

State Library of New South Wales

Acquisition of Collection Material Policy Collection Acquisition Policy

Introduction

Policy and guidelines for the acquisition of material for the State Library collection.

Relevant Legislation/Policy Framework

Copyright Act 1879

Library Act 1939

Public Finance and Audit Act 1983

Access to published information 2000 (Premier's memo 00-15).

Code of Conduct

Financial Delegations Policy

Associated Documents

This policy is one of a suite of key policies used to manage the Library's collection asset.

Collection Development Policy	information about collection strengths. informs decisions about what kind of material should be selected for the collection
Bibliographic Access Policy	framework for creating records that provide information about collection items and categories
Valuation Policy	relates to determining the value of the collection for and includes frequency of valuation and methodologies employed
Depreciation Policy	relates to how the value of material in collection categories changes over the life cycle of the material
Retention and Disposal Policy	what collection material is to be retained and what categories may be disposed
Storage and Access Policy	indicates how collection material is accommodated and accessed physically including aspects such as standards, criteria for onsite and offsite storage, shelving standards, stock take and inventory control
Preservation Policy	preservation and conservation strategies and priorities for maintenance and treatment of collection categories

Policy

1.0 Purpose of the policy

The aim of the acquisition policy is to ensure the most cost-effective, efficient and timely outcomes for the Library in the acquisition of collection material

through a fair, transparent and accountable acquisition process, consistent with the *Public Finance and Audit Act, 1983*.

1.1 Context for the Policy

The Acquisition Policy for Collection Material was revised in 2002 to reflect the restructure of the Collection Management Division which brought the acquisition of printed, electronic and original materials together. Since then it has been refined to reflect the entire range of categories of material acquired and incorporates advice from the Resource Management Division.

The policy provides a framework to manage acquisitions procedures and workflows consistently and systematically across all acquisition categories including purchase, donation, government and legal deposit, bequest and transfer.

The Library's acquisitions process is well documented by files as outlined in the Policy, and these along with the integrated library management system, provide a clear audit trail, linked with the Library's financial system for payments, to ensure that the capital collections vote is spent efficiently and effectively, suppliers are selected on the basis of objective criteria and acquisition decisions are based on policy.

1.1.1 The marketplace and preferred strategies

The information and media industries from whence printed and electronic collection material is derived are dynamic and volatile. Similarly the market for heritage materials is subject to many outside forces. In this environment the preferred acquisition strategy is to practice risk management by consolidating orders for printed materials with mainstream, reputable suppliers with well-documented, competitive service and pricing policies. This practice negates the need to obtain quotes for specific titles, which is time-consuming and costly.

Electronic datasets and audiovisual resources present particular purchasing challenges in that they usually must be purchased from producers, aggregators or local agents, that is, sole suppliers. Original pictorial or manuscript items purchased for the heritage collections are unique, and as such are only available from particular sources at particular times with pricing reflecting market forces and affected by the circumstances of individual transactions.

1.2 Country of origin versus local purchasing

Country of origin purchasing is preferred for specific categories such as new books and serials published overseas where material is priced based on the overseas retail price. Invoicing in these cases is preferably in Australian currency based on a negotiated exchange rate policy.

Local supply is preferred for categories such as audiovisual formats and electronic datasets where standards are consistent with the local environment, and licenses and pricing appropriate to the environment may be negotiated. If new material published overseas is urgently required, the most cost-effective method of obtaining it should be used, which may be through a local retailer.

Heritage material must be purchased where and when it is found, and this is sometimes governed by heritage and export legislation, ownership and market-based decisions by sales agents. Risks in purchasing this category of material overseas can be managed and processing of such acquisitions can be streamlined through use of reputable agents.

1.3 Conditions of supply

Conditions of supply are regularly revised, accompany all orders for new printed and audiovisual material and must be observed by suppliers to the Library. If a supplier of these types of material wishes to negotiate about a specific condition he or she must contact the Coordinator, Operations & Acquisitions.

2.0 Choice of suppliers

A range of suppliers is selected, where possible, to ensure cost-effective fulfilment of orders; to take advantage of specialist expertise in specific categories, and to provide access to an appropriate range of value-added services. Suppliers of all formats and categories of collection material purchased for the collection are selected and evaluated based on the type of materials and services they offer and the way they meet the Library's selection criteria.

