



Policy: 235 235.1

Subject: ORDERING – APPROVAL PLANS

Approved by: Director of Libraries

Contact: Coordinator,
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Approved:

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I. POLICY

“An approval plan is an acquisitions method under which a library receives regular shipments of new titles selected by a dealer, based on a profile of library collection interests, with the right to return what it decides not to buy.” Robert F. Nardini, Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science (Marcel Dekker, 2003) DOI: 10.108/E-ELIS 120008874. Many approval plans now incorporate shelf ready processing and are no longer “approval” plans in the original sense; the right to return is not an option. However, with the advent of e-approval plans, the option to return may be offered through a “virtual approval shelf” on the vendor’s website.

Libraries generally use approval plans for the savings gained in staff time spent on selection and processing, for the vendor discounts they ensure, and for the speed of delivery. Approval plans also ensure a steady delivery of materials to a library during staff absences or temporary position vacancies. The University of Manitoba Libraries are committed to using approval plans to acquire a significant portion of its monographs efficiently and in a timely manner.

Approval plans are not deposit plans, where the library deposits a sum with its vendor, and purchases are gradually deducted from the deposit amount until it is fully expended.

II. PROCEDURES

There are two types of approval plans in the Libraries: unit specific plans and the general, cross-unit plan. Printed books received on the Libraries’ general plan and most of the unit specific plans are not returnable, as approval books are sent directly from the vendor to OCLC Canada for cataloguing and some shelf-ready treatment.

Unit Specific Plans

- to set up an approval plan the unit head works with the Head, Acquisitions to identify a portion of their monograph budget for an approval plan, to communicate with the vendor and set up shipping, fund id, purchase order, treatment, and invoicing arrangements
- the unit head should previously work with the approval vendor to get an estimate of the funds needed to cover the plan based on the subject and the non-subject parameters

- once the budget is set the Libraries will ask the approval vendor to alert the Libraries if the fund might be over- or under- spent, but this the unit head should also monitor the fund regularly
- who communicates with vendors where there is a problem or when a profile change is needed
- who sets up alerts/slips?

Libraries' General Plan

- funds for the general plan are allocated centrally and monitored by Collections Management
- new profiles may be added to the central plan at the discretion of the Associate Director, Collections, and on the basis of a projected estimate supplied by the vendor
- profiles may be dropped from the central plan at the discretion of the Associate Director, Collections or the Collections Management Coordinator, but funds associated with the profile remain central funds to be re-allocated by the Associate Director, Collections, in the best interests of the Libraries overall
- profiles may be adjusted in the central plan by contacting the Collection Services Librarian, Collections Management.
- Vendor e-notifications set up to work with approval profiles may be set up by individual liaison librarians in the vendor database
- The Head, Acquisitions is responsible for setting up online access to approval profile information for new liaison librarians or liaison librarians with new subject responsibilities
- The Head, Acquisitions, is responsible for communicating with the vendor should the Libraries have to turn off the approval plan before year end for budgetary reasons. The Head is also responsible for shipping, fund id information, correction location information, purchase order, treatment and invoicing information in terms of working with the vendor.