The University of Manchester Library:
Digital Preservation Statement March 2020

1. Summary

The Digital Preservation Statement (the Statement) sets out the principles and general objectives by which the University of Manchester Library (UML) manages and preserves its digital collections.

The Library recognises that digital preservation is an essential and ongoing organisational activity, and considers the principles outlined in this Statement demonstrate its commitment to effective stewardship of our digital collections.

The Library views the preservation of its digital collections to be of equivalent importance to that of its physical/analogue collections. However, it recognises that there are additional challenges in preserving digital content, which may be subject to technical obsolescence, loss, corruption and inaccessibility. Consequently the Library intends to develop its expertise in digital preservation, underpinned by this Statement, to ensure that its digital collections remain trustworthy, complete and accessible as long as they are required by the Library.

2. Target Audience

This Statement applies to all University of Manchester Library staff (including permanent, fixed-term, part-time, casual, etc.) who are involved with the management of its digital collections. The Statement also applies to other University of Manchester staff, volunteers and external contractors, consultants, and service providers who may from time to time work with the Library's digital collections. The Statement is of interest to funding bodies, donors, researchers and users of the Library's digital collections.

3. Scope

The Statement applies to all Library digital collections, including born-digital collections (i.e. content created electronically), and collections composed of digitised content (i.e. content converted from its original analogue format). However, the Statement excludes

licensed digital collections held by third-parties (such as publisher-held eTextbooks).

3.1 Digital content covered by the Statement:
- Published born-digital Library collections.
- Born-digital personal and corporate archives held by the Library.
- Digitised Library collections.

3.2 Digital content not currently covered by the Statement:
- Any digital content held by the Library, which is not identified for permanent preservation (generally, this is "business" content and covered by general University IT and records management policies).
- Commercial or open access digital content which is not managed by the Library, and where the Library has only access rights.
- Research outputs which fall within the Library's responsibility for research data management.

4. Principles

The Statement sets out a series of principles which underpin the Library's approach to the long-term preservation of its digital collections. It will take a strategic approach to digital preservation, aligned with wider Library policies, strategies and initiatives, to give practical effect to its digital preservation activities.

4.1 Governance and Advocacy
- Responsibility for digital preservation sits with the Library's Research and Digital Horizons Directorate, working closely with the other directorates. Overall governance rests with the Library's Executive Team and this Statement sits within the overall policy framework in place in the Library, and in particular its Collection Management Policy and its Special Collections Content Development Policy.

- The Library will promote and advocate digital preservation across the Library and University to ensure it can support the Library's key strategic goals and the University's mission and core values.

4.2. Sustainability
- The Library follows a sustainable and long-term funding model for its digital

preservation activities, including appropriate levels of staffing.

- The Library will seek cost-effective methods for its digital preservation activities, including the benefits of economies of scale and information-sharing through collaboration with other organisations. UML will actively seek out opportunities for strategically aligned funding to support its digital preservation work.

4.3. Workforce development

- The Library will ensure that digital preservation activities are undertaken by staff with clearly designated roles and responsibilities, and relevant skills and professional knowledge.

- The Library will actively ensure that staff have appropriate opportunities to develop expertise in digital preservation, where it is relevant to their roles.

4.4. Standards (see also Section 5)

- Standards in digital preservation are still evolving and the Library will monitor their development, and implement standards and good practices commonly used by the international digital preservation community.

- Whilst the Library recognises the value of open, community-led standards and tools for digital preservation, the Library will nevertheless adopt the best tools that meet our requirements whilst ensuring we are vigilant and flexible in ensuring these can be revised or replaced.

- The Library will ensure that standards relating to digital preservation align and co-ordinate with the standards adopted for its wider collection management activities.

4.5 Collection Management

- The Library will manage its digital collections to ensure they are, and remain, trustworthy and accessible. It will ensure that the fixity measures for digital content are created, monitored and maintained over the lifecycle of that content to ensure that no corruption or unauthorised changes have occurred.

- The Library will acquire digital content in a wide range of file formats (including text, graphic, image, video, audio, and email) in support of its collection development objectives. However, it reserves the right to refuse file formats which it lacks the technical capability or economic means to preserve.

- The Library will accept digital content held on physical media (e.g. optical disk, floppy disk, external hard disc drive, USB flash drives). We will process content on digital media as soon as is practicable after receipt; prioritising those digital media (or 'carriers') deemed either an immediate risk or high-priority. We cannot however guarantee that such content can always be extracted and preserved.

- The Library may undertake file format migration to ensure that digital content will be usable in current and future computing environments. Any potential risk of information loss will be mitigated through preservation planning actions. Migration actions will be documented as part of the metadata associated with the record.

- The Library will hold multiple copies of digital content through its routine backup procedures, with one copy located in remote storage which is geographically separated from other backup copies.

- The Library will work with creators and donors to provide guidance on the creation, management, disposition and submission of digital content. Building such relationships can encourage the use of open and commonly used file formats and promoting good digital record-keeping practices, thereby improving the quality of digital content acquired by the Library.

4.6. Technical Infrastructure

- The Library will develop a technical infrastructure – including hardware, software, storage media and any other equipment – as part of its digital preservation management. The key component of this is the Library's digital preservation repository which will ensure long-term, standards-compliant storage of its digital collections and associated metadata.