2.1 Direct supply versus use of library and specialist suppliers

Preference is given to consolidating purchases through library suppliers, subscription agents and specialist suppliers who provide a range of services based on current standards, and *who act on the Library's behalf*, rather than dealing directly with individual publishers and small suppliers which is time-consuming and costly.

Notable exceptions to this policy include individual Legal Deposit and government deposit suppliers which must be used for statutory reasons, and donors, individuals who self publish or offer single items for sale, auction, second-hand and antiquarian suppliers of unique or rare heritage materials.

2.2 Selection criteria for suppliers

Suppliers must provide a range of flexible and efficient services to support cost-effective use by Library staff. The following selection criteria are arranged in the order of importance.

2.21 Capacity to meet the Library's basic requirements

- Reliability, integrity and business record are critical
- Provide current information about services and policies
- Process orders using a range of suitable technologies
- Communicate effectively with Library staff
- Invoice correctly and as specified by the Library
- Report correctly on overdue orders at negotiated intervals
- Use a range of appropriate bibliographic and research sources
- Provide accurate supply: high fulfilment rate with low error rate
- Material received in excellent condition

- If supplying original material, can effectively describe the material on offer

2.22 Effective customer service

- Individual point of contact for most inquiries
- Process requests and claims efficiently and reports results
- Communicate effectively to resolve supply issues and problems
- Provide responsive and ongoing customer support, particularly critical in the case of electronic resources

2.23 Cost

- Make current pricing policy available
- Pricing policy clearly outlines freight and handling charges, special charges or surcharges for specific services and any other factors affecting the cost of material such as policy on exchange rate
- Pricing policy is understandable in application
- Pricing is competitive

2.24 Timeliness

- Speed of supply appropriate to category of material and competitive in the Australian environment
- Supplier must be able to meet agreed deadlines for special purchases, renewal invoices or renewal lists

2.25 Range of services complementary to the Library's requirements -

Specific services may include

- urgent order service
- selection support, blanket, approval and standing order services
- capacity to obtain special formats or types of resources
- inspection, valuation and reporting on heritage material
- bidding at auction on heritage material
- consolidation services for books and serials
- cataloguing and processing services as specified
- local staffing, representation or visits
- identifying and locating out of print material

2.3 Allocation of orders to suppliers

Allocating orders to individual suppliers is managed to achieve

- correct suppliers for particular formats and categories of material
- appropriate channels with regard to country of origin
- minimum staff time spent following up orders
- basis for comparison between suppliers where realistic
- regular processing ensuring continuous throughput and meeting commitment goals
- sufficient orders to individual suppliers to ensure custom is valued and appropriate service level will be provided

The Coordinator, Operations & Acquisitions in consultation with the Manager, Collection Services will review and update information received from individual agents or suppliers for printed, audio-visual and electronic material annually or more often if required.

The Manager, Original Materials in consultation with original materials senior staff will review and update information received from individual agents or suppliers of original material as required.

2.4 Monitoring and evaluating supplier performance

Supplier performance must be monitored routinely, and each member of staff involved in the acquisition of collection material is responsible for continuous informal assessment during daily processing. Individual members of staff are required to report their observations to supervisors, particularly in the case of poor supplier performance or a change in supplier performance.

In the integrated library management system environment, substantial information about supplier performance may be accessed as required. From time to time it is gathered, interpreted and placed on file to support discussions with suppliers about their performance.

Formal supplier evaluation is conducted for current printed material to ensure that criteria are met and to trial or rank suppliers.

Procedures

3.0 Guidelines for specific acquisition categories

The principles governing selection and acquisition of all collection material are the same. The information below provides more specific guidelines for specific categories.

3.1 Significant high value original materials and rare books

Material is acquired for addition to Original Materials and Rare Books Collections through direct offers to the Library by commercial or private vendors; sale catalogues (bookseller or antiquarian dealer); bidding at public auction; Cultural Gift or Bequest Programs; collecting projects or individual approach by the Library to a potential donor or vendor.

3.1.1 Selection criteria

Material is often of high value and either original and unpublished, existing as unique items and not replicated in multiple forms; or rare editions of retrospective publications. No matter what the source of the material, the following criteria are used in the rigorous assessment process for potential acquisitions.

