

QUT Library Collection Development Manual

4. Collection Management

4.12. Weeding

Identification block

QUT Library Collection Development Manual	
4.12. Weeding	
Contact Officer	Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources)
Approval Authority	Library Management Group
Approval Date	5 February 2007
Date of Next Review	12 December 2008

Policy statement

Table of contents

1. Introduction
2. Weeding guidelines
3. Exceptions
4. Disposal of weeded material

4.12. Weeding

1. Introduction

Weeding is the process of removing unwanted material from the collection. It does not refer to the process of relocating material to the Central Store, for which see the [Central Store Policy](#).

Libraries need to weed collections for several reasons:

- To maintain a current, relevant and useful collection;
- To make the best use of space;
- To improve the appearance, appeal and browsability of the collection
- To check for materials that need repair or replacement;
- To get feedback on the collection's strengths and weaknesses.
(<http://www.ilsa.lib.ia.us/weeding.htm>)

A structured, planned approach to weeding is essential to ensure that material of research or historical value is retained, particularly in areas supporting new courses and/or research.

The Library maintains a Weeding Register and Plan Overview which records the overall weeding activities, both completed and intended, for the whole Library. More detailed Branch-specific ongoing weeding plans are recorded on a separate instrument (Branch Weeding Timeline), and inform the [Weeding Register](#) and Plan Overview. Branch Library Managers are responsible for recording future weeding projects as well as the ongoing weeding plans documented by the Branch Weeding Timeline onto the Weeding Register and Plan Overview. Branches are also required to make operational weeding documentation such as procedures and reports available via the Library's intranet. Each October, IRMG reviews the Weeding Register and Plan for the following year in order to coordinate and prioritise major weeding projects recommended to LMG for project funding in the following year.

Collection evaluation documents such as School and Faculty Information resource Plans should be consulted at the beginning of a weeding project and should also inform, and be informed by, the Branch Weeding Timelines of each Branch. Faculty staff and relevant staff from other branch libraries should also be consulted.

Weeding is undertaken in four ways at QUT Library.

- Ongoing weeding as documented in the Branch Weeding Timelines and School Information Resource Plans
- Branch projects - Branch Library Managers initiate a major weed
- Spot weeding initiated by liaison librarians. This may be in response to feedback from shelving staff that available space is getting low. In some cases an academic staff member may assist with the weeding of small areas of the collection.
- Ad hoc weeding . - Unplanned weeding decisions can be prompted by factors such as:
 - Identification of damaged material
 - Identification of superseded editions of reference titles
 - Changes in shelving availability

2. Weeding guidelines

This policy provides guidelines to assist in the decision-making process rather than rules to be applied rigidly. Factors such as the subject content of the material under consideration will affect the interpretation of these guidelines.

Material that falls into any of the following categories can be considered for weeding.

Material no longer relevant to QUT's learning, teaching and research needs

Material identified as no longer relevant to QUT courses and research can be discarded. QUT does not have a policy of retaining last copies therefore last copies will be discarded if material no longer relevant.

Earlier editions

Copies of earlier editions of works can be considered for discard. Where multiple copies are held, one may be retained if content is deemed valuable or unique The Law Library retains one copy of all previous editions of legal works.

Superseded reference editions

Superseded editions of reference works are either discarded or relocated to the general or periodical collection if they contain valuable or unique content.

Duplicate issues of periodicals

Once a periodical volume has been bound or replaced by microform, duplicate issues are discarded.

Paper volumes duplicated by electronic versions are discarded if perpetual access is assured in the licence agreement. This can be checked on the list "Print Holdings with

Perpetual Access” maintained on the Intranet.
<http://intranet.library.qut.edu.au/irm/serials.jsp>

Material with obsolete or out of date content

Material with out of date or inaccurate information should be discarded.

AV/multimedia/computer software requiring unavailable hardware

Items relying on hardware that is no longer supported by QUT, or that is generally unavailable in the community, are discarded unless they need to be retained as exemplars.

