



**Library and Archives Canada**

**Evaluation and Acquisition Policy  
Framework**



# Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework

## 1. Effective Date

This Policy Framework has been approved by the Management Board of Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and takes effect on April 1, 2016.

## 2. Application

The *Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework* applies to activities across LAC undertaken to evaluate and acquire governmental and ministerial records, publications, and private archives, in both digital and analogue forms.

This policy framework supersedes the former *Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework* (2012), *Policy on Evaluation* (2012) and *Policy on Acquisition* (2012). The *Evaluation and Acquisition Checklist* tool (2013) is also superseded.

The *Evaluation and Acquisition Framework*, and its related suite, are informed by, and must be applied in a manner consistent with, other LAC policy frameworks and instruments. Activities intended to facilitate access to and remove restrictions on LAC holdings are governed by the *LAC Access Policy Framework*; activities aimed at preservation after acquisition are governed by the *LAC Stewardship Policy Framework*.

## 3. Definitions

See Appendix A.

## 4. Context

As set out in the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, LAC serves as a source of enduring knowledge, contributing to the cultural, social and economic advancement of Canada as a free and democratic society, and serves as the continuing memory of the government of Canada and its institutions.

LAC is part of both national and international library and archival communities, and part of a broader community of memory and educational institutions. As a national library and archives, LAC's mandate is to acquire, preserve and provide access to Canada's documentary heritage. LAC's mandate complements that of museums and research institutions, which have various roles in preserving and interpreting Canada's past.

LAC meets its mandate within existing legislation, regulations, and policies, including the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, the *Cultural Property Export and Import Act*, the *Federal Accountability Act*, and other legislation and policies as outlined in Appendix B. Its legislated mandate includes: acquiring Canada's documentary heritage; acting as the permanent repository of the records of the federal government; and acquiring all publications by and about Canadians.

This framework captures the guiding principles for evaluation and acquisition, and reflects LAC's unique mandate as a blended national library and archives.

## **5. Purpose**

Under the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, LAC is mandated to acquire Canada's documentary heritage. The purpose of this Policy Framework is to articulate LAC's principles for achieving this mandate.

This Policy Framework also defines the approach for LAC evaluation and acquisition activities. It sets out how to ensure: that they reflect the LAC mandate; that LAC's policy direction and the principles underlying evaluation and acquisition activities are clear; that roles and responsibilities within LAC are understood; and that, where possible, all necessary metadata are captured at the point of acquisition.

## **6. Principles**

In order to achieve its mandate, LAC conducts evaluation and acquisition activities in alignment with the following principles.

### **6.1 National significance**

As a national library and archives, LAC focuses on, identifies, and acquires documentary heritage of national significance.

Documentary heritage of national significance is that which:

- Demonstrates the Canadian experience, federal or pan-Canadian;
- Has influenced the development of Canada;
- Has a broad national scope;
- Has or has had an impact on national trends and events; and/or,
- Illustrates Canadian impact and perspectives on international trends and events.

### **6.2 Collaboration**

As part of a larger library and archival community, LAC collaborates meaningfully with other memory institutions, both nationally and internationally.

LAC recognizes that other cultural heritage institutions may also acquire material of national significance based on their mandate and the needs of user communities.

LAC works with other memory institutions towards ensuring that the documentary heritage of Canada is acquired by the most appropriate institution.

### **6.3 Representativeness**

LAC aims to build a collection of documentary heritage holdings that is representative of the complexity of Canadian society and the events that shape it, both at home and abroad.

Decisions about evaluation and acquisition take place within a broader context. LAC identifies and evaluates for acquisition the long-term impact of the documentary

heritage pertaining to individuals, communities, and organizations that are illustrative of the development of Canadian society. LAC takes a comprehensive approach to acquiring works published in and about Canada. LAC considers the need to document the perspectives of minorities and marginalised groups and to reflect their experiences and identities in its holdings. To this end, LAC acquires sufficient documentation, both in breadth and depth, to reflect the full diversity of Canadian society.

