

Special Collections Policy

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Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to define roles and responsibilities, collection development guidelines and access conditions to Special Collections.

Audience:

Library Staff, Academic staff and researchers of the university who use or manage Special Collections

Preamble:

This policy covers all existing and future materials and collections within Special Collections, including archival and non-archival materials including but not limited to, bibliographic items, ephemera, memorabilia, objects, manuscripts and digital items.

Objectives:

- To outline the roles and responsibilities of the University Library in the management of Special Collections.
- To provide guidelines for future collection development priorities, by purchase and gift, of Special Collections.
- To provide a tool to assist in decision-making and collaborations with students, academics, library staff and other collecting institutions.
- To inform the library Staff, academic staff and researchers about the Special Collections scope, strengths and conditions of access.

Definitions:

Any defined terms below are specific to this document. The definition of common terms appears in the Murdoch University Dictionary of Terms.

There are no terms.

Policy Statement:

1. Special Collections

Existing collections covered by this Policy (new collections will be added once received):

- 20th Century Paperback Collection
- 6UVS FM – an audio history
- Abortion Law Reform Association (ALRA) (WA branch) papers
- Australian Peace Committee (WA branch) Collection
- Bali Oral History Archive
- Betty Daly-King Collection
- Betty McIntosh Collection
- Bob Hetherington Collection
- Brian Aldiss Collection
- Centre for Research for Women (CRW)
- Christabel Chamarette Collection
- Dee Margetts Collection
- Diana Warnock Collection
- Dot Goodrick Collection
- Douglas Social Credit Movement of Western Australia papers and correspondence
- Film Tie-In Paperbacks Collection
- Francis Byrne Collection
- Geoffrey Bolton Archives
- Glaskin Collection
- Harry Whittington Collection (WISALTS)
- History of Chiropractic Collection
- History of Murdoch Collection
- Holmes a Court Collection
- Ian Watts Collection of Witchcraft
- Incest Survivor Association Collection
- Indigenous Affairs Department Collection
- Irene Greenwood Collection
- Jean Teasdale Collection
- Jennifer Lindsay Collection
- Jo Vallentine Collection
- Joan Williams Collection
- John Clements Oral History Collection
- Ken McPherson Collection
- Leigh Edmonds Collection
- Luna / FTI Collection
- Megan Sassi Collection
- Michael Durey Collection of History Microforms
- Mills and Boon Collection
- Original ABC radio drama manuscripts
- Paget Collection
- Pankhurst Collection
- Peet Collection
- People for Nuclear Disarmament (PND) (WA branch) Collection
- Play scripts from TV script production course
- Political Pamphlet Collection
- Popular Culture Collection
- Popular Women's Magazines
- Poster Collection
- Publications of the Allied Geographical Section
- Rare Books
- Rottnest Island Oral History Project
- Science fiction collection
- Shane Guthrie

- Sir Walter Murdoch
- Solar Energy Research Institute of WA (SERIWA)
- Toronto Film Society programme notes
- Vivienne Abraham 'Peace' Collection
- Western Australian Council of Churches Noonkanbah Documents
- Women and Politics Conference, Canberra 1975, papers and related materials
- Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) (Bunbury branch) Papers
- Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL) (Perth branch) Papers
- Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) (WA branch) Collection
- World Council of Churches Delegation Documents

2. Special Collections by Subject Areas

The Special Collections are subdivided into the following subject areas:

- Agriculture
- Asian Studies
- Counterculture
- Environmental Sciences
- Health Sciences and Sport
- History
- Peace Studies
- Politics
- Popular Culture
- Rare Books
- History of Murdoch University
- Indigenous Studies
- Law
- LBGTIQ
- Media Studies
- Maritime History
- Science Fiction
- Theology
- Women's studies

3. Responsibilities and Roles

3.1 Coordinator, Special Collections

The Coordinator, Special Collections is responsible for the overall management and development of Special Collections and for the provision of expert advice on preservation/conservation and handling of rare, fragile and valuable items, as well as collection decision-making, including acquisitions, disposal/deaccession and donations. The Coordinator, Special Collections is also responsible for fostering and managing relationships with current and potential donors, as well as cultural institutions and community groups. The Coordinator, Special Collections reports to the Manager, Research and Resources.

3.2 Librarians of the University

The Librarians employed by the University are responsible for providing subject specific expert advice and for liaising with relevant academic staff.

