Digital Preservation Policy

Hull History Centre is a partnership between Hull City Council and the University of Hull. The City Council's obligations to the partnership are administered and delivered on its behalf by Hull Culture & Leisure Ltd a wholly owned Hull City Council company. The partners aim to provide a seamless service to stakeholders and the following should therefore be read as applying to both partners unless otherwise stated.

1.   Introduction

1.1   The purpose of this policy is to provide a statement relating to the active preservation of born-digital archives held by Hull City Archives and Hull University Archives. Born-digital material is held on behalf of Hull City Council, the University of Hull, and is deposited by third parties. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Access Policy, the Acquisitions Policy, and the Collections Care and Preservation Policy. It is implemented in accordance with UK legislation governing Freedom of Information and Data Protection.

1.2   Born-digital archives are understood here as material created in a digital format and identified as of interest for permanent preservation in accordance with our acquisition policy. This policy does not relate to digitised versions of traditional format archives, although some of the processes governing their management might overlap.

1.3   This policy provides a framework for establishing processes and developing tools, which will be documented separately as workflows and guidelines.

2.   General Principles

2.1   Processes involved in the preservation of born-digital material seek to ensure the trustworthiness and authenticity of original records and their respective formats, although this does not guarantee compliance with legal requirements relating to admissibility of evidence. The ability to collect, manage and provide access to born-digital archives is necessary to allow Hull History Centre to fulfil its role as a place of deposit for archives. Accordingly, it is essential that we continue to improve our expertise and processes so that we can develop our collections, whether digital or otherwise, for use by our stakeholders.

2.2   Hull History Centre's default position (see section 4.3) will be to migrate and normalise file formats, but it does recognise that in some circumstances there is a richer "experience" of the material through the emulation of the computer environment. Hull History Centre staff will keep a watching brief on projects and

initiatives relating to both file format migration and the successful use of emulation to provide access to born-digital archives.

2.3   While it may be technically possible to manage the bit preservation of digital content, we cannot guarantee that all content will remain accessible in a meaningful way due to software obsolescence. This distinction will be made clear by Hull History Centre staff when dealing with depositors.

3.   Standards

3.1   The Hull History Centre will adhere to standards and emerging good practice for all stages in the digital curation lifecycle including the collection, storage, management, preservation and dissemination of digital content. Through active engagement with colleagues working in both the archives and digital repository sectors Hull History Centre staff will maintain a watching brief on key areas of development and best practice.

3.2   In particular, we will manage collections in a manner that conforms to the requirements of the Open Archival Information System Reference Model (OAIS) (ISO 14721:2012) and the PREMIS Data Dictionary for Preservation Metadata maintained by the Library of Congress.

4.   Content and file formats

4.1   The Hull History Centre expects to preserve a range of born-digital content that is likely to include, but is not limited to:
- Text documents (plain and marked-up)
- Still and moving image collections
- Datasets (data designed for use in spreadsheets, databases and statistical packages)
- Digital audio recordings
- E-mails.

4.2   The Hull History Centre does not expect to preserve:
- Software - except for specific and exceptional uses
- Hardware -unless required for the reading of the records contained therein.

4.3   Although it is not expected that Hull History Centre will explicitly require material to be in a particular file format as a condition of deposit, it is accepted that certain file formats are easier to handle and manage than others, with better outcomes in terms of preservation and user accessibility. During the acquisition process we will

inform the depositor that there may be certain file formats which we are unable to accept.

4.4 With regard to live and dynamic websites for ongoing organisations the Hull History Centre's position is to encourage institutions to self-refer their sites to the UK Web Archive.

5. Access

5.1 Access is currently provided via the Hull History Centre's online catalogue and is managed behind the public interface with settings built into the digital repository.

5.2 Any changes in this area will invoke a review of both this policy and our procedures to ensure they remain relevant.

5.3 Access to material which has copyright or other restrictions on it is currently not possible.

6. Withdrawal of content

6.1 The University's digital repository has a take-down policy where it receives proof that material is in violation of copyright or other intellectual property rights. It also has established processes and protocols for instances of complaints being made at the request of the author/copyright holder. This will be extended to cover born-digital material placed online through the Hull History Centre.

6.2 The circumstances within which born-digital archives can be withdrawn by the depositor (or their successors) will be discussed at the time of deposit and set out within the deposit agreement. Withdrawal of material is not applicable in the case of material donated to the Hull History Centre. As a matter of policy, we are unable to guarantee that metadata will not persist, and it is our preference that metadata should be retained to provide an audit trail of the accession and de-accession history of the material.

7. Storage including storage media

7.1 Born-digital content will be managed through the University's digital repository and stored on appropriate storage media designed for long-term storage of digital content. Storage will be monitored for resilience and content integrity as part of ongoing collection management. Content will be prepared for preservation storage through generation of relevant fixity checks, associated derivatives and metadata to support future use. The University will be working to align to Trustworthy Digital

Repository criteria, many of which the system already meets.

7.2   It is expected that content will be received on a wide range of current and historic storage media formats and the priority will be to safely transfer content from these media to secure network storage. A process for creating a photographic record of portable media has been established, two forensic workstations are currently in-place to help capture content from a range of media, and there is a need to review the range of media supported on a regular basis.

7.3   Once the data has been successfully captured from the original media and ingested into the digital repository the original media effectively become artefacts. These may be of interest to users but there is not always a compelling need to retain all such media permanently. Original deposited media will be retained initially but the usefulness of this will be reviewed on a regular basis.

Review
With policy and practice still evolving this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Last updated: October2024
To be reviewed: October 2025