University of Reading Library Content Principles

University of Reading Library Content Strategy

Contents

Purpose 1
Principles 2
The Principles in practice 2
Collections & Access 4
Collections 4
Access 4
Engagement 4
Internal Engagement 4
External Engagement 5
Statement on Content 5
Associated Policies 5
Version control 5

Purpose

The Content Principles govern how the University Library acquires, manages, provides access to and retains/disposes of all physical and digital Content within its collections. The Principles are in support of the Library's Strategy and the University's strategic aims and determine how we support our users.

Points of note:

- The term 'content' refers to all Library materials and resources (print, physical and digital/electronic) that the Library manages and/or acquires either via purchase or via another method of acquisition.

©University of Reading 2025

- The University also holds special collections and archives materials, but these are out of scope for this document.

Principles

The University has 4 principles within this document: Community, Excellence, Sustainability and Engaged University.

The Content Principles document has the following principles to correspond with the University strategy:

- **User-focused**
- **Open**
- **Sustainable**
- **Value**
- **Inclusive**
- **Engaged**

The Principles in practice

User-focused

The Library ensures that our users are at the heart of what we do and that their needs are considered within all decision-making related to Library Content. Content provision will be determined by need in relation to the teaching, learning and research of the University; and within budget, sustainability and space criteria. The needs of the University in relation to content provision will be reviewed in light of any changes (for example programme/course closures or additions) in order to best serve our users.

Open

The Library actively promotes and supports open content and practices. We facilitate an open research environment by promoting content that is freely available to all and of appropriate quality to support teaching, learning and research. We support the production of open content/research by supporting academic colleagues in finding open access routes for publishing. The Library advocates for open research and content that is non-paywalled.

Sustainable

The Library prioritises environmentally sustainable methods for the acquisition and management of Library content wherever possible – whether this be in physical format or electronic. We approach disposing of content through sustainable and environmentally conscious means. The Library engages with frameworks and suppliers who share sustainability information and engage in good practice with regard to sustainability, and with the University's Education for Sustainable Development (EDS) framework and objectives.

Value

The Library aims to always achieve value when purchasing and managing library content. This includes, but is not limited to, value for money to ensure budgets are adhered to. The Library will use all relevant data to inform decision-making and ensure that value and sustainability are sought. Content will also be assessed in terms of its value for teaching, learning and research at the University and on impact in relation to those areas. We also review any potential disposals to determine whether items have any historical and cultural value. Value will also be considered when thinking about appropriate formats and the best way to provide access to content for our users – for example, if a format is too expensive, such as an e-textbook, we would prioritise purchasing print copies.

Inclusive

The Library is committed to being inclusive, global, accessible and diverse in our approach to Library content. We encourage our users to engage with this approach and provide resources for inclusivity, such as the LGBTQIA+ LibGuide, the Disability And Inclusion LibGuide, and via the Diversify Our Collections suggestion form.

Engaged

The Library is engaged with its users, the University community, sector groups and University partners. This engagement informs and enables content provision, whether by assessing user need for content or via participation in nationally led negotiations for Library content. This approach allows access to content held by other organisations via reciprocal schemes such as SCONUL Access or via Inter Library Loan with partner institutions.

The Library will also engage with national schemes for collections – for example collective collections – to ensure we contribute to, and participate in, sector initiatives at national level for collection preservation.

Collections & Access

Collections

The Library is committed to providing and managing collections in support of the University's teaching, learning and research. The Library is also committed to maintaining collections which are specialisms of the University of Reading, and collections and/or items that are to be retained in line with national collections objectives. Items of rarity will be retained.

The Library will make decisions on whether to acquire, retain or dispose of content based on robust, data-driven principles and in consultation with key stakeholders. Should collections, or parts of collections no longer be relevant we will, where and if appropriate, carefully assess items in order to be either ethically disposed of, or relocated suitably if possible.

Access

Equitable access for all University of Reading Library users is prioritised, and the Library ensures that all Content held is as widely accessible as possible by considering appropriate alternate formats where required. We support the wider Reading community by facilitating access to our content (where possible and appropriate).

The Library achieves digital excellence by prioritising the discovery of content via metadata and preservation and discovery systems.

Open access content is a priority and the Library will promote and support this both for accessing content and to allow Reading authors to publish via open access routes, and facilitate self-archiving of content.

Engagement

Internal Engagement

We are actively engaged internally across the University both with students and staff, through membership of relevant University committees, groups and by working with partners, for example University Museums and Collections.

Within the Library, we engage in decision-making regarding content across library teams and in consultation with academic colleagues where appropriate.

©University of Reading 2025

External Engagement

We engage externally via participation in national groups and library sector initiatives. We work with and utilise national framework agreements (such as SUPC framework agreements), and nationally negotiated deals or consortia (such as JISC negotiated agreements). The Library is committed to contributing to national negotiations, and to negotiating with publishers on an individual basis to ensure best value and service in relation to content for the University of Reading.

Statement on Content

The Library is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment. The Library does not censor content and procures the content necessary to support teaching and research at the University. Ownership of any content that is perceived to be sensitive/offensive is not to be seen as an endorsement of its content by the Library. We are supportive of the University's guidance on content warnings on course content ('trigger' warnings). The Library is bound by the rules and subject headings outlined in the schemes used to catalogue and classify its content and acknowledges that some of the terminology used in these may not always accurately reflect current cultural references.

Associated Policies

Donations Policy

Publishing Open Access

Research Data Management Policy

Version control

Version	Keeper	Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date
1.0	Associate Director (Scholarship & Planning)	Annually	University Librarian, DELT Committee	August 2025