3.3 Special Collections Library Staff

The Special Collections staff are responsible for the day-to-day collections care and operational tasks, including, indexing, cataloguing, re-housing, and in-house digitisation.

3.4 History of Murdoch Advisors

History of Murdoch Advisors are responsible for providing expert advice and recommendations to the Director, Student and Library Services and the Coordinator, Special Collections on matters related to the history of Murdoch University.

3.5 Special Collections Volunteers

Special Collections volunteers assist, under the supervision of the Coordinator, Special Collections, in a range of tasks, including oral history transcriptions, indexing and collection re-housing.

4. Guidelines for Acquisitions

4.1 Collecting Methodology

Special Collections acquires materials primarily through:

- 4.1.1 Donations, gifts and bequests, both solicited and unsolicited.
- 4.1.2 Transfer of items/collections from other University Offices related to the History of Murdoch.
- 4.1.3 Transfer of items/collections from the main library collection.
- 4.1.4 Purchase.

Materials will be included/accepted in Special Collections only if they comply with at least one criterion in each section of the Collecting Guiding Criteria, including primary, secondary, tertiary criteria, and formats.

4.2 Collecting Guiding Criteria

4.2.1 Primary criteria for archival, non-archival material:

The Special Collections' main guiding principle for acquisitions is based on the purchase and/or acceptance of materials that:

- 4.2.1.1 Relate to existing collections within Special Collections or collections strengths with the general collections.
- 4.2.1.2 Relate to relevant academic/knowledge areas associated to the University's learning, teaching and research programs.
- 4.2.1.3 Enhance Special Collections and general collection strengths, including, History of Murdoch, Women Studies and Science Fiction.

- 4.2.1.4 Enrich the academic, cultural and historical significance of the collections.

4.2.2 Secondary criteria for archival and non-archival material:

- 4.2.2.1 Materials that are considered either rare, unique, or fragile and not commercially available.
- 4.2.2.2 Materials at risk of format obsolescence.
- 4.2.2.3 Material that will address collection gaps and/or complete or supplement existing collections.

4.2.3 Secondary criteria for rare books (Only):

Rare Books will be assessed based on the following criteria:

- 4.2.3.1 An edition of less than 500 copies.
- 4.2.3.2 Australian imprint Pre-1900.
- 4.2.3.3 Non-Australian imprint pre-1850.
- 4.2.3.4 Signed by the author and are of literary value.
- 4.2.3.5 Of noteworthy provenance.
- 4.2.3.6 Deemed to be vulnerable.
- 4.2.3.7 Items which are subject to legal restrictions on access.

4.2.4 Tertiary criteria:

Materials either purchased, transferred or donated must be safely stored and re-housed in the Special Collection area; therefore, in order to make a final decision, the Library will also take into consideration:

- 4.2.4.1 The size of the collection.
- 4.2.4.2 Size of individual objects/artefacts.
- 4.2.4.3 Storage, housing, preservation and environmental requirements.
- 4.2.4.4 Concurrent funding for processing, storage and preservation.

4.2.5 Formats

4.2.5.1 We Collect

Murdoch University Library collects digital, printed, published and unpublished materials for inclusion in Special Collections in the following formats/types:

- 4.2.5.1.1 Archives
- 4.2.5.1.2 Artefacts
- 4.2.5.1.3 Books and pamphlets
- 4.2.5.1.4 Correspondence
- 4.2.5.1.5 Ephemera
- 4.2.5.1.6 Maps
- 4.2.5.1.7 Memoirs and other primary sources
- 4.2.5.1.8 Newspapers
- 4.2.5.1.9 Oral Histories
- 4.2.5.1.10 Periodicals
- 4.2.5.1.11 Photographs
- 4.2.5.1.12 Posters
- 4.2.5.1.13 Sound recordings
- 4.2.5.1.14 University publications
- 4.2.5.1.15 Videos and similar materials

4.2.5.2 We Do Not Collect

- 4.2.5.2.1 Murdoch University Library does not collect material, for inclusion in Special Collections, in the following format:
 - Business records (This type of material is held by the University Archives).
 - Diaries and similar first-person accounts – unless the material belongs to a person of interest to the History of the University or to an existing collection.
 - Maps, surveys and similar items (This type of material is held by the University Archives).
 - Materials available in other collecting institutions.
 - Public domain materials available online.
 - Professional, personal, and family papers— unless the material belongs to a person of interest to the History of the University or to an existing collection.

