Frequently Asked Questions

I’m having trouble accessing an eresource at home. What can I do?

Most eresources can be used at home but some are only accessible in the Library. Look for the library building with a card icon to see if the eresources is accessible from home.

Try clearing your cookies and cache, then restart your browser.

Still not able to access? Contact Ask a Librarian [1] with your Library card number and the eresource name and we’ll do our best to help.

Remember you need to be a New South Wales resident and have a Library card [2] or a registered NSW public library card from a participating library to use the Library’s eresources at home.

I’ve requested a book but I won’t be able to come in today. Do I need to re-request?

The book that you’ve requested will be available to collect and use for seven days. After seven days, you will need to request the book again.


I’ve requested some books from offsite storage. When will the books be ready to collect?

Books and other collection material requested from offsite storage are available after 4 pm the next working day. Offsite material is not delivered to the Library on weekends and public holidays.

Can I borrow books from the Library through my public library?

Yes, you can borrow books from the Library’s collections through your public, academic or work library. Other items such as DVDs can also be borrowed but only through your public library. Some books and other collection material are not able to be borrowed.

See the Interlibrary Lending Policy [4] for more information.

Can I use Ancestry Library Edition from home?
Ancestry Library Edition is only accessible at the Library. You can access Ancestry on a Library computer in the Governor Marie Bashir Reading Room [5] or on your own device using the Library’s free wi-fi [6].

Can I request a book if it’s checked out to someone else?

Yes, you can request a book that's checked out in the catalogue [7]. We will check the book out to you when it becomes available.


How much does it cost to photocopy?

Prices for photocopying your own or Library material range from $0.20 to $3.

Library material that's too fragile or large will need to be copied by staff. Prices range from $1 to $3.

Reduced prices apply if you use double-sided printing.

See printing and copying [8] for more information.

The book's location is listed as offsite storage. What does this mean?

We also keep books and other collection material in storage that's not located at the Library. In the catalogue we've listed the location as offsite storage for material not stored at the Library.

See Using the Library's collections [3] for more information about requesting offsite material.

I would like to view some manuscripts. Are you able to set them aside for me?

Yes, complete the Access to collections request form [9] to request the manuscripts you would like to view. We will get back to you within 4 working days.

Do you offer scanning services?

We don't currently offer self-service scanning but we can scan some Library material, for you. You can place an order for us to scan articles, chapters from books and fragile material. See ordering copies [10] for more information including pricing.
You can use your own hand-held scanner to scan Library material. Speak to staff before you scan Library material. Scanners are not allowed in the Special Collections area [11].

Can the Library do extensive or ongoing research for me?

We're not able to do extensive or ongoing research. You can employ a professional researcher from organisations such as:

Professional Historians Association NSW [12]
Society of Australian Genealogists [13]

The Library does not accept responsibility for any aspect of their work or for any fees incurred. See the Ask a Librarian Service Policy [14] for ways that we can help with your research.

Is the Library able to value an object such as an old book?

We do not provide a valuation service. Visit the Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program [15] for a list of approved valuers [16].

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