

Memo

To	NLLT
From	Mark Crookston, Director, Content Services
Date	20 October 2023
Subject	Endorsing new General Collections Removal Policy

Purpose

- a) This memo requests your endorsement of the new General Collections Removal Policy, prior to approval by the National Librarian.

Recommendations

- b) It is recommended that NLLT:
 - a) **Endorse** the final draft of the General Collections Removal Policy (appendix A)
 - b) **Note** the summary of the final amendments (paragraphs 5-7)
 - c) **Note** the implementation and next steps (paragraphs 8-9)
 - d) **Discuss** the outstanding question in paragraphs 10-11

Background

1. In June 2022, NLLT endorse, and the National Librarian approved, the [Approach to Developing the Removal and Disposal Policy](#).
2. Following an engagement period, and [summary of the analysis and the proposed changes](#) were discussed with NLLT in July 2023.
3. A summary also went to the Guardians Kaitiaki, Library and Information Advisory Commission, and Te Komiti Māori. All endorsed the proposed changes.
4. The policy was redrafted based on those proposal, and discussed with the Advisory Group meeting and key internal working group members Jessica Moran and Kim Gutchlag.

Summary of final amendments

5. An overview of the major amendments to the General Collections Removal Policy are summarised below:

Changes to support the change in scope

- a) **Scope** – ATL and other research collections have been included as “out of scope”.

- All ATL removal considerations are unique to their circumstances and will require a separate process.
- b) **Name** – Due to the change in scope, and a recommendation from the Advisory Group to ‘keep it simple and clear’, the name of the policy has changed to *General Collections Removal Policy*.
- c) **About this policy** – wording changes to remove reference to research collections and ATL.
- d) **Circumstances for removal** – there were statements in the explanation section of the table which noted which collections each circumstance applied to. These have been removed.

Changes to the descriptions of the collections

6. Changes have been made to the descriptions of the general and research collections to add clarity and make them more precise.

Changes to the principles

7. While there was significant discussion on the principles during the engagement, much of this was related to how they would be put into practice. We are not recommending any substantive changes to the principles, but will be using feedback to guide work on implementation templates and processes. However, we are proposing one small change to principle 9 (removal) to make it more precise:

Original: Where *a range of viable options* are available, disposal actions that enable ongoing public access will be prioritised

Updated: Where *more than one viable option* is available, disposal actions that enable ongoing public access will be prioritised.

Implementation

8. There are a range of guidelines and templates that have been drafted to support the implementation of this policy. They are not perfect, and I intend to only use them as a guide at this stage as we start to implement a more regular and routine removals programme. To give effect to the principles in this policy the implementation programme is intended to start with:
 - a) Website update with all documentation, including a summary of analysis from the engagement period.
 - b) Develop, approve and publish a register of upcoming intentions to remove items from the general collections, including: Newspaper and microfilm copies, regular removals from Print disability and Music Hire collections; potentially signal something about OPC Music in 2024/25.
 - c) Step through those removal processes, starting with newspaper copies.
 - i) I have the intention to do this in collaboration with a couple of other institutions who may have copies of the titles we’re looking to remove (this analysis has not been done yet)
 - d) Undertake an analysis of the already removed OPC items against the disposal principles, with a recommendation for the National Librarian.
 - e) Update the removal and disposal templates and guides from learning through doing.

Next steps

9. Following approval of the policy I will:
 - a) Work with Helen Heath and Mary Hay to update the website as required
 - b) Communicate the final policy with Minister and Stakeholders, including contacting all who submitted feedback thanking them for their contribution (some from our sector took time to make some very thoughtful contributions).
 - c) Work with my team to start the implementation steps outlined above.

An outstanding question

10. One area that I seek some guide from NLLT on, relating to scope is for our Print Disability and Music Hire Collections. Formally, these are part of the general collections and in scope of this new policy. Practically, the Library undertakes a regular removal of items based on a long-standing practice relating to the purposes of those collections.
11. There are three options for how those 2 collections could be implemented using this new policy:
 - a) Make them out of scope (not preferred): This means they do not become part of the general collections, or they are removed from scope of the policy, and the removal process is run as is.
 - b) Make them in scope and run an annual removal/disposal process (not preferred): This would effectively be an annual list, approved by Minister through the process, communicated publicly with comment, then removed and disposed as appropriate.
 - c) Make them in scope and run a single process covering a set period of years (preferred): Effectively run the process, communicate the plan, obtain Ministerial approval that covers forward decisions for a time period (e.g. 2024 – '34) that permits current practice of regular and routine disposal based on condition.

