



The  
Geological  
Society

*-serving science, profession & society*

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

CONTENTS	Page
Purpose of the policy	2
Role and aims of the Geological Society and its Library	2
The collections	2
The users	2-3
Complementary collections	3
Currency of collections	3
Historical role	3
Selection, scope and limitations	3-4
Subject coverage	4
Suggestions and recommendations from Fellows	4
Donations	4
Replacement policy	4
Binding, conservation and preservation	4-5
Retention, withdrawal and disposal	5
Inter-library loans	5
Disaster management	5
Addendum A: Priority subjects 2019-2023	6

## **Purpose of the policy**

The purpose of the Collection Development Policy is to provide an agreed framework for the future development of the Library's collections which will inform decision-making on both acquisition and disposal.

The Collection Development Policy will be reviewed every five years.

## **Role and aims of the Geological Society and its Library**

The Geological Society is a learned society and professional body. It was founded in 1807 and incorporated by Royal Charter in 1825. It is a registered charity whose mission is to serve science, profession and society.

The Library's primary role is to support Fellows with their continuing professional development, research and practice needs by providing the most relevant and up-to-date print and electronic information resources.

The Collection Development Policy incorporates the objectives from the Geological Society's strategy, the Library Strategy and the electronic resource acquisition policy.

## **The collections**

The Geological Society Library collects current post-graduate material in all the main fields of Earth sciences. It holds in Burlington House approximately 300,000 volumes going back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and subscribes to over 600 printed and electronic journals titles.

Its map collection is of national importance and comprises over 40,000 items dating from the beginning of geological mapping through to the present.

The Library also maintains the Society's archives (from its foundation in 1807), modern records and a number of special collections including:

- William Smith Collection (maps, sections and reports)
- Greenough Collection (correspondence, maps and notes)
- Murchison Collection (correspondence, field notebooks, diaries and illustrations)
- Moore Collection (correspondence, lecture notes and reports)
- MacCulloch Collection (drawings, prints and paintings)
- Agassiz Collection (watercolours and drawings)
- McKenzie Collection (working papers, notes and correspondence)

## **The users**

The Library's collections are used by a number of groups:

- Fellows
- Candidate Fellows
- Corporate Patrons
- Friends of the Geological Society
- Members of the Linnean Society, Royal Astronomical Society, Royal Society of Chemistry, Society of Antiquaries and Royal Academy of Arts
- Members of AAPG, PESGB, Geological Society of America, Institution of Materials Mining and Metallurgy, Institute of Geologists of Ireland and Geological Association of Canada
- Corporate organisations
- Members of the public

Users can access Library resources in person in Burlington House and remotely. 67% of the Library's hard copy stock is currently on open access.

The Library and archive catalogues are freely available online and are the main sources of information for the Geological Society's collection. Our serial holdings are available via SUNCAT and the Library intends to join other union catalogues in the future including COPAC and WorldCat.

Selected images from the Library's special collections are available via our print-on-demand Picture Library and the 'Plate Tectonics: The Dan McKenzie Archive' website.

A number of successful public engagement initiatives have been developed in recent years to increase the visibility of the collection e.g. Library events, Burlington House exhibitions, a print-on-demand Picture Library and loans to national and international institutions.

### **Complementary collections**

The Geological Society Library is a world-class library whose collections complement those of the British Library (for which it is a back-up library) and other national collections such as the Natural History Museum, the British Geological Survey, the Royal Geographical Society, the University of Oxford and University of Cambridge Earth Sciences Libraries.

The Library works collaboratively with its UK/London partners in developing its collections and retention practices with regard to those held in comparable organisations.

### **Currency of collections**

The Library primarily collects material supporting Earth sciences research and the values of the Geological Society. Items selected for purchase will be current research, authoritative texts and maps in a variety of formats. The balance between printed and digital acquisitions will be determined by the information needs of the Society's Fellows. Wherever possible the Library will move its printed journal subscriptions to online only.

### **Historical role**

The Geological Society Library is over 200 years old and has a collection of historical importance which includes works dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and one of the most comprehensive map collections in the world. However, the Library aims to maintain a working collection and is not a repository for all Earth sciences works.

### **Selection, scope and limitations**

The Library is committed to the maintenance and development of its printed collections and long-term provision of high quality online resources relevant to the changing needs of its users.

Although the Library will seek to supply information in a range of formats, it cannot collect comprehensively across all Earth sciences areas. The emphasis of the collection will be on English language material.

Decisions regarding acquisitions will be limited by:

- Budget
- Licensing and Copyright issues
- Usage and potential usage
- Space
- Balance of subject areas
- Ease of access online

The Library will normally acquire a single copy of a book, map and journal for lending or reference purposes. Duplicate copies of book titles may be purchased occasionally in both print and electronic formats.

