QUT Library Collection Development Manual

3. Practices

3.2. Subscriptions

3.2.2 Serials including Online Databases

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<th>QUT Library Collection Development Manual</th>
<th>3.2.2 Serials including Online Databases</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources and Research Support)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Authority</td>
<td>Library Leadership Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Date</td>
<td>23 December 2013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Next Review</td>
<td>22 December 2016</td>
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Policy Statement

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3.2.2 Serials including Online Databases

1. Purpose and scope

Serials provide current scholarly and professional information and are used extensively to inform research and teaching/learning at every university. While serials may be online or print, paid subscriptions or donations, the Library strongly prefers to provide serials in online format.
This policy deals with online and print serials obtained as individual subscriptions as well as online databases. For the purposes of this policy, databases include electronic collections of full-text journals, images and streaming music, indexing and abstracting services, other reference resources, standards; annual reports, company information and financial and other datasets.

The transition from publishing in print to publishing in electronic format for serials is close to completion in the marketplace, with the exception of some disciplines such as art, architecture and music for which print remains important. Increasingly, publications are born digital with no pre-existing print equivalent.

The following information resources are not included within the scope of this policy:

- Digital resources such as DVDs, CDs and computer discs designed to be used on individual PCs (see Non-book Resources guideline).
- E-books (see Electronic Books guideline).
- Freely available databases, online journals and websites (see Internet Resources guideline).
- Open access journals (see Open Access guideline).
- Online Videos (see Videos guideline).

2. Background to existing collection

As online serials are now the norm, and because of the improved access to library clients associated with electronic publishing, the Library has replaced most print serials with their online equivalents. As a result, the Library’s print serial acquisitions have reduced to less than 5% of current serial subscriptions and the number and variety of online serials and databases available to clients has grown exponentially from a few indexing and abstracting services purchased as CD-ROMs to tens of thousands of online subscriptions providing access to scholarly content across all discipline areas.

As courses and research priorities change and develop and new journals and database products are published, academics and researchers ask the Library to provide access to serials not currently held. Because of the relative expense of serial subscriptions and their high maintenance costs, the Library monitors its subscriptions very closely. Expenditure on subscriptions to databases and journals is normally kept around 70% of the Library Resource Allocation as a whole. Expenditure on subscriptions is strategically managed to meet changing priorities and purchase of new subscriptions often involves the cancellation of other subscriptions.

Annual increases in the LRA do not normally keep pace with inflation in scholarly publishing. The LRA is even more affected by volatility in foreign exchange rates for the Australian dollar. This level of unpredictable volatility means that the Library must forward plan for the contingency of cancellation in order to manage a sustainable serials subscription model. The Library has implemented the “Sustainable model for selection and cancellation of serials subscriptions” in order to provide funds to support new subscriptions.

3. Description of existing collection

The Library maintains a wide collection of journals and databases in every subject area relevant to the University’s teaching, learning and research programs.

Journals are acquired primarily in online format and the diminishing remainder of current print subscriptions are normally bound to ensure that issues are not lost (see the Binding and Repair guideline).
4. Scope of current collecting

Journals and databases are selected and evaluated according to their relevance to QUT teaching, learning and research. QUT Library subscribes to journals and databases in online format to maximise staff and student access. This has the added benefit of reducing the handling and maintenance costs associated with print journal issues. Networked CD-ROM databases are not acquired due to technical difficulties and stand-alone CD-ROM formats only in exceptional circumstances due to poor accessibility.

Journal databases are often bundles of full-text journals from individual publishers but are also acquired as aggregations of full or partial full-text titles from various publishers.

The majority of legal content is subscribed in online format; however the nature of the law requires that the Law Library retain print versions as the permanent and unchangeable archive to primary materials including certain law report series and statutes.

Additional detail regarding the Law Library collection is provided in the Clayton Utz Law Library Policy.

4.1. Sustainable cancellation and selection of subscriptions

Each year, once the predicted exchange rates for the year are known and inflation rates for subscriptions incorporated into the LRA budget process, the Associate Director (Information Resources and Research Support) in consultation with Information Resources Committee sets a target cancellation amount and a target new subscription amount. The target cancellation amount and new subscription amount will vary from year to year depending on the LRA Budget increase, subscription inflation and the Australian dollar exchange rates. The target cancellation amount will to some extent trade off to fund an amount for new subscriptions.