- Relationship to the parameters of the Library's *Collection Development Policy* and other relevant specific subject or format policies
- Significance of individual items to the Library's existing holdings and particularly the New South Wales and Australian historical record

- Validity of the price at which the material is offered or bids are set and how this compares with valuations by accredited valuers, prices for equivalent material purchased recently, or listings in published records
- Physical condition of the material
- Resource implications such as staffing or storage, for example, in the case of the Library acquiring large, unsorted collections.

3.1.2 Process for evaluating material to be acquired

Material on offer should normally be sighted by the Library officer recommending purchase in order to assess its status and condition. When this is not possible an agent may be commissioned to view the material on behalf of the Library and report on its condition.

3.1.3 Determining the appropriateness of the price

When material is offered for sale, the appropriateness of the price has to be determined. Curators or senior librarians are usually responsible for ensuring the validity of the price. Aspects to be considered in determining a price or price range include:

- Published prices in sale catalogues are usually not negotiable
- Published estimates in pre-sale auction catalogues are indicative only of the low range in which the material is expected to sell
- Private vendors nominate prices which are often negotiable or request that an offer be made
- Prices of equivalent material purchased recently supported by registers of previous sales maintained by the Library are indicative
- Published price listings and compilations of prices realised at art and book auctions are indicative and subject to the condition of the material

Assessment by skilled staff or valuation by accredited valuers acknowledges the complex range of criteria used to identify a price or price range.

3.1.4 Preparing submissions and recommendations

The Library staff member responsible for negotiating and recommending the purchase of an item prepares a written recommendation and attaches this to a Mitchell Library Office file named preferably to include the title of the item and/or the vendor's name. The file number is recorded on internal or external transactions relating to the item, the sale, the catalogue or the vendor.

The recommendation is prepared and finalised at the conclusion of discussions and negotiations between staff, vendor and valuers. The recommendation must include:

- A statement of the material's significance in its own right
- A statement about the relationship between the material and the Library's existing collection, *Collection Development Policy* and holdings
- Reasons the material is required as an addition to the Library's collections
- Comparative prices of similar material and/or supporting documentation justifying the price
- The recommendation to purchase at a specific price or price range

- The dated signature of the Library staff member responsible for the negotiation and compiling the recommendation

3.1.5 Approval process for original materials and rare books

The recommendation is then submitted with all supporting evidence on file to the Manager, Collection Services, the Manager, Original Materials or the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian for consideration and approval or endorsement at delegated level. Depending on the purchase price, the recommendation may then pass to another staff member with appropriate delegation for approving the recommendation: the State Librarian, and finally highly significant and expensive purchases are referred to the Library Council for endorsement and the Minister for approval.

When approval for purchase has been granted and the transaction completed with required signatures, the vendor's invoice is noted on the Library's integrated library management system and a copy completes the Mitchell Office file created for the purchase or the category of purchases. The acquisition must be clearly documented and all records placed on file.

3.2 Material received on approval

Original material, rare books and retrospective material for the heritage collections will normally be requested on approval for evaluation and comparison prior to acquisition. Material received on approval must be registered or documented on file by a curator, team leader or staff member and a receipt provided. Material on which a decision to purchase is being awaited must be stored securely. When a decision has been made to acquire or not, the supplier must be informed and the material must be paid and accessioned or returned undamaged to the supplier with despatch. The acquisition must be clearly documented and all records placed on file.

Similarly new printed material on blanket orders or approval plans is received subject to selection decisions. This material must be processed as a matter of priority to provide the best possible service to clients, and the decisions reported to suppliers with despatch. Lists of this material are printed, approved and retained on file for audit purposes.

3.3 Material offered at auction

Recommendations for material to be purchased at auction must be prepared, approved and price ranges for bids confirmed before auction. Approval should be arranged to the amount of the final bid for the lot including any associated premiums and fees. It is normal practice to decide whether a discretionary bid should be authorised to go one bid over the envisaged range, if this can be justified based on the situation on the floor of the auction. However, this must also be approved prior to the auction.

If it is possible that the material will be purchased at an amount (comprising the final bid and the premiums) which will result in an expenditure over the delegation of the approving officer, it must be approved by an officer with a higher delegation prior to the auction.

