UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE | Libraries and Archives

Modern Content Strategy



Purpose

The mission of the University of Cambridge is to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence. Its core values are: -

- Freedom of thought and expression
- Freedom from discrimination

The University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives Modern Content Strategy guides and informs the management of content[1], ensuring content and associated services are developed and managed to respond to changes in the University and the sector, and to meet evolving user requirements. It supports the wider Libraries and Archives' strategic goals and establishes how we: -

- Provide access to the content required for teaching and research at the University
- Develop, manage and share collections of ongoing cultural value that underpin the University's research
- Promote the creation of new thinking and new knowledge
- Catalyse scholarly communications and contributes to the evolution of academic publishing

Items which are part of Special Collections due to their date of publication, value, provenance, scarcity, or local relevance are governed by separate policies and are not within the scope of this Content Strategy.

The University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives seek to meet the information needs of our communities in partnership with the College Libraries and other unaffiliated libraries within the University.

Context

In an evolving landscape there are significant University, national and international developments and opportunities which have an impact on the management of library content: -

1. The impact of the Digital Shift reflecting the increasing volume of digital collections within research libraries, whether as born-digital archives, digitised content, data, research outputs contained within repositories, or electronic books and journals
2. The transition to Open Research, including the development of transitional and next generation publisher agreements, and Open Access (OA) monograph publishing approaches
3. The need to support a diverse and evolving range of research requirements within the University
4. Student requirements for, and expectations of, seamless online discovery, and access to, library content in print and digital
5. The University's commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
6. Our commitment to develop the library estate to transform our physical and digital environments as compelling destinations which enable our communities to thrive and fulfil their learning and research potential
7. The growth of collaborative national and international library networks, initiatives and services
8. The University's goal for Carbon Zero and increased biodiversity
9. Our need to be agile in our collection development work to respond to local/national/international circumstances that might impact the Libraries and Archives' ability to purchase or provide content

Financial sustainability underpins our collection development activities. Funding for content is a significant part of the whole of the University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives' operating budgets. We are stewarding the University's resources to support its core communities of research and of teaching and learning. We also support wider communities including our staff, alumni, and the communities within Cambridge and beyond in recognition of our role as a national research library.

[1] 'Content' describes physical and digital collections which support teaching, learning and research for all users of the libraries. Digital collections include a wide range of e-books, e-journals, e-resources (online databases), and parts of our web archives, with the physical collections comprising modern books and journals located in the University Library, the Faculty and Departmental Libraries and the Library Storage Facility.

Vision

We deliver prompt and effective access to content required for teaching, learning and research, maximising access to online and open content. We work collaboratively with academics, researchers, students, other groups of users, and others within the sector to provide inclusive collections, services and spaces focussed on the user. We respond to new resource formats, evolving publishing agreements and the impact of digital transformation to make the best use of available funding, technology, space and staff to provide access to content for all library users at point of need.

The Content Strategy ensures a world-class digital library to equal the physical collections built over 600 years, giving researchers and students the data, information, collections and support they need to succeed. It accelerates the open sharing of Cambridge research and collections by building new services and systems which maximise their reach, impact, use and re-use for our communities in all their diversity locally and globally

Principles & Strategy

These principles inform University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives' decisions, policies and procedures in all content development activity to ensure our collections and services meet evolving user needs and are informed by the context, developments and opportunities within the University and in the wider sector. Aligned with the principles are the strategies we have adopted to deliver on our vision and goals.

The Content Strategy is a parent document that governs a series of content policies that sit under the umbrella of the main strategy. Where policies already exist, it formalises governance and ownership of those documents, and where policies do not yet exist or are under development, it provides a framework for ensuring that the policy aligns with our strategic approach.

In some areas there may be overlap with other strategies, for example our web archiving activities and the Digital Preservation Strategy. The Content Strategy is intended to complement and support these strategies.

#	Principle	Strategy
1	**Teaching, learning & research** – we develop our collections to ensure they align with University teaching, learning, and research needs	The University of Cambridge Libraries and Archives provide and develop collections and services which support research-led curricula and evolving teaching, learning and research requirements. We work to provide our students with the materials they need to enhance their academic success and achieve their learning outcomes. We enable research and learning to reach their full potential by expanding the breadth and depth of materials underpinning Cambridge's research excellence, especially electronic and data-rich resources.
2	**User focussed** – we collaborate with our user communities and use feedback to help us develop our collections and services	The Libraries and Archives steward their collections in conversation with their users, acting on reading lists to provide teaching and learning material and growing our collections to contribute to the development of research-led curricula. We facilitate access to required material whether through acquisition or via routes such as document delivery. Academic liaison informs our purchasing decisions, ensuring we meet academic needs.