As the University implements new learning and teaching, and research areas and priorities, it is important for the Library to resources these new areas. Funding for additional library resources may not always be available to resource new subject areas (due to inflation, foreign currency exchange rates, overall funding levels), and so cancellations of some existing resources may be required to fund the purchase of new resources. The Library participates in the purchase of forward contracts for major currencies to mitigate the impact of currency devaluation and loss of buying power and to facilitate the sustainable cancellation and selection of subscriptions.

4.1.1. Identification of cancellations

In order to have enough time for a reasonable and considered process, a regular levy target of 1% cancellations is set for the year in advance but the amount of actual cancellations agreed upon by Information Resources Committee will depend on the LRA situation in the target year.

Each Branch Library Manager is responsible for contributing to the 1% cancellation target and coordinating the review of subscriptions at their Branch. Information Resources Committee reviews all the Library’s database subscription products on a rolling two year cycle to inform the renewal decision, considering unique content, usage, return on investment/value for money and the needs of client groups. This process assists in the identification of cancellations. Single electronic journal subscriptions and print subscriptions are evaluated by Branch Library staff based on usage statistics and ongoing relevance to Faculties. Subscriptions are considered for cancellation based on the additional criteria below.

In addition to the cancellation levy target and the annual review process for databases, the Library may identify cancellations as a result of changed client needs.
Liaison Librarians and Branch Library Managers (as required) consult and negotiate with relevant academic staff. Cancellations are submitted to Information Resources Committee as soon as possible and by the deadline of mid-July to enable vendors to be notified prior to renewal. Renewal of database subscriptions may occur at any time during the year, and it is imperative that databases identified for cancellation are not inadvertently renewed.

4.1.2. Criteria for cancellations

Serials subscriptions may be cancelled because the content no longer supports a learning and teaching or research need of the University and/or due to low usage. As the University changes and develops its academic profile, so too the collections should be realigned with new academic directions and priorities. Funding released by the cancellation of no longer required resources is repurposed for the purchase of new resources to support new priorities.

The Internet has had a profound effect on the availability of free information sources, and some serials subscriptions can be adequately replaced by free open access resources.

**Electronic journal subscriptions**

Electronic journal subscriptions are considered for cancellation based on unique content and availability of alternative products, usage, ongoing relevance of material to QUT community, perpetual access, cost, and suitability of document delivery as an alternative.

**Print serial subscriptions with electronic equivalents**

Print serial subscriptions with electronic equivalents are normally considered for cancellation, except where:

- The quality of the graphics or images is important (e.g. architecture, design science) and these are superior in the print version
- The information is more comprehensive in the print than the electronic equivalent
- The electronic version is embargoed and access to current issues is critical

**Print serial subscriptions with no electronic equivalents**

Print serial subscriptions with no electronic equivalents are considered for cancellation based on:

- Unique content and availability of alternative products
- Low usage
- Ongoing relevance of material to QUT community
- Cost
- Availability on document delivery

4.1.3. Selection of new subscriptions

Liaison Librarians, in consultation with academics, propose new subscriptions for consideration by the Library Information Resources Committee. Serials may be selected by Liaison Librarians based on the teaching, learning and research needs of the University community and online format is preferred. Duplication of print subscriptions in different branches is minimal and
instances should be justified to Branch Library Managers. The proposed new titles and products are prioritised and IRC decides which of those with the highest priority can be ordered out of the funds available. This process normally completes by August.

Funds freed through voluntary cancellation of individual serials or electronic databases beyond the target levy amount may be used by Liaison Librarians to order other serial titles, signed by Branch Library Manager and Associate Director (Information Resources and Research Support). No new titles will be added over and above strategic allocations for new subscriptions unless additional cancellations are made beyond the target cancellation levy amount. Subscriptions for new discipline areas will be funded by strategic allocation, requests for funding from the University or by increasing the target levy in order to free funding.

**Freely available e-trials**

Freely available e-trials are used to evaluate potential electronic database selections. These trials can be organised at any time suitable to Library staff and faculty stakeholders.

### 4.2. Licensing

All database and individual electronic journal licensing agreements are examined by the Library Resources Services staff and signed according to the QUT hierarchy of authority based on the expenditure amount (see MOPP G/5.1 Expenditure of University Funds).

The following aspects of licensing are considered when a database or e-journal is considered for purchase:

**Site licence**

As a multi-campus university, QUT requires the licence to define it as a single site.

**Definition of users**

QUT prefers unlimited simultaneous user access, although the Library may negotiate lower usage limits for a price advantage, based on demand, as appropriate. Access from within QUT libraries by QUT alumni and members of the public is desirable.

**Definition of use**

QUT prefers definitions that allow for normal university teaching, learning, research and administrative use, as well as document delivery and Course Materials Database (CMD) use.

