



# Policy on Archives, Museums and Special Collections

## 1 Preamble

As a pre-eminent university in Africa, driven by the pursuit of knowledge and innovation, with a unique institutional culture based upon the values the University espouses, the North-West University has adopted this Policy on Archives, Museums and Collections on 23 November 2007.

## 2 Policy statement

This policy applies to all personnel responsible for the management and preservation of records, museum items and special collections working in an archive, museum, department or unit of the NWU that serves as an institutional memory, educational or research facility.

## 3 Definitions

- *Archive*: an administrative department or unit that serves the University as an archives repository.
- *Museum*: an academic or administrative department or unit, responsible for the management of museum items or collections, that serves the University and the broader community.
- *Departments or Units*: academic or administrative departments or units other than formal Archives or Museums, responsible for the management of records, museum items or collections.
- *Records*: recorded information regardless of form or medium with enduring value.
- *Museum items or collections*: three-dimensional objects, art work, specimen or memorabilia of significance that have aesthetic, architectural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technical value to the University.

## 4 Rules

- 4.1 The archives, museums and departments or units responsible must identify, acquire, describe and preserve all archival records, museum items and other collections of the NWU.
- 4.2 Non-current corporate records with enduring value that are no longer required in offices are to be transferred through the records management programme to the archives and departments or units responsible who will accept, manage and preserve them on behalf of the University.
- 4.3 To complement and place into context the full range of activities and functions of the University, the archives, museums, responsible departments or units will also acquire the private records and museum items or collections of selected faculty members, administrators and former students that relate to some aspects of the University life as well as special collections that will promote research and prestige to the University.
- 4.4 The archivist or curator of a collection will have the authority to re-evaluate and reappraise materials held in the archives, museums and collecting departments or units according to applicable criteria, standards, legislation and donor agreements.
- 4.5 The disposal of de-accessioned records or collection items must be done according to the requirements of the records management programme, and donor agreements in the case of private donations.
- 4.6 Any access restrictions placed on records, museum items or collections held by the archives, museums or other responsible departments or units will be applied in a uniform manner to all users. Access to corporate records of the University is provided in accordance with the provisions of the PAIA Act. Access to non-corporate records is governed by agreements negotiated between the University and the donors.

- 4.7 The archives, museums and responsible departments or units retain the right to reproduce materials by mechanical, electronic or photographic means for conservation, security or research purposes. The archives, museums and responsible departments or units retain the right to charge for any reproduction or other research services. A schedule of fees is made available to the research public regularly.

## **5 Functions**

The functions of the archives, museums and departments or units responsible for special collections are:

- identify, acquire and evaluate records of long-term historical, administrative and evidential value in order to serve as an institutional memory;
- collect, maintain, display or use museum or other collection items in order to chronicle the development of the institution or serve as an educational or research facility and therefore define and enhance the image of the University;
- provide adequate and appropriate conditions for the storage, protection and preservation of the archival records, museum items and other collections;
- arrange and describe archival records, museum items and collections in order to document their physical location;
- prepare finding aids for the provision of reference services in order to facilitate academic research and for those offices that may require them;
- provide access to information in compliance with legal requirements and donor agreements;
- disseminate information on collections for interested parties at the University and beyond and
- liaise and cooperate with other archival, museum and other collections repositories on an academic, national and provincial level.

## **6 Governance, management roles and accountability**

- The Institutional Registrar is responsible for the existence and implementation of the policy on archives, museums and special collections.
- The personnel of the Institutional Archives and Museum are accountable to the Institutional Registrar.
- The Campus Registrars are responsible for the implementation and management of the policy on campuses.
- Personnel responsible for archives, museums and other special collections on campuses function under the authority of the Campus Registrars.