

University of York

Department of Psychology Information Resources and Access Policy 1999/2000 [Revised November 1999]

Purpose

High quality information resources are essential to maximise learning, teaching and research activities. The University of York Library has an *Information resources and access policy* which specifies the general policy for the management of library collections and for access to materials held elsewhere, whether printed or electronic. This document outlines the ways in which the Department of Psychology uses and provides library resources which cater for the diverse needs of students, staff and researchers.

Users and use

The main categories of user within the Department of Psychology are undergraduates, postgraduates (research) and postdoctoral and academic staff.

Undergraduates and academic staff rely upon books within the Library to support lecture courses, tutorials and laboratory work. Undergraduates also make use of periodicals, abstracting services and the Internet for essay exams, projects and communication skills exercises.

The main requirements for research are books, periodicals, inter-library loans, abstracting services and the Internet.

Subject coverage of interest to the Department

In both teaching and research there is a clear need to provide access to sources of information in all areas of Psychology in addition to the specialised requirements of specific degree courses or research groups.

At undergraduate level the Department offers a degree in Psychology which is served by books and periodicals in the Psychology section of the Library. In addition undergraduates may be expected to use books and periodicals located in the Mathematics, Medicine, Computer Science and Biology sections.

The Department's research interests fall into the following categories: Behavioural Neuroscience, Adult Cognition & Neuropsychology, Cognitive Development & Developmental Neuropsychology, Human-Computer Interaction & Computer-Based Learning, Health, Personality & Social Psychology, and Perception & Action

The periodicals and books funded by the Psychology allocation from the Library budget provide an important part of the infrastructure for such research; individual researchers will also access periodicals and books funded by other Departments' budgets and general science periodicals funded from the top-sliced budget.

Location of collections used

J.B. Morrell Library

Most resources used by members of the Department of Psychology are held within the J.B. Morrell Library, in particular science books and periodicals.

York District Hospital Library

York District Hospital Library is open to staff and students of the University and supplements the J.B. Morrell Library's collections, especially for medical journals.

British Library Document Supply Centre, Boston Spa

Staff, researchers and students visit the BLDSO and other libraries in connection with special projects and research. The Library runs a fortnightly minibus service to BLDSO for staff and research students, though undergraduates may take up unfilled places.

RIDING & UK Libraries Plus

Students and staff may use for reference any University Library that is part of the UK Libraries Plus scheme. Part-time, distance learners and placement students may become borrowing members of other libraries in this scheme if they fulfill certain criteria. In addition the RIDING scheme for researchers in Yorkshire & Humberside gives access to the libraries of the consortia members and allows them to apply to become external borrowing members of these institutions.

Funding

Books and periodicals are purchased from the annual departmental allocation from the Library budget. The allocation is determined by a formula which takes into account teaching (number of students), research (number of staff and research students), cost of materials and volume (amount of books and periodicals published in a subject). Many factors influence the price of periodicals and the Library estimates the percentage increase each year and factors this into the funding formula. As this rise is generally significantly higher than the general rate of inflation the balance of spending on books and periodicals is monitored. A monthly financial report is sent to the Departmental Representative.

Bids may also be made to the Special Purchases Fund which is available for interdisciplinary resources or those which are too expensive to be purchased from the departmental allocation. A case indicating why the purchase is important must be made with the support of the Psychology Librarian.

Bibliographic publications in printed or electronic form, such as PsycLIT and BIDS-ISI, are purchased from non-subject funds.

Liaison and consultation

The Departmental Library Representative and the Psychology Librarian provide the main contact between the Department and the Library. They act on a day to day basis to ensure that the Library needs of staff and students are met. Psychology also has a Departmental Library Committee (DLC) made up of two academic staff, a research student, and 3 undergraduates, one from each year of study, and the Psychology Librarian. It meets once a term and discusses provision of course material, the balance of spending between books and journals, and any other library related matters.

All courses are scrutinised by the Department's Teaching Committee and the course reading lists are then passed directly to the Psychology Librarian for checking. Where new courses are notified to the University's Teaching Committee, the Library is invited to comment on the costs of new material needed.

Collection development

Selection responsibilities

The Board of Studies in Psychology has ultimate responsibility for the selection of materials to be held and makes decisions on the basis of recommendations. Most of this responsibility is devolved on the DLC and from there to the Departmental Library Representative who receives suggestions for book purchases from members of academic staff and students. The Psychology Librarian also receives suggestions from students which are passed to the Library Representative for consideration.

The DLC advises the Board of Studies on the relative spending on books and periodicals and this is implemented by the Library Representative and the Psychology Librarian. As and when necessary the DLC surveys the use of periodicals via a ballot so that decisions can be made about discontinuing current subscriptions or initiating new ones. In June 1999 a review of journal holdings was held, which balloted all academic staff. The result was examined in consultation with the DLC for the final subscription decision. The potential of moving to increased e-journal access is of particular interest to the department.

Priorities for teaching and research needs

The current distribution of spending is approximately 78% of the budget on periodicals and 22% on books. The DLC monitors the balance between spending on teaching and research. Teaching needs are met through purchase of all items on reading lists and through suggestions from staff and students. The Department has a 5* research rating and the aim is to maintain that status. Research needs are addressed individually as requests for purchase are made to the Library. As a 5* department all areas are of international standard and have equal priority within the department.