Appendix A: Final draft of General Collections Removal Policy

1. About this policy

This policy provides the National Library of New Zealand Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa with clear parameters for when items can be recommended for removal from its general collections and what happens to them afterwards. It also covers processes the National Library needs to follow when considering removal and disposal of items from the general collections.

The policy describes four circumstances under which removal can be considered and three sets of principles:

- removal principles
- disposal principles
- process principles

This policy applies to the National Library's general collections, which are developed to meet current and known research needs and to supplement and further the work of other libraries in New Zealand. Therefore, regular and routine assessment of items against the policy is appropriate and good practice and ensures public engagement around removal decisions can be timely and adequate.

The removal of items – either individually or in groups – is part of the process of maintaining library collections. This policy recognises that to remove items from the general collections, the National Librarian must have agreement from the Minister of Internal Affairs under section 9(3) of the National Library of New Zealand (Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa) Act 2003. Decisions about disposal – that is, what happens to items once they have been removed – are made by the National Librarian.

This policy sits within, and aligns with, the broader policy context for the National Library. This includes:

- **Legislative requirements:** including Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act 2003, but also other relevant legislation like the Copyright Act 1994 and Privacy Act 2020.
- **Te Tiriti o Waitangi / The Treaty of Waitangi:** the National Library has obligations and responsibilities as a Tiriti partner and as key holders of important mātauranga Māori and taonga Māori collections.
- **Operational policies of the National Library:** at time of writing, policies include the Collections Policy, the Access Policy, the Use and Reuse Policy, Te Mauri o te Mātauranga, the Preservation Policy, and the Mātauranga Māori Policy and its associated standards.

2. Scope

This policy applies to items in the general collections of the National Library only. This includes all digital and physical items that have been accepted into the collections.

The following are out of scope:

- the schools collection of the National Library which has its own operationalised policy to guide the regular removal and disposal of items.
- the collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library, which under section 9(2) of Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act 2003 must be retained in Crown ownership in perpetuity.
- other research collections held permanently by the National Library of New Zealand.
- working tools of the National Library, which are resources that have been acquired by the library for staff to carry out their roles.
- any items stored by the National Library that have not been accepted into its collections.
- Any removal decisions that have been agreed prior to this approval of this policy.

3. When this policy will be applied

This policy will be applied when considering the removal of any items from the National Library's general collections. In most cases, the process for considering removal will be initiated by the National Library. However, there may also be requests from external parties for items to be removed, for example to be transferred to a different party with a close connection to the items.

4. Implementation

The National Library will develop a set of templates and processes to support the implementation of this policy. These will provide additional detail about what the principles will look like in practice. National Library staff will use the templates and processes to ensure recommendations about removal and disposal are consistent with the policy and its principles.

5. Definitions

Removal refers to the process of analysis and approval to remove items from the National Library's collections. This is the term used in Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act 2003. In collections management practice, other terms like deaccession, deselection, withdrawal or weeding are also used to describe the same or closely related concepts.

Disposal refers to what happens to an item once it has been agreed for removal from the collections. There are a number of potential methods of disposal, for example through

transfer to another party, donation, sale or secure destruction.

Maintenance refers to the continual care of the collections to ensure they are in good condition, accessible to the public, and fulfill their purpose. Removal of items within this scope is part of collections maintenance. Collection development and maintenance is a legislative function of the National Librarian.

6 About the National Library and its collections

The National Library of New Zealand

The National Library was established by legislation in 1965, bringing together pre-existing collections and services of the Alexander Turnbull Library, General Assembly Library and National Library Service. In 2003, the 1965 act was replaced with Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act 2003. This act remains the legislative basis for the library and its functions.

The purpose of the National Library, as set out in Section 7 of the Act is to “enrich the cultural and economic life of New Zealand and its interchanges with other nations by, as appropriate,—

- (a) collecting, preserving, and protecting documents, particularly those relating to New Zealand, and making them accessible for all the people of New Zealand, in a manner consistent with their status as documentary heritage and taonga; and
- (b) supplementing and furthering the work of other libraries in New Zealand; and
- (c) working collaboratively with other institutions having similar purposes, including those forming part of the international library community.”

In order to achieve this purpose, the National Librarian has a number of legislative functions, set out in section 9(1) of the Act. One of these functions is to “develop and maintain national collections of documents, including a comprehensive collection of documents relating to New Zealand and the people of New Zealand.”

