

Library Collections Guidelines

Contents

1. Overview	2
2. Intent	2
3. Scope	2
4. Definitions.....	3
5. Guiding Principles	3
5.1. Our People.....	3
5.2. Our Place.....	3
5.3. Our Education	4
5.4. Our Research.....	4
6. Priorities.....	4
7. Governance and Responsibilities.....	4
7.1. Governance Responsibilities	5
7.2. Library Materials Budget (LMB).....	5
7.3. Financial Delegation for the LMB.....	6
7.4. Collection Valuation.....	6
8. Acquisition	6
8.1. Selection Criteria.....	6
8.2. Procurement.....	7
8.3. Bequests, Donations and Gifts.....	7
8.4. Deposited Material	7
8.5. Freely Available Online Resources	7
8.6. Resources Beyond Our Collections.....	7
9. Discovery and Access.....	8
9.1. Discovery of Information Resources	8
9.2. Access to Information Resources.....	8
10. Stewardship.....	8
11. Review and Deselection	8
12. Related Documents	9
13. Version History.....	10

1. Overview

James Cook University Library (JCU Library) is the custodian of information resources to support students, staff and the wider JCU community. The development, management and stewardship of these resources is an essential service to support transformative education, impactful research and the University's commitment to creating a sustainable future for regional and tropical societies.

JCU Library's information resources include:

- **General Collections** – an integrated suite of electronic and physical information resources to support the University's learning, teaching and research priorities.
- **Special Collections** – unique and rare information resources of cultural and historical significance to Australia relating to life in the Tropics with a focus on north Queensland.

JCU Library does not support the development and/or management of college-based collections or libraries. Any exception requires the prior approval of the Head, Library Services & University Librarian.

2. Intent

These guidelines inform the development and management of JCU Library's General and Special Collections including the selection, acquisition, discovery, access, preservation and deselection of information resources.

3. Scope

In scope:

- All electronic resources.
- Physical resources held at:
 - Eddie Koiki Mabo Library, Bebegu Yumba Campus, Townsville.
 - Cairns Campus Library, Nguma-bada Campus, Cairns.
 - Mackay Clinical School, Mackay Base Hospital.
 - Centre for Rural and Remote Health (CRRH), Murtupuni Campus, Mount Isa.
 - Orpheus Island Research Station (OIRS).

Out of scope:

- [JCU Art Collection](#)
- [University Archives](#)
- Physical resources held at:
 - [Library Services](#), JCU Singapore, except for discovery services.
 - [The Resource Centre](#), JCU Brisbane.

4. Definitions

Cultural Gifts Program (CGP) – an Australian Government initiative that provides an incentive to members of the public to consider donating material to public institutions.

Discovery layer – the search interface that allows users to find and access library information resources.

Discovery services – the description (cataloguing) of information resources and the provision of access to them through a maintained Library Services Platform.

Information resource – an item included in the Library's General or Special Collections. For example, book/ebook, journal/ejournal, archival records, database, or multimedia.

Material – see information resource.

North Queensland – the geographical area of north Queensland for the purpose of collection building is defined as the area in Queensland above latitude 22.5. This area includes the Barrier Reef, Torres Strait and other islands which are part of the State of Queensland. It excludes towns which are located below the designated latitude such as Rockhampton, Emerald, Clermont and Longreach.

Resource sharing – the collaborative exchange of information resources between libraries.

5. Guiding Principles

In line with the University's [Corporate Strategy \(2022\)](#), the development and management of the Library collections is guided by:

5.1. Our People

Staff, students and the communities we serve

We work collaboratively and respectfully with our diverse community in the development and management of our collections. Our focus is on shaping our collections to extend access and widen educational participation of regional, remote, first in family and international students. As a civic university library, we aim to support the cultural and everyday experience of our students, staff and visitors.

5.2. Our Place

The Tropics and beyond

Our University was established with a clear mandate to encourage study and research with a focus on topics of special importance to the people of the Tropics. Consequently, we develop and maintain collections with a focus on our unique place in the world. We strategically build a range of special collections containing unique and rare information resources of cultural, historical and national significance relating to life in the Tropics with a focus on north Queensland.

5.3. Our Education

Knowledge has the power to change lives

To support JCU's commitment to provide equitable, inclusive and high-quality learning, the Library collections focus on authoritative content, at the appropriate academic level. We develop and maintain dynamic collections that align with teaching priorities and are suitable for flexible multi-modal delivery.

5.4. Our Research

A catalyst for innovation and knowledge generation

Our world class collections, including unique primary source materials, open new possibilities and discoveries in support of the University's research priorities and the communities we serve. Access to our information resources enables our researchers to contribute to the global pool of research, the free flow of ideas, and the long-term sustainability of our region.

