



## Library Weeding Policy

*Policy is in effect starting March 2006*

### POLICY STATEMENT

Weeding is the ongoing evaluation of the library collection with a view to removing those items, which are no longer useful to library users.

### WHY MUST LIBRARIES WEED?

Weeding is necessary to prevent a library collection from becoming obsolete. At the same time, weeding is necessary because a library has limited physical space. It is simply not possible for a library with limited space to collect and to house all print and audiovisual materials. The following are major established reasons for weeding:

#### 1. To Improve the Quality of Collection.

Careful and regular weeding will enhance the quality and up-to-datedness of the collection, thereby building library users' trust. It has been said that many patrons feel that the experts select library books and the mere fact that the book is in the library lends authority to it. To foster and ensure this reputation, weeding is a necessity.

#### 2. To Save Space and Money.

Weeded materials no longer cost money for cleaning, binding, mending, extra stacks, extra files, and all the other hidden costs of maintenance and space, none of which are cut by lack of use. Crowded shelves can be avoided. There can be more space for tables and chairs for in-house research, and study.

#### 3. To Save Time.

Collection weeding will save time for patrons and staff. Crowded shelves, full of ragged books with torn markings, cost time if one is trying to use the collection for research or looking for a particular book or trying to shelve books. An overload of useless books increases all library housekeeping.

#### 4. To Make the Library More Appealing.

Attractive new books will replace old and unattractive ones as a result of weeding.

#### 5. To Provide Feedback on the Collection's Strengths and Weaknesses.

Systematic weeding increases staff knowledge of the collection. This can be extremely helpful in collection building practices.

## **WEEDING CRITERIA FOR MONOGRAPHS:**

1. If the latest edition of a book is available in the library collection and the book is **NOT HEAVILY USED** according to the issue record slip.
  - i) All old and superseded editions of the book should be withdrawn.
  - ii) Up to a maximum of two copies of the same edition may be kept in the library collection.
2. Two latest editions of directories, handbooks, almanacs, travel guides, bibliographies, telephone books, publishers' catalogs, and loose-leaf service, will be kept in the collection. Annual reports will be retained for five years, except for those of companies, which will be kept for only one year.
3. If online editions of encyclopedias, directories, yearbooks, etc. are available, hardcopies of previous editions of these materials shall be weeded out from the library collection.
4. All monthly, quarterly, and semiannual statistical handbooks should also be withdrawn, if their yearly cumulative publications are available in the library collection.
5. Textbooks may be weeded out if **ALL** of the following conditions are applicable:
  - i) They are no longer part of the present curriculum at the University;
  - ii) Their contents have become obsolete (e.g. computer science books);
  - iii) They are more than 5 years old;
  - iv) Consent of the concerned academic departments is obtained;
6. All worn-out, mutilated volumes should be withdrawn from the library collection. If necessary, replacement copies may be ordered based on the demand and usefulness of the book.
7. All monographs should be considered for withdrawal provided:
  - i) They have not been circulated for the last 10 years, but with the consent of the concerned academic departments
  - ii) They do not support the acquisition policy of the library, and
  - iii) They do not support KFUPM curriculum/research programs.
8. All juvenile and elementary works, work of non-contemporary minor authors, crank literature, bibliographies of obscure people, accession lists of general libraries, personal war experiences, etc. should be considered for withdrawal.
9. Books/conference proceedings available in both formats (print and CD-ROM) will be retained for 3 years. However, print copies may be withdrawn from the collection after three years and distributed to concerned academic departments through Gift & Exchange.
10. If indexes/abstracts, catalogs, bibliographies, etc. are available in both formats (print and CD-ROM) the print copy will be discarded. Those indexes/abstracts available on the Internet, free of charge, will be considered for withdrawal.

