

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS LIBRARIES	CHL Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027			
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Purpose

The *Central Highlands Libraries Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027* is the primary document that identifies the strategic principles for collection development and the processes and accountability for collection management (selection, acquisition, evaluation and deselection).

Scope

The *Central Highlands Libraries Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027* applies to all libraries in the Central Highlands Libraries group. The Policy is developed, maintained and applied by the City of Ballarat in consultation with the CHL group.¹

The *Central Highlands Libraries Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027* was developed in reference to a broad range of professional documentation and public library sector standards. The policy is informed by current research on collection practice including the collection policies of other public library services.

Related Documents

Central Highlands Libraries Collection Maintenance Guidelines

Reader Development statewide framework

[APLA/ALIA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries 2021](#)

Fiction standing orders and profiles

Nonfiction Subject profiles

¹ Service Level Agreement 2020-2025 for Provision of Library Services by City of Ballarat.

Roles And Responsibilities

The Coordinator Collections and Infrastructure is responsible for the strategic development, and maintenance of these guidelines.

Implementation

The Coordinator Collections and Infrastructure is responsible for reporting on the outcomes of applying these guidelines to the Coordinator of Library Service Development .

Review

- Annually, for minor amendments.
- Annually, for Standing orders and Profile
- Every three years, for formal updates that are reflective of our growing and changing communities and their needs.

Contents

Introduction

Collection Principles (ethics and values that drive collection development)

Collection Management Process

- Procurement

- Collection Selection

- Selection Criteria

- Free access to information for a diverse community

- Collections in Community Languages

- Donations

- Withdrawing items from the Collection

- Replacement of library materials

- Format obsolescence

- Disposal of items

The Collection

- Fiction

- Nonfiction

- Large Print

- Magazines and Newspapers

- Audiovisual Collections

- Children's Collections

- Graphic Novels

- Hot Picks Collection

- Local History

- Digital eResources

Appendices

- Appendix A: Library Collections specific to City of Ballarat Libraries

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS LIBRARIES COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES 2024-2027

Central Highlands Libraries group acknowledges the traditional lands of all the Victorian Aboriginal nations, and their cultural practices and knowledge systems.

Central Highlands Libraries group recognises that the collection holds traditional and cultural knowledge belonging to Aboriginal communities.

We pay our respects to Elders, past and present, who have handed down knowledge systems to each new generation for millennia.

INTRODUCTION

Central Highlands Libraries group (CHL) was formed in 2011 and consists of the public library services of the Local Government Areas of [City of Ballarat](#), [Ararat Rural City Council](#), [Central Goldfields Shire Council](#), [Hepburn Shire Council](#), [Moorabool Shire Council](#), [Northern Grampians Shire Council](#), [Pyrenees Shire Council](#) and [Southern Grampians Shire Council](#).

CHL covers a geographical area over 20,000 square kilometres and services a population of 233,881. There are eighteen static library branches located at Ararat, Avoca, Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Ballarat, Beaufort, Clunes, Creswick, Daylesford, Dunolly, Hamilton, Lake Bolac, Maryborough, Sebastopol, St Arnaud, Stawell, Trentham and Wendouree. Five of the LGAs also offer outreach library services.

COLLECTION PRINCIPLES

- 1. We recognise the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands on which Central Highlands Libraries serve and work, including their rights to cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, traditional cultural expressions and intellectual property. We recognise that Country is the foundation library of traditional knowledge.*

We are committed to consulting with community to build culturally safe and balanced collections. We will make all reasonable efforts to represent Aboriginal voices through our selection criteria and to support First Nations authors, illustrators and publishers.

- 2. We will provide a collection that is guided by our community and responsive to community needs*

We will respond to our community's demand for new and popular materials in both physical and digital. We welcome customer purchase requests for items not held in the collection and we will assess these requests against our collection policy. We will actively monitor high demand items and purchase additional copies as required and we welcome feedback and comments on any element of the collection.

3. The collection will reflect the broad spectrum of community views

Public libraries make vital contributions to the social, cultural, economic, and educational development of our communities. Public libraries have a role in facilitating the exchange of ideas and information fundamental to democratic societies and we recognise that access to information and ideas through books and other formats is a basic human right. We support our patrons' right to access information (provided it is not prohibited by law).

4. We are committed to collections for children and young people

We will provide collections for children and young people that:

- Widen their interests
- Support the acquisition and development of reading and literacy skills,
- Encourage recreational reading
- Support education

Items will be added to the most appropriate collection for children, with reference to [Australian Classifications](#). We recognise that parents and guardians are the decision makers on what their children read and watch.

