

Collection Management Policy

1 Introduction

The SPL is an independent, specialist library with charitable status. Its collection and enquiry services are used by a wide range of users, from academic researchers to the general public. It works to build, curate and sustain a unique and diverse resource of recognised excellence for the nation. It collects the poetry of Scotland, and provides access to this alongside poetry from all over the world for Scotland's readers.

Founded in 1984, the Scottish Poetry Library is the nation's library for collecting, curating and lending Scottish and international poetry. It provides information about Scottish poets, and poetry is showcased through publications and a programme of live readings at the Library and with partners across Scotland. At the heart of the activity and the Library sits the Collection. Beginning with 300 donated titles, the Collection is now proactively developed and has a small allocated budget to support it. The SPL aims to enable ease of access to unique resources that may not be easily available to the general public. It provides a reference and lending collection at its physical premises in Edinburgh and a subsidised postal lending service throughout Scotland and the UK.

Collection development and management can be seen as a broad array of actions, including the selection, evaluation, deselection, replacement, retention and preservation of library material.

This policy will serve as a statement of library aims and aspirations in this area for staff, users and other stakeholders of the Scottish Poetry Library. It will act as a guide to collection development; providing a framework which can be translated into a coherent and consistent development of the collection to support current and future research activity and enjoyment of poetry. Underpinning the development of the collection is the philosophy of the SPL in bringing people and poetry together.

2 Purpose and scope of policy

To provide staff and users with a clear statement of the strengths of the collection, current collecting strategy and the priorities which inform all acquisitions, whether by purchase, deposit or donation.

It should be noted that reference in this document to 'collections' encompasses all library resources, whether owned, donated, subscribed, physical or electronic. It excludes resources developed for the Learning Resources section of the webpage, podcasts and NPD Posters. The term 'publish' is used in the broadest sense¹ and is not confined to print, written forms, books or journals, but inclusive of other formats; eg online, audio, video, film, etc.

3 Principles

The SPL endeavours to collect all poetry publications, in any format, which feature Scottish authors, publishers, illustrators, and contributors. The definition of what constitutes Scottish is expansive, broad

¹ "to produce something that people want to read, watch or play and make it available to the public" (MacMillan Dictionary)

and flexible: if a contributor is a Scot by birth or heritage, lived substantively in Scotland, or writes on 'Scottish' themes, the publication is counted as Scottish.

The SPL collects with a view to creating a resource that reflects Scottish concerns in an international context, therefore the collection is not exclusively 'Scottish.'

The SPL aims for the collections to be open, diverse and accessible. To this end different formats are included such as audio visual and braille. It seeks to be representative of current and future users and therefore include works from poets from different countries, backgrounds, ethnicity and gender.

The SPL works to maintain a balance between ease of access and preservation. The SPL collection policy aims to complement other collections such as the National Library of Scotland and the Poetry Library in London, and to provide a unique and easily accessible resource alongside these.

The SPL aims to build on existing strengths, within resources available, while identifying opportunities for new areas providing a USP that broadly fit within the principles and goals.

4 Collection Development goals

To comprehensively collect, preserve and showcase Scottish Poetry and make it easily accessible.

To develop discrete collections of interest, that may not be comprehensively represented in other collections.

To acquire resources that: inspire reading and creativity; support wellbeing, expression and identity; provide resources and readings for events and occasions; support enquiry and research work.

5 Audience and users

The collection is developed to meet the needs of the following groups. It seeks to be inclusive and representative of those with protected characteristics.

- Researchers (Scottish, UK and overseas)
- Poets and writers
- Students
- Members of the public; adult and children
- Outreach and education users
- SPL staff enquiry and project work

6 Collection profile

The SPL holds a substantial collection of primarily 20th and 21st century Scottish poetry, consisting of a variety of formats: books, pamphlets, periodicals, cuttings, audio-visual. It collects material in the indigenous languages of Scotland: English, Scots, Gaelic and BSL², as well as many different regional dialects. The SPL collects other UK and world poetry to provide a suitable international context for the Scottish collection, and meet the remit of being the Scottish Poetry Library.

