

Physical Collection Storage Policy



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Policy owner/sponsor: Executive Director, Library and Information Services

Policy Contact Officer: Manager, Collection Care

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1. Summary

The State Library of New South Wales (herein after referred to as ‘the Library’) is the premier library for NSW and its Collection is considered a state asset. In 2015 the Library’s Collection, comprising over 6 million items and 12.5 km of manuscripts was valued at \$3.15 Billion. The Library’s Collection grows continuously as a result of the Library’s dual roles to collect and maintain the documentary heritage of New South Wales.

The Physical Collection Storage Policy relates to the storage of physical collections only. It outlines how decisions are made to utilise finite storage space, at the same time meeting the needs of client and staff access to the Collection, ensuring its preservation and security, and maintaining work health and safety for staff and clients. The Policy is in line with NSLA principles.

The Policy indicates how Collection material is to be accommodated including criteria for onsite and offsite storage. It aims to ensure efficient and cost effective storage of the Library’s Collection. As well as outlining current storage options, the policy provides guidance on future directions.

2. Policy statement

Key drivers for Collection storage are the capacity to meet service delivery standards in providing client service, preservation and security of the Collection, good WH&S for staff and clients and storage efficiency.

2.1 Provide service to clients:

In every decision about Collection storage, supporting access to the Collection by clients is a primary factor and should be compatible with agreed service delivery standards.

Collections will be arranged to allow for efficient retrieval. High use Collections that are not available online should be stored onsite to ease retrieval. Data will be collected around levels of use to facilitate such choices.

All Collection material will be identifiable through an electronic record, and be circulated and tracked using the Library's integrated library management system. Tracking of the Collection is further enhanced by the use of barcodes wherever practicable, attached to items or storage enclosures as appropriate. Item location data should be recorded in the library catalogue or other tracking systems to enable Collection items to be located readily.

When considering Collections for offsite storage, preference will be given, but not restricted to the following characteristics:

- Condition and format of Collection permit safe transit between the offsite store and reading room
- Electronic or other versions are available onsite
- Guides, indexes, access tools are available onsite
- Not a high use Collection
- Access can be provided consistent with the agreed service delivery standards

2.2 Preservation and security of the Collection:

The Collection will be stored according to best practise; ensuring preservation of the Collection for current and future generations. Collection storage strategies will be implemented in line with the Preservation Policy.

The Library should provide appropriate environmental conditions in storage areas to maintain the condition of the Collection. These requirements vary according to the format and condition of the Collection. Specialised storage, such as cool, cold or frozen storage is required for a range of unstable or deteriorating formats, including cellulose acetate film. When the Library cannot provide these conditions onsite, offsite alternatives should be sourced.

New or redesigned storage areas will incorporate Integrated Pest Management Principles, such as ensuring good air circulation and ease of cleaning, to further safeguard the Collection. Planning will also cater for Collection growth to prevent damage from overcrowding. Efficient storage strategies will prevent unnecessary relocation and handling of Collections.

Appropriate storage furniture will be used to suit the format and size of items within each Collection. Format specific storage includes the hanging racks of the Framed Collections store, and the Freezer store for cellulose acetate Collections. The Library will endeavour to use appropriate sized shelving or storage units to ensure Collections are safely supported and protected whilst in storage.

Collection security measures must be incorporated into Collection storage planning. Collections of significance, value, rarity or vulnerability to theft, misplacement or damage should be stored in the appropriate onsite higher security storage area. Such rare or unique Collection items, particularly individually valued items should not be stored offsite.

2.3 Work health safety for staff and clients:

Work health and safety will be maintained for all employees and other persons working at, or visiting the Library Collection storage areas. Storage areas and furniture should be planned to minimise the amount of manual handling required by staff members.

Storage furniture and equipment should be maintained to ensure safe operation. Appropriate equipment should be provided for staff to safely access the Collection. Staff must be trained in the safe use of storage furniture and equipment (eg. mobile shelving).

The Collection will be stored in buildings maintained in compliance with the Building Code of Australia. Safe evacuation that complies with relevant building codes must be possible from Collection storage areas.

2.4 Efficient storage:

The Collection will be arranged to achieve an efficient and cost effective storage outcome. Similar formats and sizes of materials should be stored together, and the majority of Collections will be organised in running number sequences, to maximise the use of Collection storage space.

Consistent Collection size standards and shelving standards will be adopted across all storage facilities. New shelving should adhere to standards established by the Collection Storage Committee and approved by the Collection Management Group. Designated Collection storage areas will be used for Collection storage and not for non-Collection items.

The physical integrity of a particular Collection may be so significant that at times it overrides storage efficiency principles. If however security, format requirements, ease of use, storage efficiency or preservation of the Collection takes precedence, the Collection integrity should be maintained intellectually through information recorded in the integrated library management system.