5. We provide materials in the media of the day to support informational, recreational and cultural needs of the community

We recognise that providing collections in a wide variety of formats (physical and digital) ensures broader access for people of all ages and abilities and recognise the importance of this for those in regional and rural communities.

6. We will evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of our collections through analysis of performance data

The collection will be regularly evaluated using a variety of metrics including performance data, staff feedback and assessment and community feedback. This is part of our commitment to responsible expenditure of collections budgets.

Specific performance indicators include:

- Turnover rate - is calculated by dividing the total number of loans in a year by the total number of collection items. In general, very high and very low turnover rates indicate areas for improvement which need to be addressed.
- Total loans (digital and physical collections)
- Age of the collection
- Acquisition rates
- Turn around from time of order to library shelf accessibility

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Procurement

Central Highlands Libraries collections are procured by the City of Ballarat on behalf of the CHL group under agreement, and from vendors approved in the Procurement Australia tender 2306 / 0843 – *Library Collections, Furniture Equipment & Associated Requirements*.

Collection selection

Items are selected for the collection based on one or a combination of the below methods.

Standing orders

Standing orders are titles that will be ordered prepublication, in predefined quantities.

Responsibility for maintaining relevant and up to date standing orders rests with the Coordinator Collections and Infrastructure. Standing order lists are reviewed annually based on the highest circulating authors, titles, series, genres and subjects. Standing orders are modified to reflect the evolving demands of borrowers and budget availability.

Profiles and vendor selection

Selection profiles provide specifications for suppliers. These are used to select content that meets the principles of the CHL collection.

Requests and suggestions from library users.

Requests and recommendations for purchase may be made by members of the community and by library staff. Each request is measured against the Collection Policy and is subject to availability through standard procurement processes and satisfying the selection criteria.

Popular items

Multiple copies of popular items will be added to meet high demand.

Stock requests

Purchase to replace items and to fill gaps identified by staff doing collection maintenance.

Selection Criteria

The following criteria are considered when selecting all categories of material. An item need not meet all criteria to be selected.

- Relevance to community needs or interests
- Date of publication
- Popular demand
- Currency and accuracy of content
- Supports Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity (DEI) content and audiences
- Enduring value
- Suitability of subject, style and readability for intended audience
- Quality and suitability of the format
- Series already held in the collection
- Local author or local subject
- Price
- Availability

Additional selection criteria applies to digital collections:

- Platform
- Digital Rights Management
- Vendor support
- Ease of use
- Content availability and coverage
- Technical considerations (for example, user authentication)
- Contract provisions and limitations

The following materials will not usually be acquired:

- Self-published works, unless they have local relevance
- Textbooks or curriculum-based materials. The provision of prescribed textbooks and curriculum-based material is the responsibility of educational institutions.
- Specialised, technical or academic publications
- Second-hand materials
- Materials prohibited by law

Free access to information for a diverse community

Central Highlands Libraries supports the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) [Statement on free access to information](#). Selection is not based on the personal, political, moral and/or religious views. A perception that material may offend or cause controversy is not, of itself, a reason to limit purchase or provision of an item.

Public libraries have a responsibility to include in their collections a representative selection of materials, which meet the selection criteria, on topics of interest to their users. The collection will represent a diverse range of opinions and subjects, unless that material is prohibited by law. Access to titles will only be restricted when it is prohibited, as specified by [Australian Clasification](#), such as with MA and R rated DVDs.

Responsibility for reading, listening, and viewing library material by patrons under the age of 18 rests with their parents or guardians.

If a library patron has an objection to a particular title held in the library or if they consider the title is not suited to a particular collection, the matter can be discussed with the Team Leader/Branch Manager. The *CHL Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027* will be provided on request. The library is only obliged to withdraw material that has been recalled by publishers due to legal requirements or material deemed illegal by Australian Classification.

Collections in Community Languages

Central Highlands Libraries provides access to material for linguistically diverse community members through online resources (such as PressReader for global newspapers) and can also supply free bulk inter library loan of print materials.

Where there is a community language spoken by 2% or more of residents, a permanent collection will be developed, provided the material is available to purchase.

Donations

Relevant donated items can be a valuable addition to the collection. Individual donors are advised of the conditions of inclusion at the time of making the donation.

Donated items must meet the following criteria to be added to the collection:

- Published within the last 2 years
- Excellent physical collection
- In high public demand
- Items not duplicating existing holdings
- Items that expand an existing collection

Donations of audio visual materials are not accepted.