General policy for book recommendations

The majority of recommendations for book purchases are made by members of academic staff to the Library Representative who passes them onto the Psychology Librarian. Recommendations are appraised in the context of their value within the departmental priorities, and in consultation with the Library Representative as necessary.

Practice for handling reading lists

Reading lists for all the Psychology modules to run in the next term are received by the Reserve collection staff by Week 7 of the term preceding that in which the course is to be taught. They are checked by the Library for items not in stock, and books are purchased and articles obtained through ILL as necessary.

Policy on multiple copies

The number of copies ordered depends on an assessment by the Psychology Librarian and the lecturer, taking into account factors such as student numbers, past use of previous editions, importance to the course, and amount of time available to the students for reading them. Extra copies of books already in stock are bought in response to heavy usage. Student members of the Departmental Library Committee aid in the identification of those texts which should be increased in number, or those subject areas requiring significant enhancement.

Policy on reviewing periodicals

Periodical subscriptions are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to meet the teaching and research needs of the Department. If a substantial change in the subscriptions taken is required a ballot is made of all staff to identify titles for cancellation and new subscriptions. Availability of titles in electronic format is also monitored. Some back issues of core journals are purchased, but this is only done at the end of the financial year when funds permit.

Policy on access to electronic information resources

The Library subscribes to a wide range of electronic information resources which are available on both the Department Macintosh and University PC networks. The University Library has an electronic services development fund to which bids for networked resources can be made. Other resources may be funded from the Department's library budget. Additional resources are provided on standalone PCs in the J.B. Morrell Library where they cannot be networked for technical or cost reasons.

A comprehensive list of full text journals available to York users is provided on LibWeb and there are also subject lists to improve access. The British Psychological Society and the American Psychological Society are among several publishers of electronic journals to which the Library has arranged access. The Department continues to monitor the possibility of moving to electronic only access for some journals. There is also a collection of links to useful Internet resources.

In addition, the Department has been closely involved in the use of the RALPHY electronic reserve pilot programme which makes electronic copies of reading list materials available on the Web. Several courses make a use of this service.

Network access to major bibliographic databases such as BIDS-ISI (and Web of Science) and PsycLIT for staff and students is important in providing information on the content of periodicals not held by the Library.

Guides to all electronic services are available in print from the J.B. Morrell Library and on LibWeb and training is provided to staff and students (see below).

York has the CTI Centre for Psychology. This keeps libraries of experiments and CAL packages, and provides general advice about software used by psychologists.

Policy on use of inter-library loans

An inter-library loans service is available to all staff and students of the University. The majority of ILLs are obtained from the British Library Document Supply Centre at Boston Spa. There is a limit of 30 free requests for each individual staff member and research student and 10 free requests for undergraduate students. The use made of inter-library loans by Psychology is monitored by the Psychology Librarian. Undergraduate student requests for ILL have to be countersigned by a member of teaching staff.

Policy on the use of the short loan Reserve Collection

Copies of books in heavy demand may be put in the Reserve Collection for the duration of a course. The policy for putting books in the Reserve Collection is based on past use and identification of key texts by lecturers and the Psychology Librarian.

Policy on the use of the Photocopy Collection

Much use is made of the Library's Photocopy Collection to improve student access to teaching materials. Where articles are on reading lists, they may be available in journals in the Library, or as photocopies or as both, depending on the numbers of students and the priority given to the articles. Students are made aware of all these possibilities during their induction. Reading lists are marked by lecturers to show which articles are in the Photocopy Collection and these are also identified on the Library Catalogue. Due to the new copyright laws articles previously supplied on occasion from staff must be ordered from ILL specifically for the Photocopy Collection.

Collection management

Text book recommendations are divided into four categories; the most strongly recommended books will be held in the Reserve Collection for the duration of the courses with which they are associated. As a general rule there should be eight copies of the two or three most important books for each module: 1 ordinary loan copy, 5 week loan copies, and 2 held in the Reserve collection.

Some old and closed periodicals runs have been relegated to the North Room. Other titles may be similarly dealt with to keep the collection current. The Psychology book section is kept under review and multiple copies of older texts which have not been borrowed for 5 years may be removed to the North Room. All items in the North Room are freely available to staff and students if required.

When new editions of texts are purchased a decision is made whether to withdraw copies of earlier editions. This is done on the judgment of the Psychology Librarian, with advice as necessary from the relevant member of staff.

Support and training

The Psychology Librarian provides training in the use of the Library to all undergraduates. This includes an introductory tour in week 0 of Year 1 and a workbook on *Researching and evaluating information sources* (part of the ILIAD course). Towards the end of Year 2, students about to start their literature surveys attend an information skills seminar. This consists of a seminar followed by demonstrations and practical guidance on best practice searching techniques applicable to relevant information sources. Supporting documentation is also provided to guide the students.

New research students and staff are invited to visit the Library for an individual tour and information skills sessions are also offered. The Psychology Librarian brings to the attention of the Department new services and resources as they emerge and can provide training on their use on an on-going basis.

There is a comprehensive and extensive collection of library guides available at the Enquiry Desk and on LibWeb.

Implementation

The original version of this policy was approved by the Department of Psychology Board of Studies on 26 June 1997.