3. Practices

3.2. Subscriptions

3.2.2 Serials including Online Databases

Identification Block

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUT Library Collection Development Manual</th>
<th>3.2.2 Serials including Online Databases</th>
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<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Director, Library Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Authority</td>
<td>Library Leadership Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approval Date</td>
<td>November 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of Next Review</td>
<td>November 2019</td>
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Policy Statement

1. Purpose and scope
2. Background to existing collection
3. Description of existing collection
4. Scope of current collecting
   4.1. Sustainable cancellation and selection of subscriptions
      4.1.1. Identification of cancellations
      4.1.2. Criteria for cancellations
      4.1.3. Selection of new subscriptions
   4.2. Licensing
   4.3. Perpetual access
   4.4. Hosting
   4.5. Fund codes
   4.6. Orders
   4.7. Backsets
   4.8. Usage statistics
   4.9. Annual review of database subscriptions
5. Access

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. 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, law reports and cases; indexing and abstracting services and other reference resources; images; standards; annual reports; company and industry information; and financial and other datasets. The transition from publishing in print to publishing in electronic format for full-text journals and other 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 Discovery of Open Access 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 online 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 with tens of thousands of online serials 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 and expenditure on subscriptions is normally kept around 70% of the Library Resource Allocation (LRA). 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 also affected by volatility in foreign exchange rates for the Australian dollar. As a result, the Library works with relevant areas of the University to address changing demand and manage the impact of inflation and exchange rates and plans for the contingency of cancellation in order to manage a sustainable serials subscription model.

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 a diminishing number of print subscriptions.

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. Journal databases are often bundles of full-text journals from individual publishers but are also acquired as full or partial full-text collections of titles aggregated from various publishers.
Aggregated databases may have embargoes on recent issues and titles are leased and not available for perpetual ownership.

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 Director, Library Services 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, publisher 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 resource these new areas. The Library works with relevant areas of the University to address this changing demand, to manage the impact of inflation, and via the purchase of forward contracts for major currencies, to mitigate the loss of buying power due to currency devaluation. However, funding for additional library resources may not always be available to resource new subject areas and so in order to facilitate a sustainable process, cancellations of some existing resources may be required to fund the purchase of new resources.

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. All the Library’s subscriptions are subject to review to inform the annual 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. 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 Library Resource Services ensures that databases that may be candidates for cancellation are not inadvertently renewed.

3.1.2. Criteria for cancellations

Serial 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.
Where appropriate, serial subscriptions are 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 online equivalents**

Print serial subscriptions with online equivalents are normally replaced with online format, 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 online equivalent
- The online version is embargoed and access to current issues is critical

**Print serial subscriptions with no online equivalents**

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

- Unique content and availability of alternative products
- Low usage
- Ongoing relevance of material to QUT community
- Cost
- Suitability of document delivery as an alternative

3.1.3. **Selection of new subscriptions**

Liaison Librarians, in consultation with academics, propose new subscriptions for consideration by the Branch Library Manager and Director, Library Services or if the subscription cost is greater than $20,000, for consideration by the Library Information Resources Committee (IRC). Gratis subscriptions are endorsed by Branch Library Managers.

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. In certain cases, the proposed new titles and products are prioritised for IRC decision on which can be ordered from the funds available. Funds freed through voluntary cancellation of individual serials or online databases beyond the target levy amount may be used by Liaison Librarians to order other serial titles, endorsed by the Branch Library Manager and Director, Library Services. 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 online database selections. These trials can be organised at any time suitable to Library staff and faculty stakeholders.

4.2. Licensing

All database and individual online 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 as physical campuses are considered irrelevant to online resource licensing.

**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 use for document delivery and QUT Readings.

**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 considered when they are required under consortia agreements, and/or when considerable cost savings are offered. Opt out clauses are inserted into multi-year agreements wherever possible.

**Conditions of use**
QUT does not sign licences which have certain indemnity clauses that render QUT liable for damages due to breaches by its clients or require QUT to hand over sole defence of a claim Where licences cannot be amended, a risk management approach is implemented.

QUT generally does not agree to unilateral cut off of access by the vendor without notice.
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. Options to forego perpetual access in order to subscribe at a lower rate are considered where there is a significant saving to the library resource allocation. 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 online 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 online 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).

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

4.7. Backsets

The Library only buys backsets of current subscriptions in online format. Backsets are usually paid for from one-off purchase fund codes. Where access is provided in online 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 resource and employs this data in reviewing the continuingsubscription.

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 annual review of subscriptions, databases valued at >$200,000 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.

3. Access

Online and print journals are fully catalogued in the Classic catalogue and records contributed to Quick Find.

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 Quick Find and the Classic catalogue.