6. Priorities

We will ensure information resources and decisions made about the development and management of those resources are:

- **Relevant.** We will maintain a dynamic collection of information resources that are regularly reviewed to ensure our collections remain current and relate to the changing needs of the University.
- **Inclusive.** We will work to ensure information resources are presented within a culturally safe framework, and respectful of all backgrounds, beliefs, values, customs, knowledge, lifestyle and social behaviours.
- **Equitable.** Wherever possible, information resources are selected to ensure that all staff and students have the opportunity to access the same information, engage in the same interactions and enjoy the same services regardless of physical or economic circumstances.
- **Engaging.** Information resources are presented in such a way that they are easily discoverable, interactive and meaningful to the JCU community.
- **Accountable.** We will ensure diligence and transparency when making decisions regarding our collections, including expenditure of the Library Materials Budget. We will consult relevant stakeholders when required.
- **Sustainable.** We are committed to working towards the UNs Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by selecting material whose content informs green practices and seeking opportunities to reuse and recycle when deselecting material.

7. Governance and Responsibilities

Library staff develop and maintain the Library collections on behalf of the University. This is achieved through appropriate consultation and transparent expenditure of allocated funds.

7.1. Governance Responsibilities

Governance Responsibilities	
Finance and Business Services (FABS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valuation of rare components of various Special Collections. Manages the Asset Register.
Head, Library Services and University Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic management of Library collections. Signs deeds of gift and donation forms. Approves donations of significance with respect to cultural or monetary value within the library portfolio.
Senior Manager, Collections and Discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages systems infrastructure to support Library collections. Manages the Library Materials Budget (LMB).
Manager, Collection Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends expenditure of and operationally manages the Library Materials Budget (LMB). Manages donations for the General Collections. Liaises, negotiates and maintains relationships with library vendors. CAUL Content Procurement Coordinator. Manages collection analysis and review of subscription resources. Manages electronic resources.
Manager, Special Collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommends expenditure of bequeathed funds. Manages donations to the Special Collections, including JCU Art Collection. Liaises, negotiates and maintains relationships with library donors. Manages conservation of Special Collections materials. Communicates and promotes the Library's Special Collections to the JCU and broader community.
Manager, Discovery and Metadata	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manages physical collections in Cairns and Townsville. Manages metadata records and processes that make the collections discoverable and accessible.
Liaison Librarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates and promotes the Library collections to staff and students. Consults with academic staff regarding discipline specific resources.

7.2. Library Materials Budget (LMB)

Information resources are purchased using funds from the Library Materials Budget (LMB). Expenditure of the LMB is in accordance with the governance responsibilities outlined in table 7.1 and with the financial delegations outlined in table 7.3.

When allocating the LMB, priority is given to renewing continuing resources and subscriptions and purchasing new resources that support current teaching, learning and research needs.

The LMB is not used for individual publication fees, classroom book sets, resources requiring unauthorised data sharing, course-specific materials with restricted access, or software that does not directly provide access to information resources.

7.3. Financial Delegation for the LMB

Financial Delegation for the LMB	
Finance and Business Services (FABS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Materials Budget (LMB) fund allocation.
DVC Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial delegation approval above \$1,000,000.
Director, Academic Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial delegation approval up to \$1,000,000. Signs and terminates third party licence agreements. Approves all expenditure including bequeathed funds.
Head, Library Services and University Librarian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial delegation approval up to \$100,000.
Senior Manager, Collections and Discovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial delegation approval up to \$100,000.

7.4. Collection Valuation

The rare components of the Library collections are valued by a University appointed, government approved valuer on a yearly basis to comply with insurance and risk management strategies and policies of the University.

8. Acquisition

Information resources are acquired into the Library collections by way of purchase, bequest, donation, gift, commission or as freely available online resources. The Library is also the repository for JCU theses and participates in resource sharing initiatives that extend access beyond the Library collections. Potential additions to our Special Collections are assessed against the Library's capacity for perpetual stewardship.

8.1. Selection Criteria

Regardless of the method of acquisition, items for inclusion in the collections are evaluated against the guiding principles (outlined in section 5) and the priorities (outlined

in section 6). Special Collections are also evaluated against the stated collecting intent for each collection. In addition, the following selection criteria apply:

- **Format.** Digital preferred except for Special Collections.
- **Language.** English preferred.
- **Edition.** Current edition only, except for Special Collections.
- **Copyright and licensing.** Must comply with copyright, have appropriate library license and be available to all staff and students.
- **Access and discoverability.** Must be compatible with JCU systems.
- **Physical condition.** New or near new condition except for rare and unique items for Special Collections.

