

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT POLICY
FOR
THE ARAB WORLD DOCUMENTATION UNIT,
UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

by

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Abstract

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The University of Exeter's Arab World Documentation Unit, formerly known as the Gulf Documentation Unit, has undergone major changes in the course of the past two years. Its relocation to new premises, the broadened remit to cover all Arab countries, and the transfer of its management from the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies to the University Library all meant that the Unit's unwritten mission and goals, as well as its organisational structure, needed to be re-evaluated and reformulated. This study seeks to provide a framework for the formulation of a written collection management policy and a mission statement for AWDU, in order to define a consistent practise for future systematic maintenance and management of the collection. This is achieved by examining the Unit's collections, services and facilities through selected elements of the collection management policy. A user-centred evaluation of the AWDU collections and services is conducted through a survey of two major user groups, the faculty and students of IAIS. 57% of the faculty and 21% of the students responded to the questionnaires. In order to understand the role of the Documentation Unit on the local and national levels, its history and development are

documented, and the motives and reasons behind its establishment are examined in the context of Arabic and Middle Eastern studies in the UK.

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GLOSSARY

Arabic Resources. Resources on the Arabic speaking countries

Arabic Studies. Interdisciplinary study of the Arabic speaking countries

AWDU users. University of Exeter students and faculty, and external users

AWDU. Arab World Documentation Unit

BLPC. British Library Public Catalogue

CAGS. Centre of Arab Gulf Studies

COPAC. An online union catalogue providing access to the merged online catalogues of 22 university research libraries in the UK and Ireland as well as the British Library

CURL. Consortium of University Research Libraries

DDC. Dewey Decimal Classification

External users. Non-members of the University of Exeter

Faculty. Academic staff of IAIS

GDU. The Gulf Documentation Unit that was the previous name of AWDU

IAIS. Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter

IT. Information Technology

LIS. Library Integrated System

MELCOM. Middle East Libraries Committee

Middle East Studies. Interdisciplinary study of history, culture and current affairs of the Middle East region (including North Africa)

NGO. Non-Governmental Organisation

Old Library. Branch of the Exeter University Library housing the Middle Eastern collection

OPAC. Online Public Access Catalogue

Postgraduate students. Postgraduate students of IAIS

QAA. Quality Assurance Agency

RSLG. Research Support Libraries Group

RSLP. Research Support Libraries Programme

SOAS. School of Oriental and African Studies

Students. Students of IAIS

UCE. University of Central England

Undergraduate students. Undergraduate students of IAIS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Overview of Arabic Studies and Arabic Resources in the UK

1.1.1. Arabic Studies

The long tradition of Arabic scholarship in Britain can be divided into three main periods. The period from around 1100 to 1640 was the period of medieval Arabic scholarship, which was to a large extent a product of the missionary movement. The period from 1640 to 1914 was the era of individual scholars studying Arabic out of interest in Arabic culture and Islamic civilisations.

The importance of Arabic and Islamic studies grew with the British invasion and administration of Egypt and Sudan in the end of the 19th century, as there was a need for administrators with a knowledge of the Arabic language and Islamic culture. Arabic language knowledge was also important for trading purposes (Auchterlonie, 1986, p.8).

In 1947 the British government established a commission under the chairmanship of the Earl of Scarbrough, (the Scarbrough Commission) which urged the government to deepen its knowledge and understanding of the East to prepare for a new relationship with the region (Hopwood, 1982, p.15). It emphasised the national importance of Middle Eastern studies and recommended an integration of Arabic studies with the work of other university faculties as well as an increase in the number of

teaching and research posts (Great Britain, Central Office of Information, 1971, p3). On the recommendation of the Commission, Middle Eastern Studies were expanded at five universities (Oxford, Cambridge, London, Durham and Manchester), and special grants were made available to fund new posts, research scholarships and books. However, since the grants were for a limited period only, the expansion in Arabic studies ended with the end of these grants (Auchterlonie, 1986, p.8).

In 1960, the British government set up the Hayter Committee, so called after its chairman Sir William Hayter, which stated that the role played by Britain in the world had changed and that non-Western societies would have to be studied in a new context (Hopwood, 1982, p.15), with a proper balance secured between linguistic and cultural studies, and between classical and modern aspects. The report finally emphasised the need to renew the special financial assistance discontinued in 1952 (Great Britain, Central Office of Information, 1971, p3). In accordance with the report's recommendations, the government created a number of new posts and Middle East studies departments, and the number of students increased. However with the expiry of the grants' terms, most of these posts were terminated, with the exception of Edinburgh, where a chair of Arabic Studies had been endowed, and Exeter, where the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies and the Sharjah Chair of Islamic Studies were created (Auchterlonie, 1986, p.9).

At the University of Exeter, a first lectureship in Arabic was introduced in 1971 as part of the Department of Theology, offering courses in Islam and the Arabic language. In 1974 Arabic studies became a sub-department within the Department of Theology. Funds for further

lectureships were provided by countries of the Arabian Gulf in 1976 and 1977. In 1978/79, the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies was established, directed by Professor Muhammad Abd al-Hayy Shaaban, the Reader in Arabic and Islamic Studies. And in 1979 the Department of Arabic and Middle East Studies was created (Foroughi, 1982, p.43). Finally in 1999 the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies and the Department of Arabic and Middle East Studies merged to form the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies.

On the whole, Arabic and Islamic studies in Britain expanded substantially during the 20th century, with a remarkable increase in the number of students, a broader scope of subjects studied, and an extraordinary growth in the number of publications on the Middle East. The study of the region has become increasingly important, for a variety of political, economic and cultural reasons. Britain, perhaps more than any other country in the West, was directly involved in the building of the modern Arabic state. Moreover, the major oil reserves in the Middle East significantly increased the strategic role of the region, putting it in the centre of attention of the Western world and expanding its role in world trade (Makooi, 1994, p.26).

More recently, the Iran-Iraq conflict of 1980-1988, followed by the second Gulf War 1990-1991 and the sanctions imposed on Iraq, in parallel with developments in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, and, last but not least, conflicts resulting from the rise of Islamic fundamentalist movements throughout the Islamic world and their repercussions on Western countries have renewed interest in the study of the Middle East.

From the historical review of the Middle East studies in the UK, we can see that their development was linked to the change in the governments' interests in the region. The changing interests have prompted successive governments to set up commissions to review the state of Middle East studies in the UK. Since dramatic regional and international developments have taken place since the last commission (the Follett commission) presented its report in 1993, it may be time for a new committee to state the role of Middle East and Arabic studies in the United Kingdom.

1.1.2. Arabic Resources

Books and manuscripts in Arabic and on the Arab world are available in numerous libraries in the UK, of which the largest collections in non-academic libraries can be found in the British Museum Library, the Oriental and India Office Collections which were recently transferred to the British Library, the library of the Royal Asiatic Society, the library of the Islamic Cultural Centre in London and others. Academic libraries with the most outstanding collections in Arabic and on the Arab world include the Bodleian Library at Oxford, the library of the Middle East Centre at St Antony's College, Oxford, the Cambridge University Library, Durham University Library, the library of the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Edinburgh University Library.

The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) has produced a report on the "Quality Assessment of Middle Eastern Studies" which includes the results of the assessment carried out between 1996 and 1998 of the quality of Middle Eastern and African studies provided by universities and colleges in England and Northern Ireland.

Quality assessment measures the extent to which each subject provider is successful in achieving its aims and objectives. It covers the full range of teaching and learning activities within a set of six aspects of provision, one of which is “Learning Resources”. Each aspect is graded on a four-point assessment scale from 1 to 4 in ascending order of merit (see Figure 1).

Institutions offering Middle Eastern and African studies received relatively high ratings on “Learning Resources”, with seven obtaining grade 4 and three grade 3 (see Figure 2). Most of the institutions were found to have an excellent quality of library provision, fully appropriate and well-used resources, learning resource strategies that are sensitive to the needs of the curriculum, and specialist subject librarians who liaise effectively with the departmental staff. It was noted that at least four institutions are internationally renowned for their outstanding collections (QAA, 1998a).

In 1998, a QAA report presented the findings of an assessment of the quality of education in Arabic and Middle East studies provided by the University of Exeter. Therein, the aspect of provision “Learning Resources” was awarded grade 4, since it made “a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives.” The aims set within this aspect were considered met (QAA, 1998b).

The Graded Profile

The graded profile indicates the extent to which the student learning experience and achievement demonstrate that the aims and objectives set by the subject provider are being met. The tests and the criteria applied by the assessors are these:

Aspect of Provision	Tests to be applied	Scale Points			
		1	2	3	4
1. Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation	To what extent do the student learning experience and student achievement, within this aspect of provision, contribute to meeting the objectives set by the subject provider? Do the objectives set, and the level of attainment of those objectives, allow the aims set by the subject provider to be met?	The aims and/or objectives set by the subject provider are not met; there are major shortcomings that must be rectified.	This aspect makes an acceptable contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives, but significant improvement could be made.	This aspect makes a substantial contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives; however, there is scope for improvement.	This aspect makes a full contribution to the attainment of the stated objectives. The aims set by the subject provider are met.
2. Teaching, Learning and Assessment					
3. Student Progression and Achievement					
4. Student Support and Guidance					
5. Learning Resources					
6. Quality Assurance and Enhancement					

Figure 1: QAA assessment scale

Institutions Assessed in Middle Eastern and African Studies

Institution	Curriculum Design, Content and Organisation	Teaching, Learning and Assessment	Student Progression and Achievement	Student Support and Guidance	Learning Resources	Quality Assurance and Enhancement	Assessment Outcome	Quality Assessment Report
School of Oriental and African Studies	4	4	4	4	3	3	Quality Approved	Q204/88
University of Birmingham	4	4	4	4	3	4	Quality Approved	Q165/97
University of Cambridge * ¹	4	4	4	4	4	3	Quality Approved	Q133/98
University of Durham	4	3	3	4	4	4	Quality Approved	Q162/97
University of Exeter	4	3	3	4	4	2	Quality Approved	Q215/98
University of Leeds	3	4	3	4	4	3	Quality Approved	Q216/98
University of Manchester	3	4	3	4	4	2	Quality Approved	Q200/98
University of Oxford * ¹	4	3	4	4	4	3	Quality Approved	Q23/98
University of Salford * ²	3	4	3	4	3	3	Quality Approved	Q96/98
University of Westminster	4	3	4	3	4	4	Quality Approved	Q251/98

* Denotes assessment with other units; see key:

Key

*¹ East and South Asian Studies

*² French, German and Related Languages, Italian, Iberian Languages and Studies

Figure 2: QAA assessments of Middle Eastern and African Studies 1997/98

1.2. Study Rationale

The Documentation Unit, established in 1981 by the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies at the University of Exeter, has undergone major changes in the course of the past two years.

In the year 2000, the IAIS appointed Lesley Forbes, the Keeper of Oriental Collections at the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, as an outside consultant, who drew up a report on the strengths and weaknesses of the Documentation Unit collections and management. She recommended, among other things, the incorporation of the Unit

into the University Library management structure and the appointment of staff with expertise in Arabic and technical issues who can manage the collection in a more professional manner. Her recommendations were largely followed, and in July 2001, the management of the Documentation Unit, renamed Arab World Documentation Unit (AWDU), was transferred to the University Library. At the same time, the former GDU was relocated from the Old Library building to the new building of the Institute of Arab and Islamic Studies which came into existence in 1999 as a result of a merger of the Department of Arabic and Middle East Studies and the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies.

Although Forbes' report covered major aspects of the Unit's functions, it had its limitations, owing to the nature and scope of the assignment. The technical and administrative problems were not dealt with in the light of the Unit's mission and management policy. The report however laid the basis for a new chapter in the Unit's history. The present research can be considered a form of progress report, which discusses and analyses the developments since Forbes' report was submitted and provides a framework for a systematic management for the future.

The Documentation Unit's change of name has meant that it shall henceforth collect documentation on all aspects of the Arab world. However, the comparative advantage of the AWDU still lies in its collections on the Arab Gulf, which may be the largest of its kind in the UK and even in Europe.

Considering all the significant changes referred to above, it has become imperative to re-evaluate and possibly re-articulate the mission and goals which were laid down for the Documentation Unit at the time of its

inception. This process will inevitably affect the processes related to the management of AWDU collections, the acquisitions policy and the collection development policy.

The transformation of the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies into the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies is expected to have a great impact on the role of the AWDU, its organisational structure and on the nature of the liaison and professional relations between the academic staff and the librarian in the field of collection development and acquisition policy.

In order to understand the role played by the Documentation Unit, it will be necessary to study the motives and reasons behind its establishment in the context of Arabic, Islamic and Middle Eastern studies in the UK, the policies of which were shaped by the five reports known as "The Reay Report (1909)", "The post-war reports by Scarbrough (1947)", "The Hayter Report (1961)", "The Parker report (1986)" and "The Follett Report (1993)".

1.3. Research Aims and Objectives

1.3.1. The aims:

To examine the Arab World Documentation Unit collection, services and facilities within the context of Arabic studies in the UK;

To evaluate the existing acquisition and collection development policy within the context of management transfer and the change of name;

To provide a framework for the formulation of a mission statement and for a systematic maintenance and management of the AWDU collection, in order to define a consistent practise for future developments.

1.3.2. The objectives:

To document the history and development of the Documentation Unit;

To assess the role and objectives of the Documentation Unit and their validity in light of the management transfer and the change of its name;

To evaluate the AWDU collections and services through a survey of two major user groups, the faculty and students of IAIS;

To examine the scope and organisation of the collections.

1.4. Scope of Research

The research will focus on “collection management policy” in the Arab World Documentation Unit, University of Exeter. A policy is a statement that defines rules to guide the development of a collection towards its goals. (Farrell, p.54), while collection management is concerned with policies on the housing, preservation, storage, weeding and discard of stock, as well as the systematic maintenance and management of "the planning, composition, funding, evaluation and use of library collections over extended periods of time, in order to meet specific institutional objectives" (Jenkins & Morley, 1999, p.2).

The research will cover the history and development of the Documentation Unit from its creation in 1981 until the present day, shedding light on the current collections, services and facilities offered by AWDU.

The term “Arabic collections”, for the purpose this study, refers to library collections in Arabic or any other language, mainly English, and covering subjects directly related to the Arab world region.

The term “Arabic and Middle Eastern studies” is defined as academic studies focusing on the history, anthropology, political science, literature, law, religious studies and language of the Arab world and the Middle Eastern region (in its widest sense extending from North Africa to Central Asia and from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean).

1.5. Benefits and Justification

Since its inception in 1981, the Documentation Unit has been managed without a proper written policy or a mission statement of its own to refer to. Moreover, with the move from the GDU to the AWDU, the need for a reformulation of the existing unwritten policy and mission statement has become more pressing, as these no longer reflect the current needs of the collection. Budget plans also needed to be reconsidered and adapted to recent developments. This study aims at addressing the development of AWDU’s role, functions, collections and utility, thus contributing to a deeper understanding of the current situation, which in turn would help formulate a clear mission statement and a collection management policy for the Unit.

2. METHODOLOGY

In order to investigate the collection management policy of the Arab World Documentation Unit, the case study research method has been adopted. This research strategy was considered the most appropriate, since the study is concerned with a specific, contemporary case (Yin, 1994, p.8), that of the AWDU and its collection management policy. This method also provides the basis for the application of ideas and solutions. The case study was used as an "application of specific qualitative research methods in a specific setting" (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.50) to evaluate the collection management policy in AWDU within the context of the Documentation Unit history, the change of name to AWDU and the transfer of management from the IAIS to the university library.

The methodology consisted of four stages, as recommended by Yin (1994): (1) designing the case study; i.e. developing a plan that will ultimately lead to the study's conclusions; (2) preparing for data collection, which will include the preparation of the interview questions, the questionnaire and conducting the pilot questionnaires; (3) collecting the data by relying on various sources of evidence, and (4) analysing the case study evidence by examining, categorising, and recombining the evidence.

This case study applies a combination of two main qualitative research methods - the historical study and interviewing - in order to derive the most benefit from each of them (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.51).

However, the quantitative approach will also be used in the user and faculty questionnaires, for the purpose of conducting a user-centred collection evaluation, which constitutes a major element of collection management, and of obtaining information on the current use of the Unit's collections and services.

The data gathering process involved multiple sources and techniques.

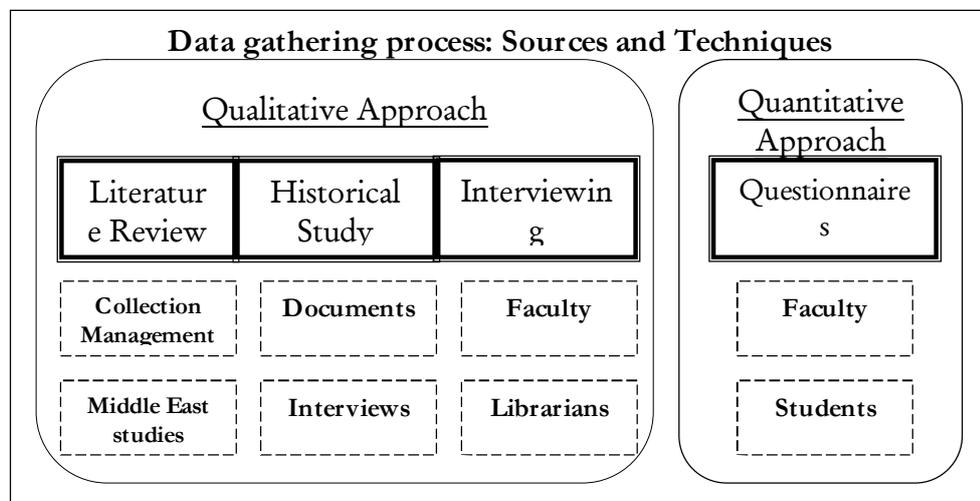


Figure 3: Data gathering process: Sources and Techniques

2.1. Literature Review

The search for literature has been conducted on different levels to ensure a comprehensive review of the topics. Books were searched for through different online catalogues in UK academic libraries such as the University of Central England in Birmingham (UCE) and the University of Exeter, in addition to the "CURL" union catalogue

(COPAC), as well as the British Library Public Catalogue (BLPC) which covers the British Library holdings of grey literature. Online journals and databases were searched for articles through the electronic resources of UCE and the University of Exeter. The Internet search was more restricted to UK organisations, associations and institutions, both governmental and non-governmental, which have connections with Arabic or Middle East studies one way or the other. Contact with experts¹ in the field of Arabic and Middle East studies in the UK was found to be particularly useful, since these were able to guide me to relevant information resources on the topic.

Type	Subject coverage	Date range	Source
<u>Books</u>	Collection Management, Collection Development and Acquisition.	1980 onwards.	Online catalogues such as COPAC and BLPC.
	Arabic Studies and Middle East Studies.	1970 onwards.	
	Research Methods.	1990 onwards.	
<u>Articles</u>	Collection Management, Collection Development and Acquisition.	1980 onwards.	Online journals accessed via Emerald, Ingenta and Elsevier Science Direct. and databases such as LISAnet and ABI Inform
	Arabic Studies and Middle East Studies.	1970 onwards.	
<u>Manuals</u>	Collection Management, Collection Development and Acquisition policies.	1990 onwards.	Websites of 4 UK, 4 US, 1 Australian and 1 Canadian university libraries with Middle Eastern collections.

