

# **Oxford Brookes University Library – Special Collections Digital Preservation Policy**

## **1 Introduction**

The Special Collections' mission statement is to curate unique collections for teaching and research. This Digital Preservation Policy complements our Preservation Policy and sets out what the Special Collections does to achieve its duty of preservation for digital records - in order to maintain and promote access - both currently and in the future. The majority of our special collections are in analogue formats, predominantly paper-based, but we do hold some digital records and expect that born digital material will become a larger and more significant part of future deposits. We have also created digital surrogates of some of our collections to improve access to the collections and preserve the original records.

### **1.2 Definitions**

For the purposes of this policy, Oxford Brookes University Library has adopted the following definitions:

#### **1.2.1 born digital material**

Material which was created in a digital format.

#### **1.2.2 digitised material**

Material which was created in an analogue format and has since been copied into a digital format e.g. by scanning or photographing the original.

#### **1.2.3 metadata**

“A set of data that describes and gives information about other data.”

#### **1.2.4 core metadata**

Metadata which can be extracted directly from the digital record. This can include elements such as file type, file size, date of creation etc. Also referred to as technical metadata.

#### **1.2.5 descriptive metadata**

Metadata which adds elements of description not included in the core metadata. This can include elements such as creator, description, identifier etc.

#### **1.2.6 migration**

Moving a digital record from one file format to another, often to combat obsolescence.

## **2 Strategic objectives for the preservation of digital records**

Oxford Brookes University Library will ensure that the management of its special collections' digital records, their security, documentation and care are sufficient to meet the requirements of the collections and their users according to agreed priorities and responsibilities.

## **2.1 File formats**

In order to ensure long term preservation of the digital records in our care we will migrate each digital record into a suitable preservation format. We will also create an access copy to be used by researchers (see 2.3 Access and use). The original file will be retained and can be returned to if any issues of authenticity arise.

A metadata file, compliant with the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), will be created and kept with each copy of the record. This will record core metadata extracted from the digital record and descriptive metadata, in line with the Dublin Core element set, which can be added by the Archivist.

Preservation and access file formats will be chosen based on “community best practices, availability of open-source normalization tools, and an analysis of the significant characteristics for each media type”.

New accessions will be accepted in line with the Special Collections’ Acquisitions Policy. However, the Library does not have the facilities to accept all file formats into the archive; a list of file formats and their corresponding preservation and access formats are included in the Digital Preservation Procedures. In some circumstances we may investigate ways to accept and preserve formats not specified on the list but this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

## **2.2 Storage**

Digital records and their accompanying files are stored in a secure folder on the LR Drive or in a shared drive on Google, both of which are backed-up regularly. Access to the digital records are limited to a small number of Library and IT staff. Additional access copies are also stored on the University’s Research and Digital Asset Repository and/or a stand-alone PC in the reading room. See 2.3 below for further information on access.

Storage space on the LR Drive is limited and it is the intention that a purpose-built storage service will be acquired for the long-term storage of the processed digital records. The long-term storage facility will limit access to the digital records, therefore only fully processed digital records will be stored in the facility, while unprocessed digital records will be stored on the LR Drive until they are ready to be transferred.

## **2.3 Access and use**

Access copies of digital records for which we own the copyright, or for which we have obtained the relevant permissions from the copyright owner(s), are made available via RADAR, the University’s Research and Digital Asset Repository.

Digital records for which Oxford Brookes does not own the copyright to, or has not obtained the necessary copyright permission, but which are open to the public, are made available in the reading room in Headington Library, via a stand-alone PC to prevent unauthorised copying.

The same restrictions on use apply to digital records as records in analogue formats. Therefore some digital records will remain closed for a number of years (under the Data Protection Act or the wishes of the donor). These records will be processed in the same way as other digital records but no access copy will be made available to the public.

Where an electronic record is available, this is noted on the Archive Catalogue and either a link to the record on RADAR or a note to say it is available to view in the reading room is added.

## **2.4 Audit and risk management**

The two storage methods used for digital records (LR Drive and Google drive) are independently backed up in order to minimise the risk of data loss. Checksums are generated for born digital records prior to processing. The checksum can be used to check for changes in the original record in the event of suspected deterioration of one of the original copies. Five-yearly spot checks will also be conducted on a range of file formats.

Preservation and access file formats for different file types will be reviewed at least every five years so that the University is using the most appropriate formats to ensure accessible, reliable digital records.

## **2.6 Budgeting**

No separate Library revenue budget heading is identified for Special Collections digital preservation. Ongoing revenue needs are supported from appropriate Library budget headings e.g. Equipment. Budgetary needs for specific projects would need to be identified in advance and a case and application made to appropriate internal or external funding bodies.

## **2.7 Standards and guidance**

The following standards and sources of guidance have been used in the development of this policy and the accompanying Preservation Strategy:

- ISO 14721:2003 Space data and information transfer systems – Open Archival Information Systems – reference model (OAIS)
- ISO 15836:2009 Information and Documentation – The Dublin Core metadata element set
- Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), <http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/>
- The National Archives, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)
- The Digital Preservation Coalition, [www.dpconline.org](http://www.dpconline.org)

March 2011

Last modified, October 2021

Next review due October 2024