## **WEEDING CRITERIA FOR PERIODICALS:**

1. The preferred format for retention of periodicals should be in the following order: electronic, microform, and print.
2. Depending on the nature of periodicals only the current 10 years periodicals in print format should be retained. In case of space problem, science and technology periodicals should be preferred over the humanities and social sciences periodicals.
3. Periodicals older than 10 years should be managed in the following order:
  - i) Purchase periodicals in electronic or microform format and discard the print copy;
  - ii) If electronic or microform format is not available, shift the periodicals to the secondary storage collection.
4. The volumes/issues of periodicals that are received weekly, bi-weekly, and popular magazines should be automatically withdrawn from the collection on the expiry of their retention period already decided. However, heavily used and technical periodicals (Nature, Science, Time, Newsweek, etc.) may be acquired in electronic or microfilm format after 5 years.
5. If multiple copies of a periodical are received in the library, at least one copy should be retained in the library and the remaining copies may be weeded out and sent to the concerned academic departments with their consent.
6. Ceased, outdated and obsolete periodicals should be weeded out from the library collection and relocated to academic departments, if they are willing to take them.
7. Non-English (excluding Arabic) periodicals and those which have no academic or research value should immediately be weeded out from the library collection.
8. Loose issues of periodicals are the main source of space problem. Every effort should be made by the Coordinator of Binding to bind all such journal issues. The number of volumes bound per year should not be less than 5,000. Loose issues, which are not strong enough and cannot be properly shelved, should be the prime target for binding. The periodicals included in the List of Periodicals for Binding prepared by the Serials Department and approved by the Dean of Library Affairs should be given preference for binding over other periodicals.
9. Periodicals available in more than one format (electronic, microform, and print): the print and microform copies should be discarded with the consent of the concerned academic departments.
10. All weeded out periodicals should be relocated to the concerned academic departments with their consent, or disposed of through Gift & Exchange.

## **WEEDING CRITERIA FOR REFERENCE COLLECTION**

1. Older volumes of reference publications, particularly serials, such as directories and yearbooks.
2. Older and superseded editions that contain outdated or inaccurate content.
3. Materials, which no longer support the academic curriculum.
4. Materials not in Arabic and/or English language, which have no academic or research value.
5. Materials used very rarely and have no potential use.
6. Duplicate and multiple copies of directories, guidebooks, yearbooks, etc.
7. Materials which are badly worn out, defaced, or otherwise in poor condition should be replaced with new copies, if used, or discarded, if not used.
8. Bibliographies with narrow subject scope.

## **WEEDING CRITERIA FOR AUDIOVISUAL MATERIALS:**

1. Any A.V. material over 15 years old that show little evidence of use.
2. Out-of-date A.V. materials, which no longer conform to prevailing ideas of presentation, e.g., 16mm and 8mm films, filmstrips, audiotapes, etc.
3. Worn out or frail A.V. materials that serve no purpose and are in very poor condition.
4. A.V. materials that are damaged, have missing segments or have not been in use.
5. A. V. materials that have been transformed into other formats.
6. Any A.V. material, which is neither in Arabic or English, with the consent of the concerned academic departments.
7. Multiple copies of any media item.

## **WEEDING PROCEDURES:**

### ***Selection of Material***

The weeding librarian visits the shelves, picks up the item after reviewing the title, its contents, and the issue slip to determine the amount of use of the book for possible withdrawal from the library collection. After the selection of material, the following procedures are followed:

1. The online catalog is checked to find out: the number of copies available in the library; whether a subsequent edition is available or not; and the date of publication. The catalog is also checked to find out whether or not other sources on the same topic and subject are available in the library before deciding to weed out the title.
2. It is also determined if the information contained in the item is available in any other source or not.
3. The physical condition of the book is checked.
4. A brief annotation about the item is prepared.

### ***Preparation of List***

1. A list of selected materials for weeding is prepared on INMAGIC with the following details:  
Author, Title, Call No., Publisher, Year of Publication, Copy No., Edition/ Volume, Type of material, Holdings in the Main Library, Secondary Storage holdings, if any, Films holdings, Reasons for withdrawal, Annotation, Action including Recommendation and/or Decision.

### ***Review/Decision***

1. The list is forwarded to the Manager, Acquisitions Department; then to the Director General, Library Affairs; and finally to the Manager, Reference & Information Services for their opinion on one of the following actions: weed out, do not weed out, send to department, keep in secondary storage, or any other decision.
2. The final list is submitted to the Dean of Library Affairs for his review of the opinions expressed by the Managers and his final decision. The Dean of Library Affairs' decision is final and overrules all the decisions made by the Managers. Necessary action is taken according to the final decision recorded by the Dean of Library Affairs, including recording the decision on the INMAGIC database.