6.1 General Collections *(See appendix A Section 1 and 2 for more details about the collections)*

² "Scotland's main language by custom and usage is English, with Gaelic, Scots, British Sign Language and minority languages making up the country's other main language groups." www.gov.scot/policies/languages accessed 09/07/19

The general collection consists of reference and lending material. A format neutral approach is taken, therefore it includes books, pamphlets, audio, audio-visual, digital and braille. It consists of the following.

- Scottish poetry
- UK and world contemporary poetry
- Anthologies in English
- Shortlisted and prize-winning poetry
- Literary criticism and practice
- Poetry in translation
- Shortlisted and prize-winning poetry
- Canonical poetry in English
- Children's Collection
- Folios
- World Poetry
- Periodicals
- AV Materials

6.2 Archive and Special Collections *(See appendix A Section 3 for more detail about each collection)*

The SPL maintains a Special Collection with a selection of rarer Scottish material, alongside an archive of the poet Edwin Morgan's publications. SPL will aim to continue to develop a strength in concrete, visual poetry and artists' books, thus expanding the range and nature of the collection. It holds an extensive collection of material by Ian Hamilton Finlay and Thomas A Clark. These and other discrete collections are listed below:

- Special Collection
- SPL Archive
- Newspaper and Magazine Cuttings Collection *(See appendix B for collection criteria)*
- The Edwin Morgan Archive
- The Ian Hamilton Finlay collection
- Special Collections books, primarily dating pre 1901
- The Thomas A Clark collection
- Concrete Poetry, this includes posters, art works, etc
- Small press and artists' books
- AV materials

6.3 E-Books

The National Poetry Library provides comprehensive, free, public access to poetry e-books³. Therefore this is a low priority for development for SPL.

7 Purchasing and acquisition principles

7.1 General Collection: Books and pamphlets

The Library aims to acquire:

- Two copies (where funds allow) of every poetry book and pamphlet published with a Scottish contributor or by a Scottish publisher

³ https://www.nationalpoetrylibrary.org.uk/node/233?utm_source=cat [accessed 19/08/19]

- All poetry in Scottish Gaelic, Scots or BSL as one of the languages
- Poetry collections nominated for a UK Poetry Prize
- Major poetry anthologies published in English
- Representative poetry from across the UK
- Representative poetry from across the world when published in parallel translation in English, Scottish Gaelic or Scots.
- Literary, academic and other non-fiction texts that provide interest, support enquiry work and provide a wider context for the encouragement and support of using and writing poetry.
- Biographical and literary criticism

7.2 Periodicals

The Library aims to acquire all Scottish poetry periodicals, and some Scottish literature or arts periodicals that contain substantial poetry criticism. The Library will also collect a representative selection of titles from the UK and Ireland and some international titles. Individual issues may be acquired where there is substantial content of interest to add to the lending book collection. Titles will be reviewed for content and usage, to ensure they provide VFM. To preserve access to back files these will be collected as print copies while available.

7.3 Children's Collection

To purchase a broad representation of current and engaging poetry for children and families. This includes picture books.

7.4 AV Material

SPL purchases AV material in current formats. This increases the accessibility of the collection, and enables poetry to be available in all forms.

7.5 Archive and Special Collections

The following areas are actively being developed, by purchase of new material, where budget allows, and donation:

- SPL Archive
- Newspaper and Magazine Cuttings Collection
- Edwin Morgan Archive
- The Thomas A Clark collection
- Concrete Poetry
- Small press and artists' books
- AV materials

Other collections in this area are added to primarily by donation.

7.6 Requests and suggestions

Where budget resource allows the Library aims to be responsive to requests from users and borrowers to purchase specific titles, prioritising those that fit within the Collections remit.

