

English literature

Collecting policy

User profile

This collection statement covers provision for English Literature within the School of Languages and Literature.

The collections serve all staff and students studying English literature within DEL, and they are also used by students studying English education; and film, theatre and television as well as pre-sessional language students.

Related and interdisciplinary areas include:

- aesthetics, shared with Philosophy

- American studies, shared with History

Current holdings

Most materials fall into the 800 section of the Dewey classification, especially 800 (Criticism and theory), 810 (American literature) and 820 (English Literature). Related material on film, theatre and television is located at 790.

For more detail see the English literature [guide](#).

Books

The University Library's collections in the field include primary texts and supporting criticism to support all areas taught at undergraduate and postgraduate level. Research-level monographs are also purchased to support ongoing activity, especially relating to the research centres mentioned above.

The collection now includes a large number of e-books.

The Department also benefits from a small range of literature reference works provided through the Gale Virtual Reference Library platform as well as other aggregated reference collections such as Credo Reference and Oxford Reference Online, and specific e-book titles available from Wiley-Blackwell, such as:

- The encyclopedia of the gothic
- The encyclopedia of English Renaissance Literature
- The encyclopedia of literary and cultural theory
- The encyclopedia of Romantic literature
- The encyclopedia of the novel
- The encyclopedia of twentieth-century fiction
- The encyclopedia of British literature: 1660-1789

Bibliographic

The key bibliographic database is the MLA (Modern Language Association of America) bibliography. The Library subscribes to the online Iter gateway to the Middle Ages & Renaissance to support modules and research relating to the medieval and early modern period. The Library also subscribes to the .

The Library's General fund is used to purchase other relevant indexes, such as:

ISI Web of Knowledge), ; the (via
and .

The Location Register of 20th-century English literary manuscripts and letters and its supplements have been compiled by a research project at Reading University Library.

Film Indexes Online supports related film studies.

Related Special Collections

Beckett Collection

The world's largest collection of resources relating to the writer Samuel Beckett, it contains manuscript items, typescript drafts, notebooks, correspondence, stage files related to performances of Samuel Beckett's plays, editions of his work and critical texts in over 20 languages, artists' illustrated books, newspaper cuttings, audiovisual material, photographs and ephemera.

Children's Collection

Over 6,000 volumes of predominantly English, nineteenth-century children's literature.

Finzi Book Room Collection

About 6,000 printed volumes, the literature collection of the composer Gerald Finzi (1901-1956), predominantly English poetry, especially of his lifetime.

Mark Longman Library

A collection of around 4,000 books, pamphlets and journals on subjects related to the

Other relevant special collections

Papers of: Brian Aldis, Gwendoline Courtney, Pearl Craigie, Dorothy Edwards, Edwin John

Multiple copies of accompanying critical works will normally be purchased for seminar groups of over ten students, though where possible, the preference is now to acquire e-books rather than multiple print copies of criticism. There is a wide range of literary texts and critical material to support undergraduates writing independent extended essays and dissertations. Students sometimes consult primary sources (archives / rare books), especially at dissertation level.

To support teaching in new modules and research, the Department will be developing its collection of primary texts and criticism in modern and contemporary writing (especially poetry) and post-colonial literature.

Alternative access

Other information resources in the University

The Department has an extensive collection of some 2,000 videos and supplementary reading in the Geoffrey Matthews Collection. The Centre for Ephemera Studies collection and other collections in the Department of Typography and Graphic Communication hold other resources for the study of book production.

Use of other libraries

Other libraries used include: BBC Written Archives Centre; College and University Libraries in Oxford and Cambridge; British Film Institute (to which Reading University Library has an institutional subscription); the British Library; the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington; the Huntington Library, California; the London Library; The National Archives, Kew; and the National Art Library (for children's literature).

The Department also makes medium to high use of the Inter-Library Loans service.

Selection, acquisition and stock editing

See the General Collection Development Statement for general principles.

New scholarly editions of texts are acquired. Older scholarly editions, especially those dating from the 'new bibliography'