¹ Paul Auchterlonie, Middle East Librarian in Charge, University of Exeter, Rashid El-Enani, Professor of Modern Arabic Literature, University of Exeter, Leslie Mcloughlin, Honorary Research Fellow, Arabic & Islamic Studies, University of Exeter.

<u>Theses</u>	Arabic or Middle East collections or studies in UK.	1970 - 2001.	"Index to Theses" website and BLPC.
<u>Reports</u>	Arabic and Middle East Studies in UK.	Open.	BLPC, scholars' personal collections; governmental and non-governmental organisations websites, such as: Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, Joint funding Council's Library Review Group, British Society for Middle Eastern Studies, and the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Table 1: The nature of the material reviewed

2.1.1. *Collection Management*

The reviewed literature will largely focus on collection management since the late 1980s, when the term "collection management" was starting to become well established in the field of academic libraries (Jenkins & Morley, 1999, p.1).

The literature was searched for collection management in general as well as for collection management policies in UK academic libraries and selected US, Australian and Canadian academic libraries.

2.1.2. *Arabic Studies*

In order to evaluate the existing collection management policy of the AWDU, it was also necessary to review the literature on Arabic studies in the UK, to understand the historical background of Arabic collections in UK academic libraries.

2.2. Historical Study

A historical study was carried out, for without understanding AWDU's past and the making and development of its precursor, the Gulf Documentation Unit, it would have been impossible to understand the present situation of the Unit. A "historical perspective is vital both in providing a realistic idea of what might be feasible and in revealing any distorted representations of the past which may be obstructing change." (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.159). This historical study was imperative while investigating the substantial widening of the collection focus and the acquisition policy of AWDU. Furthermore, historical investigation plays a significant role in collection development, as collection strengths and weaknesses are frequently rooted in a library's history and evolution (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.46). To understand AWDU's historical roots, this study has relied on a range of sources, including primary resources such as official documents, reports, meeting minutes and interviews, and secondary resources such as articles published on the Unit.

2.3. Interviews

The interview method was chosen as a qualitative research tool to obtain in-depth information from individuals who were instrumental in the making and development of the Documentation Unit (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.53). In view of the fact that there are insufficient documents on the foundation of the Unit, we are not entirely clear as to what its original aims and objectives were (Auchterlonie, 2002). The personal interviews conducted thus had the purpose of supplementing the written records within the framework of the historical investigation,

by eliciting detailed information on the historical development, policy and technical aspects relating to the Unit.

A careful preparation of the interviews was important to guarantee a successful outcome. This process involved: The selection of the interviewees, setting up the appointments, preparing the questions, and conducting the actual interview.

Selection of Interviewees:

Interviews were conducted with selected academic staff members and librarians through a purposive sampling on the basis of the interviewees' involvement with the Documentation Unit. Two members of the academic staff were chosen to represent the IAIS academic staff, whose input in the development of the AWDU collection is essential. Dr. Kamil Mahdi is the coordinator between the Institute and the University Library, while Professor Tim Niblock is the Institute Director of IAIS who has made the decision to transfer the AWDU management to the University Library. As regards the librarians, the two librarians most involved in AWDU were selected for the interviews. Ruth Butler is the former AWDU librarian who has worked there from 1981 to 2001, while Paul Auchterlonie is the Librarian in charge of all Middle East collections, the line manager of the AWDU librarian and the liaison librarian for the IAIS, and prior to that for the CAGS. In 1997 he was also assigned by the CAGS to draw up an evaluation report on the AWDU.

Following the selection of the interviewees, appointments were made for meetings of around 45 minutes each in which the interview was to be conducted.

Preparation of interview questions:

A set of prepared points of discussion was used in each interview to ensure that all important points were covered. Preference was given to 'non-directive probes' in the form of open-ended rather than structured questions, in order to give the interviewees the opportunity to highlight the topics they regard as particularly important or those which may have been overlooked and to expound their personal perspectives. (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.129)

Recording the interviews:

The interviews conducted in the framework of this study were tape-recorded. The recordings served as an aide-mémoire for the interviewer. Following the interviews, a short interview report was written, with notes on the main points of the conversation, which was later complemented with certain transcribed comments and observations which were considered particularly significant. (Clayton and Gorman, 1997, p.136)

2.3.1. Faculty interviews

Interviews with faculty members were conducted in order to elicit information on the history and development of the Documentation Unit, the faculty's perspectives on the management transfer and change of name. The interviews also touched on their expectations of AWDU after the dramatic changes to the Unit since 2001.

2.3.2. Librarians interviews

The Middle East librarian at the University of Exeter was interviewed with a view to understanding the University library mission statement,

its organisational structure, as well as other issues related to collection development and management. An interview was also conducted with the former librarian of the Documentation Unit, in order to gain insight about the history of the Unit, its role and objectives at the time of its inception, and the acquisition policy that was formerly in practise.

2.4. Questionnaires

Although questionnaires are sometimes considered less scientific than other data collection methods, their use in this research was useful and necessary, not only for measuring user satisfaction and evaluating existing collections and services provided by AWDU, but also for obtaining new ideas and recommendations from its users that can be incorporated into the decision-making and collection management process.

Two separate questionnaires² were developed to survey the major user groups: faculty, postgraduate and undergraduate students. Although the external users account for a sizeable proportion of the AWDU users, they were not included in the survey since it was not practicable to find them and send them the questionnaires.

Pilot questionnaires were sent in advance in order to refine the content of the questions and to remove and add questions as deemed necessary. The wording of certain questions was changed when the original wording was found to be misleading. Since the questionnaires were to be filled out online through a web page, the pilot questionnaires were

² See appendix II: Questionnaire Samples

further useful to expose any technical problems or difficulties encountered and enable me to amend them accordingly.

2.4.1. Student questionnaire

The student questionnaire³ was designed for students, for the purpose of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the AWDU from the user's point of view and measuring its utility. A structured questionnaire with closed questions was used in order to make sure as many users as possible respond to it. This user-centred approach to collection evaluation was combined with collection-centred techniques, such as measuring the library stock against the AWDU objectives and the purposes it is intended to serve (Winkworth, 1999, p.77).

Students consist of 2 categories: (A) Forty-one IAIS undergraduate students, of which 20 first-year students were excluded because they spend the second year abroad. (B) Fifty-two IAIS postgraduate students of which 5 are full-time MA students and 47 are PhD students. 6 of these are interrupted so they were excluded. 28 are full-time students and 13 are part-time students⁴.

The questionnaires were deployed between 1 August and 31 October 2002. In August, with the assistance of the IAIS secretary, all students were invited to participate via an e-mail announcement that directed them to a Web-based questionnaire. A single e-mail reminder was sent one month after the initial mailing, with specific instructions that only those who had not responded to the first e-mailings were to respond. A link from the AWDU homepage to the questionnaire was also

³ See appendix II: Questionnaire Samples, p. A21

⁴ According to IAIS report dated 07/06/2002

established. The submitted results were sent directly to the researcher's e-mail. A copy of these results was also saved automatically to an online file.

Students who completed the Student questionnaire were offered an incentive consisting of 2 postcards, "Vanishing Nubia", donated by Nubian Studies, IAIS.

2.4.2. Faculty questionnaire

A second questionnaire⁵ was sent to academic staff of the IAIS, in order to record the nature of the liaison between them and AWDU librarian and the role of AWDU in supporting the Institute programs. The academic staff were also asked to evaluate the AWDU collection, and to specify priorities from their perspective. The IAIS has twenty-one academic members of staff: 6 professors, 1 reader, 5 lecturers, 2 recognised teachers and 9 honorary research fellows.

In August 2002, the faculty questionnaire was promoted to the faculty via an e-mail containing a URL link to an online version of the questionnaire. The e-mail was sent to the entire population of faculty, based on a list obtained from the IAIS secretary. The e-mailing was followed up with phone calls or personal contact.

⁵ See appendix II: Questionnaire Samples, p. A27

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review was conducted on two main topics:

- Literature about collection management and collection development.

- Literature about Arabic Studies in the UK.

3.1. Literature on Collection Management

Although the vast majority of literature found using the term "collection management" stem from the USA, dating from the early 1980s, literature from the UK using the term was found to be on the increase in the past few years, indicating that a terminological and conceptual shift is taking place in this country as well. In 1999, Jenkins and Morley wrote: "There is still very little United Kingdom professional literature on collection management as a whole, although there is a considerable amount dealing with its constituent activities" (Jenkins and Morley, 1999, p. 1). Law adds that "discussions of the staffing and management of resources for acquisitions and collection management are not common in the British professional literature, but are more frequent in North America" (Law, 1999, p. 32)

In order to outline a collection management policy for the AWDU, which is one of the main aims of this research, it was imperative to refer back to the relevant literature to obtain a clear definition of the scope

and limitations of the term "collection management". In distinguishing between collection development and collection management, Jenkins and Morley regard collection development as a concept related to the early stages of library expansion, i.e. collection building, selection and acquisition, while collection management is concerned with policies on the housing, preservation, storage, weeding and discard of stock, as well as the systematic maintenance and management of "the planning, composition, funding, evaluation and use of library collections over extended periods of time, in order to meet specific institutional objectives" (Jenkins and Morley, 1999, p.2)

Hazen (1999, p. 291) and Law (1999, p.15) agree with this view and confirm that collection management subsumes collection development. Clayton and Gorman (2001, p.17) define the collection development policy as "a statement of general collection-building principles which delineates the purpose and content of a collection in terms relevant to both external and internal audiences". According to them, a separate internal procedures manual would be necessary to complement the collection development policy. The wider collection management policy would encompass, among other things, both the collection development policy and the internal procedures manual. Law examines collection management under four main headings: 1) Collection development; 2) collection evaluation; 3) stock relegation and disposal; 4) staff structures.

Rowley and Black (1996, p.25), on the other hand, regard the principal functions of collection development as being material selection, faculty liaison, collection management and preservation, budget oversight, thus regarding collection management as a component of collection development.

Williams (1999, p.206) and Gorman and Miller (2000, p.316) stress that collection management goes beyond the stage of collection building to include managerial aspects such as collection use, budgeting and other related matters. Gorman and Miller further argue that today, the emphasis of collection management is more on access and intellectual content than on the physical ownership of collections, and that the future lies in the concept of "content management" (Gorman and Miller, 2000, p.331).

The importance of devising an elaborate collection management policy is addressed in a number of studies. Clayton and Gorman (2001, p.19) consider a written policy to be "a contract between a library and its users." Such a contract, however, is "not immutable, but rather a 'notional' document that constantly evolves, setting parameters rather than once-for-all benchmarks." Farrell (1999, p.62f.) stresses that policies must be written and revised whenever necessary to reflect planning and review processes, as well as shifts in emphasis, for example, from collection development to collection management. Winkworth (1999, p.77) argues that "objectives need to be phrased as targets against which performance can be measured. A statement such as 'supporting the teaching and research of the university' is an inadequate formulation as a collection management objective". Friend (2000, p.45) underlines the need to link the collection management policy with the strategic aims of the organisation it serves. Where a policy falls within an institutional planning cycle, "the policy should naturally be revised and updated in the normal course of events in response to the changing institutional requirements and needs" (Clayton and Gorman, 2001, p.19).

Clayton and Gorman (2001, p.27) further stress the strong political significance of the collection development and management policies. They evoke the example of the Research Assessment Exercise carried out in British universities, which leads to new directions and exposes unexpected weaknesses in the institution, often directly impinging on the library, which is expected to help overcome these weaknesses through collection management.

Spiller (2000, p.9f.) finds that policy statements often consist almost entirely of broad statements of intent that are of little practical use. A good policy statement, he maintains, can “ensure a consistency of approach amongst staff, and serve as a planning tool for managers, as a statement of purpose for funders and/or committees, and even as a source of information for library users.” However, Spiller argues that even in that case policy statements will not be effective unless certain conditions are met. These are: 1) good communications between policy makers and staff through seminars and workshops, 2) backing the policy by financial allocations to stated priorities, and 3) subsequent monitoring to ensure that funds are spent as directed.

Finally, there was a general agreement in the literature reviewed on the important role played by mission statements. Friend (2000, p. 49) believes that a mission statement and strategic plan should be the first step towards a collection management policy, while Svenningson and Cherepon (1998, p.16), stating that a library's goals and policies are determined by its mission statements, contend that the definition of a library's objectives and the anticipation of future areas of growth should be based on the directional guidelines of the library's mission statement.

3.2. Literature on Arabic Studies in the UK

As can be expected, the literature on Arabic studies and resources in the UK is limited. Most of the literature found on the subject relates the history of Arabic scholarship and the rationale behind Arabic studies in the UK (e.g. Auchterlonie, 1986, and Great Britain: Central Office of Information, 1971).

In his research on "Information resources on the Middle East in the UK", Makooi (1994, p.251f.) examines the role of Middle East studies from the British government's perspective. Commercial concerns (particularly those related to oil supply), growing UK exports to the Middle East and diplomatic reasons are among the factors contributing to the importance of Middle East studies. Taking this fact into consideration, he recommends that Middle Eastern collections in academic libraries market their services to non-academic (particularly business) needs. He argues that an increased emphasis in Middle East collections on current socio-economic and political issues may impact the content of courses offered by the academic departments they serve.

More background information on the history of Arabic studies in Britain was gained from the report "Teaching of Arabic in the United Kingdom" (Hourani, 1970), which was prepared by a working party set up as a result of a conference on resources for teaching of Arabic in the UK. The report investigated the possibility of closer cooperation between universities, government departments and commercial organisations in meeting the need for a more effective teaching of Arabic. It demonstrates that the interest in the Arabic language went beyond the education system, to be taught in important British

institutions to meet the needs of the diplomatic service, the military and businessmen with economic interests in the Middle East.

Finally, to appreciate the current state of Arabic studies as well as that of academic libraries with Arabic resources, it was necessary to examine the Quality Assessment Reports of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (1997 and 1998) on Middle Eastern and African studies in Britain. The activities of each department are assessed using a four-point assessment scale to grade six aspects of provision, one of which are the Learning Resources. The importance of these reports does not only lie in its retrospective assessment, but on the impact they may have on future activities in the field of learning resources. As Law (1999, p.18) points out: "(...) academic departments can no longer afford totally to ignore academic services, since points are at stake."

Chapter 4

4. THE ARAB WORLD DOCUMENTATION UNIT

4.1. Historical Background

The origins of the Documentation Unit go back to 1973, when Professor Shaaban, who was initially a lecturer in Islamic studies in the Theology Department, received a gift of £5,000 from Abu Dhabi, which he spent in a book-buying trip in Beirut. Throughout the 70s, and as the Head of the Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, Professor Shaaban continued to secure generous gifts from various Arab Gulf States, upon which he would travel to the Arab world to purchase books (Foroughi, 1982, p.43).

Another big move forward came towards the end of the 70s when Professor Tim Niblock, then the Deputy Director of the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, was contacted by an organisation in Belgium which had been collecting Gulf documentation, and who were offering to sell documentation to the Centre for £35,000. This purchased was financed by Shell. The collection consisted of a jumble of material collected in and about the Gulf countries. It was therefore a major project to find a way to organise this material. Since space was a problem only material that was considered directly relevant was kept, and everything else was discarded (Niblock, 2002). From then on, the Gulf collection has rapidly continued to grow.

The Gulf Documentation Unit was formally established in 1981. In that same year, a large project was organised to microfilm and catalogue the

press cuttings which had begun coming in second-hand from the Middle East Economic Digest (MEED). About 18 people, part-time and fulltime, participated in this project (Butler, 2002).

At that time, the Documentation Unit was housed with most Middle Eastern resources in two rooms of the Main Library, which was then situated in Prince of Wales Road, now the site of the Old Library. The printed books of the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies were also kept in these rooms while the documentation belonging to the CAGS were housed in an annex rented from the British Council. The Thornlea building in North Road contained a small library comprising the personal collection of Professor Shaaban which was placed at the disposal of students, as well as duplicates sent from the Main Library. (Foroughi, 1982, p.46)

From the outset, the Unit faced the problem of not being organised in a professional manner. A number of different people worked on the collections over the years, however, despite their interest and engagement, the practices were not consistent with what was expected from a professionally run Documentation Unit (Niblock, 2002).

Until 2001, the Documentation Unit functioned independently from University Library as it was a part of the CAGS. When material was donated to the Unit, it tended to stay there, whether it was an academic textbook, or whether it was on Islam, on Middle Eastern history or one of the Gulf States (Auchterlonie, 2002).

The relation between the University Library and GDU started in 1995, when Brian Pridham, the ex-director of CAGS, and Paul Auchterlonie, the Middle East Librarian, wrote together a proposal to get funding from

the Follett commission to develop GDU. Three projects have been funded 1) to convert the card catalogue to the Libertes (the previous library automated system); 2) to classify and catalogue the Davis collection; and 3) to microfilm the Arabic newspapers.

In August 1997 Paul Auchterlonie, the Middle East Librarian, was assigned to write an evaluation report on the GDU for CAGS. Apparently, this was the first report to tackle the GDU question. Lesley Forbes' report followed, raising further questions about GDU. Her report highlighted the areas of weakness throughout the collections, acquisitions, management, exploitation, financial independence, etc. It concluded that staff of professional level with technical and language expertise was needed to reformulate the acquisitions policy, reorganise and exploit the collection in a more professional way than had been possible until that time (Auchterlonie, 2002). As a result, negotiations took place between the University Library and the IAIS which ended with a management transfer to the University Library and the recruitment of a professional librarian for the unit.

4.2. Role and Objectives

As previously pointed out, there are insufficient documents relating to the foundation, and consequently to the role and objectives of the Documentation Unit.

However, through interviews with members of staff who have witnessed the developments of the Unit throughout the years, it has become clear that the GDU had two main implied objectives. The first was to cater for the research requirements of students and staff. The second objective was to build a strong and unique resource base which would be of value

to researchers in the future (Mahdi, 2002), by collecting non-commercial material on the history, politics, economics and social conditions of the countries of the Arabian Peninsula and Iraq (Auchterlonie, 2002).

Likewise, the main aim of the AWDU has continued to be supporting the research activities of the university and to collect reference material and primary resources on the Arab countries within the scope of its acquisition policy.

With its outstanding and unique collections on Arab Gulf states, AWDU should also aim to become a leading national and international information resource in its field.

While the Documentation Unit was under IAIS management, its implied mission statement was to support IAIS research on the Arab World through the provision of information in the available format. With the transfer of management to the University Library, AWDU is no longer tied to the IAIS, and its mission to support research should be expanded to other University departments, such as the Department of Politics, which has several researchers specialising on the Middle East.