**Conditions of use**

QUT does not sign licences which have indemnity clauses that render QUT liable for damages due to breaches by its clients.

QUT generally does not agree to unilateral cut off of access by the vendor without notice.

**Authentication**

QUT prefers IP authentication. Institutional username/password is acceptable if available. Client specific passwords are acceptable in certain cases such as financial datasets licensed for a restricted cohort of staff/students.
Content

QUT prefers the vendor’s licence to describe the content and to offer QUT a refund for the loss of considerable content during the licence period.

Term

One year licences are strongly preferred, as these suit the Library budget cycle. Multi year terms are only considered when they are required under consortia agreements, and/or when considerable cost savings are offered. Opt out clauses are inserted into multi-year consortia licences wherever possible.

The Library takes its responsibility for compliance with licence agreements seriously and procedures for potential breach of database licence conditions are linked as Appendix 1 of this policy.

4.3. Perpetual access

Perpetual access in electronic form is always highly desirable in the selection process but it is not a mandatory requirement. Where no perpetual access is available, the costs associated with acquisition and retention of print format holdings are considered alongside the ongoing importance of the back issues to QUT teaching and research and the suitability of access to older issues via Document Delivery.

QUT supports collaborative endeavours to ensure libraries have ongoing access to published electronic resources and these resources are preserved in cases where publishers go out of business e.g. PORTICO, CLOCKSS, LOCKSS.

4.4. Hosting

QUT strongly prefers remote hosted perpetual access from the publisher or an approved institution’s server and does not locally host perpetual access files.

4.5. Fund codes

The Library tracks expenditure on electronic and print subscriptions separately through its fund codes SE Subscriptions Electronic and SP Subscriptions Print.

4.6. Orders

All orders or contracts are authorised according to the QUT financial delegation based on the expenditure amount (see MOPP G/5.1 Expenditure of University Funds).

Gratis subscriptions must be authorised by Branch Library Managers.

Where possible, the Library seeks to obtain the best possible deal by joining CAUL consortia offers.

Arrangements to approve and fund these offers will be made by Information Resources Committee in conjunction with the sustainable model for selection and cancellation.

4.7. Backsets

The Library only buys backsets of current subscriptions in electronic format. Backsets are usually paid for from one-off purchase fund codes. Where access is provided in electronic format, duplicating print backsets are generally discarded in order to release library space.
When cancelling a subscription the Liaison Librarian will justify the need to retain backsets of cancelled print serials.

4.8. Usage statistics

The Library monitors and records usage statistics for each product and employs this data in reviewing the continuing provision of products.

Title level usage statistics are also reviewed for significant publisher collections where the ability to substitute and cancel individual titles is provided and/or to assess the most cost-effective purchase model.

4.9. Annual review of database subscriptions

In addition to the biennial review of all database subscriptions costing more than $1,000 at Information Resources Committee, databases valued at >$100,000 per annum are annually reviewed as part of the Library’s adherence to the QUT MOPP G/5.3 Purchasing and QUT Strategic Procurement Procedures.

5. Access

Online and print journals are fully catalogued in the Library catalogue.

Databases are arranged alphabetically and by subject on the Library web pages and in Subject Guides with descriptive information on their content, characteristics and access. They are also available through the Library catalogue.

The Library enhances QUT client access to its serials wherever possible e.g.:

- Resource discovery platforms
- Open URL link resolver
- Google Library Links program which enables QUT clients who find article references in Google Scholar to link through to the full text of the article in the library database

Access via IP address on the WWW is strongly preferred. EZProxy is used to facilitate access for QUT clients seeking access from their own Internet provider. Some research level datasets are hosted locally, including via TILS High Performance Computing.
Appendix 1
Procedures for potential breach of database licence conditions

Prepared by: Cathy Slaven, Information Access Coordinator
Created: November 2013

Contact officer | Associate Director (Information Resources & Research Support)
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Approval authority | Information Resources Committee
Approval date | November 2013
Date of next review | November 2015

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1. Context
The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures to follow when it is suspected there has been a potential breach of database licence conditions by a QUT student or staff member.

The Library takes all potential database licence breaches seriously therefore this type of incident is to be treated as a priority at all times and should be actioned immediately that the Library identifies or is notified of the incident.

2. Notification of potential breaches
There are two main pathways for receiving a breach notification:
1. **Notification from the vendor**
   This is usually via direct email from the vendor (the email is usually sent to ejournals or
   the LRS Manager and in some instances directly to the Library eServices Information
   Access team). In some cases “notification” by the vendor is in the form of
   **automatically blocking access** to the database or resource.