Where the content is still valuable to the collection, the Library seeks permission to copy it to an appropriate format or buy a replacement content in an appropriate format.

Material damaged beyond repair

Items damaged beyond repair are discarded. They should be replaced or legally copied if the material is still in demand. Since it is very complex to get copyright permission, this avenue is rarely pursued. This could include kits where substantial parts are missing.

Superseded material

Superseded parts of cumulative works are discarded.

Reference Collection

Refer to [Reference Collection Policy](#).

3. Exceptions

Material in the following categories will not be discarded:

- Material subject to regional or national collecting agreements
- QUT Research level theses, ie. PhD, Masters Research and Professional Doctorates
- Special collections (for example, Railway Collection, Australian Childrens' Literature Collection, Brougham Collection, Rapaport Collection)
- Collections of historical significance or where the Library has given an undertaking not to withdraw the material

Note: Commonwealth Library Deposit Scheme conditions apply. Under a previous scheme, these Australian Government publications deposited in the Library were marked “Do Not Discard” unless Ausinfo was notified. This condition no longer applies and material may be discarded if no longer relevant to the collection.

4. Disposal of discard material

Certain suitable discarded materials can be offered to other branches or relevant institutions, eg Oxley Library. If discarded items are offered to organisations, ie. Lifeline, the collection of items must be accommodated within the timelines of the Library weeding project and must be at no cost to the Library.

Approaches from other institutions for QUT Library discarded materials are referred to the Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources) who investigates:

- The requirements and standing of the requesting organisation eg. types of material required/not required
- The status of organisation (eg. fee paying, government sponsored, etc)
- The costs of packaging and freight arrangements and identification of who will pay
- The availability of suitable discards and copies of their MARC records from QUT Library.

Any ongoing arrangements with other institutions are recorded by the Associate Director, Library Services (Information Resources) and the LRS staff and actioned in future in relation to disposal of suitable items from the Library's major weeding program[m1].

Some discarded Law Library titles are sent to other universities, courts and government bodies as part of ongoing arrangements.

Records for withdrawn items are stored on the I Drive for auditing purposes.

Prior to final disposal in covered recycling bins, an interested staff member can apply to obtain a weeded item, by completing an Application for QUT staff member to obtain item withdrawn form collection request form.

Forms are to be signed off by relevant Library Section Heads and are retained in the Branch for five (5) years to ensure that accountability in the process is maintained.

Following major weeds, materials deemed unable to be reused are placed in covered paper recycling bins.

As a general rule, the small quantities of discarded materials removed from the collection on a day to day basis are placed in paper recycling bins.

Appendices to policy

Appendix 1: Application for QUT staff member to obtain item withdrawn from collection

Modification history

Date	Sections	Source	Details
14 Nov 2005	4.12 Section 1,2,3	Associate Director, Information Resources	Revised to include annual weeding plan and update.
5 Feb 2007	All	Associate Director, Information Resources	Extensive revision due to review of weeding process library wide

QUT Library Collection Development Manual

Weeding Policy Appendix 1

Application for QUT staff member to obtain item withdrawn from collection

Applicant/Employee name	
Staff Number	
Date	
Bibliographic Description of Item for Disposal (Or attached catalogue records)	
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	
Approximate value (if appropriate)	
REASON FOR DISPOSAL <i>e.g. damaged beyond repair, superseded, no longer relevant to the Library collection/University's needs</i>	
<hr/> <hr/>	
DECLARATION BY APPLICANT	
<p>I, _____, (name of applicant) do declare that I am not aware of any conflict of interest which might arise in relation to the disposal of this item into my possession.</p> <p>Signed:.....</p>	
AUTHORISATION BY SECTION HEAD	
<p>I hereby authorize the disposal of the described asset to the applicant, whose details appear above</p>	
Name	
QUT staff number	
Date	
Signature	