

1. Context of the policy

West Glamorgan Archive Service (WGAS) is a joint service for the Councils of the City and County of Swansea and Neath Port Talbot County Borough, reporting to the West Glamorgan Archives Committee.

WGAS is based in Swansea Civic Centre and operates an additional service point at the Neath Mechanics Institute. WGAS provides a professional service to donors, depositors and users of archives in accordance with national standards of access to archives, in particular the Archives Accreditation Standard.

WGAS publishes information about its performance in the form of an annual report available through its web pages on the Swansea Council website. It also provides annual statistical returns to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and annual lists of its accessions to The National Archives.

This policy forms part of a suite of Archive Service policies as published on the Archive Service web pages on the Swansea Council website. Hard copies are also made available in the archive searchrooms.

2. Definitions used in the policy

Deposit: a transfer of documents to WGAS on permanent loan, whereby ownership still resides with the depositor.

Depositor: the legal owner of documents transferred to WGAS on permanent loan. The depositor may be an individual or an organisation.

Donation: a transfer of documents to WGAS as a gift, whereby WGAS becomes the legal owner.

Donor: person or organisation who transfers archives to WGAS as a gift.

3. Purpose of the policy

As outlined in its security policy, WGAS does not permit its searchers to borrow archives, or to take them out of the searchroom for any reason. However, there are situations where documents are temporarily transferred to other institutions or to the original owner. This policy outlines the appropriate arrangements in each of these scenarios.

One purpose of this policy is to outline the methods by which documents may also be loaned to other institutions on a temporary basis for the specific purposes outlined below.

4. Arrangements for temporary withdrawal of documents by a depositor

Depositors of documents (or their agents) may withdraw documents they have deposited with WGAS, as outlined in WGAS Conditions of Deposit, and strictly by prior arrangement.

Any agent acting on behalf of a depositor must bring written instructions from the depositor, naming the agent and the purpose for the loan. WGAS will require proof of identity.

A loans request form will be completed, stating the purpose for withdrawal, the conditions under which the documents will be kept, and a date for their return. WGAS reserves the right to refuse a request to loan documents if it is deemed that this will result in their irreversible damage.

Donors of documents do not have the right to withdraw documents they have donated. However, in exceptional circumstances, permission to withdraw them temporarily may be given, subject to the same conditions imposed upon depositors.

5. Arrangements for temporary transfer of documents to other institutions

Documents may also be transferred by WGAS to other institutions on a temporary basis for the specific purposes listed below. WGAS must be satisfied that the documents will be conveyed and kept in secure conditions that will not be detrimental to their long-term preservation:

- **Conservation:** documents that require conservation, may be transferred to an approved conservator. A conservation worksheet will be completed for each document, giving details of its condition and required treatment.
- **Copying:** documents may be transferred temporarily to an institution or private company for specialist copying. In the case of deposited collections, the permission of the depositor will be sought before proceeding.
- **Cataloguing:** if a collection is to be catalogued as part of a collaborative project at another institution, it may be transferred on a temporary basis, subject to WGAS being satisfied with the storage conditions and security arrangements. In the case of deposited collections, the permission of the depositor will be sought before proceeding.
- **Display:** in exceptional circumstances, documents may be transferred to other institutions for display purposes. WGAS must be satisfied that the documents will be kept in conditions that are sufficiently secure and which will not be detrimental to the preservation of the documents. In the case of deposited collections, the permission of the depositor will be sought before proceeding.

6. Loan conditions

In this section, “recipient” means the person to whom the documents are loaned, and who takes responsibility for them once they have been removed from WGAS.

1. The recipient will complete and sign the relevant loans form outlining the circumstances for the loan.
2. The recipient will take responsibility for the documents while they are in their custody.
3. The recipient will undertake to transport and keep loaned documents in secure conditions, where the environment is not such as is likely to cause damage and deterioration.
4. The recipient will ensure that documents are returned by the due date. If they are required for longer, the recipient will inform WGAS and set a new date by which they should be returned.
5. WGAS should be informed if the recipient intends to transfer the documents to a third party. Similar conditions to the above should be imposed upon the third party.

Policy dated March 2020, for review by March 2025