Donated item intended to replace a lost or damaged item while on loan are not accepted.

Donations with local history subject matter will be considered and can be exempt from some of the above criteria.

All donated items, particularly unsolicited donations, become subject to the collection management procedures of the Central Highlands Libraries group and may be assessed for deselection according to deselection criteria. Donations are not added to the collection in perpetuity.

Items assessed as unsuitable for the collection or deselected may be:

- Discarded
- Donated to third party charities
- Returned to the donor if this has been requested

Monetary gifts for the purchase of library materials will be accepted, provided the donor's intention for the use of the funds is consistent with the *Central Highlands Libraries Collection Development Guidelines 2024-2027*.

Donations of self-published items will be accepted if the author lives or has lived in the Central Highlands area of Victoria, or the subject matter of the item relates to the Central Highlands area, and the item fills a need within the collection. Items must be produced in a robust format suitable for community circulation.

As outlined in the Central Highlands Libraries Service Level Agreement, the number of donated items added is not to exceed 2% or the previous year's collection acquisitions.

Withdrawing items from the Collection

Withdrawing items (otherwise known as weeding) from the library collection is integral to the Collection Management process. An active and continuous weeding program is essential to maintain a high-quality, high-performing collection.

The following criteria is considered when assessing items for withdrawal:

- The information / content is out of date or inaccurate
- New edition available
- Low circulation, including duplicate copies
- Items in poor physical condition, i.e. worn, damaged, soiled unless it is a heritage or archival item and/or the usage does not warrant minor repair
- Materials no longer in demand
- Obsolete formats or where the item is now available online
- Relevance to present and anticipated community needs
- Physical capacity of library spaces

The Local History collections are exempt from these weeding criteria.

Replacement of library materials

While the library aims to maintain copies of standard and enduring works, it does not automatically replace all materials that are withdrawn. In deciding whether to replace an item, staff will consider the following criteria:

- Whether the item is still available and can be replaced
- Whether another item/title or format might better serve the same purpose
- Whether there remains sufficient demand to replace the item
- The number of additional copies already held in the collection

Format obsolescence

Audio Visual collections will be monitored to ensure they are purchased in formats that match community expectations. As the range of titles published in DVD and Audio Book CD declines and usage of these formats by the community decreases, the viability of these collections will be evaluated.

Disposal of Items

The disposal of Items identified for deaccessioning will be according to the policies of Central Highlands Libraries council policies and procedures.

Where a replacement fee is levied due to damage or loss of an item while on loan, disposal will be in accordance with council policy and procedure at that Local Government Authority

THE COLLECTION

The collection is developed, managed and maintained to be relevant and reflect the needs and requirements of the local community. As well as physical items, the collection includes a range of downloadable, streaming and online resources to support the recreational, lifelong learning and information needs of the community. This collection includes eBooks, eAudiobooks, movies, magazines, local and global newspapers and research databases for family history.

Fiction

Central Highlands Libraries provide a wide range of high interest, popular, best-selling, and classic fiction works in all formats (print and digital). The collection is regularly refreshed with new titles. Classic and enduring titles are refreshed as necessary. Where a title is in high demand, additional copies of that title will be purchased. The importance of maintaining the integrity of enduring fiction series is recognised and where possible replacement copies, either in print or digital form, will be procured.

Nonfiction

The Central Highlands Libraries nonfiction collection provides resources for recreational reading, lifelong learning, information, and general educational support. Physical and digital formats are provided, for all ages and stages of life. Where a title is in high demand, additional copies will be purchased. Efforts will be made to assess the collection's coverage and to address any obvious or reported gaps.

Central Highlands Libraries group does not purchase text books, unless these have general community value.

Large Print

The large print collection primarily supports library users with print disability, but there are no restrictions on general use. As far as possible, this collection reflects the standard print collections, however procurement is limited to the titles published in this format. This collection is predominantly popular adult fiction titles, with a smaller amount of popular nonfiction.

Magazines and Newspapers

Subscriptions are held to selected magazines and newspapers that reflect community need and interest at each library. Back collections of magazines are not held, as the intention is to provide current and relevant information. The collection is comprised of general interest magazines and journals that reflect current news, trends, and popular culture. This includes sports, arts and crafts, current affairs, travel, music, business. Popular titles for children and young people are also included. The print magazine and newspaper collections are enhanced by online subscriptions, providing library users with a choice of format.

Magazine and newspaper subscriptions are reviewed annually.