Having become a branch of the University Library, AWDU aims should now be brought in relation to the institutional mission (Farrell, 1999, p.56), to be more in line with those of the University Library as a whole, to include the following: the provision of a research environment which integrates reading places, information technology and materials for research; specialist support through enquiry handling, information skills guidance and instruction; and to collect material in anticipation of use, providing a basis for its growth and development (University of Exeter, 2002). However, unlike the University Library, AWDU should not aim

to support teaching programmes since these are supported by the Old Library, and since its collection is for reference only.

4.3. Staffing Structure

The GDU was run by 2 library assistants. A cataloguer joined the GDU team from 1995 to 1997 for a cataloguing project funded as a result of the Follett report. The Unit was directly supervised by the Director of the Centre for Arab Gulf Studies, and then by the Director of IAIS when CAGS and Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies merged in 2000.

Restructuring the staff was the first initiative taken after the management transfer to meet University Library standards.

AWDU is managed by a site librarian (see Figure 3) with a degree in Archive and Library Science as well as Arabic language and IT skills, who was hired in September 2001. His employment came upon recommendation of the Lesley Forbes' report (2001) which considered that hiring an Arabic librarian is an essential part of all scenarios for developing the Documentation Unit.

As a result of the transfer of management and administration to the University Library, AWDU is now managed in coordination with the existing Middle Eastern library collections, and the Middle East librarian (Sub Librarian) is the mentor of the AWDU Librarian.

Forbes (2001) stated the following reasons for her recommendations: the existing overlap in content between the Unit and the University Library's Middle Eastern collections, and consequently the need to process materials in the same way for optimum use both locally and remotely; and the fact that the Unit needs professional staff with a

library or information services background, and with more expertise than is available from existing Unit staff and in the IAIS. Niblock (2002) confirms that with the increasing Arabic language material coming in, the absence of Arabic-speaking staff able to process it presented a problem in the Unit.

AWDU staff also includes one full-time and one half-time library assistant (Figure 4). The transfer of management has generally benefited the Unit in that it is now more closely involved with library routines and practices, such as the availability of training in library systems, database searching, website management.

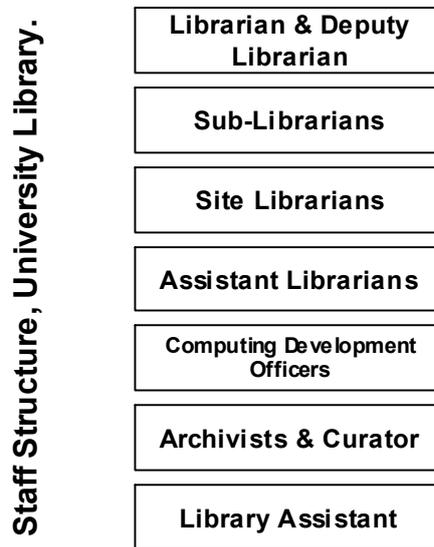


Figure 4: Staff structure, University of Exeter Library

AWDU has now been incorporated into the University Library to be one of seven branch libraries under the University Library management in the main library:

- The Main Library: contains the main undergraduate and research collections in all subjects, with the exception of Arabic, Law, Education and Engineering.
- The St. Luke's Campus Library: contains the education and sports science material.
- The Old Library: contains the Arabic and Islamic Collection, the Ghana Collection and the Drama sets. It also houses the Roborough undergraduate reference collection and the store of older, less used books and journals.
- CSM Cornwall Library: the main library of the Camborne School of Mines, specialising in geology and mining engineering.
- The Devon and Exeter Institution Library: a private collection containing much West Country material and nineteenth century materials.
- The Exeter Medical Library.
- The Law Library.
- The Arab World Documentation Unit. (University of Exeter, 2002)

5. COLLECTION MANAGEMENT IN AWDU

5.1. Introduction

Collection management in AWDU will be discussed in this chapter through selected elements: collection development, budget allocation, collection evaluation, stock organisation, stock relegation and disposal, and presentation of collection. This discussion should provide the foundations of a written collection management policy.

The main purposes and benefits of having a written policy are:

- To provide a framework for the maintenance and development of AWDU's collections and facilitate a systematic planning for future development with a minimum personal bias, while establishing selection criteria across the range of different subjects, languages and formats, thus creating a consistent and coherent basis (Jenkins and Morley, 1999, p.8)
- To describe the processes of collection management and development which provide the library staff with a practical guidance so routine decisions can be made once and for all and need not to be considered every time they arise. The policy also provides information for the budgetary process. (SOAS, 2001)

- To establish useful priorities to guide cataloguing, retrospective conversion and decisions concerning preservation and to provide criteria by which the collection can be evaluated (SOAS, 2001).
- To provide a base for cooperation for libraries on collection development (SOAS, 2001).
- To promote improved communication between the library, its users and institutional administrators (Jenkins and Morley, 1999, p.8).

5.2. Description of Collection

The total size of the collection is 30,000 volumes (official reports, statistics, development plans, technical surveys, official gazettes, periodicals, legal texts and archival materials), excluding 300 metres of press digests and newspapers, 1010 microfilm reels of newspapers, 800 maps and the Davis Collection. Most of these items are in English or in English and Arabic. There are 3000 volumes in Arabic, 10000 volumes in Arabic and English, 16000 volumes in English and 1000 volumes in other languages (or other languages and English). The annual intake is in the region of 2000 volumes/issues of periodicals and part-publications (excluding newspapers and daily press bulletins).⁶

The collection consists of primary documents on the politics, economics, society and history of the Arab countries. Until recently, there was an active acquisitions policy only for the Arabian Peninsula (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Bahrain, Yemen, United Arab Emirates) and Iraq

⁶ These figures were estimated by the sub-librarian on the basis of the figures issued by the Library automated system on November 2002.

as well as to a limited extent for Palestine/Israel. The collection is therefore particularly comprehensive for these countries. The Unit now also holds an increasing amount of documentation for Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, less however on the countries of North Africa and Sudan.

The Unit is particularly strong on economic material on Arab Gulf countries, such as the main statistical publications, annual reports of government ministries and agencies, banks and financial institutions. The Unit also holds the publications of Pan-Arab, regional and international organisations, such as the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas, the Gulf Cooperation Council, the Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran and Turkey, the United Nations and the World Bank as well as the major oil companies and petroleum organisations such as OPEC and OAPEC. A number of rare private commercial reports on water and oil issues in the Gulf and Jordan is also available.

Political and sociological material is well represented in form of censuses and the newsletters of political parties and opposition groups, human rights pamphlets and grey literature on the Arab-Israel conflict and conditions in Palestine and Israel. AWDU also houses the Davis Collection, which contains 2600 volumes of books, 600 pamphlets and 400 volumes/boxes of periodicals mainly dealing with the Arab-Israeli conflict.

The Unit also holds much archival and historical material on the Arab Gulf from the mid-18th century onwards, such as the Bombay Diaries (16,000 selected photocopied pages from 1778 to 1820), as well as

microfilms from British, American, Indian, French and Portuguese government archives and around 500 volumes of reproduced documents from the British Public Records Office published by Archive Editions. There are also important collections of private papers and diaries, as well as microfiche holdings of documents on Palestine during the Mandate period and after 1948.

Press and media coverage of the Arab world consists of a classified press-cuttings collection on microfiche covering 1952 to 1982, the press-cuttings file of the Council for the Advancement of Arab-British Understanding (CAABU) 1967-2000, the BBC Summary of World Broadcasts (1955-2000 - Middle East section), Mid-East Mirror (1987-) and Arab Press Service (1979-). The Unit also holds extensive runs of newspapers from the Arab Gulf in hardcopy and on microfilm.

5.3. Collection Development Policy

Since its inception in 1981, and until today, the Documentation Unit has been operating without any written collection development policy. Although an implied policy was in use, its concepts and technical aspects were not clear.

The Unit always depended heavily on donated materials. In the past, there was a tendency to collect almost anything that came in, and not to pursue specific material which was of particular importance (Niblock, 2002). With the growth of institutions in Arab countries and the development of publications in a variety of media, the need for a much more focused policy and a sustained, discriminating acquisition process became obvious. Material which is more ephemeral and of less value was not to receive the same attention as before (Mahdi, 2002)

The first attempt to draft a written policy was undertaken in August 1997 when Paul Auchterlonie, the Middle East Librarian, was assigned to write a plan for GDU which consisted of 6 sections in 5 pages comprising purpose, functions, acquisition, cataloguing and classification, processing, resources management and personnel management. Should the Unit keep everything it collects or is given? What material should the Unit acquire? Auchterlonie raised these and other critical questions in his proposed plan. Forbes underlined the importance of precisely defining the main active and secondary collecting areas in relation to other UK collections. In this respect I would like to point to the crucial role of MELCOM UK (Middle East Libraries Committee) in facilitating and encouraging the co-ordination of acquisitions of materials on and from the Middle East by UK libraries, in order to make best use of scarce resources, to ensure that the fullest possible coverage is achieved in the UK as a whole, and to avoid unnecessary duplication of holdings. (MELCOM , 2002)

5.3.1. Scope of collection

Geographical scope: has been changed from Gulf countries, broadly defined as countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq and Iran, to encompass all Arab countries as a result of changing the name of the Gulf Documentation Unit to the Arab World Documentation Unit in July 2001. This name change was undertaken by the Director of IAIS, who in the interview with the researcher justified this as a necessary step to meet the needs resulting from the expansion of the research interests in the Institute. For some time before the name change, GDU had continued to acquire material from countries of the region outside of the Arabian Gulf. Keeping the old name would have meant downgrading the importance of the other material. At the same time, the name Middle

East Documentation Unit was considered to be too broad, as it would encompass, in addition to the countries of the Arab world, countries like Turkey, Iran and Israel. In order to keep the geographical and language scope within sustainable limits, the Unit was named Arab World Documentation Unit. (Niblock, 2002).

On the other hand Forbes (2000) maintained that the focus should continue to be on the Gulf countries, as well as on expanding the already strong collections on Palestine, oil, energy and Islamic banking. So she was mainly thinking of a subject expansion not a geographical one. However she also suggested collecting statistical abstracts of all Arab states and general economic and political material relating to the Middle East as a whole. Material in AWDU on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is still a grey area, as it overlaps with the Old Library collections. The GDU had been systematically collecting material on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, at a time when there was a Palestine Studies Unit and Uri Davis was a research fellow at the Institute with special interest in this topic (Auchterlonie, 2002). AWDU also holds the Uri Davis special collection, and the microfiche holdings of historical documents on Palestine. This stock needs to be revised on the basis of AWDU's objectives.

Language scope: Because most of the material collected comes from the countries involved, the language scope is basically English and Arabic. The Unit does not aim to collect monographs on the countries of the Arab Gulf published in other countries, e.g. in France, Germany, or Italy (Auchterlonie, 2002). Where publications are available in both English and Arabic, preference is given to the English language material, as it is more heavily used by AWDU users. Material on the region

published in other European languages is acquired selectively, as in the case of North African countries (Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco and Mauritania) where the French language is widely used alongside the Arabic language. Accordingly, one of the first measures taken by the University Library after the management transfer was hiring a librarian and an assistant with Arabic and French skills.

Subject scope: includes material on agriculture, anthropology, archaeology, arts, communication and media, development, economics, education, environmental sciences, history, human rights, industries, international relations, law, politics and government, science and technology, sociology and women. Arabic literature and Islamic studies are excluded.

Chronological scope: emphasis is placed on material from the birth of the first independent Arab nation states in the 1950s until the present day.

Formats: include monographs, maps, serials, newspapers, microforms, videotapes, posters, photographs, CD-ROMs and archival material. The archival material still constitute a grey area which needs to be resolved, since archives often need to be kept in stable environmental conditions.

Publication Dates: the content data range from 1950 to present. The emphasis of acquisition activities is on recent imprints in the Arab world. Whenever possible, retrospective materials, on electronic format or on microform, are added.

Types of materials:

- Include official publications, public records, scholarly books, reports, statistics, monographic series, serials, newspapers, proceedings, facsimiles, reprints, government documents, microforms, visual material and electronic media.
- Exclude textbooks, classical texts, special collections, commercial books, manuscripts and translations into Arabic.

5.3.2. *Acquisition*

The GDU sought to collect documentation covering all aspects of the Arab Gulf area and many other Middle East topics such as Palestine, Israel and the Arab-Israeli conflict, concentrating primarily on non-commercial publications from governments, and from international and regional agencies, as well as the publications of commercial bodies: central banks, companies, etc, and political and academic institutions. This acquisition policy gave the collection great strengths in statistical data, developmental plans and reports, official gazettes, social policy, administrative, municipal, financial, economic, and commercial affairs, petroleum and energy studies, history and politics.

The broadening of the remit to the whole of the Arab world proved to be unsustainable with the same cost and effort as before. The AWDU Librarian raised this question in a meeting held with Dr. Kamil Mahdi from the IAIS and Paul Auchterlonie, the Middle East Librarian. It was decided that, in addition to the material previously collected by the GDU, emphasis would now be placed on region-wide material, particularly publications of regional organisations, as well as a skeleton of statistical material from the individual Arab countries.

Acquisition of AWDU material should be systematic according to the nature and type of the collection. This could apply to official gazettes, annual reports and statistical abstracts. Other material like books and periodicals would be checked against the publication lists of research centres and organisations in the Arab World, other specialised research centres and international organisations.

Occasionally when a lot of material is received, a selection procedure is applied to distinguish between material which fits within the collection scope and that would be retained, material to be relegated to other interested libraries⁷, and discardable material which would not be of the interest to AWDU or other libraries.

AWDU emphasis is on primary resources which are mostly in monograph format. However, similar to organisations such as UN agencies which have started publishing reports and statistics online for downloading, several governmental institutions in the Arab world now make their publications available online.

A strategy should be devised to archive this material and a mechanism developed such as an intranet acquisition gateway to ensure a systematic downloading of outstanding material, especially since it is expected for this trend to grow along the lines of the commercial sector. Dedicated PCs should be set aside for browsing the material in electronic format. A systematic backup of electronic format should be arranged.

⁷ Priority is given to the Old Library, but material may also be relegated to other University of Exeter libraries or MELCOM UK libraries.

5.3.3. Cooperation in Collection Development

A 2002 report by the Higher Education Consultancy Group to RSLP underscored the importance of collaboration between libraries: “There appears to be broad agreement that the dual pressures of cost inflation and volume of materials have brought libraries to the point where none can realistically aim to collect and hold all materials that users require. Interest in exploring the potential for a collaborative approach to these problems – rationalisation of acquisitions, retention and storage, preservation, digitisation, etc. – is therefore increasing” (Higher Education Consultancy Group, 2002).

Most of the literature consulted on joint working between libraries does not make a clear distinction between the terms “cooperation”, “collaboration” and “resource sharing”. In the report referred to above, however, these and other terms are clearly defined: Cooperation is used to identify a basic level of working together, and is in practice weaker than collaboration, which involves “a conscious and shared approach to planning, implementing and reviewing aspects of library services”. Partnership is “a more formal and explicit approach to collaboration, often involving key roles and responsibilities being determined at the outset”. Finally, resource sharing “involves the sharing of resources, whether finance, staffing, services, accommodation and infrastructural support, or collections”. The report went further to define deep resource sharing as the stage in which “institutional autonomy in service provision is in some degree surrendered, and which involves some degree of risk” (Higher Education Consultancy Group, 2002).

Within the MELCOM UK Area Specialisation Scheme, the countries of the Middle East were divided into groups which were then allocated to

particular UK libraries. These libraries agreed to collect in greater depth lesser-used materials on and from those countries, in order to enable detailed research on any area in at least one academic library in Britain, while avoiding unnecessary duplication of materials. Nonetheless the scheme is flexible enough to allow each of the participating libraries to collect a sufficient range of materials on all areas to meet their own teaching and research needs. (MELCOM, 2002)

Within the framework of cooperation in collection development between Middle East libraries in Britain, the GDU had sent its Sudan collection to the Middle East Documentation Unit, University of Durham. At that time, the GDU largely depended on donated material and gifts, which occasionally included material not related to countries of the Arabian Peninsula, such as the Sudan collection.

In the report to RSLP, the MELCOM UK Area Specialisation Scheme was cited as an example of voluntary subject-based arrangements, which is one kind of joint library activities currently in existence. The report goes on to cast doubt on the effectiveness of voluntary initiatives, calling upon the RSLG and funding bodies to consider the case for central action and associated incentives.

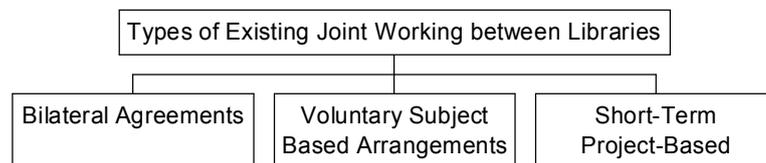


Figure 5: Types of Existing Joint Working between Libraries

The report to RSLP discusses the barriers to resource sharing extensively, and distinguishes between four kinds of barriers: General

factors concerning the lack of priority given to library development, the lack of demand for change from academic staff and researchers, specific barriers associated with sharing resources in the main library functions and non-specific factors associated with the management of change. In our case, we are particularly concerned with the specific barriers, which among other things encompass collection development and management.

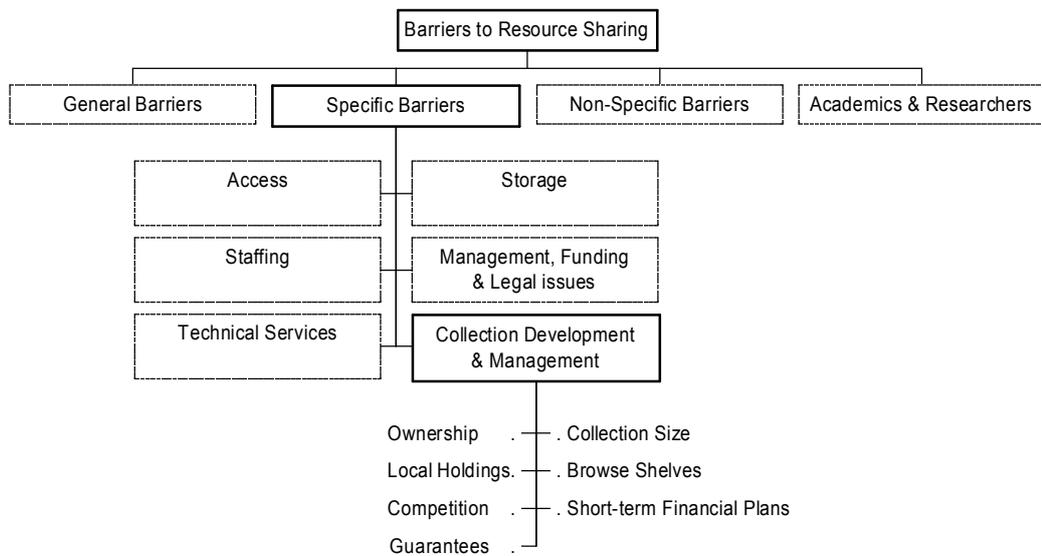


Figure 6: Barriers to Resource Sharing

According to the report, numerous barriers to successful deep resource sharing exist within libraries in the area of collection development and management: Libraries still attach great importance to their ownership of research resources as well as the size of their collections, which is still considered an indicator of library performance and institutional status. Moreover, many academics claim to need local holdings which they can browse on open shelves. Another barrier is the fact that, by sharing their resources with other institutions regarded as “competitors”, libraries

often feel that they have lost their competitive edge. Finally, resource sharing agreements often involve long-term commitments, which may conflict with the short-term financial projections.

