Collection Preservation Policy

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Policy owner/sponsor:	**Executive Director, Library and Information Services**		
Branch contact:	**Manager Collection Care** **Digital Curation Specialist, Data Quality, Systems & Standards**		
Approved by:	**Executive**		
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What is this Policy about?

In the context of the State Library of NSW, preservation refers to efforts undertaken to minimise the deterioration, damage, and loss of information within collection materials.

This policy defines the Library's approach to preservation in line with its duties and responsibilities. The document establishes and directs the Library's efforts to ensure the authenticity, integrity, provenance, longevity and ongoing accessibility of its collection in all its forms.

Who is it for?

For the public and Library staff to understand the Library's approach to maintaining its collection.

What is the background?

Alongside acquisition and provision of access to collection materials, one of the Library's most important activities is to preserve the collection. The primary goal of the Library's preservation activity is to prolong the life of collection materials so they can be used for research and enjoyment for as long as possible.

Preservation of the Library's collection includes care and treatment of physical and digital materials in both published and unpublished form including books, pictures, maps, manuscripts, photographs, audio-visual material, websites and social media and several other formats. Library staff are responsible for assessing the potential impact on the preservation of materials when undertaking any work related to the collection.

What are the principles of this Policy?

The purpose of preserving both physical and digital collection materials is to support access to the collection by current and future generations. Physical and digital preservation activities differ significantly and are subject to different technical standards and guidelines:

Principles for preservation of physical materials

1. Storage and housing

- The Library aims to provide appropriate storage for collections that reduces the risk of deterioration, damage, vandalism, theft or loss.
- Collection storage is optimised through agreed storage strategies, appropriate storage facilities, efficient and safe storage layout and high-quality durable storage systems.
- All materials, furniture and packaging used in association with the collection are of an appropriate archival standard to reduce the risk of harm or deterioration of the collection.
- Appropriate environmental conditions, light exposure duration and air quality are provided, monitored and recorded during storage, use and display in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- An Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan is in place.
- A designated quarantine area is in place for screening and processing of incoming acquisitions and for disaster remediation of water and mould affected collection items.
- Appropriate housing and enclosures are provided for collection items. Improvements to housing and storage of collections are planned and implemented periodically.
- Library-wide emergency plans, collection disaster response plans and business continuity plans are in place to mitigate risks, react to and recover from incidents affecting the library and the collection.

2. Access, use and display
   - The storage, movement, handling, packing and transport of collection material will be carried out by qualified and experienced staff and coordinated to identify and manage risks.
   - All staff are trained to identify harmful practices and procedures and to intervene as required.
   - Events are managed to ensure those involved are aware of risks and trained to mitigate such risks. Response strategies are employed for events and functions.
   - Appropriate item supports and equipment are provided in reading rooms, for digitisation and public programs, with usage guidelines.
   - Appropriate supports, mounts and display enclosures are used when exhibiting collection items in the Library and on loan.
   - Policies, guidelines or procedures are in place for staff and reader access to collections, exhibition and display, and outgoing loan of collection items.
   - Collection items that have been digitised are retained and preserved in original form.
   - Risk is minimised by implementing appropriate security measures, handling procedures, staff training, and insurance for items on loan.

3. Conservation treatment
   - Conservation treatment is undertaken to stabilise items or collections to prolong their lifespan and improve their visual appearance in accordance with ethical guidelines.

- Conservation treatment may be undertaken when an item cannot be made available for use due to its unstable physical condition or reduced visual integrity.
- The extent and prioritisation of conservation treatment is agreed in consultation with stakeholders.
- Items of high significance or high value are assessed in consultation with relevant subject matter experts.
- Conservation treatment is fit for purpose in line with the Australian Institute of Conservation of Cultural materials (AICCM) Code of Ethics and Practice, and is documented in Library systems.

Principles for preservation of digital materials

1. Create and Acquire
   - where appropriate, ensure best practice principles are used when creating digital material.
   - where appropriate, acquire content in standard formats
   - consider any form of digital material, regardless of format, software requirements, operating system or computer environment. This includes born digital and digitised material.
   - collect and maintain minimum metadata to support long-term preservation and ensure ongoing access.
   - support transfer of digital material from physical carriers in order to mitigate risk of obsolescence and/or degradation of physical carriers

2. Preserve
   - preserve the original file, regardless of format.
   - as a minimum, support preservation of the bitstream.
   - preservation actions, including any pre-conditioning, are undertaken in line with International standards and are documented in the digital preservation system.
   - where appropriate, implement normalisation processes that address non-standard or at-risk proprietary formats.
   - where possible, normalise to predetermined preservation formats.
   - consider emulation where normalisation is not possible.
   - migrate digital material from physical carriers.
   - Store digital material in a digital preservation system that complies with established industry standards including OAIS and PREMIS
   - ensure legal obligations are met, specifically those relating to privacy, copyright and intellectual property, when copying content for preservation purposes.

3. Store and manage
   - employ best practice data management procedures to ensure preservation including keeping three backup copies of preservation material.
   - use combination of online and offline storage systems and media along with appropriate geographic separation to mitigate risk.
   - undertake regular fixity checks on an ongoing basis to mitigate risks (including corruption).

- where appropriate, preserve original date and time information and where possible, file ownership information.
- plan and implement ongoing format migration.
- maintain appropriate infrastructure to safeguard the collection for the future and protect against loss, misuse and alteration of information.

4. Provide access and maintain rights
    - facilitate meaningful access to digital material including providing open access via online mechanisms or onsite use.
    - respect existing access conditions, rights, privacy and sensitive information.
    - seek to put in place appropriate access conditions including:
        - access to preservation masters in the digital preservation system should be highly controlled or minimised to prevent accidental or intentional loss or damage;
        - access to the digital preservation system should be provided for digital preservation management functions such as data management and preservation planning, only.

Standards for preservation of digital materials

- *OAIS - CCSDS 650.0-M-2* Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS), Recommended Practice, June 2012
- *PREMIS* Data Dictionary for Preservation Metadata Version 3.0, January 2011
- *Levels of Digital Preservation V2.0*, National Digital Stewardship Alliance, 2019
- *ISO 16363:2012* - A Standard for Trusted Digital Repositories, (last reviewed) 2017

Who is responsible?
- Executive Director, Library & Information Services and Dixson Librarian is the Executive Sponsor of this policy
- Manager, Collection Care and Digital Curation Specialist are the Policy owners and are responsible for its implementation and monitoring its content in line with the changing landscape of international standards and practice
- Library staff involved in preservation activities and all collection related work are responsible for upholding this policy

What informs this Policy?
Legislation:
- *Library Act 1939*
- *Library Regulation 2018*
- *Copyright Act 1968*
- *Copyright Act 1879*
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*
- *State Records Act 1998*
- *Work Health & Safety Act 2011*

Other Library policies and plans:
- Strategic Plan 2019-2023
- Collection Acquisitions Policy

- [Collection Development Policy](#)
- [Collection Donations Policy](#)
- [Information Security Policy](#)
- [Metadata framework: principles & standards for cataloguing](#)
- [Policy on the use of State Library Information & Communication Technologies](#)
- [Physical Collection Storage Policy](#)
- [Records and Information Management Policy](#)
- [Work Health and Safety Policy](#)

Document history and version control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Brief description
3.1	11 May 2021	Executive Committee	Final