The Library enhances QUT client access to its serials wherever possible, including:

Integration of QUT Fulltext Finder (link resolvers) in A&I databases to enhance fulltext linking

Access via online journal browsing tools such as BrowZine

Integration with the 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

Online access via IP authentication is strongly preferred compared to database-specific username and passwords, with EZProxy software used to manage access for both on and off-campus usage. Single Sign-On integration (SSO) e.g. Australian Access Federation/Shibboleth is increasingly used to provide access to databases where the platform supports SSO integration. This allows for a more personalised experience for students and staff (e.g. saving items, bookmarking etc.).
Appendix 1
Procedures for potential breach of database licence conditions

Prepared by: Cathy Slaven, Information Access Coordinator
Created: November 2016

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Procedures for potential breach of database licence conditions

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Created: November 2016

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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 email account or the LRS Manager and in some instances directly to the Information Access team email account). 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**
   The Information Access team use Splunk (a log management application) to monitor excessive use of a database by a single user. Email alerts are sent to the 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.

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

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<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1a</td>
<td>Immediately advise LRS Manager and Information Access Team (via <a href="mailto:libeis@qut.edu.au">libeis@qut.edu.au</a>) of potential breach (including any details / logs provided by the vendor)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1b</td>
<td>Reply to vendor advising we are investigating potential breach as a matter of urgency and request access is restored (if blocked)</td>
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</table>

Step 1.2: Notification via Splunk alert

<table>
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<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.2a</td>
<td>Review EZProxy logs to determine if potential breach or if a false alert has been triggered (e.g. PYMCA has constantly rotating background images that can easily trigger a heavy download alert).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2b</td>
<td>If potential breach or security incident identified advise LRS Manager immediately and forward information to Information Security for investigation (see step 2.c below).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2b</td>
<td>Review licence agreement and contact vendor to determine if a breach has occurred. Advise Information Access Team and Information Security of outcome.</td>
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Step 2: Investigate potential licence breach

<table>
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<th>Action</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.a</td>
<td>Retrieve relevant Library logs (e.g. EZProxy) and immediately 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>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.b</td>
<td>Review licence agreement and forward appropriate sections (with explanatory text) to Information Security. Ensure Information Access team also copied into correspondence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.c</td>
<td>Information Security to contact user and conduct detailed investigation (as per standard Information Security incident management procedures) and forward results of investigation to Library Resource Services Manager and Information Access team.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Action | Responsibility
--- | ---
2.d | If access is blocked for all (or most) users update relevant Library database pages with outage alert and send email to db.news@qut.edu.au. 
| Information Access team
2.e | If required advise appropriate BLM or Library Manager of outcome. 
| Library Resource Services Manager

**Step 3: Follow-up with vendor and advise outcome of investigation**

### Action | Responsibility
--- | ---
3.a | Follow-up with vendor and advise outcome of investigations and if necessary request access be restored. 
| Library Resource Services Manager

**Step 4: Closure of incident**

### Action | Responsibility
--- | ---
4.a | If access to database was blocked by vendor: 
  - Advise Information Access team when access has been/should be restored (unless they are also copied into the email) 
  - Update relevant database pages to remove outage alert and send advice to db.news@qut.edu.au 
| Library Resource Services Manager 
  Information Access team
4.b | Archive all relevant information pertaining to breach in appropriate secure location (as individual users will be identified). 
| Library Resource Services Manager

### 6. Blocking individual usernames from accessing Library databases via EZProxy

Occasionally there may be a requirement to quickly block an individual user from accessing Library databases. The primary reason would be if the user is in the process of systematically downloading significant amount of content from one or multiple databases and that the behaviour clearly breaches licence conditions (and the downloading has not triggered an automatic vendor block).

EZProxy software includes functionality to block individual users from accessing all Library resources that are accessed via EZProxy (i.e. IP authenticated resources). This type of block can be used by the Library to temporarily mitigate the risks associated with a licence breach while Information Security is investigating the incident.

EZProxy blocks can only be applied with permission from the Library Resource Services Manager (or delegate) or based on a recommendation from Information Security. The Information Access team has the responsibility for applying and removing blocks in EZProxy.

Blocking via EZProxy does not address additional security issues that may be present and as a result Information Security may choose to apply additional QUT accountblocks or restrictions as per their standard incident management procedures.
7. Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</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>
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## Modification History

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<td>4.2 Licensing – Term</td>
<td>Assoc Director (IR) via IRMG</td>
<td>Updated</td>
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<td>29 November 2007</td>
<td>All sections</td>
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<td>Complete revision of policy combining former policy 3.2.3 Serials with 3.2.2 Electronic databases into a new 3.2.2 Serials including electronic databases.</td>
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<td>Appendix 1</td>
<td>Information Access Coordinator via IRC</td>
<td>Amendment to procedure for licence breaches</td>
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<td>DLS (Acting)</td>
<td>Format overhaul in accordance with new Library look and feel</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 December</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>PA to Associate Director Library Services</td>
<td>Update relevant contact/team details for licence breaches and minor updates to procedures to match current work practices.</td>
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<tr>
<td>21 November 2016</td>
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<td>Information Access Coordinator</td>
<td>Update relevant contact/team details for licence breaches and minor updates to procedures to match current work practices.</td>
</tr>
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<td>All</td>
<td>Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources &amp; Research Support) A/g via IRC</td>
<td>General update</td>
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