As a documentation unit with the basic role of documenting material, AWDU needs to own the material to make it available for researchers whenever they need it. It is therefore our view that AWDU should not take steps towards deep resource sharing. However, cooperative collection development activities may be necessary within a national strategy for Middle Eastern collections.

Collaborative projects should be stated as a library objective and provided for in the collection management policy, in order to be able to take into account their implications and effects on the diverse aspects of collection management as well as financial matters.

5.4. Budget Allocation

To start with, the budget is moderate despite the great expectations from AWDU and the ambitious broadening of the remit to the Arab world. The budget used to be allocated for subscriptions to journals, newspapers and newsletters, and some monograph series such as country reports. Figure 7 shows the budget allocation for the year 2002, which does not reflect the acquisition priorities described above and agreed upon by the liaison librarian and the IAIS academic staff coordinator. This is obviously an indication of a confusion of concepts and responsibilities, owing to the following reasons:

- The University library's budget comes from the different schools and departments of the University. The contribution of the IAIS is

allocated to both the AWDU and the Old Library, without any clarity of how the contribution should be split between them.

- Almost half of the AWDU budget is used to acquire journals and newsletters requested by IAIS academic staff to support their research and course needs, although this material should be acquired on the Old Library budget, since the mission of the AWDU is to carry out documentation of material issued by Arab organisations, governmental and intergovernmental agencies, and to support research, not teaching, activities within AWDU's collection scope, which was defined to reflect the strategic role.
- Furthermore 30% of the AWDU budget is spent on country reports published in the UK, which are secondary resources available in a number of libraries around the UK and the Arab world, and should also be acquired by the Old Library if necessary. The AWDU should focus on primary resources and reference material not easily found elsewhere.

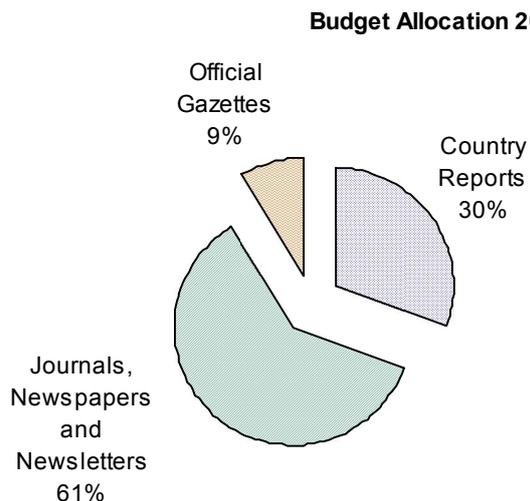


Figure 7: AWDU budget allocation 2002

Priorities should be set according to the importance of the material. Initially, a part of the budget should be dedicated for the basic material or primary resources such as official gazettes, strategic plans, reports and statistical abstracts. Journals, newsletters, non-commercial books and other relevant publications would be added sparingly until sufficient funding is provided to AWDU.

5.5. Collection Evaluation

The simplest aim behind collection evaluation is to satisfy the needs of present and potential users (Law, 1999, p. 25). The purpose of collection evaluation is, moreover, to ensure that the collection is being developed in line with the collection management policy. Evaluation could involve some bias, but this could be reduced by using a combination of collection-centred and user-centred techniques and objective data. Each of these techniques has particular strengths and weaknesses, and one is often used in order to compensate for the other (Gorman, 2000, p. 311).

The user-centred technique was applied in two separate questionnaires⁸ targeting two different groups, the students and the faculty. These questionnaires were designed to reflect the utility of the collection. A statistical method was adopted to assess the quality and importance of each section of the collection and to evaluate the entire AWDU collection from the users' point of view⁹. Measuring the actual usage of AWDU is problematic, since there is no policy of circulation and all material is for reference or internal use only. The introduction of a barcode system might provide a solution, whereby each item used in AWDU would be registered as internal borrowing by scanning the barcode into the library integrated system (LIS). Visitors statistics confirm that the Documentation Unit does not have as many users as the Old Library, which makes the registration of used items through the LIS reasonable¹⁰. Statistical data on the size, subject and other objective data can be generated by the LIS. However, "circulation studies generally measure success rather than failure. They tell us what the users have found and 'used', not what they have failed to find". (Gorman, 2000, p. 315)

Collection-centred evaluation consists largely of quantitative measures applied to the collection itself, rather than the use of the collection. One of its most widely used tools is checklisting, i.e. comparing the collection against an authoritative list (Dennison, 2000, p.24). Because of the nature of the material in AWDU, which consists largely of monograph series such as statistical abstracts, annual reports, the Archives Editions, official gazettes, etc, the collection can be checked against the complete sets of

⁸ See appendix II for the questionnaire samples.

⁹ See chapter 6: p. 56, 62 for the discussion and analysis of the collection evaluation.

¹⁰ In 2002 the average number of AWDU visitors was 135 persons per month.

particular series. Other material like books and periodicals would be checked against the publication lists of research centres and organisations in the Arab World, other specialised research centres and international organisations. A standardised collection evaluation methodology which would apply for other documentation units and research libraries in the UK would determine the collections' strengths and weaknesses. This would highlight potential areas of collaborative projects.

5.6. Stock Organisation

The previous system of organisation was designed to keep all publications related to a particular country together regardless of type or format. Periodicals, statistics, company reports, books, regional organisations surveys, official gazettes, individual articles etc. of each country were all kept together in one section. Within the country they were divided into three sections: public sector, private sector and international section. These were further arranged according to a predetermined set of subjects, i.e. publications on administration would be shelved together, followed by agriculture, commerce, industry and so on. Within each subject division material was then arranged by the name of the publishing institution, organisation or department, followed by a suffix identifying the type of publication (e.g. STA for statistics, REP for reports, etc.). As a result, the classmark was very complicated and not compatible with the bibliographic fields of the LIS. For example, a classmark would be: A/BAH/1/AGRI/BMF/STA.

The drawbacks of this system were the following:

- It had a rigid set of predetermined subjects, which posed problems when classifying material with a different subject matter or containing more than one subject;

- It was not user-friendly. Library staff were always asked for help to find particular material. The system of organisation was only known to the existing documentation officer (Auchterlonie, 2002).
- Even library staff had difficulties in locating and shelving material.
- There was a frequent overlapping between sections
- New acronyms and new sections had to be created for each new publishing institution, even if only one of its publications was available in GDU.
- An individual decision was always needed for the classification of each single material, especially joint publications, publications covering two or more topics or a particular region of more than one country.
- It was difficult to evaluate the collection and to discover any missing items.

AWDU collections were subsequently reorganised and restructured, and the previous classification system converted to DDC.

The philosophy of new structure and system of organisation is to be practical and efficient, compatible with LIS standards and in line with the University Library systems. A major benefit of the transfer of management was that the collection now has a much clearer, more transparent organisational structure for the material on the shelves.

A prefix was used where possible to make it easier to re-shelve items, to browse the whole collection in OPAC and to issue shelf lists.

Material with new classmarks was re-labelled. Templates were designed on a word processor for standard and efficient label printing, since labels used to be handwritten.

Systematic procedures were laid down for the gradual move from the old system to the new one to guarantee a smooth workflow and service continuation.

The reasons for the conversion to DDC were as follows:

- To integrate the AWDU collection into the University Library system,
- To ensure an easy use and access¹¹,
- To facilitate the collections evaluation and stock revision process,
- To control the collection through the LIS,
- The DDC number is used as a topic identifier in the bibliographic record.

The reasons for reorganising and restructuring the AWDU collection:

- I think from the outset the problem was that it was organised in a good way but it wasn't professionally organised
- To prevent the overlap between sections,
- To ensure an easy use and access,
- To facilitate the collections evaluation process,
- To enable the stock review, retention and relegation process.

As a result of the new system, the AWDU collections now consists of the following sections:

The Arab Countries Collections: The Arab Countries Collections, arranged by country, cover the official publications, reports, statistics,

¹¹ See appendix I: figure 16 p. A4

researches and legislation issued by governmental and non-governmental institutions such as universities, research centres and institutes in the Arab countries or their representatives in other countries. Within each country, the classmark for each item consists of three parts: A prefix (almost always the first 3 letters of the country, in accordance with a scheme), the DDC number (which identifies the topic), a suffix (3 or 6 letters from a title keyword/s) and the year (if applicable). This classmark guarantees that the publications of each country are kept together on the shelf and, within each country, arranged according to the topic. The suffix will distinguish between publications with the same DDC number. On the LIS, this classmark allows us to round up all publications within the country section, and to issue a shelf list for each section for the purpose of shelf reading.

The classmark of the Establishments Census issued in Kuwait in the year 1992 would look like this:

KUW
315.367
EST-STA
1992

The Official Gazettes: used to be kept within the country collection. Under the new system they are now kept separate due to the growing number of incoming official gazettes, and also to preserve the unity of this collection. They are arranged by country and by the original series number. The classmark consists of: the letters “GAZ” followed by 3 letters from the country name, DDC number and the year of work, e.g.:

GAZ/BAH
340.095365
1999

The Periodicals Section: includes more than 300 titles in English, Arabic and French issued in Arab countries or other countries through Arab institutions or interested institutions. A local classmark has been devised to consist of the prefix “Per”, and a unique set composed of a letter and a number generated from the title.

Per

B795.31

Periodicals are arranged according to the classmark, reflecting the alphabetical arrangement of the titles. The classmark has to be generated from the Latin title or the transliterated version of the original title.

The Press Cuttings Collections: include the MEPEP Press Cuttings (1967-1985) which are divided into broad subject categories, with sections on the 4th Arab-Israeli war, The Camp David Summit and Arab reactions, and the Middle East Political Situation. Moreover, there are press cuttings donated by Michael Adams and Hugh Mowat (1977-2000) which are divided into subject files to include: Progress towards Peace 1977, Lebanon, Human Rights, the Israeli election 1988, the Intifada 1987-88, and many more recent files.

Books Collection: covers economic, social, financial and political subjects on the Arab World published by government departments, organisations or institutions. The collection is arranged according to DDC followed by a suffix, e.g.:

338.10953

ICA

The Theses Collection: includes various topics related to the Arab countries. In accordance with the University Library System, the classmark consists of the prefix “Thesis”, the year of publication and the first three letters of the author’s last name:

Thesis
1979
ERO

The Microform Collection: includes “Arab Microfiche Institute” press cuttings (1955-1982) and the “Middle East in the World Press” (1955-1982). This collection is arranged by country, followed by the subject, and then chronologically. The classmark consists of the prefix “MFch” for microfiche and “Mfil” for microfilm, followed by the acronym of the country and the acronym of the subject. The year could be added if applicable¹².

MFch/Kuw/Tra.1965-86
Mfil/Pal/UPA-1

Archive Editions: The Unit holds most of the volumes relevant to the Arab Gulf region, containing British documents up to 1963. This substantial collection is arranged by country, then according to DDC and kept separately from the book collection.

Gulf Information Project Collection: This was set up in 1991 to monitor the humanitarian effects of the Iraq - Kuwait war, and includes international reports and documents, press cuttings files, etc. The project was continued until 1995, and the complete archive was then sent to

¹² This classmark has not been updated from the previous system. It is still under revision.

Exeter. Some updating material has been added since. This collection is still under the previous system of classmark and is now under review.

Bombay Diaries Series (1780 - 1820): the Bombay Diaries Series are the daily records of the English East India Company's activities in India and throughout its trade routes, covering commerce and the company's involvement in administration, politics and war. The extracts held at AWDU (16000 pages), consisting of photocopies and typed transcripts in their original chronological arrangement, were selected for their relevance to the Arabian Peninsula and the sea- routes around it.

The International and Regional Organisations Collection: includes statistics, yearbooks, reports, guides and surveys issued by regional or international organisations and dealing with the Arab countries, Middle East, Gulf or North Africa. This collection has been arranged by organisation, then by DDC, a suffix and the year if applicable.

AMF
336.34350956
SIY

The Uri Davis collection: This collection covers the Arab-Israeli conflict, and consists of books, pamphlets and periodicals in English, Arabic and Hebrew. It is arranged according to DDC. The classmark consists of "Davis" as a prefix, a DCC number and a suffix.

DAVIS
956.049
GEN

The Newspapers: include Arabic, English and French language newspapers issued in Arab countries or other countries through Arab

institutions or groups. This collection is kept in the newspapers section and arranged alphabetically according to the title. This section currently has 13 titles bearing the classmark “Newspapers Section”.

The Petroleum Section: includes annual reports, reviews, statistics, market trends and prices, energy profiles, conference proceedings, directories, yearbooks and guides from government sources, petroleum companies and international and regional petroleum organisations. This collection is arranged according to DDC. The classmark consists of the prefix “PET” followed by the DDC number and a suffix.

PET
301.31
SHE-PPP

The Media Reports Section: consists of analytical reports on media releases in Arab countries, such as radio channels, newspapers, governmental press releases, etc. This collection is arranged according to the service provider acronym, then chronologically. The classmark consists of the prefix “MR” followed by the service provider acronym and the year.

MR
SWB
1955

The CAABU Collection: (Council for the Advancement of Arab British Understanding) is a press cuttings collection covering the years since 1967. This substantial collection of newspaper cuttings from the British press on the Middle East has been arranged chronologically and collated in book form.

Video Tapes Collection: includes various topics related to the Arab countries. This collection is arranged according to DDC. The classmark consists of the prefix “Video” followed by DDC.

Video
297.63
GUE

A floor plan has recently been designed to illustrate the new organisation and structure of the collection. It has been published on AWDU website and the AWDU brochure for the year 2002/3.

5.7. Stock Relegation and Disposal

Stock relegation and disposal is undertaken for a number of reasons, such as expanding collections, limited space, deteriorating and obsolete materials, budget constraints, changing user needs, and shifting institutional and programmatic goals (Williams, 1999, p.209). The main concern in AWDU’s stock relegation and disposal policy is the provision of space. Since AWDU’s main role is to build a strong and unique resource base which would be of value to researchers in the future (Mahdi, 2002) and to do documentation for strategic material that is unique in the UK and probably in Europe, material does not become obsolete, nor should it be bound to changing user needs and institutional goals.

At the time of GDU there was no concept of stock revision, relegation and disposal as a systematic procedure. There were however some cases of relegation, as in the case of the Sudan collection which was sent to the Middle East Documentation Unit, Durham University, since this material did not fit within the scope of collection at that time. Having

said that, the GDU kept some sections which did not fit within the collection scope, such as the section on the Palestine-Israeli conflict.

Since GDU consisted to a great extent of donated material, much of which did not fit in the scope of the collection, the process of AWDU reorganisation and restructuring also involved a stock revision for three purposes: disposal, relegation and retention.

“I would only consider disposal of material if it fell outside the existing profile, or was duplicated already within the Unit. But otherwise I would consider that relegation would be the option rather than disposal”. (Auchterlonie, 2002).

Systematic procedures for relegation have been followed for the newspaper collection. Any material older than one year is gradually taken off the shelf and put in storage. Since newspapers coming from the Arab Countries do not arrive at the same day, while they are mostly available on the Internet, it might be worth acquiring them on CD ROM on a monthly basis from the newspaper publishers.

5.8. Presentation of Collection

In the user questionnaire deployed within the framework of this study students were asked how they learned about AWDU¹³. The answers to this question reflected the great importance of the role of academic staff in encouraging their students to use AWDU, since 42% of students reported that they learned about AWDU from academic staff. This is also an important indication that the AWDU librarian needs to regularly update academic staff on AWDU collections and services, which would

¹³ See Appendix I: Figure 15, p. A2.

be reflected on students' awareness of AWDU collections and services. Students also reported that they were informed about AWDU mainly through "Conversations with AWDU staff", "Fellow students", and "Workshop/orientation". These results indicate that the means that were used to present the collections and services to IAIS students were successful.

However, since AWDU has aimed to become a leading national and international information resource in its field, a number of steps needed to be taken to further promote the collection on local, national and international levels.

A new brochure introducing the AWDU, its collections and services, and the means of accessing them was designed, published and sent in the correspondences with other institutions and organisations.

In March 2002 a teaching seminar on AWDU collections and services was held at the Islamic Foundation in Leicester. A presentation on AWDU was delivered to the international MELCOM conference in Paris in May 2002 attended by Middle East librarians from around the world.

Articles were published about the new look of AWDU and its services and collections in BRISMES¹⁴ newsletter, Extra newsletter¹⁵ and The Line newsletter¹⁶.

¹⁴ The British Society for Middle Eastern Studies

¹⁵ The University of Exeter newsletter

¹⁶ The University Library newsletter

The AWDU website has been restructured, redesigned and updated on a regular basis for the purpose of marketing the collection and services by increasing the traffic to the website.

The aim of these promotion activities is not only to increase the number of AWDU users, but also to extend AWDU services beyond its current primary users, the academics, to attract a wider range of other, non-academic users, particularly from the business community. With the increase of representatives from the business sector making use of the Unit's services, charges could then be levied for the services provided, thus generating income for AWDU (Makooi, 1994, p.251).

6. QUESTIONNAIRES DISCUSSION & ANALYSIS

The primary aims of the questionnaires deployed within the framework of this study was to elicit information on user attitudes and perceptions and to measure user satisfaction, and to conduct a user-centred evaluation of AWDU services and collection. The faculty questionnaire further had the function of recording the nature of the liaison between them and the AWDU librarian as well as the role of AWDU in supporting research programmes within its scope. The goal was to incorporate the data obtained into the process of collection management and the design of a collection management policy.

Both questionnaires focused on the use and evaluation of AWDU collections and services. For the complete findings of the individual questions, please refer to Appendix I.

6.1. Students Questionnaire

21% of the total population responded to this questionnaire. The population consisted of the IAIS students, both postgraduates and undergraduates. External users and other University of Exeter students were excluded. The low response rate of undergraduate students¹⁷ reflects the limited usage of AWDU by undergraduates, since AWDU does not acquire textbooks. On the other hand 35% of postgraduate students have responded to the questionnaire which indicates their frequent use of

¹⁷ See Appendix I: Figure 14 “Respondents of Student Questionnaire” p. A1

AWDU and might be an indication of the level of interest in AWDU collections among them. This percentage can be considered adequate since the postgraduates' research interests encompass Middle Eastern Studies, Islamic studies and Arabic literature, while the AWDU collection covers the Middle East with exclusion of Islamic studies and Arabic literature.

6.1.1. Collection Evaluation

When asked to what extent the AWDU collections/ materials meet their research/ course needs, the weighted average of rating given by students was 2.98 on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1= not at all and 6= to a great extent. When rating the importance of the availability of these collections/ materials to their research/ course needs, the weighted average of rating was 2.67.