- Research material used in the production of academic theses and/or university publications.

5. Donations, Gifts and Bequests

Material will be accepted into Special Collections only if absolute ownership is transferred to Murdoch University. In exceptional circumstances, the Director may negotiate an alternate arrangement, however any such arrangement must have clear contractual controls and end point.

Donations of personal library/object collections will meet the Collecting Guiding Criteria (section 4.2) as a whole.

People wishing to donate materials to Special Collections should contact the [Coordinator, Special Collections](#), who will assess the material against our Library Collections Policy (link) and the Special Collections – Collecting Guiding Criteria (Section 4.2)

All donations, gifts and bequests must be fully documented by completing the relevant donation forms dealing with [published](#) and [unpublished](#) material.

6. Guidelines for the Deaccession and Disposal of Items

6.1 Deaccessioning Principles

In this policy, the term deaccession refers to the removal of items from Special Collections. Unless deaccession is a result of unsalvageable deterioration, loss or theft, items must be transferred to the Library's general collections or transferred to other collecting institutions.

6.1.1 Deaccessioning Criteria

6.1.1.1 Duplicated material.

6.1.1.2 Items that do not meet the Collecting Guiding Criteria (See Section 4.2).

6.1.1.3 Items that are missing.

6.2 Disposal Principles

In this policy, the term disposal refers to the permanent physical removal of an item from the Library Collection.

6.2.1 Disposal Criteria

6.2.1.1 Items that are in poor conditions, deemed unsalvageable or in conditions that may have a negative impact to the collection's environment and/or staff health (e.g. Mould, vinegar syndrome, vermin infestation, etc.).

6.2.1.2 Deaccessioned items that are not aligned with the Library's general collection's policy and/or not accepted as donation/transfer to the general Library collection or to other collecting institutions.

The Coordinator, Special Collections is responsible for the approval and documentation of all deaccessioning and disposal processes.

7. Special Collections External Loans

Murdoch University Library considers requests for the loan of Special Collections items for exhibition purposes from reputed cultural institutions, including museums, archives, libraries and established community groups.

A request must be sent in writing to the Manager, Research and Resources and the Coordinator, Special Collections at least three months prior to the exhibition. The request must indicate:

- 7.1 Exhibition details (purpose, dates, venue, etc.).
- 7.2 Details of items being requested.
- 7.3 Description of environmental conditions of the exhibition space.
- 7.4 Assurance that the borrowing institution will pay for all related expenses.

The acceptance of the request is at the discretion of the Manager, Research and Resources. If accepted, a legal agreement will be prepared by Murdoch University.

8. Access Conditions

Conditions of access apply to the collections identified as part of Special Collections (See Section 1). These conditions are described on application to access the Collections.

Special Collections include manuscripts, pictures, oral history, maps, rare printed items and memorabilia. These collections are irreplaceable heritage material, which are unique and significant, but also often fragile. The conditions of access ensure that the collection items are preserved appropriately and available for future generations.

8.1 Access to Items and Collections

Access to Special Collections is granted by:

- 8.1.1 Requesting a Special Collection item – [In-Store Item Request form](#)
- 8.1.2 Requesting access to a collection - [Research Request Form](#)
- 8.1.3 Accessing digital collections – [Special Collections Research Repository](#)

9. Feedback

Any feedback on the operation of this policy should be directed to the Coordinator, Special Collections. Decisions made under this policy may be reviewed by the Director, Student and Library Services.

Performance Indicators:

There are no performance indicators.

Related Documents:

[Library Collections Policy](#)

Subject Level Collection Statements

References:

There are no references.

Approval and Implementation:

Approval Authority:	Director, Library and Student Services
Responsible Officer(s):	Coordinator Special Collections
Approval Authority for supporting procedures:	There are no supporting procedures.
Approval Authority for supporting guidelines:	There are no supporting guidelines.
Approval Authority for supporting standards:	There are no supporting standards.
Contact Officer:	Coordinator Special Collections

Revision History:

Approved/ Amended/ Rescinded	Date Approved	Effective Date	Next Review Date	Resolution No. (if applicable)
Approved	11/06/2019		11/06/2022	