The collections

The National Library has three sets of collections. These are built in a number of ways, including through donation, purchase and legal deposit. The three sets of collections are:

The General Collections supplement and further the work of other libraries in New Zealand by collecting and managing a range of published items the Library is best placed to hold on behalf of the library system as a whole. These physical and digital items are made available to people in the Library’s Reading Room and around the country through the library interloan system.

The general collections are not mandated, or primarily intended, to be kept in perpetuity and decisions about removing items will be made in line with this policy. There are, however, a limited number of special research collections which the Library has committed to preserving and facilitating access to in the long term. These are currently the Dorothy Neale White collection, Susan Price collection, Whole of Domain harvests of the New Zealand Web (2003–present), and selected digitised newspapers and periodicals.

Further information about the general collections, including the focus areas for collecting, is [published on our website](#).

The Alexander Turnbull Library collections are developed for current and long-term research purposes. Their scope is broad, designed to represent and reflect the people of Aotearoa New Zealand. They cover a range of formats across published, archival, digital and online media. The collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library are required to be retained in perpetuity under the National Library of New Zealand Act 2003.

The schools collection supports the development of young New Zealanders as engaged readers and digitally literate learners, by providing physical and digital items to be accessed through school libraries. This is a high-use steady state collection with the objective of adding and removing an equal number of items each year.

Further information about the collections is outlined in the National Library's [Collections Policy](#) and supporting collecting plans.

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7. Circumstances for Removal

There are four broad circumstances where the removal of items from the general collections may be appropriate. If an item meets one or more of the Circumstances they may be a candidate for removal, however further assessment against the principles is still required before removal can be recommended.

Circumstance	Explanation
There are legal reasons for an item to be removed from the collection	<p>Examples where this circumstance may apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if there was no legal reason for an item to be accepted into the collections in the first place, or • if there is a court order for items to be removed. <p>In some cases, this requirement may not be met (e.g. objectionable content or privacy concerns), but the National Library's Takedown Policy could apply, meaning an item might be retained but access is prevented for a certain period of time.</p>
There is a more appropriate group or institution to hold the items	<p>The National Library recognises it may not be the most appropriate owner of some items in its collections, even if they align with the collections policy and fit the purpose of the collection.</p> <p>Examples of when this circumstance may apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • repatriation of items to iwi/hapū/whānau, or • transfer to another institution.
Items no longer fulfill the purpose for which they were collected and have not taken on a subsequent purpose that aligns with the collections policy	<p>Examples where this circumstance may apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where there are multiple preservation copies an item (for example newspapers) • items that have deteriorated so information can no longer be accessed.
Items in the collection do not align with the collections policy	<p>The collections policy sets up the general shape and form of the collections and will guide maintenance decisions for the general collections.</p> <p>Examples where this circumstance may apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • items which no longer meet current research needs of New Zealanders • items which are now broadly publicly available.

8. Principles

The three sets of principles below form the main body of this policy. Any time the National Library is considering the potential removal and disposal of items from its general collections, its processes, recommendations and decisions must align with these principles. The process principles are designed to apply to both removal and disposal decision-making processes.

Removal principles

1. At least one of the circumstances for removal must be met in order for removal to be considered.
2. Removal of collection items must be consistent with New Zealand law.
3. Before a recommendation is made for removal, an assessment will be made about the impact on the ongoing information and cultural needs of New Zealanders.
4. Removal recommendations will take into consideration the relationship items have with other items in the collections.
5. Removal of items from the collections is final and not contingent on specific conditions set by the National Library.
6. The cost of maintaining and storing items is not the primary driver for removal decisions.

Disposal principles

7. Disposal of items must be consistent with New Zealand law.
8. The National Librarian can consider a wide range of potential disposal options, including transfer, sale, donation and destruction.
9. Where more than one viable option is available, disposal actions that enable ongoing public access will be prioritised.
10. The costs of potential disposal actions will be understood and considered and may influence disposal decisions.
11. If transfer to another party was agreed as part of the removal decision, no other disposal actions will be considered.

Process principles

12. The process for making removal and disposal decisions, and the outcome of these decisions, is transparent
13. The National Library builds or maintains relationships with people who have significant connections to collection items being considered for removal and disposal.
14. The National Library seeks advice from relevant groups and individuals to ensure

decisions align with the general collection removal policy

15. Appropriate tikanga will be followed when making and implementing removal and disposal decisions.

16. A record of items considered for removal from collections, and any supporting disposal action taken, will be made and kept.

17. A summary of engagement activities and outcomes will be provided to the person making the final removal or disposal decisions.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed no later than 7 years from the approval date.

10. Approval

This policy was approved by the National Librarian Te Pouhuaki on [DATE TBC]

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