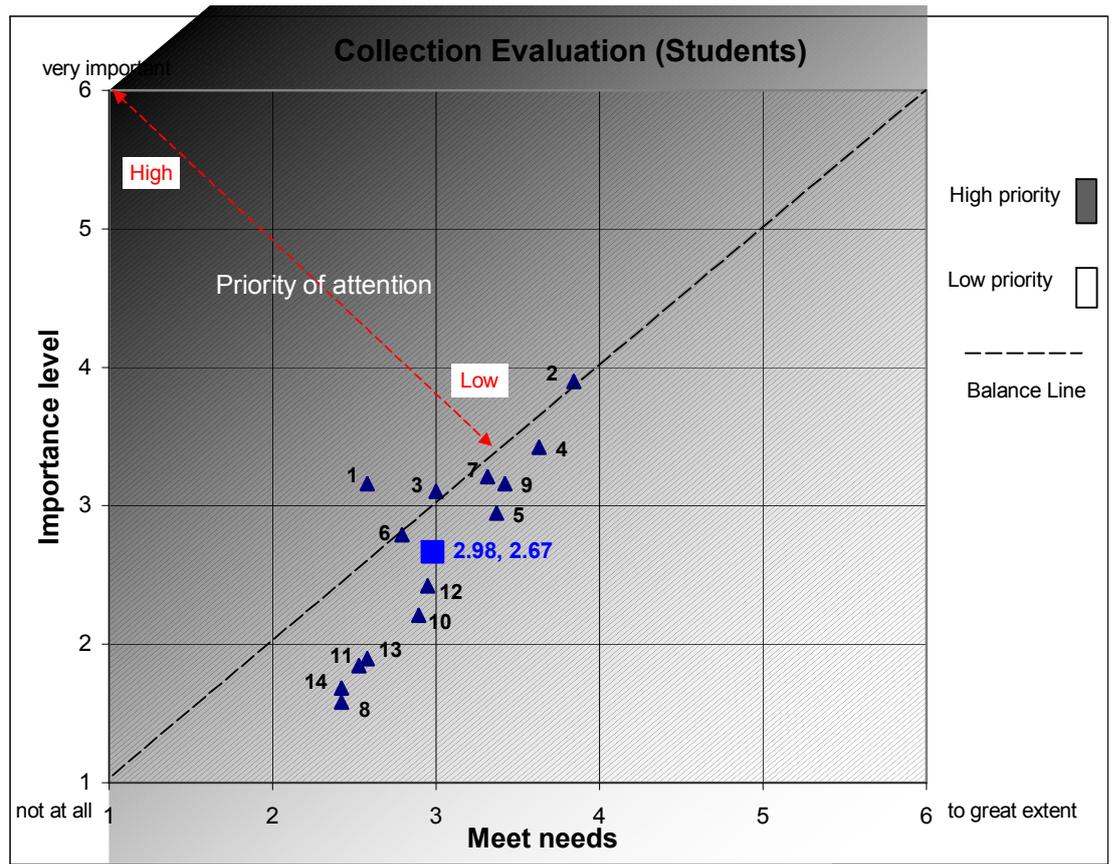


Figure 8: Collection Evaluation by Students

The above chart shows the relation between how important a collection is to students and to what extent to which it meets their needs. I assumed that when the rating of the importance of the collection equals the extent to which it meets students' needs, it can be considered to be on an imaginary "balance" line extending from 1,1 to 6,6. The collections falling in the area above the balance line (where importance > meet needs) would need more attention to meet the needs of the students. The priority of attention would become higher, the bigger the distance from the balance line. The collections falling in the area below the balance line (where meet needs > importance) would be functioning well since they

meet the needs of the user in relation to their importance. However, even these collections could require further development to meet the needs of users on the national level. The chart shows that most of the AWDU collections fall on or below the balance line, which indicates a reasonable functioning of the collections. The overall average rating of the importance of the collections and the extent to which the collections meet students' needs is below the balance line (2.98, 2.67 respectively). These relatively low ratings are acceptable due to the fact that AWDU is a special collection which does not support teaching programmes but is mainly concerned with primary and governmental sources.

The students were further asked to rate their satisfaction with the collections. 79% of the students rated the AWDU collections as satisfactory or very satisfactory. 16% of the students reported that they do not make use of the collection, while 5% of the students were not satisfied with the collection. These ratings confirm the results of the collections evaluation, according to which the collections meet the students' needs to a great extent in relation to their importance.

It is worth mentioning that the periodicals collection was given the highest rating in both the question of importance (3.89) and the extent it meets the students' needs (3.84). This could reflect AWDU's unique connections in the Middle East which enable it to receive large numbers of periodicals from the region on a regular basis, many of which would not be available for sale through commercial channels. It is consequently vital to maintain these relations with Middle East institutions to guarantee a continuation of AWDU's mission. On the other hand, the Bombay diaries were given the lowest rating in both questions (1.58 and

2.42, respectively). This archival material is very specialised, therefore it cannot be expected to be of interest to a great number of students.

6.1.2. Student satisfaction

To record student satisfaction, students were asked about each individual service offered by AWDU, such as helpfulness of the AWDU staff, competence of the AWDU staff, the library catalogue, photocopying facilities, provision of microform readers, provision of computers, organisation of AWDU materials on the shelves, etc., followed by a question on the overall services, the results of which are shown in the chart below.

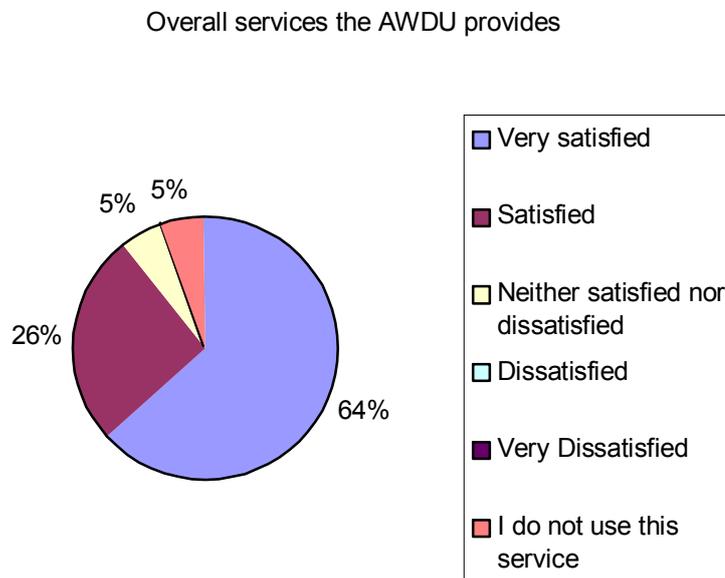


Figure 9: Students' satisfaction with overall services

In rating the overall services the AWDU provides, 64% the students reported that they were very satisfied and 26% were satisfied. 5% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and another 5% reported that they do

not use AWDU services. This question was designed to measure the overall satisfaction with AWDU services by posing it directly to the students.

As opposed to the previous chart, the chart below was designed to reflect the overall satisfaction with AWDU services by adding up the responses to each individual service. In this case, those who did not use a particular service were not taken into consideration. Only slight differences can be noticed between the two charts, which suggests that this chart is to a great extent an accurate illustration of the students' overall services evaluation.

Total Evaluation of students' satisfaction

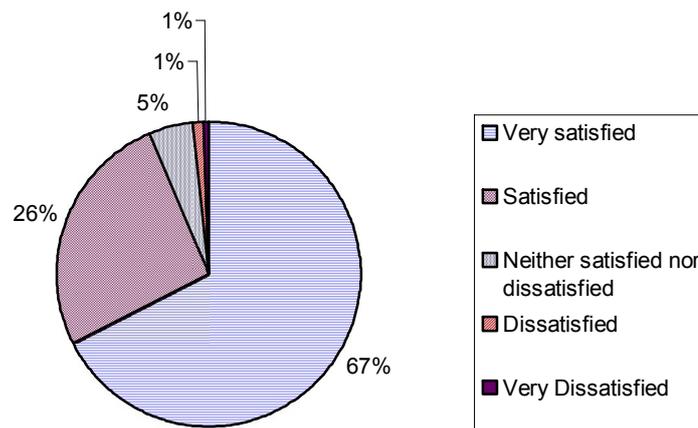


Figure 10: Total evaluation of students' satisfaction

6.1.3. Suggestions

The suggestions touched upon collections and services and were partly significant in terms of collection management. 35% of the respondents suggested acquiring more electronic materials. This point could be controversial, since the main purpose of AWDU is to do documentation, i.e. to own the material it is documenting. It might therefore not be adequate to subscribe to electronic journals or databases online which may not be available in the future. Acquiring materials in CD ROM, on the other hand, may be the right action to take in the electronic age.

Written responses to “Other suggestions” included the transfer of relevant books from the Old Library to AWDU. The difference between AWDU and the Old Library still does not seem to be clear to a number of students, as both libraries have a similar specialisation. This implies that more workshops are needed to explain AWDU’s role and objectives. Having a clear mission statement, aims and objective would help in that case and others.

Suggestions by Students

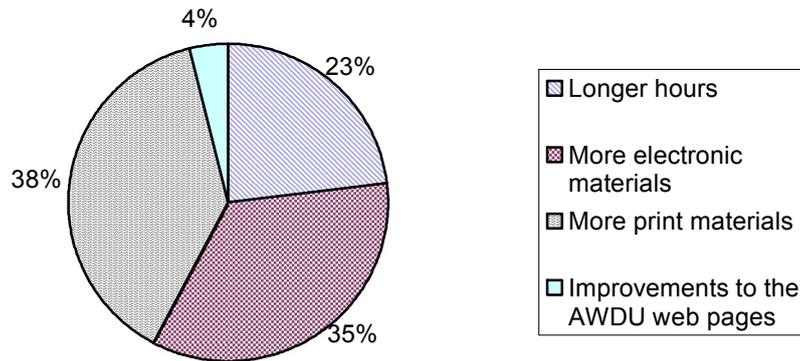


Figure 11: Suggestions by Students

6.2. Faculty Questionnaire

57% of the total population of faculty responded to this questionnaire. This relatively high response rate reflects their interest in AWDU and a desire to contribute to AWDU's development.

6.2.1. Collection Evaluation:

When faculty were asked to what extent the AWDU collections/ materials meet their research needs, and how important the availability of these collections/ materials are to their research needs, the overall average rating was 2.88 and 2.82, respectively.

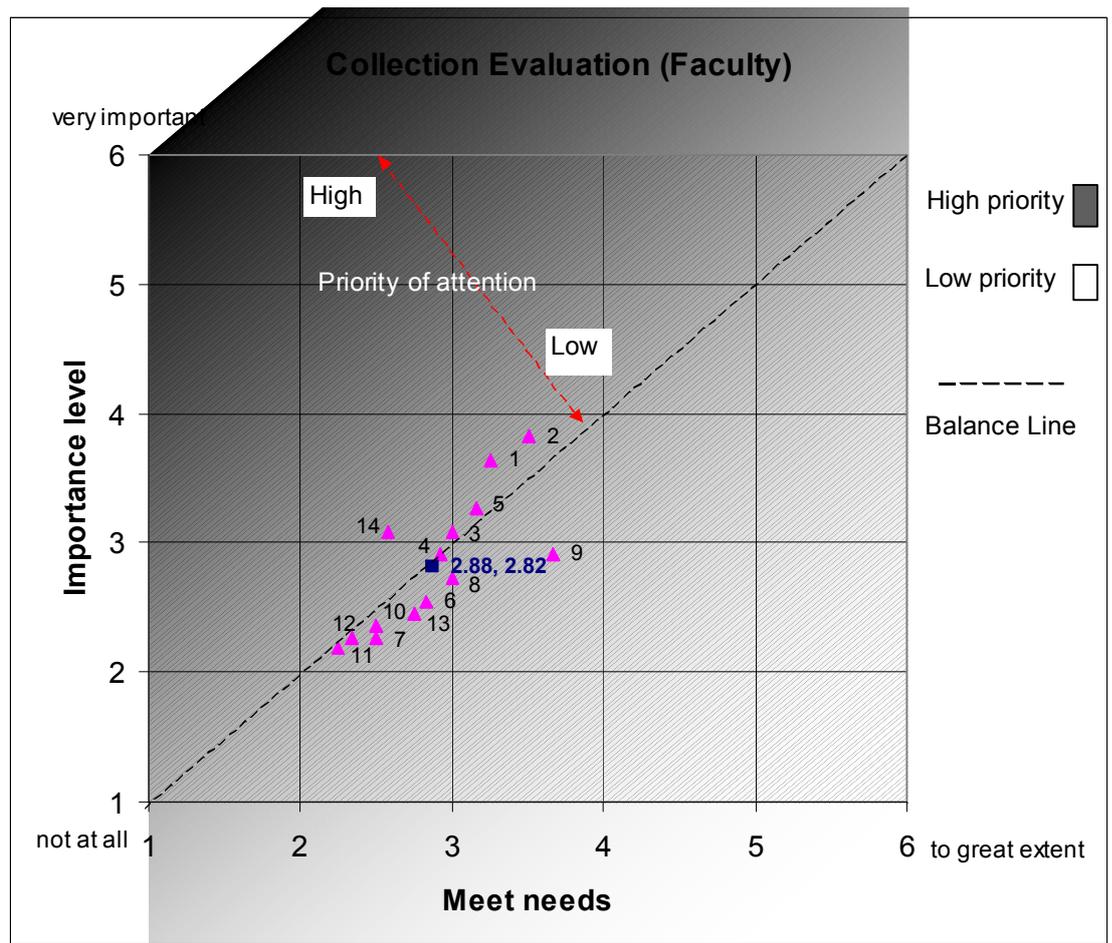


Figure 12: Collection Evaluation by Faculty

The faculty rating is slightly different from the students' rating (2.98, 2.67) with more AWDU collections in the faculty survey falling above the balance line where importance > meet needs, which means that the collections would need more attention to meet the needs of the faculty. The priority of attention becomes higher, the bigger the distance from the balance line¹⁸. This means that more attention would be needed for the books, periodicals, country collection, international and regional

¹⁸ Discussed in Chapter 6.1.3.

organisation publications, and video collection. One explanation for the fact that more collections need attention from the faculty's point of view compared to the students may be that faculty have more in-depth knowledge of the subjects and thus have a more critical view of it. The book collection and the country collection both were above the balance line in both questionnaires. An explanation for the fact that AWDU users perceive the book collection as not adequately meeting their needs could be that AWDU does not acquire textbooks or commercial books, both of which are acquired by the Old Library, but focuses on reference books and books published by governmental departments and organisations in the Middle East. The country collection requires more attention to meet users' needs due to the broadening of the remit of AWDU from the Gulf region to all Arab countries. Extensive acquisition is still required for several Arab countries, particularly the countries of Northern Africa¹⁹.

6.2.2. Liaison with AWDU staff

50% of the respondents reported that they are frequent users of AWDU, visiting AWDU once or more a week, while the remaining faculty visit AWDU occasionally. The primary reason for visiting AWDU was reportedly to seek help from library staff. 92% of respondents stated that they have directly consulted AWDU staff at the information desk. Other means of communication (e-mail, telephone and appointments) were used by an average of 50% of the respondents. Information provided by AWDU staff was considered "useful" or "very useful" by a 100% of the respondents who used a particular service. These results reflect strong interaction between faculty and AWDU staff, which

¹⁹ See Chapter 5.3.2 for more details.

enables AWDU staff to better understand and cater for the faculty's needs, and to take these into consideration in the process of revising the collection development policy.

The questionnaire showed that faculty are still expected to play a bigger role in presenting AWDU to their students, since only 42% confirmed that they required their students to use AWDU, and 58% stated that they don't. The student questionnaire had revealed that the highest percentage of students (42%) learned about AWDU from academic staff. This confirms the importance of the role played by faculty, and the need to further enhance this role.

6.2.3. Suggestions

Faculty members were asked to make suggestions to make AWDU more effective. As in the students' questionnaire, the highest percentage of faculty (29%) suggested the acquisition of more electronic materials²⁰. 29% also suggested carrying out improvements on the AWDU website. As the questionnaire had shown that 58% of the faculty never used the AWDU website, regular improvements to the website should be carried out in conjunction with efforts to promote the website to the faculty and to keep them informed of updates and new services.

²⁰ Discussed in Chapter 6.1.3.

Suggestions by Faculty

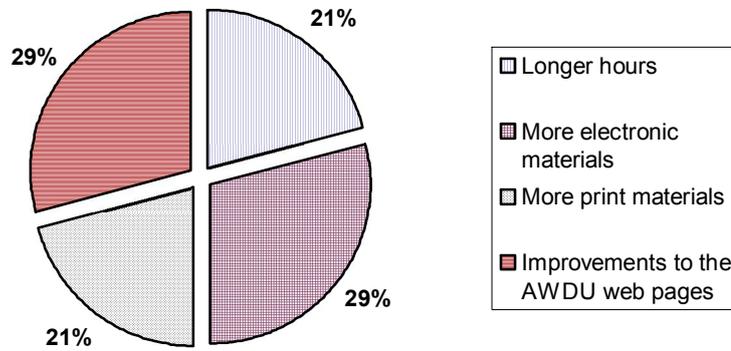


Figure 13: Suggestions by Faculty

Other suggestions included the building up of a comprehensive Arabic reference library to extend services to non-specialists. This suggestion could be developed to extend AWDU services beyond students and academics to other sectors such as the business sector. This should then be reflected in AWDU's aims and objectives, as well as in certain components of the collection management policy, such as the selection and the presentation of collections to the business sector.

7. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS & REFLECTIONS

7.1. Conclusions

This study reviewed the history of the Documentation Unit within the context of Arabic studies in the UK, as a starting point for understanding its role on the local and national levels. The Unit's collections, services and facilities were examined through selected elements of the collection management policy, thus providing a framework for the formulation of a mission statement and for a systematic maintenance and management of the collection, with the aim of defining a consistent practise for future developments.

The study highlighted two major reforms undergone by the Unit which made the need for a collection management policy crucial: The transfer of AWDU management from the IAIS to the University Library in July 2001 meant that the collections had to be reorganised in a professional manner with a clearer and more transparent structure. Library technical operations, such as cataloguing, classification and acquisition, can be discussed and resolved more efficiently within one system, where the staff has similar levels of experience and expertise in systems management and systems librarianship. The integration of the AWDU collection with the University Library system was to lead to more coordinated acquisition activities in order to avoid overlapping. Both AWDU and the Old Library are specialised in the Arab or Middle Eastern countries, although they have distinctive mission statements.

Both libraries now come under University Library management, but this has not completely prevented the overlap in acquisitions, or their participation as two separate entities in collaborative collection development projects. In addition to that, there is often confusion in budget matters due to the absence of a written comprehensive collection management policy for Middle Eastern collections.

The other major development was the change of name to AWDU and the broadened collection scope to cover all Arab countries. This had considerable implications on AWDU's mission statement, role, budget and AWDU's commitment in collaborative collection development projects. It would therefore inevitably impact the collection management policy. Despite the expanded scope, storage considerations are not expected to become pressing in the foreseeable future, since retrospective acquisition of material for the countries subject of the broadened remit will not be undertaken in hard copy. However, such material would be considered when available in microform or on CD ROM.

