Collection Policy for Philosophy  
(Draft, not yet confirmed by Philosophy COLP)

1 Overview

1.1 General coverage of philosophy in OULS

Oxford is one of the world’s great centres for philosophy, and its library resources enable the Faculty of Philosophy to maintain its pre-eminence, as well as supporting the research of scholars from all over the world. The Bodleian’s almost unparalleled collections of printed works, manuscripts and archives in philosophy are complemented and supplemented by the extensive lending collection held at the Philosophy Faculty Library, and by related collections in, *inter alia*, the Sackler Library, The Taylor Institute Library, and the Social Sciences Library. Philosophy material does not easily divide into research-level or taught course items, and the overlap in usage between research and teaching has been crucial to the development of the reference and lending collections. Current policy gives priority to the acquisition of a reference copy of any philosophy title, before any need for an additional lending copy is assessed.

Holdings cover all periods of western philosophy from classical to contemporary, with extensive holdings also in aesthetics; epistemology; ethics; gender studies; logic; metaphysics; philosophy of language; philosophy of law; philosophy of mathematics; philosophy of mind; philosophy of psychology; philosophy of religion; philosophy of science; political and social philosophy.

The Central Bodleian holds the principal library resources to support research and teaching in philosophy at the University. The library’s policy is to maintain the wide scope of existing holdings and their capacity to support academic activity in this field at the highest level. A very substantial proportion of relevant material, including virtually all UK publications and many American academic titles, is received by legal deposit, and the library aims to add non-UK material systematically by purchase and exchange. The Bodleian Library also holds an extensive collection of philosophy manuscripts and rare books. The Bodleian Library’s collections are of national and international importance, used by students and scholars from all over the world. The library’s acquisitions reflect this wider rôle.

Core texts, journals and frequently-used secondary material are located on the open shelves in the Philosophy Reading Rom, New Bodleian. The open shelf Ancient Philosophy collection is located in the Lower Reading Room, Old Library. Philosophy of Religion is located in the Lower Camera.

The Radcliffe Science Library holds the science collections of the Bodleian Library. The Radcliffe Science Library is responsible for acquisition (including the receipt of legal deposit materials) in the philosophy of science; the philosophy of mathematics; logic; philosophy of logic; bioethics; the philosophy of mind and the philosophy of psychology.

The Bodleian Law Library is responsible for acquisitions (including the receipt of legal deposit materials) in the philosophy of law.

The Philosophy Faculty Library is the main provider for loans in philosophy to undergraduates, graduate students, academic visitors and academic staff. There is a video collection, including the “Philosophers in conversation” series (Davidson, Quine, Strawson).
Oriental Philosophy falls within the remit of the OULS Department of Oriental Collections which comprises six distinct units distributed between five different locations.

OLIS, Oxford’s online catalogue, lists almost all printed monographs and journals held by OULS and college libraries, as well as related audio-visual material. Both OLIS and separate catalogues for manuscripts and some special collections can be accessed via OxLIP, the interface for electronic resources.

Philosophy syllabuses overlap at certain points with those prescribed by many other faculties, and in consequence coverage overlaps with libraries serving other faculties and departments, such as Law, Politics, Economics, Theology, English, Modern Languages, History. Provision for some joint courses may be shared between relevant libraries, or, by arrangement, adopted by one specific library. The use of the shared catalogue and OLIS ordering system ensures that any duplication of stock is intentional.

1.2 Legal deposit

As a library of legal deposit, the Bodleian expects to provide virtually comprehensive coverage of British and Irish publications. Some of this material is held on open access in the appropriate reading room, much more is held on closed access but may to be called to reading rooms in the Bodleian and other research libraries.

Decisions are made by the subject librarian for Philosophy, in collaboration with colleagues in related subject areas, on the location of items received by legal deposit; the PFL does not house any legal deposit material. The Copyright Receipt Office in the Bodleian is alerted to any gaps and delays in legal deposit supply.