7.7 Deposits, donations, gift and bequests

Publishers and poets are encouraged to voluntarily deposit their newly published poetry items. Other donations are accepted on a case by case basis. Donations are accepted on the understanding that the

items belong to the Library and maybe subject to future withdrawal. Donations sent without prior agreement may not be accepted into stock and may be disposed of through the means listed in 8.4 Generally the Library is unable to accept manuscripts or loose-leaf collections.

Assessment criteria for donations typically includes:

- Format
- Ability to provide appropriate space to house them
- Potential of items to enhance the existing collections and support future research
- Potential costs of cataloguing, conserving and storing the items
- Physical condition of items

8 Retention, withdrawal and disposal

8.1 Retention

Retention decisions are subject to the following considerations: relevance to the collection, uniqueness, space, storage and conservation or preservation capabilities. The SPL has no conservation department or climate controlled storage facilities. Therefore it may not always be appropriate or ethical to retain some objects of importance if they can be better cared for elsewhere.

8.2 Withdrawal

Items in the lending and reference collections should reflect a dynamic library collection. Pragmatically the Library has a fixed amount of shelf space. As such items in the collection may be subject to withdrawal.

Withdrawal criteria includes, but is not limited to: relevance, usage, electronic availability, provenance, age, edition, duplication, illegal content or physical condition.

8.4 Disposal

Deaccessioned items will be disposed of responsibly and include the following: alternative repository, sale⁴ (to the public or through agency) or recycling.

The SPL will follow SCURL's *Last Scottish Copy Policy February 2019*. (<https://scurl.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/SCURLLastScottishCopy2019.pdf>)

9 Cataloguing

All items added to the general collections have a record created on the LMS (Koha). It is recognised there are items in the Archive store that do not have a catalogue record. A local subject index is used to provide consistency in terminology. See Appendix D for Standardised subject terms used to identify groups of titles.

10 Preservation

The Library endeavours to comply with best practice as regards the preservation of materials. However, the SPL is not able to provide climate controlled conditions or carry out conservation work. This is balanced with cost, uniqueness of the item and facilities available.

⁴ Any income will be re-invested back into Collection Development.

Where practical, material is stored in archival quality boxes. Archival paper is used to mark items in the special collections. Decisions for binding, repair, replacement are made based on cost, value and uniqueness of item.

11 Access

The catalogued collection can be searched via the online catalogue. The Scottish Poetry Library is a publically accessible building in Edinburgh. There is no charge for consulting, using or borrowing from the collection. The collection is available for reading, learning, research, browsing, enjoying and, where appropriate, for outreach work. Use of some Special Collections / Archive material may be restricted, require prior request to enable retrieval, require supervision during use or proof of research validity (ie letter from University).

12 Loan

The collection includes many lending copies of books and pamphlets. Membership of the Library is required to borrow books; there is no charge for this. Items are issued for one month, with an option to renew once. Postal loans are also available throughout the UK. Items may be changed to a Reference status depending on age, availability and condition.

13 Financial Management

Funding for collection development and maintained is allocated through the SPL Operational Budget. The SPL Board confirms the proposed allocation as part of the annual budget setting. Fundraising or project bids may be considered and appropriate for Collection Development or the acquisition of significant collections/objects.

14 Monitoring, updating and review of policy

The Head Librarian is responsible for the monitoring and updating of this policy, with sign-off from The Board. This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum, to ensure it reflects the needs of the SPL and potential constraints or opportunities of the resource budget allocation.

To enable Collections of the Scottish Poetry Library to grow and develop to reflect the national poetry scene, and to be responsive to future resource availability it is essential that the policy is flexible enough to guide the future, balanced with providing clear direction and guidance. According to GE Gorman “once formulated, a policy must *never* be regarded as fixed for eternity” (Clayton, P. (2001) *Managing Information Resources in Libraries: Collection Management in Theory and Practice*. London: Library Association.)

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