

Churchill College Library: Policy on books donated to the College Library

The Library has a collection approaching 50,000 volumes, housed primarily in four rooms, all of which are approaching or at capacity. The Library is a working undergraduate library, which must maintain the focus of its collections to satisfy this function. However, there is also a need for the Library to include a small number of other collections to reflect the broader interests and experiences of the College.

We are increasingly receiving offers of collections of books from a range of people associated with the College (mainly retired Fellows and ex-students). Because of increasing pressures on space and time, and the fact that the size of some of these collections could form a significant fraction of the total Library collection, we need to implement a coherent policy for managing the offers of books. This policy must be transparent and consistent.

We suggest the following decision-making procedure, which should be given to all potential donors of books immediately they approach the Librarian. Three extra points for further consideration are:

- a. How does the following compare to the policies formulated by other Colleges?
- b. Will future Government rules tying fee income strictly to student education prevent acceptance of collections not relevant for teaching unless they are accompanied by an endowment to fund maintenance of the collection?
- c. What is the relationship of the Archives Centre to this business? Does the College Library take books accepted by them as part of collections of papers? If so, what say does the Library have in their acceptance? Does the relationship with the Archives Centre require changing/firming up?

Finally, it should be remembered that a procedure has already been proposed for dealing with the existing collections (Minute 189 of the meeting of the Library Committee held on 26th April 1999).

1. Collections can only be accepted from people associated in some way with the College or the main traditions of the College (including the Archives). 'Non-College' offers should be referred to the University Library.
2. Collections can also only be accepted if they can be divided and incorporated within the existing stock. All books will be labelled appropriately to identify their source.
3. After delivery, the collection will be stored in the back rooms of the College Library. It may be catalogued after receipt, although decisions on retention of the books could be made before cataloguing.
4. Collections can only be accepted if it is agreed that the retention of each book within the collection is decided after receipt and at the discretion, ultimately, of the Librarian. Books that are not retained will be either donated to charities such as Book Aid or Oxfam, or sold to fund the purchase of undergraduate texts. Money raised in this way will be acknowledged by the placement of a plaque with the donor's name in the front of each book.
5. Duplicates of books already in the Library will be automatically removed from the collection, unless the item is borrowed frequently.
6. Directors of Studies in the relevant subject areas will be consulted about the value of both the collection as a whole and individual books within the collection. Value needs to be assessed on the basis of several criteria:
 - a. Usefulness for current and future Fellows and undergraduate and postgraduate students
 - b. Historical value, primarily in the context of the College and of 20th century history (because of the Churchill Archives)
 - c. Monetary value.

These are ranked in order of priority, although relative weighting will vary with subject area. Extra criteria may also be used for certain subjects.

7. The above assessment will be aided by other Members of College and professional book dealers as necessary.

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