

# National Library Removal and Disposal Policy: Updated draft and explanation of proposed changes

13 July 2023

## About this document

Amendments have been made to the National Library draft Removal and Disposal Policy following public engagement on the draft. An overview of changes outlined below, followed by the updated draft Policy. Further information about the feedback received during the engagement process is in the Summary of Submissions document.

## Changes to support change in scope

Following the engagement process, the National Library decided to change the scope of the policy to only include the general collections. Changes to the following sections were made to reflect this change in scope – these are the most significant changes since the draft. In particular:

- **About this policy** – wording changes to remove reference to research collections and ATL
- **Scope** – research collections changed to ATL collections and have been included as “out of scope”
- **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.

No substantive changes have been made to the Circumstances for removal or principles to reflect the change in scope.

## Changes to the descriptions of the collections

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

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.

*DRAFT – Updated draft NLNZ R+D Policy following engagement process, 13/7/2023.*

# National Library Removal and Disposal Policy

## 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 user 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 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.

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## Scope

This policy applies to items in the general collections of the National Library. 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
- 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.

## 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.

## 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.

## 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.

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## About the National Library and its collections

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.”

### About 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** of published items, including one copy of physical format titles received under legal deposit and selectively collected overseas publications. The purpose of these collections is to support the current information needs of New Zealanders, in particular through supplementing and furthering the work of other libraries in New Zealand. The general collections are developed and maintained because of their utility value and are therefore able to be borrowed and accessed throughout the New Zealand library network. Items in these collections are not required to be kept in perpetuity,
- **the research collections**, often also referred to as the heritage collections, which are acquired with the intention they will be kept permanently by the library. They include the collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library and the Dorothy Neal White children’s literature collection. These collections are developed and maintained because of their value in supporting current and emerging research needs, as well as anticipated needs of future generations of New Zealanders. Under section 11(2) of Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa Act 2003 the Crown must continue to own the collections of the Alexander Turnbull Library in perpetuity
- **the schools collection**, which supports the development of young New Zealanders as engaged readers and digitally literate learners. This is a high-use steady state collection, in which the objective is to add and remove an equal number of items.

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

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## 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 be removed from the collection	<p>Examples where this circumstance may apply include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• if there was no legal reason for an item to be accepted into the collections in the first place, or</li> <li>• if there is a court order for items to be removed.</li> </ul> <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"> <li>• repatriation of items to iwi/hapū/whānau, or</li> <li>• transfer to another institution.</li> </ul>
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"> <li>• where there are multiple preservation copies an item (for example newspapers)</li> <li>• items that have deteriorated so information can no longer be accessed.</li> </ul>
Items in the general collections do not align with the National Library's 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"> <li>• items which no longer meet current information needs of New Zealanders</li> <li>• items which are now broadly publicly available.</li> </ul>

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## 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

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14. The National Library seeks advice from relevant groups and individuals to ensure decisions align with the Removal and Disposal 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 final removal or disposal decisions.

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