8.2. Procurement

Financially sustainable procurement strategies are used to maximize the University's return on investment, including evidence based and patron driven acquisition models, and read and publish agreements. New resources may be introduced for a trial period and may be restricted to a smaller number of users.

8.3. Bequests, Donations and Gifts

JCU Library accepts bequests, donations and gifts that enhance the Library collections and meet the selection criteria, including those submitted via the Cultural Gifts Program (CGP). Offers will normally be accepted only if they are free of any restrictive covenant or conditions. Any exception requires the prior approval of the Head, Library Services and University Librarian. The Library reserves the right to accept or decline donations.

8.4. Deposited Material

It is a requirement that JCU PhD, Professional Doctorate and Masters by Research theses are received by the Library for deposit into the University's institutional repository, [ResearchOnline@JCU](#) in accordance with the [HDR Thesis Library Deposit Guide](#).

Honours and Postgraduate Coursework theses may be accepted under special circumstances.

8.5. Freely Available Online Resources

Freely available online resources will be evaluated against the selection criteria and may be included in the Library collections.

8.6. Resources Beyond Our Collections

Acquisitions can be supplemented with the use of resource sharing initiatives, particularly in support of research programs or for resources that are required on a temporary basis.

9. Discovery and Access

9.1. Discovery of Information Resources

Information resources are described (catalogued) and made discoverable through the Library's discovery layer. In addition, the Special Collections can be discovered in a variety of ways including NQHeritage@JCU (dedicated online repository for Special Collections), specific finding aids and staff dedicated to the area.

Library staff promote discovery of the Collections by creating browsable [Discovery Collections](#), developing subject specific [Library Guides](#) and by showcasing collections in themed displays and exhibitions. The Library engages in community events and partners with other institutions. Social media platforms are used to promote our collections and activities to the global community.

9.2. Access to Information Resources

Electronic resources are available to all JCU staff and students both on and off campus, within license restrictions. Members of the community have access to the physical collections and limited access to online resources.

JCU Library supports and promotes affordable and open access to information resources as outlined in the University's [Open Scholarship Policy](#).

Information resources in physical form in the Special Collections are accessed via supervised reading rooms. Where possible, items are digitised and made openly available online through the Special Collections repository, [NQHeritage@JCU](#).

10. Stewardship

JCU Library is committed to the appropriate storage, preservation, and maintenance of our collections, ensuring their integrity whilst providing responsible access to our users.

Electronic resources are safeguarded against cyber security risks and threats in accordance with JCU's [Information Security Policy](#). The Library's Disaster Management Plan outlines the management of the physical collections in the event of disasters or situations that may cause damage such as cyclones, water leaks or mould.

Special Collections are housed in controlled environmental conditions to preserve unique and rare information resources of cultural, historical and national significance for both current and future generations.

11. Review and Deselection

JCU Library regularly reviews information resources to ensure they continue to meet the learning, teaching, and research needs of the University. The review process involves both quantitative and qualitative methods including usage analysis, evaluation by subject matter experts, user surveys and feedback to determine if material should be retained or deselected.

Items for retention are assessed against the guiding principles (outlined in section 5) and the priorities (outlined in section 6). In addition, the following retention criteria apply:

- JCU publications
- JCU authors
- Rare or unique
- Indigenous knowledges and perspectives
- Historically significant
- Seminal works
- Incompatible with digitisation

The Special Collections are to be permanently retained because they have been donated with the understanding that they will be preserved. They are also classified as having long-term value under the Non-Current Asset Policies (NCAP) for the Queensland Public Sector.

Items for deselection are assessed against the following criteria:

- Available in preferred format
- Discredited works
- Incomplete sets, brief journal holdings of limited value
- Outdated, redundant or superseded
- Poor condition, damaged beyond repair
- Technologically obsolete

The Library will dispose of deselected physical resources in an environmentally responsible way in accordance with University policies and procedures. The Library does not offer discarded material for public sale.

12. Related Documents

JCU:

- [HDR Thesis Library Deposit Guide](#)
- [Information Security Policy](#)
- Library Services Disaster Management Plan (Staff only)
- [Library Use Policy](#)
- [Open Scholarship Policy](#)
- [Reconciliation Statement](#)
- [Student Disability Policy](#)
- [Sustainability Statement](#)

Australia:

- [ALIA Free Access to Information Statement](#)
 - [Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services](#)
 - [Non-Current Asset Policies \(NCAP\) for the Queensland Public Sector](#)
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International:

- [IFLA Statement on Libraries & Intellectual Freedom](#)
- [UN Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#)

13. Version History

Version	Date Approved	Approver
4.0	July 2025	Head, Library Services
3.0	October 2015	Director, Library & Information Services
2.0	December 2013	Director, Library & Information Services
1.0	August 2009	Director, Library & Information Services