Audiovisual collections

The Central Highlands Libraries audiovisual collection includes audiobooks and DVDs. Technological advances dictate the format, currency and popularity of various media. Sustainability and the popularity of new and emerging formats will in part determine if these formats will be acquired and for how long existing formats will be retained and supported. This assessment will also include equity and access provisions across the Central Highlands region.

The Library applies the [Australian Classification Board's guidelines](#) to cataloguing processes.

Children's Collection

The children's collection provides board books, picture books, begin to read, junior fiction, junior graphic novels, DVDs, audiobooks and junior nonfiction. The guiding principle is to encourage children and families to read widely for enjoyment, to develop positive reading habits for life and to support literacy acquisition.

Graphic Novels

The graphic novel collection provides popular titles to support the information, recreation and general reading interests of adults, young adults and children. The collection includes graphic novels and manga. A variety of formats are acquired for the collection, with consideration to narrative and artistic quality, popular culture, and public demand. The Library applies the [Australian Classification Board's guidelines](#) when assigning titles to the adult, young adult or junior collections.

Hot Pick Collection

The Hot Pick Collection is a curated selection of recently published bestseller titles, books in translation and niche fiction. It is a browsing collection with a one-week loan period and is non-holdable. The Hot Pick titles are also available in the general collection, with a four-week loan periods and are holdable.

The Hot Pick Collection is held at the library branches of Ballarat, Sebastopol, Wendouree, Bacchus Marsh, Ballan, Beaufort, Avoca, Hamilton, St Arnaud and Stawell.

Local History

The Local History collections contain titles of relevance to the library location and may include publications by local authors. These collections are available for loan.

Digital eResources

The library provides access to a range of downloadable, streaming, and online resources. These include eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines and newspapers, streaming videos, and online databases. These collections are not intended to fully replicate or replace existing physical collections.

Appendix A: Library Collections specific to City of Ballarat Libraries

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections

The collection comprises books written by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander authors or focussing on subjects and themes relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Criteria for labelling? Purpose to identify and promote First Nations authors.

Book Club Collection

Ballarat Libraries facilitates 120 book clubs, using a collection of book club sets. The collection comprises fiction and nonfiction titles. New titles are selected with input from the book club members and are purchased annually.

Australiana Research Collection

The Australiana Research Collection provides a range of materials reflecting the richly diverse heritage of the City of Ballarat and the surrounding districts. Subject specialities include gold exploration and gold mining, family history and genealogy. The library aims to acquire, catalogue and preserve resourced relating primarily to the City of Ballarat. The collection consists of books, photographs, newspapers, maps, journal articles, ephemera, manuscripts, audio, microform, microfiche. Artefacts (realia) are not actively collected.

Heritage Collection and BRHAE

The Heritage Collection is comprised of items originally held in the Australiana Research Collection, but on subjects that fall outside the core Australiana Research Collection guidelines. These include items from Ballarat East library and Camp Street library and reflect the ad hoc collection methods in place at the inception of the Australiana Research Collection.

Library of Things

Is a collection of items that can be borrowed by library members. These include thermal cameras within sustainable energy kits and Envoy mp3 players.

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Collections owned by third parties

Organisations who wish to make their collections more accessible to the public may approach City of Ballarat to discuss adding their collection to City of Ballarat Libraries. If the collection in question meets the collection development criteria in the Collection Policy and in accordance with Libraries and Learning Strategic Plan 2022-2027, an agreement or MOU between the Organisation and City of Ballarat can be put in place.

City of Ballarat would be responsible for the ongoing collection management of the items but not be responsible for the replacement or reimbursement of any lost, damaged or discarded items.

Appendix 2 – Guidelines related to the management of material with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content and perspectives

1 Statement

The City of Ballarat Libraries adopts specific ATSILIRN (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network) protocols to inform these guidelines.

2 Governance and management

City of Ballarat Libraries will:

- 1.1. Recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders as the traditional owners and custodians of Australia.
- 1.2. Develop mechanisms to ensure effective monitoring and review of policy implementation.
- 1.3. Facilitate organisational change to accommodate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives and ensure that this is reflected in our collection.

2. Content and perspectives

Our collections including general library and heritage collections include content and depictions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, culture and experience presented from a variety of perspectives. The City of Ballarat Libraries have a responsibility to ensure that our collections are comprehensive, inclusive and reflective of all perspectives. To achieve this the Library will:

- 2.1. Seek to balance collections by acquiring material by and about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 2.2. Promote the existence and availability of collections and provide patrons with an explanation for any conditions governing access.

