



Content Withdrawal Policy

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1 Document control

Version	Approved by	Approval date	Revisions
v1.0	Library Board of Queensland	29 November 2022	Policy created. Approved by Library Board of Queensland

2 Authority

Library Board of Queensland

3 Responsibilities

Staff are responsible for making appropriate withdrawal decisions in line with State Library's Content Strategy and Financial and Administrative Delegations, to ensure that collections are relevant, fit for purpose, and maintained in good condition.

4 Policy statement

A trusted collector of content, State Library is responsible for collecting and preserving a comprehensive collection of Queensland's cultural and documentary heritage, providing free access to information for all Queenslanders through state-wide library services and partnering with over 320 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs). To ensure that State Library's collections remain relevant, meet our clients' needs, and fulfill our legislative mandates, the withdrawal and disposal of collections is an important component of the lifecycle of a library collection. It is as important as the selection and acquisition of collections, and is sound library management practice.

5 Purpose

The Content Withdrawal Policy provides guidance for State Library staff on the withdrawal and disposal of collection items from the Memory Collections, Extraordinary Collections, Information Collections, and Public Library Collections. This policy gives members of the public assurance that due process is followed when any items are withdrawn, and that collection items are not disposed of without appropriate approval processes.

The policy is accompanied by the Content Withdrawal Procedures.

6 Scope

This policy applies to physical and digital items accessioned as part of State Library's Memory Collections, Extraordinary Collections, Information Collections, and the Public Library Collections, and the staff who maintain them. Items not owned by State Library (e.g. electronic resources provided under a subscription model) are out of scope.

7 Definitions

Word	Definition
accession	To officially add an item to a library or archive's collection/catalogue
deaccession	To officially remove an item from a library or archive's collection/catalogue
deselection	A decision to remove items from a library that are no longer needed or viable or relevant
digital preservation system	A system in which digital objects are stored and preserved for subsequent access and retrieval.
file fixity checks	The process of verifying that a digital file remains unchanged
obsolete carriers	Any objects that require a device or equipment to be able to view or use them as they were intended to be viewed or used. Includes physical carriers of digital content (see below) as well as visual media such as slides, negatives, videos, and film reels, and audio in the form of cassettes, vinyl records, and open reels.
physical carriers	Devices used solely for the purpose of carrying digital content – e.g. compact discs, DVDs, CD-ROMs, USBs, floppy discs, external hard drives.
withdrawal	The act of removing items from a library that are no longer needed or viable

8 Identifying items for possible withdrawal

Occasionally, decisions need to be made about retaining or withdrawing collection items. An item that is identified for possible withdrawal will go through a thorough process, as documented in section 10. Unique content from the Memory Collections and Extraordinary Collections in particular, will be reviewed with extra rigour, and withdrawal decisions will only be made in exceptional circumstances. The decision to withdraw an item (or not) from State Library's collections is based on one or more of the following factors:

Consideration for possible withdrawal. If the item:	Decision dependent on which collection the item belongs to:		
	Memory/ Extraordinary Collections	Information Collections	Public Library Collections
Has aged and/or deteriorated beyond, repair, salvage or reproduction, or the format has become obsolete	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is a duplicate of an existing item, and is not required for access, research, or preservation purposes *Does not apply to rare, unique, or significant items in the Memory/Extraordinary Collections	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has aged or deteriorated, but can be repaired	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Consideration for possible withdrawal. If the item:	Decision dependent on which collection the item belongs to:		
	Memory/ Extraordinary Collections	Information Collections	Public Library Collections
Was added to the collection in error, or unlawfully	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does not comply with State Library's Content Strategy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is identified as surplus to requirements, through a formalised deselection process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Threatens other collection items through spreadable contaminants such as mould, vinegar syndrome, virus or insect infestation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is identified as missing as a result of the stocktake process, as advised by auditors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has been missing for 90 days or more and is declared 'lost'	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has not been returned from loan for 8 months or more	n/a	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has been digitised, and the original hard copy has deteriorated beyond repair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a
In response to an approved takedown request	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If a superior copy of the item is obtained or created <small>*Does not apply to rare, unique, or significant items in the Memory/Extraordinary Collections</small>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Has low, or no circulation history (low usage)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Is a physical item which becomes available digitally on a trusted collecting institution's catalogue <small>*Does not apply to rare, unique, or significant items in the Memory/Extraordinary Collections</small>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Physical carriers where unpublished content has been migrated to our digital preservation system and undertaken required checksums	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	n/a	n/a
Key to symbols:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This criterion will not be considered for items in this collection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This criterion will be considered for items in this collection <u>n/a</u> This criterion does not apply to items in this collection		