AWDU will continue to focus on the Gulf region which was the main area specialisation before broadening the remit to the whole Arab world, since this collection is distinctive in the UK and probably Europe. Still, a high priority will be given to a skeleton of essential material from all or major Arab countries.

The study provided a tool for a user-centred evaluation of special collections on a local level in the form of faculty and student questionnaires, which were followed by an analysis and discussion of the findings. In order to evaluate the collection on a national level, however, a collection-centred evaluation would be critical for mapping collection

strengths and weaknesses in accordance with a standardised collection evaluation methodology which would apply for other documentation units and research libraries.

The user survey showed that most of the AWDU collections are functioning reasonably well in terms of their importance to users and the extent they meet user needs. However, even these collections would require further development if AWDU aims to meet the needs of users on the national level.

The majority of students' questionnaire respondents were postgraduates, since AWDU is a special collection which is more concerned with research than with teaching programmes. The collection is mainly concerned with primary and governmental resources from the Arab countries.

The study further demonstrated that the availability of an Arabic speaking librarian is essential for various functions in the Documentation Unit, such as reference services, cataloguing and acquisition of Arabic material.

7.2. Recommendations

Following are a few recommendations addressing various aspects that should improve the practice of collection management in AWDU:

- A mission statement should be formulated to act as a basis for AWDU's collection management policy²¹.

²¹ See Chapter 4.2, p. 27.

- A comprehensive collection management policy should be devised for both the Old Library and AWDU. This would provide more transparency in the role and mission of AWDU and make the participation in national collaborative projects more effective²².
- Compliance with collaboration arrangements (e.g. the MELCOM Area Specialisation Scheme) to which AWDU has committed itself should be considered a library objective and stated in the collection management policy.²³
- Acquisition from regional and international organisations such as UN agencies, intergovernmental organisations, NGO's and associations with a wide regional remit should be enhanced.²⁴
- Some governmental institutions in the Middle East do not have a selling policy for their publications, which can make it difficult to identify and obtain them. It is consequently vital to maintain relations with these institutions, departments and organisations to guarantee that publications from the region are received on a regular basis, since a considerable part of the material is not available through bookselling channels.
- Since the departments and organisations in the Arab world publish their statistics and annual reports on the Internet for downloading, an Intranet acquisition gateway should be designed to ensure a systematic downloading of outstanding material.

²² See Chapter 5.3.1. p. 36. and Chapter 5.4. p. 42.

²³ See Chapter 5.3.3. p. 39f.

²⁴ See Chapter 5.3.2. p. 38.

- Since AWDU is receiving the newspapers from the Arab countries at least 2 days late and most of them are available online, it is worth getting them on CD on a monthly basis for instance, to save space, processing time and possibly money.²⁵
- Dissemination of information about AWDU should also be conducted through the main library system to reach students and academics in other university departments, whose research topics may be linked to the Arab world.²⁶
- AWDU should have a future plan to market its collection and information services to other sectors such as the business sector in order to be able to levy charges for the services and generate income.
- The budget needs to be expanded by 50%, not only because the budget was modest to begin with, but also to cover the broadened remit to the Arab world, despite the recommended solutions to the tight budget²⁷.
- With the broadening of the AWDU remit to cover all the Arab countries, the section on the Palestinian-Israeli conflict should be incorporated with Palestine in the country section. This should solve the problems of overlapping with the Old Library and separate subject coverage.²⁸

²⁵ See Chapter 5.7. p.53.

²⁶ See Chapter 5.8. p. 55.

²⁷ See Chapter 5.3.2. p. 38.

²⁸ See Chapter 5.3.1. p. 35.

7.3. Reflections

My research skills were improved while undertaking this study through the application of a variety of research tools and techniques, such as interviews and questionnaires.

As I started out on this study, the role of the interviews were limited to supporting questionnaires and to compensate for some of their drawbacks, such as the difficulty of obtaining a sufficient number of responses and the lack of details provided in the answers. As interviewees were selected from among the people who were instrumental in the making of AWDU and the questions were prepared, I realised the potential information that could be obtained by the interviews. Moreover, the lack of documents on the history and development of AWDU meant that other sources had to be exploited. The role of the interviews therefore shifted to elicit detailed information on various aspects of the Unit's history and development, its collections and policies.

Questionnaire response rates could have been increased if I had maintained the focus of the questions on the essential topics, which would also have simplified data interpretation. The long questionnaire and often confusing questions may have negatively impacted response rates. I should also have considered the calendar of the community I study, and conducted the user questionnaires during term time. The strengths and weaknesses of questionnaires could have been identified if the questions had been piloted more extensively.

The use of a web-based questionnaire was very efficient in reaching the population surveyed and in encouraging them to participate, thus

increasing the response rate. However, a lot of time was consumed in designing an online questionnaire by using a web editor although there is specialised software for quick survey designing, some of which is free of charge for educational purpose.

Although the samples were small, the questionnaires yielded a lot of data, some of which were not used in the dissertation. I should have reflected more carefully in advance on how the data would be interpreted and translated into trends or actions.

Nevertheless, the user surveys were very useful and practical for me personally, as it gave me a more profound insight into the users' perception of AWDU collections and services. In all, this study greatly contributed to a better understanding on my part of the history and development of the Unit within the context of Middle East studies in the UK.

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I. QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

I.1. Student Questionnaire

I.1.1. Respondents

21% of the total population have responded to this questionnaire. The low response of undergraduate students reflects the limited usage of AWDU by undergraduates. On the other hand 35% of postgraduate students have responded to the questionnaire which indicates their regular use of AWDU.

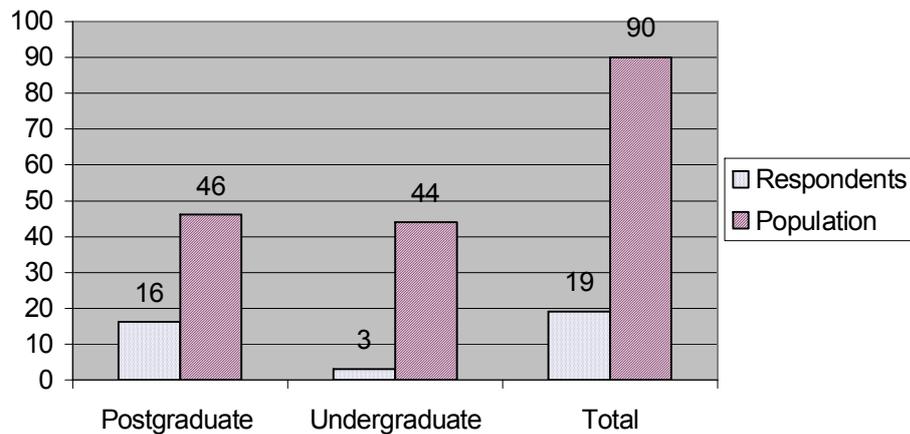


Figure 14: Respondents of Student Questionnaire

I.1.2. How did you learn about the AWDU?

The answers to this question reflect the great importance of the role of academic staff in encouraging their students to use AWDU, since 42% of students reported that they learned about AWDU from academic staff.

Students also reported that they were informed about AWDU mainly through "Conversations with AWDU staff", "Fellow students", and "Workshop/orientation".

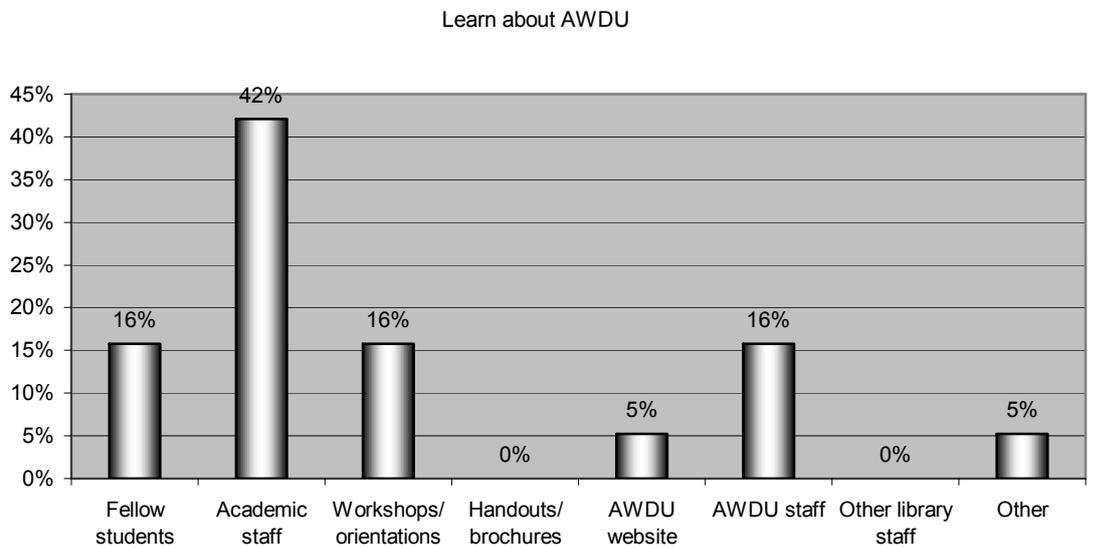


Figure 15: How students learned about AWDU

1.1.3. Collection evaluation

1.1.3.1. To what extent do AWDU collections/ materials meets your research/course needs?

1 = not at all extent 2 3 4 5 6 = to great extent

1.1.3.2. How important is the availability of these collections/ materials to your research/course needs?

1 = not at all important 2 3 4 5 6 = most important

	To what extent meets your needs						How important to you						Weighted average	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	1	2	3	4	5	6		
1. Books	2	7	7	3			2.58	3	5	3	4	2	2	3.16
2. Periodicals	2		5	5	6	1	3.84	2	1	4	5	4	3	3.89
3. Arab countries collection	4	3	5	4	2	1	3.00	4	3	5	3	2	2	3.11
4. Theses	3	2	3	5	3	3	3.63	4	3	2	4	3	3	3.42
5. Organisations collection	5	1	4	3	3	3	3.37	6	4	3		3	3	2.95
6. Official gazettes	5	3	6	2	2	1	2.79	5	5	3	3	1	2	2.79
7. Media Reports	4	2	5	3	2	3	3.32	5	3	3	2	3	3	3.21
8. Bombay diaries	8	6			4	1	2.42	11	7			1		1.58
9. Archive editions	4	3	4	1	3	4	3.42	6	3	2	2	2	4	3.16
10. Davis collection	6	4	2	1	5	1	2.89	8	4	3	3	1		2.21
11. Petroleum collection	8	4	1	2	3	1	2.53	11	5	1		1	1	1.84
12. Press cuttings	8	2	1	2	3	3	2.95	10	2	2	1	2	2	2.42
13. Microform	7	6		1	4	1	2.58	9	7	1		2		1.89
14. Video	8	4	3		3	1	2.42	11	5	2		1		1.68
Total	74	47	46	32	43	24	2.98	95	57	34	27	28	25	2.67

Table 2: Collection evaluation by students

This table reflects the students' evaluation of the collection. Due to the disparity of opinions between "not at all" to "very important"/ "to a great extent", it was necessary to determine a method to assess the quality and importance of each section of the collection and to evaluate the entire AWDU collection from the users' point of view. Different statistical methods were considered. The weighted arithmetic average was found to be the most suitable method, as it takes into account all the frequencies and values, as well as the weight of each value. The weighted average value is: $\frac{(\text{category} \times \text{frequency})}{\text{frequencies}}$.

This method could be used at a later stage when undertaking a user-centred evaluation of the collection.

When asked to what extent the AWDU collections/ materials meet their research/ course needs, the weighted average of rating given by students was 2.98 on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1= not at all and 6= to a great extent. When rating the importance of the availability of these collections/ materials to their research/ course needs, the weighted average of rating was 2.67.

The periodicals collection was given the highest rating in both the question of importance (3.89) and the extent it meets the students' needs (3.84). On the other hand, the Bombay diaries were given the lowest rating in both questions (1.58 and 2.42, respectively).

1.1.4. Have you visited the AWDU with the aim of doing any of the activities below? Please rate your success at each activity.

The evaluation of activities on the whole shows that 47% of activities were very successful, 23% were fairly successful, and 1% was very unsuccessful. 89% of students reported that they were very successful in receiving help from library staff.

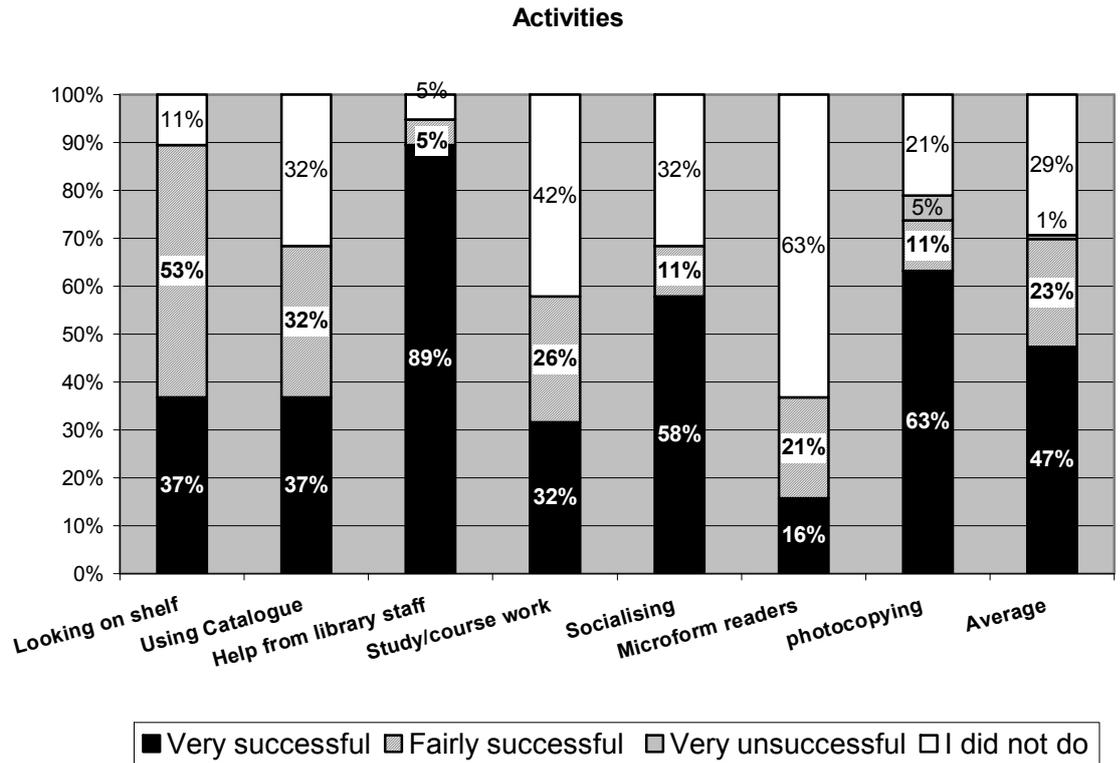


Figure 16: The evaluation of activities in AWDU by students

1.1.5. In the past year have you consulted with AWDU staff?

This table shows that most of the inquiries take place at the information desk, while inquiries by letters are rare, all the more so since this questionnaire does not cover the external users who would be expected to inquire by letter more than students who are on campus.

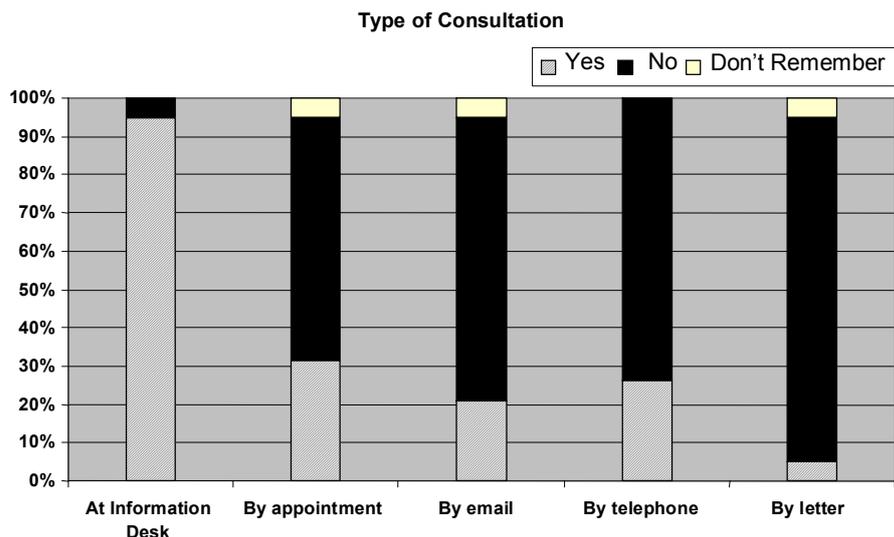


Figure 17: Types of consultation with staff by students

1.1.6. How useful was the information provided to you by AWDU Staff?

Consultation Results					
	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Not Applicable
At the Information Desk	84%	11%	0%	0%	5%
By appointment	42%	0%	0%	5%	53%
By email	26%	5%	0%	0%	68%
By telephone	21%	5%	0%	0%	74%
By letter	5%	0%	0%	0%	95%
Percentage Average	36%	4%	0%	1%	59%
Consultation Results	87%	10%	0%	3%	

Table 3: Usefulness of Students' Consultation

The table above shows that 84% of the students reported that the information provided at the information desk was very useful and 11% said it was useful, while 5% did not use this service. 42% of the students tried consultation by appointment with the librarian and found it very useful, while 5% reported that it was not useful. Consultation by e-mail

was considered very useful by 26% of students and useful by 5% of the students. Also, 21% of the students reported that consultation by telephone was very useful and 5% reported that it was useful. 5% of the students tried consultation by letter and thought that it was very useful. In total, 87% of the students who used the particular AWDU information services referred to above found the information provided very useful, while 10% found it useful and 3% found it not useful.

1.1.7. Have you accessed the AWDU via our Website?

63% of students reported that they never used the AWDU website.

1.1.8. If yes, how easy was it for you to find the information you wanted?

37% of students have used the AWDU website and more of 90% of them found it easy while less than 10% found it to somewhat easy.

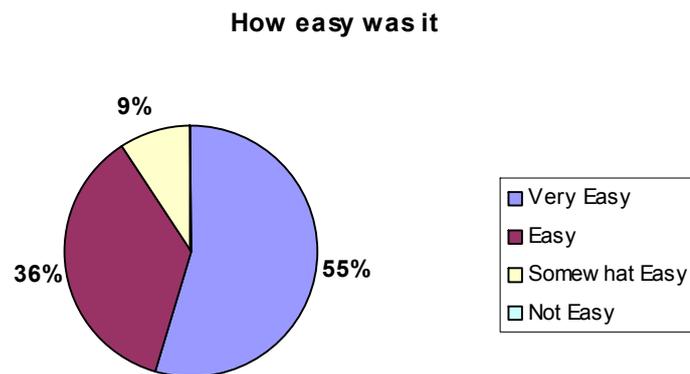


Figure 18: Searching AWDU website by students

I.1.9. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following services or facilities in the AWDU.