Staff from the Library or a bidding agent may represent the Library at auction. Use of an agent ensures confidentiality. The basis for the agent's commission must be on file prior to the auction. Material should be inspected prior to auction by a member of staff or an agent and a written report obtained. Instructions for bidding agents (or in the case of the submission of a prior bid directly to the auctioneers) must be provided in writing by letter, fax or e-mail and receipt confirmed prior to the auction. The acquisition must be clearly documented and all records placed on file.

3.3.1 Material for which the Library unsuccessfully bid and is offered subsequently

If a recommended item on which the Library has unsuccessfully bid is passed in at auction or sold to a dealer or individual who subsequently approaches the Library with a view to selling, the Library may review the original recommendation. The value of the item must be reconsidered based on recent comparative price data, the uniqueness or rarity of the item and critically, the relationship to the existing collection. An addendum to the initial recommendation or a new recommendation must be prepared by an individual other than the person who made the original recommendation. This must be endorsed and approved at the appropriate delegation levels. The acquisition must be clearly documented and all records placed on file.

3.4 Material offered for purchase by individuals

- There is no obligation for the Library to purchase collection material offered by individuals; the same selection criteria should apply as would to any other item under the Library's *Collection Development Policy*.
- Physical condition of the material is critical.
- Long term or permanent loans will not usually be arranged.
- The individual must own the item offered, and an acquisition form must be completed to this effect and to indicate where copyright rests.

The staff member should seek approval in principle for the purchase from the Manager, Collection Services; the Manager, Original Materials or the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian before taking the time to prepare a submission and recommendation. Material must be valued by experienced curators, archivists or an independent valuer. The submission for the acquisition must be recommended and approved by Library staff with the appropriate delegations as must payments for valuations from independent valuers. The acquisition must be clearly documented and all records placed on file.

3.5 Material offered as a donation

Similarly to category 3.4 above,

- There is no obligation for the Library to acquire collection material offered by donation. The same selection criteria should apply as would to any other item under the Library's *Collection Development Policy*.
- Physical condition of the material is critical.

- Resource implications such as staffing or storage, for example, in the case of the Library accepting large, unsorted collections must be considered.
- The individual must own the item offered, and a donation form must be completed to this effect and to indicate where copyright rests.

Individual donations must be approved by Collection Services Team Leaders or Original Materials senior staff. Donations of collections must be approved by the Manager, Collection Services; the Manager, Original Materials or the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian. All donations must be acknowledged appropriately.

3.6 Material offered on Cultural Gifts Program

The Cultural Gifts Program administered by the federal Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts seeks to give the donor a tax concession over up to five years in return for donating material of cultural significance to a listed cultural institution.

- There is no obligation for the Library to acquire collection material offered through the Cultural Gifts Program. The same selection criteria should apply as would to any other item under the Library's *Collection Development Policy*.
- Physical condition of the material is critical.
- Resource implications such as staffing or storage, for example, in the case of the Library considering large, unsorted collections must be considered.
- The individual must own the item offered, and appropriate forms and valuations must be completed.

The team leader or senior staff member must seek approval in principle from the Manager, Collection Services; the Manager, Original Materials or the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian for the acquisition before proceeding to arrange valuations.

All material offered through the CGP must be valued by two valuers accredited to carry out CGP valuations and listed in the program's handbook. Payments for valuations must be approved by library staff with the appropriate level of delegation. The acquisition must be documented on specific CGP paperwork and submitted to meet program deadlines. The acquisition must be clearly documented and placed on file.

3.7 Audio-visual material

Audiovisual material will not normally be previewed prior to purchase or purchased primarily for exhibition unless the selection is consistent with the Library's *Collection Development Policy*. The Library's "Conditions of Supply" stipulate that audio-visual material must be able to be viewed or exhibited on site or loaned to public libraries in NSW. Use outside these parameters must be arranged separately.

3.8 Electronic products; license agreements

Electronic material selected for purchase must be evaluated based on the Library's "Electronic Selection Model" or "CD-ROM Checklist". Licences for large electronic datasets will be negotiated according to the Library's "Licensing Guidelines" prior to purchase. Any material purchased subject to a license agreement will not be paid or a credit will be sought if the Library's criteria cannot be met by the supplier or another satisfactory agreement cannot be negotiated.