1.3 Electronic resources

The University and OULS are fully aware of the increasing importance of e-resources to teaching and research in philosophy, and budget allocations for e-resources have been greatly increased in recent years. In philosophy, the aim is to build a comprehensive collection of full-text original writings of the great philosophers, both in the original language and in translation (where appropriate). Electronic coverage of philosophy journals has now reached over 75% of core English-language titles, and our aim is to increase this as funding and availability permits. Coverage of reference material, such as Encyclopedias of philosophy, and bibliographical databases, is already very strong and remains a high priority. The acquisition of electronic copies of philosophical monographs is also a crucial part of library support for teaching needs in philosophy, as well as being a key part of provision for readers with print, visual or mobility disabilities.

OxLIP+ is the interface for electronic resources, such as bibliographic databases. Oxford University e-Journals provides access to e-journals. Both include subscription resources and selected open-access resources. Networked electronic resources are preferred to stand-alone CDRoms.

Proposals for new resources for Philosophy and related subject areas are discussed and prioritised by the Committee for Library Provision in Philosophy and the Humanities Subject Management Group.

1.4 Notes about particular formats or collections

The video collection held at the PFL targets live philosophical debate and experts on their specialist subjects. Philosophy videos, DVDs and Cd-Roms acquired by the Central Bodleian may also be deposited in the Philosophy Faculty Library.
1.5 Languages

The Bodleian aims to collect a wide range of scholarly monographs, series and journals in English (published throughout the world), the principal Western European languages and to a lesser extent other European languages. Acquisition is extensive in English, complementing items received by legal deposit; rather more selective in Western European languages; in Eastern European languages selective and only where related to major indigenous philosophers and the history of philosophy in the country concerned; and in non-European languages only in exceptional cases. Translations of English philosophical works into other languages are not normally collected unless accompanied by editorial or other matter which justifies their acquisition as a contribution to the study of the work and/or author.

In the collections of the Philosophy Faculty library, philosophical texts are generally held in the original language and in translation. Secondary works are usually English-language only, unless a seminal work is only available in another language.

2 Teaching collections

The main teaching collections for Philosophy are held at the Philosophy Faculty Library and in the relevant Bodleian/OULS reading rooms (Philosophy, LRR, L.Camera,, RSL, Social Studies), and are fully integrated with related research collections and available for research use.

The Philosophy Faculty Library is the main University provider for loans in philosophy to undergraduates, graduate students and senior members. The Philosophy Faculty Library purchases almost all its holdings, and intentionally duplicates many books and journals held in the reference collections in the Bodleian and its dependencies. It has a book stock of 27,000 volumes (15,000 titles): multiple copies and electronic surrogates are provided of frequently-used books. Where possible, electronic copies of all original texts and secondary works appearing on reading lists are also provided.

The collection covers the history of philosophy from ancient times to the present, with extensive holdings also in aesthetics; epistemology; ethics; gender studies; logic; metaphysics; philosophy of language; philosophy of law; philosophy of mathematics; philosophy of mind; philosophy of psychology; philosophy of religion; philosophy of science; political and social philosophy.

The primary focus is on material required for undergraduate and taught graduate courses, with supplementary material complementing these teaching areas, and research-level material to serve graduate needs and the wider academic community. Loan statistics demonstrate a 90% overlap on books borrowed by both graduates and undergraduates. The Philosophy Faculty is strongly committed to the maintenance of a lending collection up to and including research-level.

2.1 Text books

Given the wide-ranging syllabi of the joint philosophy schools and the difficulty of separating philosophical works into teaching or research-level, the Philosophy Faculty Library aims to collect canonical primary texts and secondary works as widely as funding allows. Purchasing also takes account of developments in the subject area, new research and teaching initiatives, changes in syllabi and new courses.
2.2 Journals and Journal articles
The Philosophy Faculty Library takes some core philosophy journals, and some others where a print subscription is a pre-requisite (65 current titles). Journal usage is regularly reviewed: alternatives such as on-line access are promoted. A small collection of journal articles and offprints is maintained, but library policy is to replace these wherever possible with electronic surrogates.