The Library receives two copies of each book and one copy of each printed journal published or co-published by The Geological Society Publishing House (please note - this arrangement excludes journals published for other societies e.g. Scottish Journal of Geology)

New acquisitions are highlighted in the bi-monthly Library newsletters and the online Library catalogue.

### **Subject coverage**

The Library will actively collect books, periodicals and maps from priority areas (see Addendum A) which will be revised every five years.

The Society has never actively collected archive material but has occasionally acquired unique collections e.g. the Dan McKenzie archive and should only seek items on the development of geological thinking and theories.

### **Suggestions and recommendations from Fellows**

Advice, recommendations and feedback are welcomed from the Society's Fellows. This can be done directly to the Library staff - in person, by phone +44 (0)20 7432 0999 or email:

[library@geolsoc.org.uk](mailto:library@geolsoc.org.uk)

### **Donations**

The Library will consider donations of material particularly of recent publications and where they fall into the scope of the collection or are of historical importance.

Donated material will be carefully evaluated by the Library according to its likely benefit to the Society and the resources involved in acquiring, maintaining and preserving it.

The Library is not obliged to keep donated items especially if unsolicited and may dispose, sell or donate them to other libraries.

### **Replacement policy**

The Library will only seek to replace high usage items and authoritative textbooks which have been damaged or lost. A replacement might be the same title or a more recent publication covering the same subject area as appropriate.

### **Binding, conservation and preservation**

It is the Society's duty to look after its heritage and maintain its collections in the best possible conditions but more needs to be done in this area in terms of storage. The Library has an annual budget for archives, binding and conservation. In 2017, over 8,000 items were preserved during the Library audit.

Binding is a preventive measure and is essential to the conservation of the printed journal collection and other fragile items. Priority is given to current print journal titles, long journal runs and fragile items. In 2017, 59 journal titles required binding (around 147 volumes) as well as a small number of books.

Due to its national significance, digitisation of the map collection will be given priority. Since 2014, maps of historical importance such as the 1815 William Smith and the 1819 Greenough maps of England and Wales have been conserved and digitised.

Additionally, 3,500 African maps have been digitised for preservation purposes. However, their retrieval and display in the Library is currently not efficient and would benefit greatly from a more robust IT infrastructure.

The Geological Society has appointed a Head of Development whose opportunities (assessed in line with Society-wide priorities) could include fundraising for the digitisation of out copyright material in the collection and the retrospective cataloguing of the tracts collection.

### **Retention, withdrawal and disposal**

Items published by the Society, material of historical significance to the Earth sciences and the history of the Geological Society will be retained. These should be stored in Burlington House or off-site in a climate controlled environment if older than a hundred years old, fragile or rare.

The Library will try and keep as much hard copy stock as possible but cannot promise to retain items in perpetuity. When reviewing the stock, the following criteria should be considered: usage, currency, historical importance, subject coverage, space and accessibility.

A full survey of the Library's hard copy stock was completed in 2017 in order to assess the relevance and condition of the collection as well as its suitability for off-site storage and identify duplicate copies. More work is needed in this area to rationalise the collection and make it more accessible to users.

### **Inter-library loans**

Inter-library loans should be considered for out of print and/or out of scope material. Titles published in the last two years and within scope requested via the Library's inter-library loan service should be considered for purchase.

### **Disaster management**

The Geological Society Library has a regularly updated Disaster Management Plan. It is a priority user with Harwell Document Restoration Services who can be called on after damage from fire, water damage, explosion, sewage flood, mould damage contamination or infestation affecting its printed stock. Library staff have all attended in the last two years Harwell's training and a refresher workshop in salvage and disaster recovery.

Fabienne Michaud  
30 January 2019

## Addendum A

<b>Priority subjects 2019-2023</b>
chronostratigraphic methods (dating)
coal geology
contaminated land
dynamic topography
early earth
earthquakes
engineering geology
environmental geology
geoarchaeology
geobiology
geochemistry (inorganic)
geochemistry (organic)
geoconservation
geohazards
geoinformatics, AI and big data
geomorphology
geophysical methods: indirect (gravity, magnetics, etc)
geophysical methods: seismic
GIS
history of geology
hydrogeology
magmatic studies
marine studies and oceanography
metamorphic geology
mineral and ore deposits
mineralogy
palaeoclimatology
palaeogeography
palaeomagnetism
palaeontology and geobiology
petroleum geology
petrophysics and borehole research
planetary geology and meteoritics
quaternary geology
regional geology
remote sensing
rock and geomechanics
sedimentology
shallow geophysics
soils
stratigraphy
structural geology
tectonics and geodynamics
unconventional resources
volcanology