3. Intellectual Property

The interests of the authors and publishers of records, books and other documentary material are protected by copyright law but the interests of those whose culture is described are not. The primary rights of the owners of a culture must be recognised. The City of Ballarat Libraries will:

- 3.1. Identify any items in our collection that fall into this category
Develop ways, including the recognition of moral rights, to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural and intellectual property.

4. Accessibility and use of our libraries (*Note this is not part of the collection development guidelines but should be reflected in other library documents*)

The City of Ballarat Libraries will ensure that our libraries are safe, comfortable and friendly places for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. We will where possible:

- 4.1. Employ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in as many roles as possible, but especially visibly at library service points.
- 4.2. Ensure accessibility by encouraging and fostering positive relationships between staff members and clients.
- 4.3. Promote library services and programs directly to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.
- 4.4. Encourage the use of the organisation's facilities as meeting places and resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 4.5. Involve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the planning, design and layout of libraries, archives and information services to create welcoming and suitable environments.

5. Description and classification

Indexing terminology, subject headings and classification systems are designed to provide easy access to materials in libraries and information services. However, the use of outdated, inaccurate or value laden terms actually obstructs access. To improve access

to our collection we will:

- 5.1. Use national Indigenous thesauri for describing documentation relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and issues.
- 5.2. Promote appropriate changes to standard descriptive tools and metadata. schemas with the aim of retrospectively re-cataloguing items recorded with unsuitable subject headings.

- 5.3. Improve access by the introduction of classificatory systems which describe items by their geographic, language and cultural identifiers.
- 5.4. Provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to describe and annotate material that relates to themselves and their communities, particularly in relation to locally produced resources.

6. Secret or sacred materials or sensitive

Some of the materials within our collection may be confidential or sensitive and may require certain restrictions on access.. Secret or sacred or sensitive Indigenous information should not be confused with material that may be considered offensive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Guidance on the handling of potentially offensive material is provided in these guidelines.

7. Suitable management practices will depend on both the materials and the communities served by the organisations. In implementing the processes through which such materials are managed, organisations will:

- 6.1. Consult in the identification of such materials and the development of suitable management practices with the most appropriate representatives of the particular Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities involved.
- 6.2. Seek actively to identify the existence of secret or sacred and sensitive materials by retrospectively surveying holdings and by monitoring current materials.
- 6.3. Provide suitable storage and viewing facilities with limited access as may be required.
- 6.4. Ensure that any conditions on access are understood by staff and users and are fully implemented.
- 6.5. Ensure that secret, sacred and sensitive material is managed appropriately in the Digital Environment.

7. Offensive

The City of Ballarat Library collections including the general collection and heritage collection may contain materials that are offensive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Such materials may be racist, sexist, derogatory, abusive or offensively wrong. Many examples are of a historical nature but some are contemporary. We have a responsibility to preserve and make accessible the documentary record but must also respond appropriately to the existence of offensive materials. We will:

- 7.1. Develop an awareness of the extent to which our collections may contain materials which will be offensive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- 7.2. Develop strategies to deal appropriately with offensive materials and ensure that all items in this category are kept in closed access or removed from the collection and that library records state the following: "This item is kept in closed access and contains information that is incorrect and that may be offensive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People."

8. The Digital Environment

Increasingly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections are or include digital collections created through digitisation programs, for preservation and to increase access to collections, or are 'born digital'. In addition, digitisation is an enabling technology that permits virtual repatriation without institutional relinquishment of heritage materials.

Digitisation of Indigenous materials poses some complex issues for organisations. Challenges include the need for institutions to accommodate different access conditions for materials that contain sensitive Indigenous knowledge, and the need for institutions and communities to

deal with conflicts around different concepts of intellectual property associated with Indigenous and Western knowledge systems. In addressing these issues, organisations will:

- 8.1. Ensure sustainable choices of formats, descriptive methods and access and preservation strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' knowledge, creativity and experience.
- 8.2. Pursue digitisation and digital access as a means of facilitating repatriation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and preserving material for future generations.
- 8.3. Consult with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities about relevant digital content made available via their websites.
- 8.4. Avoid providing access to items deemed secret, sacred or sensitive via their websites and online catalogues.
- 8.5. Ensure that material is digitised and stored electronically, in a manner consistent with and respectful to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural protocols.
- 8.6. Work cooperatively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to promote the creation, collection and management of digital materials.

Educate users of their collections about the potential benefits and risks of sharing digital content in an online environment.