2.3 Levels of provision
It is PFL policy to spread available funding across the scope of the collection, and the syllabus prescribed by the Philosophy Faculty, taking into consideration such factors as the number of students taking a particular course. Purchasing takes into account developments in the subject area and new teaching initiatives and courses.

As far as possible, at least one copy of each title on a Philosophy Faculty reading list is made available in both the Bodleian (reference) and the PFL (lending). This does not apply to titles which may already or would more appropriately be housed in another OULS library. In addition, given the high student numbers, one or more duplicate copies of titles expected, or known, to be in heavy demand are purchased for the PFL. The acquisition of multiple copies is informed by circulation hotlists and reservation reports, and by staff and reader feedback. Electronic surrogates are increasingly used as a substitute for extensive numbers of multiple copies. Copies of items in heavy demand may also be added to the short loan collection.

3 Research collections
The main research collections for Philosophy are held in the Bodleian Library, although the strength of the Philosophy Faculty Library’s holdings satisfies many of the Faculty’s immediate needs. The Philosophy Faculty is committed to the continuing provision of a comprehensive philosophy collection on the central Bodleian site, with reasonable proximity to the manuscript and archive collections.

The Central Bodleian holds the principal library resources to support research in philosophy at the University. The library’s policy is to maintain the wide scope of existing holdings and their capacity to support academic activity in this field at the highest level. A very substantial proportion of relevant material, including virtually all UK publications and many American academic titles, is received by legal deposit, and the library aims to add non-UK material systematically by purchase and exchange. The Bodleian Library’s collections are of national and international importance, used by students and scholars from all over the world. The library’s acquisitions reflect this wider rôle.

3.1 Research Books
The Central Bodleian aims to provide access on open shelves to a copy of every classic philosophical text, and all books, journal issues and other material in philosophy that is in frequent use by Senior or Junior Members. In pursuit of this aim, and subject to spatial constraints, its policy is to provide the following material on open shelves:

- important works of reference; encyclopedias, dictionaries of philosophy, bibliographies etc.
- texts and commentaries; the philosophical works of all major philosophers, in the original language and English translation, together with the most widely-used commentaries on them. Whenever the space expands or contracts, the range of authors and texts covered under this heading will be reviewed by the
library staff in collaboration with the Philosophy Librarian and the Committee for Library Provision in Philosophy.

- material prescribed for study by examination regulations, unless it is held in the Radcliffe Science Library or Bodleian Law Library.
- runs of the major philosophy periodicals (currently from 1970), unless held in the Radcliffe Science Library or Bodleian Law Library. The starting date may be amended at the discretion of the Philosophy Librarian, and is to be regularly reviewed by the Committee for Library provision in Philosophy (next review 2007).
- material on the Philosophy Faculty core reading lists for undergraduate and taught graduate courses, unless it is held in the Radcliffe Science Library or Bodleian Law Library.
- material on individual tutors’ reading lists for undergraduate and taught graduate courses, unless it is held in the Radcliffe Science Library or Bodleian Law Library.

3.2 Monograph series and standing orders

To maintain continuity and the comprehensive scope of the collection, a considerable number of US and European series, both original texts and secondary works, including conference proceedings, are obtained via standing order. Standing orders are regularly reviewed.

3.3 Journals

Current OULS policy is to retain/acquire one print copy and one electronic copy of key journals for each subject. In some cases where the Bodleian’s legal deposit print copy does not support electronic access, subscriptions are generally taken at the Philosophy Faculty Library. In support of the Philosophy Faculty’s role in supporting teaching and research, key philosophy journals are duplicated in the collection. Legal deposit print titles are kept in perpetuity. Proposals for new subscriptions (normally print+electronic) are welcomed and carefully considered by the Philosophy Librarian and the Committee for Library Provision in Philosophy (which also reviews proposed journal cancellations).