2.5 Current storage options:

The Library is currently utilising the following facilities for storage of the Collection:

- Mitchell Wing:
 - Purpose built climate controlled stacks
- Macquarie Wing:
 - Purpose built climate controlled stacks
 - Freezer Store, Stack 2
 - Framed Collection Store, Stack 4
- Offsite storage facility at Moorebank:
 - Purpose built, climate controlled stacks
- Offsite storage at Government Records Repository, Kingswood:
 - Cool storage for microfilm and SMH Mint set
- Offsite storage at National Library of Australia:
 - Cold storage for microfilm preservation masters of closed NSW newspaper titles
- Offsite storage at Global Specialised Services:
 - Climate controlled storage of oversized Collection items

The storage areas are subject to constraints such as the heritage nature of the Mitchell building, and the current arrangement and housing of the Collections. These impact on how the principles of the Collection Storage Policy are implemented. Mitchell Wing storage areas in particular have many Work Health Safety concerns, (such as low ceilings and narrow corridors impeding access), which also fail to meet Preservation requirements and do not allow for efficient storage of the Collection.

2.6 Future directions:

Collection storage is managed within constantly changing parameters. The Collection continues to grow. The availability of storage space changes over time. The range and quantity of different formats within the Collection will vary over future years. Collection use will change. The guiding principles of this Policy however will still apply.

In line with these principles, the Library is currently focussing on the following as part of its planning:

- Moving Collections out of Mitchell wing into Macquarie and the Moorebank offsite store
- Improving storage conditions in the Macquarie Wing
- Enhancing security and tracking of Collections by extending the use of security barcodes to a greater number of Collections whenever feasible and appropriate
- Fitting out the Macquarie Wing with more appropriate storage furniture
- Consolidating Collections
- Updating Collection measurement data
- Planning for future Collection growth
- Pursuing future offsite storage for the Collection

Informed long term storage planning requires accurate data on the current size of the Collections and available storage space. A methodology needs to be in place for maintaining this data and in particular measuring Collection growth.

Collection relocations will be carried out in line with this Policy. During planning the direct costs of relocations – staffing, removalists and possibly new storage furniture – should be considered in conjunction with associated costs, such as rehousing and re-cataloguing.

3. Legislative and Policy Framework

Most relevant legislation

- Building Code of Australia, 2014 as amended.
- Library Act, 1939
- Library Regulation 2010
- NSW Copyright Act, 1879-1952
- Work, Health and Safety Act, 2011
- State Records Act 1998

Related and/or most relevant State Library and government policies

- Collection Acquisition Policy
- Collection Storage Access Policy
- Collection Development Policy
- Preservation Policy
- Work Health and Safety Policy
- Premier's Memorandum No. 2000 - 15, Access To Published Information - Laws, Policy and Guidelines, as amended
- Standard on the physical storage of State records 2015

4. Definitions and acronyms

The State Library as a member of NSLA has worked with other member libraries to develop commonly used principles in relation to storage management. Some definitions are adopted from the 'NSLA Stack Management Working Group Commonly used principles for organising stack Collections'.

Significance¹ - The meaning and values of an item or Collection, or what makes it important. Significance is the historic, aesthetic, scientific and social values that an item or Collection has for past, present and future generations.

Condition - The relative state of an item or Collection that indicates its fitness for use, handling or display (ie good condition, fragile condition).

Collection integrity - The relationships between items in a 'Collection'. This could infer the same donor, the same subject or format. The David Scott Mitchell Collection is a bequest from a single donor, and includes pamphlets, books, journals, newspapers, manuscripts, maps and pictorial material as well as realia, stamps, coins and furniture.

Integrated Pest Management - A preventative approach to pest management. It aims to make the library environment unattractive to insects, rodents and mould by using good housekeeping, physical exclusion, environmental monitoring and early detection to prevent or eliminate pests before they can gain a foothold.

5. Responsibilities

Executive Committee members are responsible for leading the implementation of this policy including its conformity to legislative and other compliance requirements, communicating this policy to managers and supervisors and other relevant activities regarding specific policy implementation.

Managers and supervisors are responsible for managing processes relevant to this policy and communicating this policy to staff.

The Collection Storage Committee are responsible for the review of the policy, and recommending it to the Collection Management Group for approval.

Staff are responsible for understanding and complying with this policy.

6. Reporting requirements

NSLA Storage Management Community of Practice quarterly reporting of storage activities.

Collection Storage Committee, via the Chair, will report to the Collection Management Group on their activities, including the implementation of the policy.

7. Procedures

Storage issues are to be raised through the Collection Storage Committee. The roles and responsibilities of the Committee include:

¹ **Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections** Roslyn Russell, Kylie Winkworth, © Commonwealth of Australia, 2010

- 7.1 Consultation, discussion and review of Collection storage strategies, policies, procedures and significant operational matters
- 7.2 Recommending and/or progressing, where required, significant storage matters to/on behalf of the Collection Management Group.
- 7.3 Communicate information on Collection storage activities

8. Approval

This policy was approved by the Executive Committee of the State Library of NSW on 6 December 2016 for immediate implementation.

9. Implementation

This policy is implemented on 6 December 2016.

10. History

This policy replaces Collection Storage and Access Policy, 2012

11. Related Policy

This policy is related to the Preservation Policy.

12. Prepared by:

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 29 November 2016

13. Document History and Version Control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Brief description
1.0	19 October 2016	Library and Information Services Management Committee	Policy endorsed with amendments (see v 1.1)
1.1	21 November 2016	Collection Management Group	Policy endorsed with amendments (see v 1.2)
2.0	6 December 2016	Executive Committee	Approved 2 nd version