### *Distribution of Material*

1. In case the Dean of Library Affairs decides against the weeding of any material, then no action is taken upon it.
2. In case the Dean of Library Affairs decides to weed out the complete holdings of a particular periodical/monographic title, a letter signed by the Chairman, Library Materials Evaluation Committee (with a copy to the Dean of Library Affairs) is forwarded to the Manager, Users Services Division with the request to pull out the title/titles from the shelves for weeding.
3. Upon receipt of materials in the Acquisitions Department, another written request is forwarded to the Senior Manager, Cataloging Operations Department or the Serials Department for deleting their copy records from the online catalog. Deletion of serials holdings and transfer of physical volumes/issues of periodicals are the responsibility of the Serials Department.
4. In case the Dean of Library Affairs decides to send the material to an academic department, the Weeding Librarian takes the following action:
  - i) A letter is forwarded from the Dean of Library Affairs to the academic department chairman indicating the author name, title, year of publication, classification number, and annotation and inquiring them if they would like to receive the item for their department.
  - ii) If the Academic Chairman agrees to receive the materials, they are forwarded to his department through the Gift & Exchange Section after necessary update of the online catalog by the Cataloging Operations or by the Serials Department.
5. In case the Dean of Library Affairs decides to keep the material in the Secondary Storage Area, a letter is forwarded by the Chairman, Library Materials Evaluation Committee to the Senior Manager, User Services Division with the request to withdraw the listed titles from the active shelves and forward them to the Cataloging Operations Department or the Serials Department (as the case may be) to change the location of the material in the online catalog from Main to Secondary Storage. After updating the catalog, the weeded out material is forwarded to the Secondary Storage area by the User Services staff.
6. In case the Chairmen of academic departments decline to take the material, a letter from the Dean of Library Affairs is forwarded to the Deans of Community Colleges with the weeded out materials list inquiring if they are interested in taking the materials. If yes, the weeded out material is forwarded to them.

## **DISPOSAL OF WEEDED MATERIALS:**

Disposal of weeded materials ***should be done in the following order:***

1. **Donate.** If the material discarded has potential value for other libraries in the Kingdom (including KFUPM satellite libraries), the Arab world, and the Muslim world in that order, they should be sent to them. The Acquisitions Department should have a mailing list of libraries ready for sending materials in accordance with profiles supplied by those libraries. Lists should be sent to libraries that would like to see them before receiving materials. The lists should preferably be sent to them by fax with the request that a decision is needed within two weeks. If the response does not come during that period, it will be assumed that they are not interested. If ***donation was not possible*** in any way, the material will be offered for sale to the public.
2. **Sell.** Items with commercial value may be sold through Housing and Office Services or any other appropriate department of the university. The amount received from the sale may be deposited to Library account 741.
3. **Recycle.** One of the recommended environmentally friendly methods of disposing of materials is to recycle them through government or private agencies.
4. **Destroy.** Destruction is the last resort, if library materials cannot be donated, sold, or recycled. This can be done in the following three ways:
  - i) Burning in an incinerator
  - ii) Shredding
  - iii) Tossing into the trash by removing the hard cover and tearing of some pages.

While burning may cause an environmental hazard, we need to choose between second and third options; whichever is cost effective and convenient.

## **OTHER GUIDELINES:**

Before disposing of library materials, the following steps are to be taken:

1. All weeded out materials must be stamped with the Library's DISCARD or WITHDRAWN stamp to show that they are no longer library property. Call number labels may be covered with tape or crossed, if the items are to be sold.
2. A list of all items to be disposed of must be prepared and copies sent with physical items to Cataloging Department or Serials Department for deleting their records, to libraries receiving them as donation, and to any other location the materials are being sent.
3. Respective items and bib records must be deleted from the library catalog.
4. Magnetic strips must be desensitized from the weeded out material, before its disposal.