3.4 Levels of provision

The Bodleian Library will always seek to secure a level of funding sufficient to permit the adequate discharge both of its national and of its university roles. In the event of a significant reduction in the real level of acquisition funding, the general principle is that material considered essential to the University’s current and anticipated research interests will be accorded the highest level of protection against the consequences of any fall in funding.

4 Special Collections

The Bodleian Library also holds an extensive collection of philosophical manuscripts and rare books. Oxford’s most important manuscript of classical philosophy is the Clarke Plato (MS. E. D. Clarke 39), the oldest surviving manuscript for about half of Plato’s dialogues, which was acquired by the University in 1809: it was written in Constantinople in A.D. 89. Ancient and medieval philosophy is well represented among the incunable collections. Of the ancients the Library has, for example, approaching 50 incunable editions of the works of Aristotle, and copies of nearly half the pre-1500 printed editions of the works of Plato. Medieval scholastic philosophy is represented by authors such as Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. In the field of early modern philosophy, the Library’s outstanding collection is that of John Locke (1632-1704). The manuscripts include journals, notebooks, correspondence and early drafts of An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, and the Bodleian now holds over 800
volumes owned by Locke. The 20thC. Modern Papers collections are especially rich, including manuscripts by Wittgenstein, Collingwood, J.L. Austin, Sir Isaiah Berlin, and Sir Alfred Ayer.

The Philosophy Faculty Library currently provides general access to two antiquarian collections: the Fowler collection, centring on early logic and the works of Francis Bacon, and the Hodgson collection (on loan from Corpus Christi College).

For further information, see: Philosophy holdings in OULS.

5 Subject coverage of selected purchased material

In addition to the legal deposit intake and general works, OULS will purchase non-deposited material in the following specific subjects and priorities.

5.1 Philosophy Faculty Library

Subject to budgetary constraints and availability, the Philosophy Faculty Library aims to purchase the following, in this ranking order:

- Items on the Philosophy Faculty core reading lists.
- Items on individual tutors’ reading lists.
- Additional copies of items which qualify under a) and b), or which loan statistics demonstrate are in heavy demand.
- Items requested by members of the Faculty of Philosophy, provided that these fall within the scope of the collection. Very specialist items are likely to be acquired for Central Bodleian only.
- Items requested by library users, provided that these fall within the scope of the collection. Very specialist items are likely to be acquired for Central Bodleian only.
- Newly-published books by well-known and respected philosophers, on topics central to the scope of the collection, and which are judged likely to be heavily-used. The Library aims to acquire these on publication, rather than delaying acquisition while waiting for reviews. This is of particular importance for UK publications (where the Bodleian’s copy is subject to the time constraints of the legal deposit process).
- Items well-reviewed in academic journals, provided that these fall within the scope of the collection. Very specialist items will be acquired for Central Bodleian only.

5.2 Bodleian Library

Philosophy is covered from ancient times to the present day. The library’s policy is to acquire the following:

- Scholarly editions of the works of all significant philosophical writers, in their original languages and in English if available.
- New philosophical writing which carries weight with scholarly opinion, selected on the same linguistic basis.
- Scholarly treatments of individual philosophers, of philosophical schools, of the history of philosophy and of methods of philosophical enquiry. Other areas of study include, but are not restricted to: aesthetics; epistemology; ethics; gender studies; metaphysics; philosophy of language; philosophy of religion; political and social philosophy; epistemology and metaphysics; ethics; aesthetics; political and social philosophy; and the philosophy of religion. Acquisition is extensive in English, complementing items received by legal deposit; rather more selective in Western European languages; in Eastern European languages selective and only where related to major indigenous
philosophers and the history of philosophy in the country concerned; and in non-European languages only in exceptional cases.

- Scholarly journals and monographic series, on the same basis.
- Bibliographies, specialist encyclopedias, biographical and other reference works, on the same linguistic basis.

6 Name of subject consultant(s) responsible for collections

Hilla Wait (Philosophy Librarian)

Date: 19/1/2007