Physical Carriers of digital content

Original, unpublished content is often received on physical carriers such as CDs, DVDs, and external drives. These physical carriers are not collection items, but simply vessels for the digital content, and will be retained until such time as the digital content has been removed from the carriers, is safely stored in our digital preservation system, and the content has undergone four successful file fixity checks. Where a physical carrier in an unpublished collection contains design aspects such as cover art, it will be retained with the item. Select carriers may also be retained as exemplars of the technology of the day.

Physical carriers for published CDs, DVDs, etc. will be evaluated for withdrawal as per the identified factors in the above table.

Migration of content from existing obsolete carriers

Where digital content is identified in existing collections on physical carriers facing obsolescence (floppy discs, CDs, etc.) it will be migrated to our digital preservation system where possible, and the physical

carriers will be disposed of after four successful file fixity checks.

Digitisation of analogue content

Where unpublished analogue content that requires obsolete equipment for playback (VHS videotapes, audio cassettes, slides, etc.) is digitised, the analogue item will be retained as long as it is viable. If the item deteriorates beyond usability, and/or equipment for playback is no longer available or accessible, the analogue carrier will be assessed for disposal. Significant content included on the physical carrier will be captured in the catalogue record, and/or digitised.

9 Method of disposal

Physical

Physical content identified for withdrawal is disposed of by secure means using external vendors who collect and destroy the material. This work is managed by Access Services.

Material identified for disposal from the Public Library Collections is either donated to charitable organisations, or securely destroyed if it is not fit for use.

Digital

When digital files are approved for disposal, the content is no longer discoverable through the State Library's catalogue. The file, and all of its derivatives, are deleted from the digital preservation system, with an annotation to the catalogue record kept for perpetuity. All associated files on the storage system are also deleted.

10 Delegations and documenting decisions

Before an item is withdrawn from the collections, it must first be approved by the relevant delegate. Delegation for withdrawal of collection items is outlined in State Library's Financial and Administrative Delegations Policy.

Decisions about the withdrawal of collection items will be permanently retained in State Library's corporate records. Deaccessioning decisions for original materials from the Memory Collections and Extraordinary Collections will also be recorded on the library catalogue.

11 Essential considerations

Section 28 of the [Human Rights Act 2019](#) states that Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples must not be denied the right to enjoy, maintain, control, protect and develop their identity and cultural heritage. In conducting actions within the scope of this policy, the Human Rights Act 2019 will be considered, and the policy will be applied in conjunction with the library's [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections Commitments](#) document.

12 Risk management and mitigation

Risk	Description of risk	Mitigation management
Reputational damage	Perception that State Library is throwing out collections	Robust application of this policy and the accompanying procedures.
Accidental disposal	Collection item disposed in error	Multiple staff involved in disposal decisions and processes.
Collection valuation	Withdrawal of items may negatively impact value of collections	Rigorous reporting of collection valuation as part of annual financial reporting

13 References

The policy is supported by:

Queensland Government

- [Libraries Act 1988](#)

State Library of Queensland

- [Content Strategy](#)
- [Content Guidelines – Memory Collections](#)
- [Content Guidelines – Extraordinary Collections](#)
- [Content Guidelines – Information Collections](#)
- [Content Guidelines – Public Library Collections](#)

14 Approval

Approved by resolution of the Library Board of Queensland on 29 November 2022. **RES/2022/111**

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