Services & Facilities Satisfaction						
	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	I do not use this service
Range of AWDU collections	47%	32%	0%	5%	0%	16%
Photocopying facilities	74%	21%	0%	0%	0%	5%
Quantity (amount) of study facilities	68%	21%	0%	0%	0%	11%
Quality (standard) of study facilities	68%	16%	5%	0%	0%	11%
Provision of computers/PCs for the library catalogue	37%	11%	16%	0%	0%	37%
Provision of Microform readers	16%	5%	5%	0%	0%	74%
Library catalogue	26%	26%	5%	0%	0%	42%
Opening hours	47%	37%	5%	5%	0%	5%
Library environment (noise, heating, ambience)	47%	37%	5%	0%	5%	5%
Helpfulness of the AWDU staff	89%	11%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Competence of the AWDU staff	79%	16%	0%	0%	0%	5%
Overall service the AWDU provides	63%	26%	5%	0%	0%	5%
Total Percentage Average	55%	21%	4%	1%	0%	18%
Total Satisfaction	67%	26%	5%	1%	1%	

Table 4: Students' Satisfaction

In general, 79% of the students rated the AWDU collections as satisfactory or very satisfactory. 16% of the students reported that they do not make use of the collection, while 5% of the students were not satisfied with the collection.

95% of students reported that photocopying services are more than satisfactory, while 5% only did not use this service. The quantity and

quality of study facilities received the approval of more than 80% of the students.

The highest percentage of students (37%) did not use the online catalogue in AWDU. 75% of those who did use the catalogue were satisfied with the provision of PCs in AWDU. The majority of students (74%) did not use the microform readers in AWDU. The remaining students were either very satisfied, satisfied or indifferent.

The highest percentage of students (43%) do not make use of the library catalogue. The remaining 52% of the students were either very satisfied or satisfied with the library catalogue.

85% of the students approved of AWDU's opening hours, while 5% were dissatisfied. 85% of the students approved of the AWDU environment (noise, heating, ambience), while 5% were very dissatisfied.

All the students who responded to the questionnaire consider the AWDU staff to be helpful. 89% of them were very satisfied in that respect. 79% of the students were very satisfied with the level of competence of the AWDU staff and 16% were satisfied with it.

Overall services the AWDU provides

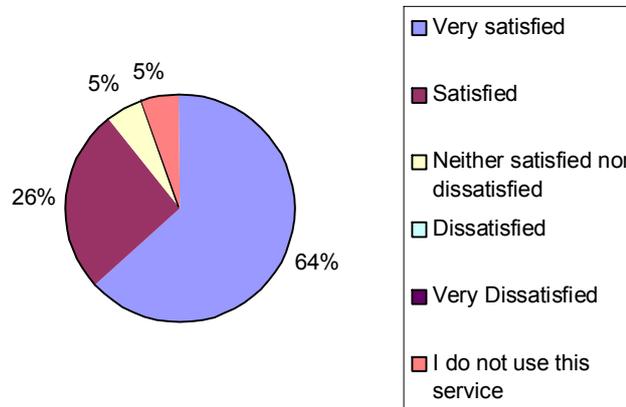


Figure 19: Students' satisfaction with overall services

In rating the overall service the AWDU provides, 64% the students reported that they were very satisfied and 26% were satisfied. 5% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and another 5% reported that they do not use AWDU services. This question was designed to measure the overall satisfaction with AWDU services by placing it directly to the users.

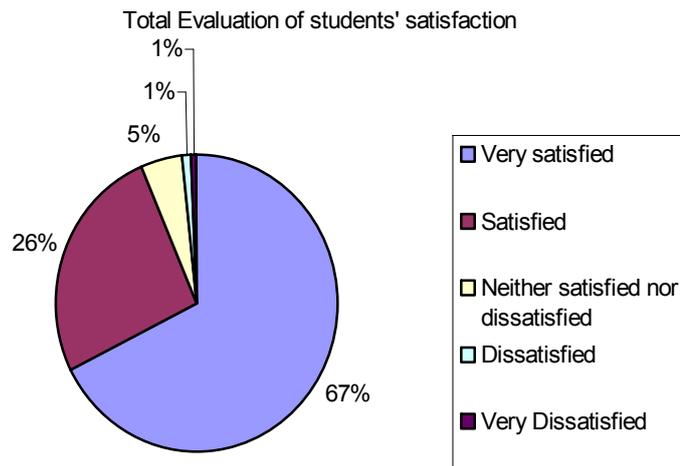


Figure 20: Total Evaluation of students' satisfaction

As opposed to the previous chart, the above chart was designed to reflect the overall satisfaction with AWDU services by adding up the responses to each individual service. In this case, those who did not use the particular services were not taken into consideration. Only slight differences can be noticed between the two charts, which suggests that this chart is to a great extent an accurate illustration of the students' overall evaluation.

1.1.10. What changes to services and resources would you suggest to make the AWDU more effective?

38% of the students suggested acquiring more print materials, 35% suggested acquiring more electronic materials, 23% suggested the introduction of longer opening hours, while 4% suggested improvements to the AWDU web pages. Written responses to "Other suggestions" included: The transfer of relevant books from the Old Library to AWDU, replacing the old microfilm and microfiche machines with

newer machines with printing facilities, and acquiring more recent studies on Arab countries.

I.2. Faculty Questionnaire

I.2.1. Respondents

57% of the total population have responded to this questionnaire. There was a 100% response rate among professors and readers as opposed to 0% response rate among recognised teacher.

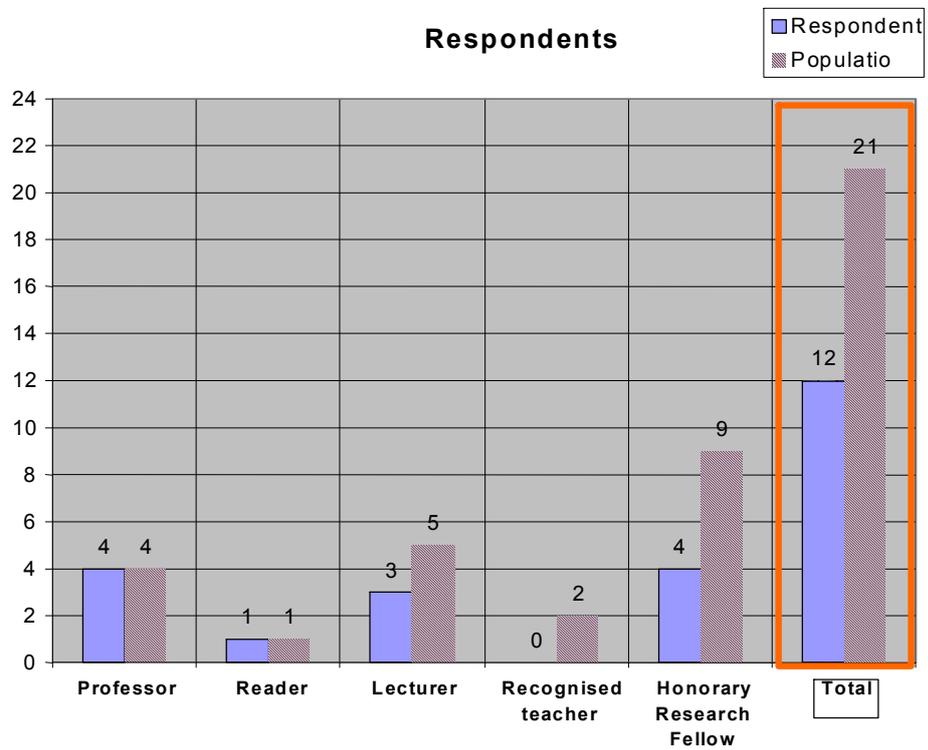


Figure 21: Respondents of faculty questionnaire

I.2.2. How often do you use AWDU services and resources?

50% of the faculty are frequent users of AWDU, visiting AWDU once or more a week, while the remaining faculty visit AWDU occasionally between less than once a term and 3 times a month. Honorary research fellows were most likely to be frequent users.

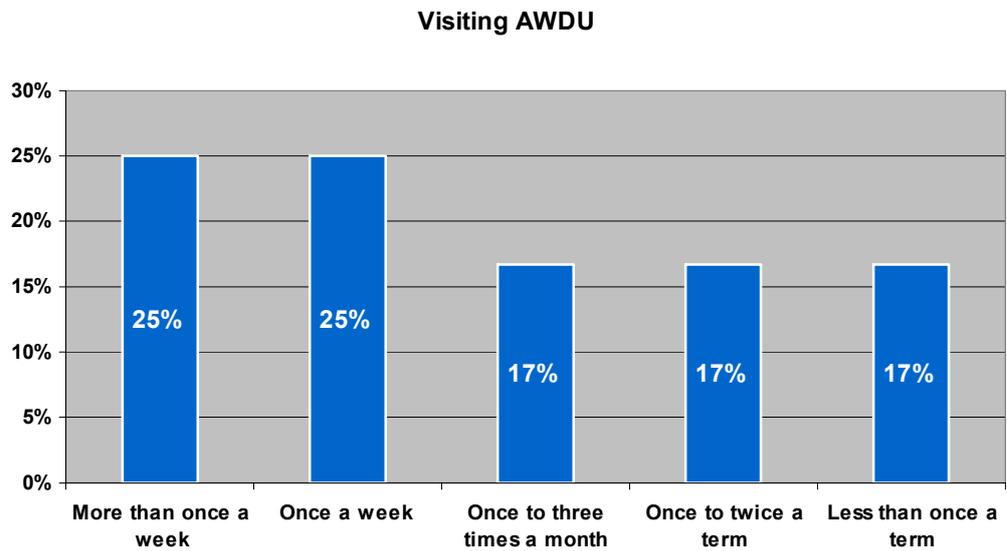


Figure 22: Frequency of AWDU use by faculty

I.2.3. Do you use any of the AWDU's services from outside the AWDU (e.g., via home or office computer, telephone, email, the Web)?

I.2.4. If yes, how often do you use the AWDU's services from outside the AWDU?

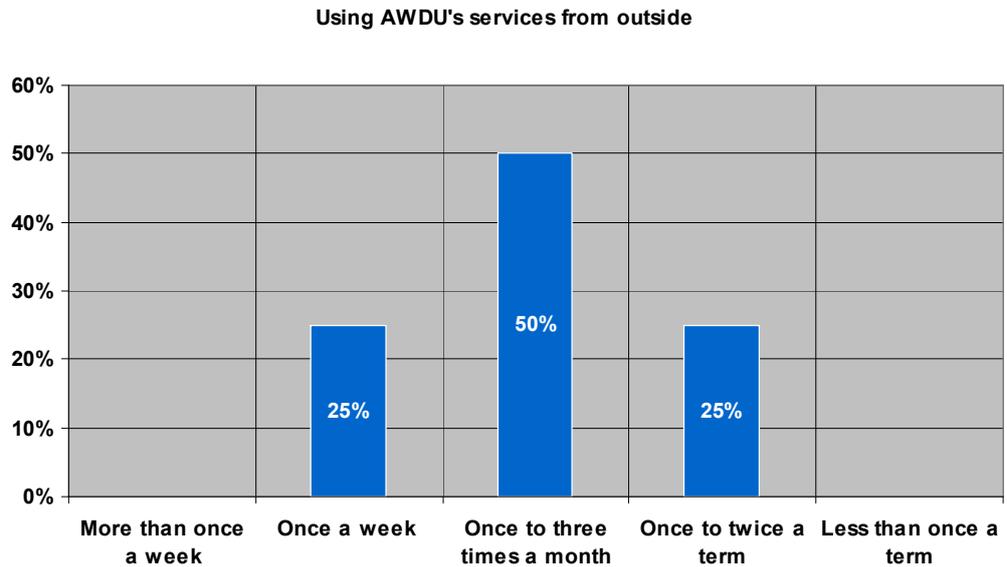


Figure 23: Frequency of use AWDU's services from outside by faculty

Only 33% of the faculty were likely to use AWDU's services from outside the AWDU (e.g., via home or office computer, telephone, email, the Web). On average, these faculty members used these services once to three times a month.

I.2.5. *Have you used the services or facilities of a library other than AWDU in the past year?*

I.2.6. *If yes, which library services or facilities have you used or visited?*

Using other libraries

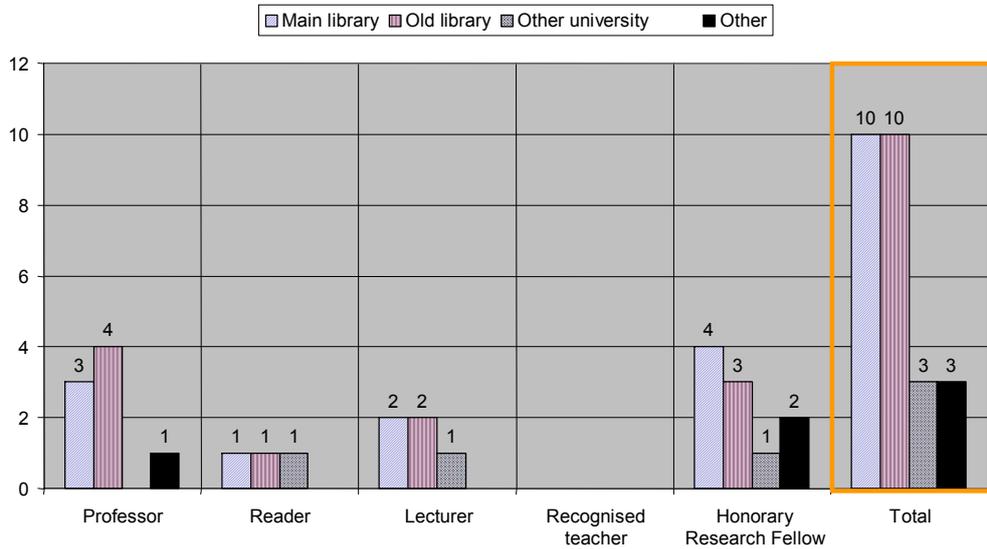


Figure 24: Use of other libraries by faculty

I.2.7. *What was the main reason you used this (these) library (ies)?*

All participating faculty members reported that they used the services or facilities of a library other than AWDU in the past year. The University’s Main Library and Old Library were visited by 10 faculty members each. 3 faculty members visited other University libraries. Other libraries named were the Cathedral Library and the British Library. Reasons cited by the faculty members for using other libraries were: “For research purposes”, “to use references not available in AWDU”, “searching various documents”, “location of material relevant to teaching and research”, “to find books/ publications for courses and

research”, “to consult books rather than documents”, “to borrow references”, and to find books and other research material on “North Africa literature, Arab cinema and Mediterranean culture”, “Arab World history”, “Middle East affairs and Latin poetry”, and “Arab world topics”.

1.2.8. Collection evaluation

1.2.8.1. To what extent do AWDU collections/ materials meets your research needs?

1= not at all 2 3 4 5 6=
to great extent

1.2.8.2. How important is the availability of these collections/ materials to your research needs?

1= not at all 2 3 4 5 6=
most important

	To what extent meets your needs						How important to you						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Weighted average						
1. Books	4	1	1	1	4	1	3.25	4	1	1	1	4	3.64
2. Periodicals	3	1	1	3	2	2	3.50	3	1	1	3	3	3.82
3. Arab countries collection	5	1	2	3	1		3.00	5	1	1	1	3	3.09
4. Theses	3	1	3	4	1		2.92	3	2	3	2	1	2.91
5. Organisations collection	4	1	1	3	1	2	3.17	4	1	2	2	2	3.27
6. Official gazettes	4	1	2	4	1		2.83	5	1	2	1	1	2.55
7. Media Reports	6	2	3	1			2.50	6	1	1	2	1	2.27
8. Bombay diaries	5	2	1	3	1		3.00	6	2		3		2.73
9. Archive editions	4	1	1	3	3		3.67	4	2	1	1	2	2.91
10. Davis collection	5	1	2	3	1		2.50	6	1	1	1	1	2.36
11. Petroleum collection	5	2	3	1	1		2.25	6	1	2	1	1	2.18
12. Press cuttings	6	1	1	3	1		2.33	6	1	1	2	1	2.27
13. Microform	5	2	4	1			2.75	5	1	2	2	1	2.45
14. Video	4	1	5	2			2.58	4	1	1	1	3	3.09

Total	63	11	26	33	22	13		2.88	67	14	17	16	15	25		2.82
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Table 5: Collection evaluation by faculty

This table reflects the faculty’s evaluation of the collection. As in the students’ questionnaire the weighted average was used to assess the quality and importance of each section of the collection and to evaluate the entire AWDU collection from the users’ point of view.

When asked to what extent the AWDU collections/ materials meet their research needs, the weighted average of rating given by the faculty was 2.88 on a scale from 1 to 6, where 1= not at all and 6= to a great extent. When rating the importance of the availability of these collections/ materials to their research needs, the weighted average of rating was 2.82.

The periodicals collection was given the highest rating in the question of importance (3.82), while the Archive editions received the highest rating on the extent to which it meets the faculty’s needs (3.67). On the other hand, the Petroleum collection was given the lowest rating in both questions (2.18 and 2.25, respectively).

1.2.9. Describe how these items do not meet your needs?

Respondents who rated any of the items in question 8 as Very or Most Important but indicated that they do not meet their teaching/ research needs were asked to describe how these items do not meet their needs. This occurred in one case only, where a respondent, referring to the Arab countries collection, stated that he needed more printed material from North Africa.

I.2.10. *Have you visited the AWDU with the aim of doing any of the activities below? Please rate your success at each activity.*

Faculty indicated that they visited AWDU primarily with the aim of seeking help from library staff. This was also the activity given the highest rate of success. On the other hand, the faculty members were least likely to visit AWDU in order to use Microform readers.

