

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT: Electronic Resources

Components of collection management include: **budgeting, collection development, collection evaluation, deselection, collection preservation**, and the development of guidelines and procedures related to these activities.

The University Librarian is responsible for managing the collection in collaboration with the librarians.

Kwantlen Polytechnic University Library adheres to the Association of College and Research Libraries' recognized guidelines for resource management outlined in [Standards for Libraries in Higher Education](#).

In these guidelines, the term 'collection' refers to all materials held within Library-managed accommodation, and to the electronic resources to which the Library provides access.

Electronic Resources

Introduction:

These guidelines address management issues involved with the collection of electronic resources, i.e. subscription online databases and open-access databases (free web resources).

Electronic resources are selected using the same basic principles as print and non-print media in accordance with the Kwantlen Library's Collection Development Procedures.

Electronic resources are an increasingly important source of information for the research community. Because electronic resources have special characteristics as well as ones that they share with traditional information resources, a statement of criteria is needed to guide the selection of electronic resources for inclusion into the collection.

Purpose of Guidelines

The purpose of the guidelines is to provide help in choosing appropriate electronic resources and to establish consistency and priorities in managing this important part of the Library collection.

Scope

“Electronic resources” in this document refer to full-text and bibliographic databases and electronic reference products, including open-access databases and electronic resources purchased or licensed by the Library from a commercial source, a non-profit organization, a professional organization or any external institution. Not included are e-books, single title e-journal subscriptions, and catalogued websites.

Selection Principles

Subject, scope, and format are the primary considerations for licensing of electronic resources as they are for other library resources. Electronic resources are selected using similar criteria to print material selection. Whenever possible, the library will cooperate with the ELN, COPPUL, and other consortia to take advantage of price reductions for products meeting our selection criteria.

Priority is given to:

- Reference, full-text, and bibliographic resources that support the overall university curriculum.
- Resources that support the instructional objectives of a specific discipline.
- Additional criteria to consider include:

Content:

- Content must be relevant to and support the teaching curriculum and research requirements of the Kwantlen community.
- Anticipated or demonstrated demand
- Accuracy, relevance, currency, comprehensiveness, and uniqueness of content
- The importance of the resource to its discipline and the level of use expected at Kwantlen.
- The extent of overlap (if any) with other Kwantlen databases, and the relationship of the database to the Library's print and other holdings.

Presentation:

- Resources should meet a high standard for user-friendliness and accessibility, and should be well-designed and organized
- Resources should be compatible with current hardware and software available on Libraries terminals

Functionality:

- Functionality, including linking to the online catalog, integrated ILL request capability, and compatibility with link resolving software
- Advanced search and thesaurus capability

Technical:

- Local and remote access
- Ease of installation and maintenance
- The Library strongly prefers web versions of e-resources (excluding CD-ROMs and other formats)
- Good technical support
- Stability
- Publisher/vendor reputation

Cost:

- The cost of the database.
- Cost per anticipated use; one-time and ongoing costs

Management:

- Availability and content of usage reports.

Evaluation Process:

Methods of evaluation may include comparisons to similar products, demonstrations, literature reviews, and Librarian/Faculty consultation. The following will be taken into consideration during the evaluation process:

- authority of contributors
- timeliness and accuracy
- quality and uniqueness of information
- target audience
- depth of coverage
- technology requirements
- price
- advantage over comparable print resource

- usage statistics
- availability of a better product based on evaluation methods and criteria listed in this policy statement
- a current product becomes obsolete

Procedures for Acquiring and Integrating New Electronic Resources

- Trials are used to evaluate databases. The e-resources team will attempt to arrange a trial of a database at the request of librarians or library users.
- Working with the Systems librarian, the trial database is made available on the library web site. The trials are typically held in the spring and summer.
- After the feedback is collected and if Librarians voted for the database to be recommended for purchase, a recommendation goes to University Librarian and a purchase decision is made.
- When advantageous, the University Library will participate in consortia agreements for access to electronic resources.

Retention and Renewal

The dynamic nature of the Internet, as well as the speed with which new information-delivery technologies come in and out of vogue, require that the Library frequently review its e-resources for continuing relevance and cost-effectiveness. In addition to considering each factor in the SELECTION PRINCIPLES section, the Library also studies usage statistics to determine if the use of a resource justifies its continued maintenance and accessibility.

Usage statistics will be evaluated periodically to ensure resources are still current, reliable, and relevant to Kwantlen students. Databases with low usage statistics may be considered for de-selection. However, some products have been selected for a specific program, therefore consideration will be given to the size of user population. In principle, the same evaluation criteria will be used when deselecting e-resources.

Licensing

The Library must be able to maintain any license agreement it enters into. The management and distribution of electronic information resources will be in strict compliance with licensing agreements.

Licensing Considerations

- User authentication methods should allow seamless access by authorized users. Methods which rely on the distribution of individual passwords or which restrict

access to a limited portion of the University community are discouraged and will only be considered under special circumstances.

- “Authorized Users” should be defined as broadly as possible. Bona fide faculty members, students, and employees (and contractors) of the University should be included as authorized users that are permitted to access the electronic resource from on-campus and remotely via the University's secure network.
- The license should permit fair use of all information for non-commercial, educational, instructional, and research purposes by the Library and authorized users. These include viewing, downloading, and printing. Other uses permitted under fair use are interlibrary loans, e-reserves and course packs.
- The license should reflect realistic expectations concerning the Library's ability to monitor use and discover abuse.
- In general, the vendor should employ a standard agreement that describes the rights of the Library in plain language.
- The Library adheres to the BC ELN General Guidelines for License Negotiation, and COPPUL's Model License, when licensing consortial databases.

Contracts with Vendors

The following provisions should be considered when negotiating and reviewing contracts with vendors:

Access:

Access is the fundamental consideration that is comprised of several additional criteria.

- Remote Access: Agreements which allow access from remote networked locations with authentication through a proxy server are preferred.
- Simultaneous users: Unlimited simultaneous users model is preferable. The decision about number of simultaneous users will depend on cost but also on expected usage of the database.
- Access vs. ownership: For fee-based resources, what exactly does the fee pay for? Does the fee include perpetual access to (ownership of) the content or does it only include access to the content for the duration of the subscription? If perpetual access is purchased, where will the content reside, with the publisher or with the library? Perpetual access (ownership) is preferred.
- Interlibrary loan right: Does the vendor/publisher permit the library's ILL department to distribute copies according to the normal and proper procedures of interlibrary loan?

- License or contract: Is the library required to sign a license agreement or access contract in order to provide access to the database to users? License review and negotiation is an expensive process in terms of Library and University resources and this should be taken into consideration along with the needs of library users for timely access to databases.

Archiving:

- Strong preference should be given to agreements that allow the Library to have access to, or own the content of, the last-held version of the database in perpetuity.

Copyright:

- The Library will comply with the existing copyright laws. The Library will also promote copyright compliance among users and among its staff.

Confidentiality:

- The confidentiality and privacy of all library patrons must be protected.

Negotiations:

- With the exception of resources jointly negotiated with the ELN COPPUL or other consortia, agreements with electronic resource vendors are negotiated by the e-resources team.

Guidelines on selection of open-access databases

Selection of free electronic resources should follow the general guidelines developed for all electronic resources.

- The quality and content of the electronic resource are considered
- Quality indicators can include peer review of the site, review of the site by other librarians, an authoritative sponsor or producer, and evidence of ongoing support (creation of archives, mirror sites, etc.).
- The amount of content provided should be significant.
- Reliability and stability can also influence selection. Resources known to be frequently unavailable should not be selected.