

## QUT Library Collection Development Manual

### 3. Practices

#### 3.2. Subscriptions

##### 3.2.1. Electronic Books

##### Identification block

<b>QUT Library Collection Development Manual</b>	
<b>3.2.1 Electronic Books</b>	
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##### Policy statement

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##### 3.2.1. Electronic Books

###### 1. Purpose and scope

Note: Although ebooks may be one-off purchases or subscriptions, for convenience, this policy is located in the section covering subscriptions.

An electronic book (ebook) is an electronic representation of a monograph, usually a parallel publication of a print copy. Ebooks can also be “born digital” (i.e. there is no print equivalent).

QUT Library is actively increasing the availability of ebooks in its collection. Publishers are becoming more willing to make electronic versions of their books available (with the exception of textbooks), and there are signs that user acceptance of ebooks is increasing.

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There is a range of purchase models for ebooks. They can be purchased title by title, or as bundled aggregations (covering a diverse range of subject matter), subject-specific collections, or publisher collections. Title by title purchases are one-off payments, whereas bundled products may be subscriptions or one-off payments. Some models allow titles to be swapped for other titles at the end of the subscription year, provided the overall subscription purchase value is maintained. Demand-driven models, such as those offered by EBook Library (EBL, provided by the EBook Corporation), MyiLibrary (provided by Ingram Digital) and NetLibrary (OCLC) are becoming more common.

Aggregations of ebooks sold as one-off purchases may also require the payment of an annual platform fee, although this is usually a small amount.

The Library evaluates new ebook products and models as they become available. The advantages of the ebook format, such as increased accessibility, are seen to balance the disadvantages associated with ebooks, such as screen reading and navigation issues.

Electronic reference resources are not considered ebooks for the purposes of this policy. For guidelines on electronic reference resources, see the policy: [3.6.4 Reference Collection](#).

## **2. Background to existing collection**

The Library is continuing to build its collection of ebooks through subscription, one-off purchasing, and the acquisition of subject-specific collections.

In 2007, the Library trialled the EBL demand-driven model, which enables the unmediated lending and acquisition of titles in the EBL collection that have not been selected and purchased by the Library (hereafter called “non-owned titles”). Following a five-month trial, a decision was made in November 2007 to continue with the model in 2008. The initial load of 50,000 records for non-owned EBL titles into the catalogue resulted in greatly increased exposure of ebook content, and users responded by making heavy use of titles in the collection on short term loan. A steady growth in titles acquired through auto-purchase will increase the Library’s total collection of owned ebooks. In order to manage costs and resulting expenditure, in 2009 the non-owned titles were restricted to titles with recent publication dates and Australian publishers.

In 2009 the scope of the ebook collection was expanded to include a number of additional collections, including both one-off purchases and subscriptions.

## **3. Description of existing collection**

As publishers are not generally making textbooks available in ebook format, the ebooks in the Library’s collection are in most cases not for required reading. They are being used as supplementary reading by undergraduate students, for research purposes by academic and research staff, or as reference material.

As the ebooks have been acquired from a range of different publishers and aggregators, access is provided through several different platforms via the web. Most platforms require the use of the Adobe Acrobat reader. Ebooks that require special hand-held readers are not acquired. The Library is continuing to monitor developments in accessing ebooks on hand-held readers and mobile, small-screen devices.

## **4. Scope of current collecting**

### **4.1 Sources of funding**

Databases of ebooks purchased on subscription are selected according to the guidelines in the policy: [3.2.2 Serials Including Electronic Databases](#). Proposals

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for purchase may be submitted annually to the Information Resources Committee (IRC) for consideration as eTrials. Alternatively, the Branch Library Managers may make allocations for ebook subscriptions out of Faculty Specific monograph allocations, taken “off-the-top.” The EBL demand driven model is funded “off the top” of the Faculty Specific Pool monograph allocation.

One-off purchases of monographs are paid from individual monograph funds.

#### 4.2 Demand-driven model

The Library continues to support the demand-driven model, but with the proviso that costs will be kept within budget. If at any time there is any possibility of an over-run, appropriate action will be taken to cap expenditure. Only one demand-driven model will be in place at any one time to prevent duplication of purchasing and access. Different models will be assessed as they become available, and if deemed appropriate, a change will be made. At the time of the latest update of this policy, EBL is the preferred product.

#### 4.3 Ordering one-off ebooks

Both EBL titles and Blackwell’s ECHO titles are available for one-off purchase on Blackwell’s Collection Manager.

There are alternative workflows for ordering ebooks from other vendors, such as NetLibrary or individual publishers. As these workflows are less convenient, ordering on Collection Manager is preferred if there is a choice.

#### 4.4 Purchasing EBL ebooks

As access to non-owned EBL titles on short term loan is available via the catalogue, Liaison Librarians should only purchase EBL titles in the following cases:

- The title falls outside the scope of QUT’s profile for non-owned ebooks, and therefore does not have a record in the catalogue
- High use is expected (initial purchase is more cost-effective than the combination of short term loans and subsequent auto-purchase)
- Long term use is expected (initial purchase ensures enduring access, in the event that the records for non-owned titles are removed from the catalogue in the future).

#### 4.5 Choice of vendor/platform

Where there is a choice of platform for one-off purchases, the predominant platform in use should be preferred. As EBL is currently the predominant platform, EBL titles should be preferred over others, including Blackwell’s ECHO titles.

If there is no EBL title available, the following factors should be taken into account:

- Simultaneous use vs one user at a time;
- Restrictions on downloading and printing;
- Availability of perpetual access rights;
- Ease of use and overall functionality;
- Availability of MARC records;
- Acquisitions workflows.

The Library is actively supporting the selection of a broader range of ebook platforms to increase the range of ebooks available from a wider variety of publishers.

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#### 4.6 Selection of electronic and print versions

For titles where both electronic and print versions are available, the following guidelines apply:

- For high use titles, both print and electronic versions of titles should be purchased.
- For titles that are expected to have light use, the ebook only should be purchased, if available.

#### 4.7 Licensing

The general principles for database licensing also apply to ebooks. (See policy: [3.2.2 Serials Including Electronic Databases](#).)

### 5. Access

Wherever possible, full catalogue records are obtained for ebooks in subscribed databases, with links to the full text. If full catalogue records are not available, brief records are created from lists on vendor databases for loading into the catalogue.

Owned ebooks purchased title by title are always fully catalogued.

Vendor-supplied records for non-owned EBL titles are loaded into the catalogue. When a title is auto-purchased, the EBL record is replaced by a fully catalogued record.

The URLs in the catalogue records are edited to provide access via EZProxy.

Access to ebook collections and aggregations is also provided via the Database page on the Library website, with the exception of EBL.

### Modification history

Date	Sections	Source	Details
16May 2006	Appendix: Guidelines for selecting e-books.	Associate Director Information Resources via IRMG. Approved LMG 16/5/06	Appendix added
13 Dec 2007	All sections	Associate Director Information Resources via IRMG.	Includes EBL demand driven model of selection. Selection preference for ebooks only for light use; ebook and print for high use titles.
16 March 2009	All sections	Associate Director Information EResources via IRC	Updates EBL information and emphasises commitment to ebooks.
15 December 2009	All sections	Library Resource Services Manager via IRC	Preference for EBL now broadened to include other platforms.