3	**Format** – we provide content in the most appropriate format for the purposes of improved accessibility and availability	To best meet the needs of all users wherever they are located, the Libraries and Archives select digital content where this can be effectively provided through content acquisition, subscription, Open Access or digitisation. We recognise the importance of print collections where content is only available in print or where the print format best fits the content in question, and to support readers with disabilities. We provide accessible digital alternatives for students to content held in the Libraries and Archives through the Alternate Formats Service.
4	**Open** – we are committed to the principles of open access publishing and open research, and incorporate open content into our collections	We are committed to the advancement and promotion of open research by helping users discover open content in our collections and supporting Open Access publishing efforts. Open content enhances and complements traditional resources that are purchased/owned, leased, or created by the library.
5	**Diverse & inclusive** – we are committed to developing diverse and inclusive collections that reflect the richness of thought, ideas and experience from across our user communities	The Libraries and Archives actively seek to build a collection that represents a wide range of voices, perspectives, identities, and experiences, ensuring that all users within our communities feel seen and included through the materials available to them. We acquire content by and about a wide array of people and cultures to ensure access to a variety of ideas, information, stories, and experiences.
6	**Access** – we invest in our collections and digital services to make collections accessible, secure, and discoverable for current and future generations	We take advantage of innovations in search and discovery tools to improve access to our collections, building on the foundations of metadata creation and curation. We will develop new services that improve access to the information we hold to enable new thinking and the creation of new knowledge.
7	**Audiences** – we seek out opportunities where our content can add meaningful value to communities beyond the Libraries and Archives, particularly reaching new and contemporary audiences	We promote our collections and collecting activities via a range of media to share the material we hold, and we seek further ways to highlight our material to as broad an audience as possible. We will widen access to our digital and physical resources, acknowledging that equity of access to our collections and content requires different approaches for different people.
8	**Legal Deposit** – we re-affirm our commitment to ensuring that the UK and ROI's published output, and thereby its intellectual record and future published heritage, is collected systematically, to preserve the material	We are engaged in developing new approaches that improve collecting practices, access to and discovery of Legal Deposit in diverse formats. The Libraries and Archives broaden access to the collections, removing barriers as far as possible.

	for the use of future generations and ensure they are discoverable and accessible for all our communities	We advocate for the best possible services in partnership with the national network of Legal Deposit Libraries and publishers.
9	**Research library** – as a National Research Library and as a research library of international importance, we develop our existing collection strengths and seek to collect in complementary areas to maintain the depth and richness of our collections	The Libraries and Archives build on their existing collection strengths in order to maintain their national or international importance. We act on developments in new areas of research or publishing to start building new collection strengths that our users will benefit from now and far into the future. Measures will be taken to preserve content of all formats which are required for the long term. Items may be transferred in from elsewhere through collaborative collection management schemes or received as donations. We manage the complete lifecycle of content including disposal where this is appropriate.
10	**Collaborate** – we engage in cooperative decision-making with other libraries and within library consortia	The Libraries and Archives participate in national and international networks, initiatives and services to provide effective discovery of and access to collections held in Cambridge and elsewhere. Building on our status as a Legal Deposit Library and a National Research Library we partner with our peers to drive innovation in the scholarly communications ecosystem.

Statement on Collecting Policy

Cambridge University Libraries and Archives acquire material to support teaching, learning and research at the University and beyond. The Libraries and Archives have a responsibility to facilitate access to expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity. To this end, we acquire, preserve and make available the widest variety of materials, reflecting the plurality and diversity of society. We do not exclude or suppress material because of the ideas or opinions expressed within the content. The presence of any material within our collections does not imply an endorsement of the ideas or opinions expressed within the content.

We adhere to the Research Libraries UK (RLUK) statement on intellectual freedom, its endorsement to the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom, and share its ambition to "acquire, organise and disseminate information freely and oppose any form of censorship".

Consistent with this is our role as a Legal Deposit library. Legal Deposit is inclusive in its aim and collects comprehensively thus avoiding censorship. It is not concerned with value judgement, so it does not prejudice the future opportunities for study and research.

Review term

This strategy will be reviewed in 2027 and subsequently every three years.