4.0 Guidelines for collection acquisition procedures

Issues are the same for staff no matter what category or format of material is being acquired.

4.1 Approval to purchase

Routine purchases of individual, current, in print books listed in standard "in print" works such as *Australian Books in Print*, or *Global books in Print* that are consistent with the Library's *Collection Development Policy* may be purchased if clearly selected by a member of the Library's staff without regard to item by item approval, consistent with advice provided by the Resource Management Division and the Internal Auditor. Similarly, collection material procured on the basis of a blanket order or approval plan consistent with the Library's *Collection Development Policy* and reviewed by Library staff may be purchased without regard to item by item approval.

Individual Collection Services team leaders under the supervision of the Coordinator, Operations & Acquisitions are responsible for monitoring the volume of orders and printouts of individual titles weekly. The weekly printouts will be approved by the correctly delegated officers and filed in the Library's records management system. Access to this information may also be provided through retrospective printouts from the integrated library management system if required.

All items where it is envisaged the cost will be over \$1,000; continuing commitments such as journals or series; multiple copies or non-print formats; and licenses for electronic resources must be individually approved for purchase by a staff member with an appropriate delegation.

If material is retrospective or to be purchased for the heritage collections including the Rare Books collection, a recommendation must be prepared by a staff member and approved by a different staff member with the appropriate delegation for approving collection material. (See 3.0 above)

4.2 Current versus retrospective acquisition

Most printed and audiovisual items acquired for the collection are current material, consistent with the objective of providing new and up to date material for clients and ensuring that each year's publishing output is selectively represented in the Library's collections.

Retrospective acquisition of printed and original formats is limited to specific circumstances:

- material relating specifically to New South Wales or to fill gaps in areas of strength in the Library's heritage collections
- material required to fill gaps in developing new strengths in the collection

4.3 Purchasing for the financial year

Each year the State Government through the Treasury provides the "Book Vote" to the State Library of NSW for additions to the collection. Commitments to suppliers will be made to purchase, license or subscribe only over periods of likely funding availability.

4.4 Communication with suppliers

Communication with suppliers is ideally managed on a number of levels including formal written documentation about services and pricing and less formal telephone or e-mail discussions about individual items, claims, deliveries. It is the role of any staff member dealing directly with a supplier to maintain a professional manner and to ensure that communication is open, clear, does not waste the time of either party and achieves the desired cost-effective service for the Library.

4.5 Ethical Practice

The Library and individual members of staff are committed to ethical practice consistent with the Library's Code of Conduct. Potential situations of conflict of interest in dealing with suppliers must be reported to the Manager, Collection Services, the Manager Original Materials or the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian.

4.6 Completing the audit trail

A linkage between the Library's integrated library management system and the Library's financial management system is critical to completion of the audit trail. Currently, to ensure successful payment to the vendor, the vendor's invoicing details are collected and transferred weekly from the integrated library management system to the financial management system. The Finance branch then undertakes audit and payment functions in line with financial payments procedures.

5.0 Supplier Files

Files will be created in the General Office files in the Library's records management system for individual major suppliers of books and serials, audiovisual, microform and electronic publications, a single file for miscellaneous suppliers in these categories and a single file for prospective suppliers in these categories.

Current information about suppliers' terms and conditions and copies of all agreements with suppliers will be maintained in these files. Correspondence with suppliers relating to services, performance and general matters should also be placed on these files. Reports or correspondence about individual titles should not be placed on these files, but kept by relevant staff until the item has been supplied or the issue resolved. These may be used as a basis for discussing performance with suppliers.

Prospective suppliers may be asked to send information about their terms and conditions to be placed on the prospective suppliers file to be submitted for annual review by the Coordinator, Operations & Acquisitions. General Office files relating to current major suppliers, miscellaneous suppliers and prospective suppliers may be kept in number order in the filing system in the Collection Services Branch.

Current information about suppliers of heritage materials and their offerings will be created in the Mitchell office files.

6.0 Policy renewal

The policy is subject to continuous review. Changes to the policy will be submitted to the Library's Executive Committee for approval. The sponsor of the Policy is the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian. Comments may be forwarded to the Assistant State Librarian, Collection Management Services & Mitchell Librarian at the Library.

This policy replaces the Acquisitions Policy 2002.

(Approved by Library Council of New South Wales, 2004)