- The Library will ensure its technical infrastructure can support a comprehensive set of workflows and procedures for the ingest, preservation planning, storage, back up and accessibility of its digital collections.

- The Library will document, monitor and refresh its technical workflows and processes over time.

- The Library recognises that the process of digital preservation extends beyond the technical infrastructure and systems employed at any one time. It will therefore ensure that appropriate exit strategies exist for its current infrastructure and systems, which can assure the preservation of digital collections and associated metadata.

4.7. Preservation Management

- The Library will adopt the most appropriate strategies for the preservation of its digital collections. In all cases, it will preserve the original bitstream as well as any other manifestations created as a by-product of the preservation process.

- The Library will pursue preservation planning actions to mitigate risks to its digital collections. This will include systematic risk analyses of digital content, and a technology watch, to identify preservation actions required to ensure the continuing authenticity and accessibility of the Library's digital collections.

- The Library will ensure that any preservation activities performed on digital collections are tested, evidenced-based, and recorded.

- The Library will investigate becoming a trustworthy digital repository. If appropriate, it will pursue relevant standards of accreditation and certification, which may involve both self-assessment and external audit, to demonstrate compliance with best practice standards in digital preservation.

4.8. Metadata

- The Library recognises that good quality metadata is an essential component of digital preservation. It will create and capture metadata for digital content at all relevant points in its lifecycle by both human and machine-based methods. It will

create descriptive, technical, administrative and preservation metadata according to current standards and good practice.

- The Library will ensure that all metadata is maintained, indexed and backed up. Any recovery efforts of digital content will also include the recovery of all associated metadata.

- The Library will create persistent identifiers for digital content, with 'original' filenames retained in the metadata.

4.9. Access and Security

- The Library will implement measures to protect its digital collections against loss, misuse, unauthorised changes and corruption. It will ensure that preservation masters, co-masters, born-digital originals and associated metadata will be located in secure and managed network locations.

- The Library will ensure that administrative access to its digital collections is restricted to authorised staff. It will monitor and audit actions performed on content including deletions and preservation actions. The activity logs will be audited annually.

- Access to and use of digital content is subject to any agreements, contracts, legislation and University policies which apply to the Library's digital collections. The Library will implement appropriate procedures manage and restrict access to sensitive content, especially where covered by the GDPR/Data Protection Act 2018, in line with the University's Information Governance policies and operating procedures.

- A fundamental objective of digital preservation is ensuring digital collections are accessible to our users. The Library aims to provide appropriate access to digital content, including metadata. Open digital content will be available in a user-friendly way, accompanied by associated metadata and integrated into the Library's wider resource discovery systems.

- The Library will ensure that digital content has rights metadata generated and/or

provided (for current and future uses). Where digital content is found to have no access conditions or rights metadata available, a risk-based assessment will be undertaken and metadata created, prior to access being provided. Access conditions, copyright and rights are adhered to when managing, preserving and providing access to digital content.

- Deaccessioning and disposal of digital content, associated materials and/or metadata will be undertaken subject to any agreements, contracts, and relevant University and Library policies. This activity will be documented in accordance with existing deaccessioning procedures.

4.10. Collaboration

- The Library will be actively involved in the wider digital preservation community, benefitting from the value of shared knowledge and experience to advance digital preservation practices across the UK and internationally.

- The Library will maintain membership of specialist groups such as the Digital Preservation Coalition, and will work with these to share knowledge and expertise.

- Library staff will be encouraged to be involved with any wider digital preservation projects, initiatives and events which advance the subject of digital preservation. Staff are also encouraged to share skills, knowledge and expertise across the University, and through formal and informal digital preservation community and industry channels.

5. Standards

For information the following list of **technical** and **operational** standards (supplied by the DPC) reflects current best practice as recognised nationally and internationally: https://www.dpconline.org/handbook/institutional-strategies/standards-and-best-practice

6. Roles and responsibilities

Responsibility for the preservation of digital material lies primarily with relevant digital repository service owners and the curators, who develop and manage collections.

- **The University Librarian** is responsible for authorising and overseeing the Policy, ensuring that it is effectively led across the library;

- **The Library Collections Group** are responsible for understanding and complying with this statement, and leading the active encouragement of digital preservation efforts, to improve UML's ability to collect, preserve and provide access to digital content for education and research purposes.

- **The Digital Preservation Manager** is responsible for the technical aspects of digital preservation and ensuring there is adequate infrastructure to support digital preservation efforts as well as appropriate technical resources to support digital preservation efforts. Also for reviewing and updating the Digital Preservation policy.

- **The Special Collections lead for Digital Preservation** is responsible for Digital Preservation as it relates to Special Collections and ensuring curatorial staff are aware of, understand, and comply with this statement.

- **UML Staff** are responsible for understanding and complying with this statement.

7. Approval

Version	Approved by	Date
1.0	Library Leadership Team	26 March 2020

8. Statement Implementation

This Statement was implemented on 26 March 2020.

Appendix

The above Statement draws on ideas from The Polonsky Digital Preservation Project, and the Digital Preservation Policies of the Universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, and Leeds, The Royal Danish Library and PRONI.