2. **Identification of heavy usage by Library eServices**
   Library eServices uses *Splunk* (a log management application) to monitor excessive
   use of a database by a single user. Email alerts are sent to Library eServices
   Information Access team if potential excessive usage is identified.

3. **Responsibility for coordinating potential breach actions**
   The Library Resource Services Manager (or Datasets Coordinator) is responsible for *coordinating*
   the follow-up of any potential licence breach notifications. They are responsible for ensuring the
   guidelines below are followed and that the Associate Director (*Information Resources & Research
   Support*) is informed of these incidents.

4. **Responsibility for investigating potential breaches**
   As excessive downloading is both a **database licence breach** and **information security issue** it
   is the role of Information Security team (Information Technology Services) to investigate these
   breaches as per standard Information Security incident management procedures.

   It is also imperative that Information Security be **informed immediately** so they can contact the
   user and conduct a detailed investigation in order to minimise or prevent damage or downtime to
   QUT IT resources. Immediate notification by the Library is crucial to gather real-time evidence and
   is especially urgent if the case involves external hacking of a user account.

5. **Procedures for investigating potential breaches**
   Dependant on the method of notification of the breach, there are slightly different procedures to
   follow (refer to **Step 1.1** and **Step 1.2** below):
### Step 1.1: Library receives notification by vendor

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1a <strong>Immediately</strong> advise LRS Manager and Information Access Team of potential breach (including any details / logs provided by the vendor)</td>
<td>Recipient of email i.e. LRS Electronic Resource Assistants or Information Access team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1b Reply to vendor advising we are investigating potential breach as a matter of urgency and request access is restored (if blocked)</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Step 1.2: (or) LRS receives notification by Library eServices

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<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.2a Advise LRS Manager <strong>immediately</strong> of potential breach and forward information to Information Security for investigation (see step 2.a below).</td>
<td>Information Access team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2b Review licence agreement and contact vendor to determine if a breach has occurred. Advise AD(IR&amp;RS), Information Access Team and Information Security of outcome.</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
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### Step 2: Investigate potential licence breach

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<th>Action</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.a <strong>Retrieve relevant local Library logs (e.g. EZProxy) and immediately</strong> forward this (along with any other relevant vendor information) to Information Security to investigate potential licence and QUT Network usage breach Ensure Library Resource Services Manager is copied into correspondence.</td>
<td>Information Access Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b Information Security to contact user and conduct detailed investigation (as per standard Information Security incident management procedures) and forward results of investigation to LRS Manager and Library Information Access team.</td>
<td>Information Security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c If access is blocked update relevant Library database pages with outage alert and send email to <a href="mailto:db.news@qut.edu.au">db.news@qut.edu.au</a>.</td>
<td>Information Access team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.d Advise AD (IR&amp;RS) and if required appropriate BLM or Library Manager of outcome.</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Step 3: Follow-up with vendor and advise outcome of investigation

<table>
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<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.a Follow-up with vendor and advise outcome of investigations and if necessary request access be restored.</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Step 4: Closure of incident

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.a If access to database was blocked by vendor:</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advise Information Access team when access has been/should be restored</td>
<td>Information Access team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Update relevant database pages to remove outage alert and send advice to <a href="mailto:db.news@qut.edu.au">db.news@qut.edu.au</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.b Archive all relevant information pertaining to breach in appropriate secure location (as individual users will be identified).</td>
<td>LRS Manager</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Blocking individual usernames from accessing Library databases

Although EZProxy does provide the functionality to block individual usernames from accessing all Library resources via EZProxy this does not address additional security issues that may be present and as a result if any blocks or restrictions are to be applied to a user account these should be put in place by Information Security as per their standard incident management procedures.

7. Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact person</th>
<th>Email</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library Resource Services Manager</td>
<td>Colleen Cleary</td>
<td><a href="mailto:c.cleary@qut.edu.au">c.cleary@qut.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Access team</td>
<td>Cathy Slaven</td>
<td><a href="mailto:libeis@qut.edu.au">libeis@qut.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information Security team</td>
<td>Maria Corpuz</td>
<td><a href="mailto:security@qut.edu.au">security@qut.edu.au</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associate Director (Information Resources &amp; Research Support)</td>
<td>Martin Borchert</td>
<td><a href="mailto:m.borchert@qut.edu.au">m.borchert@qut.edu.au</a></td>
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## Modification History

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<td>General update</td>
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<td>Information Access Coordinator via IRC</td>
<td>Amendment to procedure for licence breaches</td>
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<td>Format overhaul in accordance with new Library look and feel</td>
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