

SOAS Library Electronic Resources Policy

Document type:	Policy		
Document number:	LIB-090	Version	02
Department:	SOAS Library		
Approved by:	Chief Librarian		
Date approved:	01/11/2024	Review Date	01/11/2027
Publication:	SOAS website		
Related Documents:			
<i>Note: All policies must be read in conjunction with all other SOAS policy, procedure and guidance documents. Printed copies of policies may not be the most up to date, therefore please refer to the policy pages on the SOAS external website or intranet for the latest version.</i>			

1. Introduction / Purpose

The Library will make resources available in electronic format wherever it is appropriate to do so, taking into account teaching and research needs, cost effectiveness, technical requirements, user authentication and licensing and preservation issues.

2. Purchasing

The Library seeks to purchase electronic resources within nationally negotiated agreements eg. JISC, CHEST, LUPC and by means of purchasing consortia.

2.1. Databases

- The Library will purchase research tools (eg. bibliographies and reference works) to support the teaching and research needs of the University.
- Full text and other databases and multimedia formats (eg. sound image and data) will be purchased to support the teaching and research needs of the University.
- Databases made available free of charge for the UK Higher Education Community will be made available where they support the teaching and research needs of the University.

2.2. Electronic Journals

The Library follows an “electronic first” policy for the purchase of new journals.

2.3. New Journals

New titles may be purchased in print and electronic format where a core title specifically relates to African, Asian or Middle Eastern studies.

New subscription titles will be acquired in e-format only where a title is required to support the teaching needs of the University but does not specifically further the Library’s National Research mandate.

2.4. Backfiles

Backfiles of e-journals will be purchased when the title is considered essential for the teaching and research needs of the University and when the backfile is available via an approved vendor on a suitable basis.

2.5. Packages and Big Deals

E-journal packages will be purchased when they offer better value for money than purchasing single titles.

2.6. E-books

- Electronic versions of books will be purchased from a single vendor in line with procurement procedures and to assist users with learning a single interface.
- Perpetual or one-off purchases will be preferred to models involving recurring costs.
- Purchased e-books will be added to the library catalogue.

3. Cancellation

Usage of e-resources will be monitored and items with low usage may be cancelled. Price increases and changes of supplier or content may also result in cancellation.

3.1. Cancellation of print subscriptions

Cancellation of print subscriptions will be considered when ownership of the electronic version or perpetual access can be guaranteed and when the e-version does not omit text or images found in the print format.

Print subscriptions will be retained where there is a strong demand for browsing of current information. Titles where format or image quality are important may also be retained in print. Our responsibility as a National Research Library will influence cancellation decisions.

4. Access to E-resources

- Where possible access will be negotiated to allow walk-in access for all SOAS Library members and off-campus access for all SOAS students and staff.
- SOAS Library users must agree to abide by the terms of use of the resources made available to them.
- Computers will be made available to provide access to e-resources for all users in the Library. Printing may not be supported for external users.
- The Library will liaise with SOAS I&T Department to provide access for SOAS students and staff in as user-friendly a way as possible, adopting new technologies as appropriate.
- All databases will be listed on the Library website with new resources added to the resource discovery tools and catalogued as required.

5. Selection Criteria

- The Library purchases electronic resources to support the teaching and research needs of the University. Content should be relevant to more than just a few users.
- Overlap with existing subscriptions should be kept to a minimum. Continuation of overlapping resources needs to be justified via the e-resources purchasing panel review process.
- There will be minimal requirement for special set up or software installation. The resources should be web based products. Electronic resources can be readily supported by library staff without a high level of subject knowledge.
- Site wide licences are preferred with no restrictions on the number of concurrent users.
- Single sign-on (Shibboleth and/or Ezproxy) are the preferred methods of user authentication.
- The library expects the vendor to supply designated standard usage statistics on request and on regular basis.
- Free trials of proposed new resources should be coordinated by the Content & Discovery Team.