Standard Operating Procedure (SOP): Library Material Acquisition and Cataloging

This SOP details the procedures for **library material acquisition and cataloging**, encompassing the selection and procurement of books, journals, digital resources, and other library materials. It includes vendor evaluation, approval workflows, ordering processes, receiving and inspecting materials, and their systematic classification and cataloging using standardized metadata. The goal is to maintain an organized and accessible library collection that supports the informational and research needs of users efficiently.

1. Purpose

To establish standardized procedures for acquiring, processing, and cataloging library materials to ensure access, organization, and quality control of the library collection.

2. Scope

This SOP applies to all personnel involved in the selection, acquisition, receiving, and cataloging of library materials, including physical and digital formats.

3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Acquisition	The process of selecting, ordering, and procuring library materials.
Cataloging	Systematic arrangement and creation of bibliographic records for library materials using standardized metadata (e.g., MARC, RDA).
Vendor	A supplier providing library materials (books, journals, digital media, etc.).
Metadata	Structured information describing library materials for identification and retrieval.

4. Responsibilities

- **Librarian:** Coordination of acquisition and cataloging activities, vendor communication, metadata accuracy.
- **Acquisitions Staff:** Order processing, receiving, and inspecting materials.
- **Cataloging Staff:** Classification, metadata entry, and record maintenance.
- **Library Director:** Oversight of approval workflows and budget allocation.

5. Procedure

5.1. Selection of Materials

1. Review collection development policy and user requests.
2. Evaluate material relevance to user needs and institutional goals.
3. Prepare a preliminary list for acquisition.

5.2. Vendor Evaluation and Approval Workflow

1. Identify potential vendors based on reliability, cost, and coverage.
2. Compare vendor terms and services.
3. Obtain necessary approvals from library management and finance.

5.3. Ordering

1. Place orders via approved purchase systems or directly with selected vendors.
2. Record order details and anticipated delivery dates.
3. Track order status and follow up as needed.

5.4. Receiving and Inspecting Materials

1. Receive shipments and verify accuracy against order records.

2. Inspect materials for physical condition and completeness.
3. Report and resolve discrepancies or damage with the vendor.

5.5. Cataloging and Classification

1. Assign appropriate classification numbers (e.g., Dewey Decimal, Library of Congress).
2. Create or update bibliographic records using standardized metadata (e.g., MARC21, RDA rules).
3. Add holdings and item information to the integrated library system (ILS).
4. Shelve or provide digital access to materials once cataloged.

6. Documentation and Record Keeping

- Maintain complete records of acquisition, approvals, order status, and catalog entries.
- Document correspondence with vendors and resolution of any issues.

7. Quality Assurance

- Perform regular audits of acquisition and cataloging records.
- Solicit feedback from users on collection adequacy and accessibility.
- Provide training and updates to staff regarding standards and procedures.

8. Review and Revision

This SOP shall be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to ensure continued relevance and compliance with institutional policies and industry standards.

9. Appendix

- Sample acquisition request form
- Sample cataloging metadata record
- Approved vendor contact list
- Links to cataloging standards (e.g., MARC Standards, RDA Toolkit)