#### **6.4 Expertise-based**

LAC's acquisition decisions are based on expert evaluation in accordance with the principles and standards of library and archival sciences. In acquiring documentary heritage, LAC takes into consideration the needs of preservation and access.

#### **6.5 Complementarity**

Documentary heritage acquired by LAC consists of four types, as identified in the *Library and Archives of Canada Act*, each contributing to a complementary picture of Canadian society over time.

- Publications preserve ideas and imaginings of, by and about Canada and Canadians. LAC's approach to acquiring publications is comprehensive, based on consistent participation of Canadian publishers and strengthened by targeted collection development.
- Private archives document the activities, ideas and interactions of persons, and of non-profit and for-profit organizations. LAC acquires archival records that define, influence, or aid understanding of Canadian society.
- Government archives document the actions and decisions of the federal government. In acquiring them, LAC seeks to document the breadth and depth of the government's activities within Canadian society and abroad.
- Web resources document the information that individuals and organizations have sought to communicate on line. LAC seeks to capture the concerns and issues of importance to Canada and its peoples conveyed on the Internet.

LAC determines what will be acquired in light of the unique characteristics of each type of documentary heritage.

### **7. Roles and responsibilities**

The Librarian and Archivist of Canada is accountable overall for evaluation and acquisition at LAC.

The Assistant Deputy Minister responsible for acquisition ensures the implementation of the Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework, including that evaluation and acquisition activities undertaken are aligned with the Framework.

The directors general responsible for evaluation and acquisition approve operational policy instruments and tools, and implement the Policy Framework and associated policy instruments.

Directors, managers and staff conduct evaluation and acquisition activities and processes within the parameters set out in the Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework and related policy instruments; provide advice on evaluation and acquisition as required; and document their recommendations and decisions.

## **8. Planning, monitoring and review**

The Strategic Policy and Advice Division will review this policy framework, including related policy instruments, five years following its coming into effect, or as required.

## **9. Corrective measures**

Non-compliance with the Evaluation and Acquisition Policy Framework may entail corrective measures by the Librarian and Archivist of Canada, Management Board, or the Chief Operating Officer.

## **10. Enquiries**

Please address any questions about this Policy Framework to:

Director, Strategic Policy and Advice  
Library and Archives Canada  
550 Boulevard de la Cité  
Gatineau, Quebec K1A 0N4  
[bac.politiques-policy.lac@canada.ca](mailto:bac.politiques-policy.lac@canada.ca)

## **Appendix A: Definitions**

### **Acquisition [*Acquisition*]**

Acquisition is the process of acquiring documentary heritage of historical or archival value. Acquisition takes place when a decision is made to take control of documentary heritage for the purpose of preserving it for use by future generations.

### **Authenticity [*Authenticité*]**

Authenticity is the quality of being genuine, not a counterfeit, and free from tampering, and is typically inferred from internal and external evidence.

### **Documentary Heritage [*Patrimoine documentaire*]**

Documentary heritage comprises publications and records of interest to Canada.

### **Evaluation [*Évaluation*]**

Evaluation is the assessment of publications and records for their capacity to document the development of Canadian society.

### **Historical or Archival Value [*Valeur historique ou archivistique*]**

Historical or archival value is the quality of having continuing usefulness or significance to Canadian society.

### **Holdings [*Collection*]**

Holdings comprise documentary heritage brought under the control of LAC through the *Library and Archives of Canada Act* and *Legal Deposit of Publications Regulations*, and any master copies generated thereof.

### **National Significance [*Importance nationale*]**

Documentary heritage of national significance is that which:

- demonstrates the Canadian experience, federal or pan-Canadian;
- has influenced the development of Canada;
- has a broad national scope;
- has or has had an impact on national trends and events; and/or,
- illustrates Canadian impact and perspectives on international trends and events.

### **Preservation [*Préservation*]**

Preservation comprises all actions taken to retard deterioration of or prevent damage to holdings; and to ensure that access to, usability of, and authenticity of holdings are maintained over time.

## **Appendix B: Related Documents**

1. *Library and Archives of Canada Act*
2. *LAC Access Policy Framework*
3. *LAC Stewardship Policy Framework*