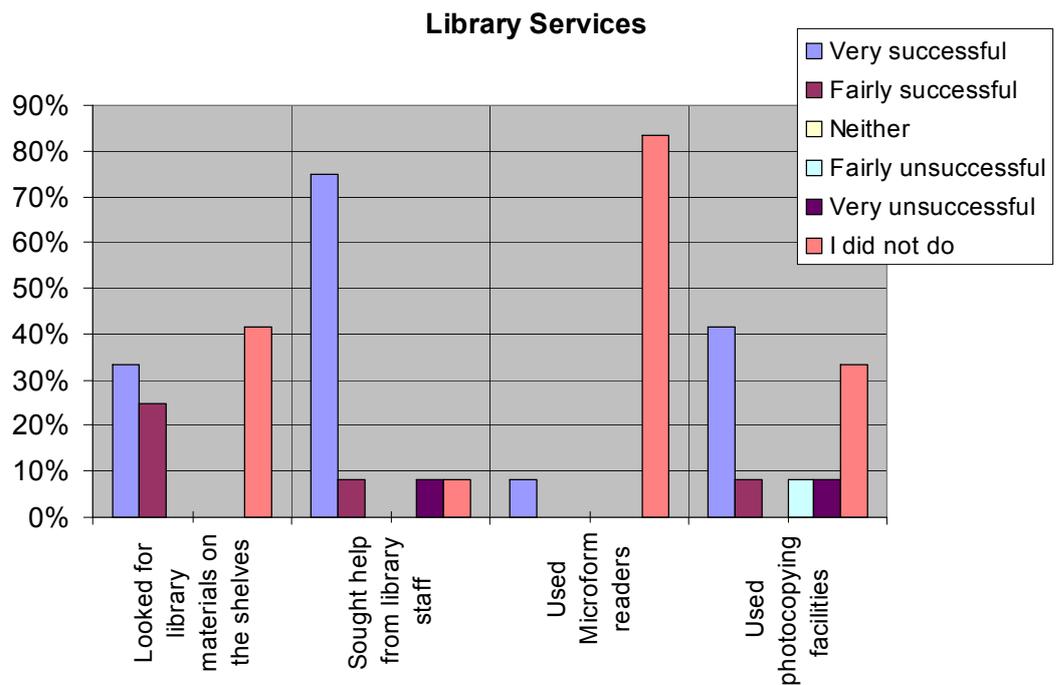


Figure 25: The evaluation of activities in AWDU by faculty

I.2.11. *In the past year have you consulted with AWDU staff?*

Consulting with AWDU Staff

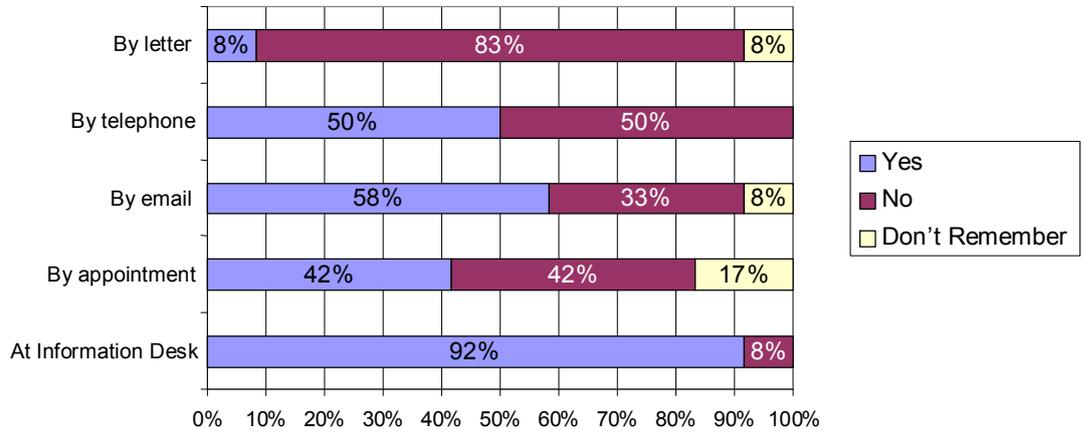


Figure 26: Types of consultation with staff by faculty

92% of respondents stated that they have consulted AWDU staff at the information desk. The email was used by 58% as a means of consulting with AWDU staff. 50% consulted them by telephone, and 42% by appointment. Letters were the least popular means of consultation (8%).

1.2.12. How useful was the information provided to you by AWDU Staff?

83% of the faculty reported that information provided at the information desk was very useful, while 8% thought it was useful. Information provided by appointment with a specialist librarian was found to be very useful by 50% of the faculty. The remaining 50% have not used this service. 42% of faculty members who received consultation by email found it very useful, followed by 17% who found it useful. Consultation by telephone was considered very useful by 33% of faculty

members and useful by 8% of the students. 8% of the respondents found consultation by letter very useful.

How useful was AWDU Staff					
	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Not Applicable
At the Information Desk	83%	8%	0%	0%	8%
By appointment	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%
By email	42%	17%	0%	0%	42%
By telephone	33%	8%	0%	0%	58%
By letter	8%	0%	0%	0%	92%
Percentage Average	43%	7%	0%	0%	50%
Consultation Results	87%	13%	0%	0%	

Table 6: Usefulness of Faculty's Consultation

In total, we can see that information provided by AWDU staff was considered “useful” or “very useful” by a 100% of the respondents who used a particular service.

I.2.13. No response

I.2.14. In the past two years, have you ever had an individual consultation about your research or collection needs with the liaison librarian assigned to the Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies?

Consultation with the liaison librarian

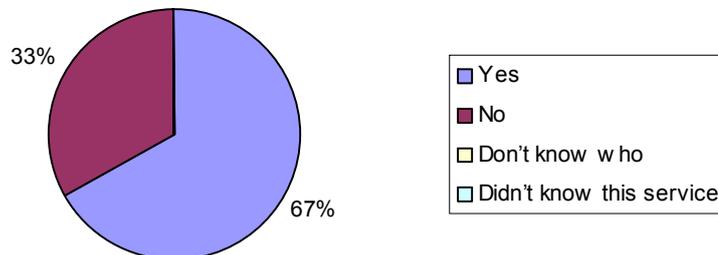


Figure 27: Faculty's consultation with liaison librarian

1.2.15. If yes, how useful was this consultation?

How useful was this consultation

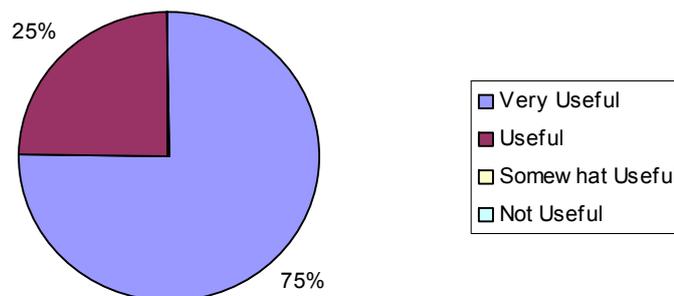


Figure 28: Usefulness of faculty's consultation with liaison librarian

67% of the faculty members responded that they have had an individual consultation about their research or collection needs with the liaison librarian assigned to the Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies. 75% of them had found the consultation very useful, and the remaining 25% had found it useful.

I.2.16. Have you accessed the AWDU via our Web site at
< <http://www.ex.ac.uk/awdu> > ?

I.2.17. If yes, how easy was it for you to find the information you
wanted?

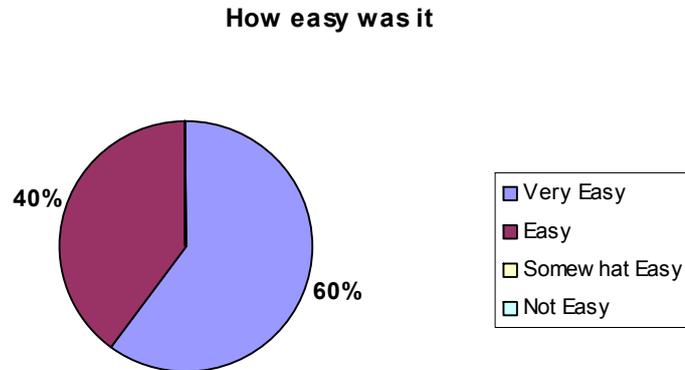


Figure 29: Searching AWDU website by faculty

Only 42% of the respondents reported that they had accessed the AWDU website before. They had all found it easy or very easy to find the information they needed there.

I.2.18. No response

I.2.19. Do you require your students to use the AWDU?

In response to the question whether they required their students to use the AWDU, 58% replied that they don't, and 42% confirmed that they do.

I.2.20. What changes to services and resources would you suggest to make the AWDU more effective?

Faculty members were asked to make suggestions to make AWDU more effective. 29% suggested the acquisition of more electronic materials, as

well as carrying out improvements on the AWDU website, while 21% suggested acquiring more print materials as well as longer opening hours. Written responses to “Other suggestions” were: Building up a comprehensive Arabic reference library to extend services to non-specialists, more organisation and easy access, acquiring other material that does not only deal with the Gulf, and creating a catalogue with annotations.

II. QUESTIONNAIRE SAMPLES

II.1. Student Questionnaire

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The purpose of the following questionnaire is to improve the AWDU collections, services and facilities in order to best meet the needs of its users. It will take you approximately **15 minutes** to complete the questionnaire.

Kindly complete the following questionnaire and return it either:

1) by mail, addressed to:

The Librarian
Arab World Documentation Unit
Stocker Road
Exeter EX4 4ND

2) by e-mail : ahmed.zayed@ex.ac.uk

3) by Fax at 01392-264035

4) by dropping it in the Questionnaire box at the entrance of the Documentation Unit by **31 July 2002**.

1. Are you (Please check one):

- a University of Exeter postgraduate student
 a University of Exeter undergraduate student
 an External user

2. How did you learn about the AWDU?

- Fellow students
 Academic staff
 Library workshops/ orientations
 AWDU handouts/ brochures
 AWDU website
 Conversations with AWDU staff
 Other library staff
 Other, please specify _____

Evaluation of Services and Facilities

3. For each of the following items, indicate

(1) To what extent do AWDU collections/ materials meets your research/course needs?

1 = Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 = To a great extent

(2) How important is the availability of these collections/ materials to your research/course needs?

1 = Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 = Most important

	To what extent meets your needs	How important to you
EXAMPLE FOR COMPLETING THIS TABLE	2	5
1. Book collection		
2. Print periodical collection (journals, magazines, newspapers)		
3. Arab countries collection (statistics, reports)		
4. Theses (on Middle East)		
5. International and regional organization publications		
6. Official gazettes collection		
7. Media Reports		
8. Bombay diaries		
9. Archive editions		
10. Davis collection		
11. Petroleum collection		
12. Press cuttings (CAABU, etc)		
13. Microform collection		

14. Video collection		
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4. Have you visited the AWDU with the aim of doing any of the activities below? Please rate your success at each activity. If you did not do a particular activity, please remember to mark the far right column.

	Very successful	Fairly successful	Fairly unsuccessful	Very unsuccessful	I did not do
Looked for library materials on the shelves					
Used the library's catalogue					
Sought help from library staff					
Study or coursework					
Social contact with colleagues					
Used Microform readers					
Used photocopying facilities					

5. In the past year have you **consulted** with AWDU staff:
(Check one box for each item)

	Yes	No	Don't Remember
At the Information Desk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By appointment with a specialist librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

By email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How useful was the information provided to you by AWDU Staff:

	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Not Applicable
At the Information Desk					
By appointment with a specialist librarian					
By email					
By telephone					
By letter					

7. If you responded Not Useful to any of the items in Question 6 above, please describe why you felt the information you received was not useful.

8. Have you accessed the AWDU via our Web site at <http://www.ex.ac.uk/awdu>?

Yes No (go to question 11)

9. If yes, how easy was it for you to find the information you wanted?

Very Easy	Easy	Somewhat Easy	Not Easy

10. If you indicated that it was Not Easy to find the information you wanted using the Web, please explain the difficulty you had.

11. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the following services or facilities in the AWDU. If you do not use a particular service, please remember to mark the far right column.

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dis-satisfied	Very Dis-satisfied	I do not use this service
Range of AWDU collections						
Photocopying facilities						
<u>Quantity</u> (amount) of study facilities (areas for study, desks and seating)						
<u>Quality</u> (standard) of study facilities (areas for study, desks and seating)						
Provision of computers/PCs for the library catalogue						
Provision of Microform readers						
Library catalogue						
Opening hours						
Library environment (noise, heating, ambience)						
Helpfulness of the AWDU staff						
Competence of the AWDU staff						

II.2. Faculty Questionnaire

FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

Significant changes have taken place in the Documentation Unit since July 2001. The name was changed from Gulf Documentation Unit to Arab World Documentation Unit (AWDU), its management was transferred to the University Library, and the AWDU moved to the new purpose-built IAIS building.

The purpose of the following questionnaire is to improve the AWDU collections, services and facilities in order to best meet your needs. It will take you approximately **20 minutes** to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire will be treated with confidentiality. The information you provide will not be used to identify you.

Kindly complete the following questionnaire and return it either:

1) by mail, addressed to:

The Librarian
Arab World Documentation Unit
Stocker Road
Exeter EX4 4ND

2) by University of Exeter internal mail

3) by e-mail to: ahmed.zayed@ex.ac.uk

4) by dropping it in the Questionnaire box at the entrance of the Documentation Unit by **31 July 2002**.

2.2.1. Respondent Profile

1. What is your current post?

- Professor
- Reader
- Lecturer
- Recognised teacher
- Honorary Research Fellow

AWDU Use

2. How often do you use AWDU services and resources?

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Once to three times a month
- Once to twice a term
- Less than once a term

3. Do you use any of the AWDU's services from outside the AWDU (e.g., via home or office computer, telephone, email, the Web)?

- Yes
- No (Proceed to question 5)

4. If Yes, how often do you use the AWDU's services from outside the AWDU? (check one)

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Once to three times a month
- Once to twice a term
- Less than once a term

5. Have you used the services or facilities of a library other than AWDU in the past year?

- Yes (proceed to question 6)
- No (proceed to question 8)

6. If yes, which library services or facilities have you used or visited? (check all that apply)

- Main library
- Old library
- Other university library
- Other, please specify _____

7. What was the main reason you used this (these) library (ies)?

Evaluation of Services and Facilities

8. For each of the following items, indicate

(1) To what extent do AWDU collections/ materials meets your research needs?

1 = Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 = To a great extent

(2) How important is the availability of these collections/ materials to your research needs?

1 = Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 = Most important

	To what extent meets your needs	How important to you
EXAMPLE FOR COMPLETING THIS TABLE	3	6
1. Book collection		
2. Print periodical collection (journals, magazines, newspapers)		
3. Arab countries collection (statistics, reports)		
4. Theses (on Middle East)		
5. International and regional organization publications		
6. Official gazettes collection		
7. Media Reports		
8. Bombay diaries		
9. Archive editions		
10. Davis collection		
11. Petroleum collection		
12. Press cuttings (CAABU, etc)		
13. Microform collection		

14. Video collection		
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9. If you rated any of the items in Question 8 as Very or Most Important but indicated that they do not meet your needs, please describe how these items do not meet your teaching/ research needs.

10. Have you visited the AWDU with the aim of doing any of the activities below? Please rate your success at each activity. If you did not do a particular activity, please remember to mark the far right column.

	Very successful	Fairly successful	Neither	Fairly <u>un</u> successful	Very <u>un</u> successful	I did not do
Looked for library materials on the shelves						
Sought help from library staff						
Used Microform readers						
Used photocopying facilities						

Information and Instructional Services

11. In the past year have you consulted with AWDU staff:
(check one box for each item)

	Yes	No	Don't Remember
At the Information Desk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By appointment with a specialist librarian	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By email	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
By telephone	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

By letter	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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12. How useful was the information provided to you by AWDU Staff at:

	Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful	Not Applicable
At the Information Desk					
By appointment with a specialist librarian					
By email					
By telephone					
By letter					

13. If you responded Not Useful to any of the items in Question 12 above, please describe why you felt the information you received was not useful.

14. In the past two years, have you ever had an individual consultation about your research or collection needs with the liaison librarian assigned to the Institute of Arab & Islamic Studies?

- Yes (go to question 15)
 No (go to question 16)
 Don't know who the liaison librarian is (go to question 16)
 Didn't know this service was available (go to question 16)

15. If yes, how useful was this consultation? (check only one)

Very Useful	Useful	Somewhat Useful	Not Useful

16. Have you accessed the AWDU via our Web site at <<http://www.ex.ac.uk/awdu>>?

Yes (go to question 17) No (go to question 19)

17. If yes, how easy was it for you to find the information you wanted?

Very Easy	Easy	Somewhat Easy	Not Easy

18. If you indicated that it was Not Easy to find the information you wanted using the Web, please explain the difficulty you had.

19. Do you require your students to use the AWDU?

Yes No

Suggestions

20. What changes to services and resources would you suggest to make the AWDU more effective?

- Longer hours
- More electronic materials
- More print materials
- Improvements to the AWDU web pages
- Other suggestions

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

*If you have any remarks concerning this Questionnaire, you can contact Ahmed Abu-Zayed at:
ahmed.zayed@ex.ac.uk or tel.: 01392-264016*

III. INTERVIEWS QUESTIONS

III.1. Faculty Interviews

Topics to be discussed in the interview with the Director of the Institute for Arab and Islamic Studies, University of Exeter (Prof. Tim Niblock) and the former Documentation Unit coordinator (Dr. Kamil Mahdi)

The interview will be held in University of Exeter and will take approximately 45 minutes. The interview will be recorded on tape.

- 1) The role of the Documentation Unit while under IAIS management
- 2) Changing the management of the Documentation Unit
 - a. Reasons behind it
 - b. Steps taken towards this transformation
- 3) Expectations of AWDU after transfer to University library management
- 4) Changing the name of the Documentation Unit: reasons behind the change
- 5) Selection of the acquired material
- 6) The Institute's expectations regarding the scope of AWDU collections:
 - a. Subject coverage
 - b. Geographical coverage
 - c. Languages
- 7) Role of IAIS in introducing students to AWDU

III.2. Librarian Interview (Middle East Librarian)

Topics to be discussed in the interview with the Middle East Librarian in charge, University of Exeter (Paul Auchterlonie)

The interview will be held in Exeter University and will take approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be recorded.

- 1) The aims and objectives of AWDU
- 2) History of the AWDU collection
- 3) Main features of the AWDU collection
- 4) Changing the name of the Documentation Unit:
 - a. Impact on budget
 - b. Impact on scope of collection
 - c. Impact on space
- 5) Changing the management of the Documentation Unit
 - d. Advantages for AWDU
 - e. Disadvantages, if any
 - f. Steps taken towards this transformation
- 6) Acquisition policy/Collection development policy
- 7) Coordination between the Old Library and AWDU, esp. in connection with the acquisition policies
- 8) Allocation of AWDU acquisition budget
- 9) Selection of the acquired material
- 10) Collection evaluation

III.3. Librarian Interview (Former Documentation Unit Librarian)

Topics to be discussed in the interview with the former librarian in charge of the Documentation Unit (Ruth Butler)

The interview will be held in University of Exeter and will take approximately 45 minutes. The interview will be recorded on tape.

- 1) What were the reasons behind the creation of the DU
- 2) Has any evaluation been done for the Unit collection? If yes in what bases was the evaluation done?
- 3) What was your policy for weeding and relegation of material?
- 4) What was the language, subject and geographical coverage of the DU?
- 5) What were the difficulties associated with the acquisition of material for the DU?
- 6) Which acquisition policy was adopted for the DU?
- 7) Was there a mission statement for the DU?
- 8) What was the role of the DU in supporting the programmes run by the Institute?
- 9) What do you think about the change of name of the DU to AWDU?
- 10) What do you think about the change of management of the DU to the University library?
- 11) In your opinion, what are the strength and weakness of Leslie forbs report?
- 12) How was the Documentation Unit budget allocated?
- 13) How was the stock organised on the shelves?
- 14) How was the Collection use Monitored?
- 15) What were the means used to promote the collection?