



Somerset

REGIONAL COUNCIL

Policy Title	Library Services Policy
Policy Number	C007
Date of Adoption	28 January 2026
Effective Date	28 January 2026
Document Custodian	Library Services Coordinator
Review Date	28 November 2026
Associated Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Somerset Libraries Collection Management Statement• C/0006 Child Safety Policy• C015 Information Management and Security Policy• C/034 Copyright Policy• EX010 Human Rights Policy• apla-alia standards and guidelines 2020.pdf• Australian Library and Information Association Core Values Statement• Service Level Agreement between Somerset Regional Council and the Library Board of Queensland• State Library of Queensland Public Library Standards and Guidelines
Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Local Government Act 2009• Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (Qld)• Libraries Act 1988• Copyright Act 1968, Copyright Amendment Act 2006 and Copyright Amendment Act 2017• Information Privacy Act 2009• Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)• Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)• Child Protection Act 1999

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to guide Council's provision of Library services and to establish a framework for appropriate customer use of the Library. This Policy sets out the administrative and customer service standards required for providing Council's Library services.
- 1.2 The Library operates under the *Libraries Act 1988 (Qld)* as amended from time to time.
- 1.3 The Library is subject to the terms of its three (3) year Service Level Agreement with the Library Board of Queensland.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This Policy applies to Somerset Libraries.
- 2.2 This Policy further applies to all staff and volunteers working in the Library.

3. CONTENT

3.1 Background

Through a network of four (4) libraries, a Library website and Library app, Somerset Libraries [Library] provides spaces where people can come together to learn, work, connect and create.

The Library provides:

- a) a broad range of physical and digital collections;
- b) educational, creative, and literacy programs for all ages;
- c) a comprehensive information and reader advisory service;
- d) mainstream technologies for public use; and
- e) a customer-focused Library team ready to assist and support the community to connect, explore and create.

Somerset Libraries are thriving place-based cultural and social hubs that respond to the changing needs of the community and provide relevant information, learning, connection and creative experiences that contribute to the overall well-being and vitality of the Somerset community.

Council acknowledges:

- It is required to comply with the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)* and the *Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld)* when providing Library services using funding provided under Council's Service Level Agreement with the Library Board of Queensland.
- The Australian Classification Board [ACB] is responsible for the classification and restriction of publications, and it is the expectation of the Library Board that a broad range of Library materials be made available in Council libraries based on Council's collection statement subject only to restrictions made by the ACB.

3.2 Policy

- 3.2.1 Council is committed to providing Library services that are informed by the Australian Library and Information Association's Core Values Statement, and:

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- a) promote and facilitate the free flow of information and ideas by providing access to recorded knowledge, information and creative works;
- b) deliver authentic information and evidence-based practice supported by quality research;
- c) connect people to ideas, knowledge creation and learning;
- d) foster reading, information and digital literacies including AI and media literacy;
- e) collect, manage, preserve and promote content relevant to the Somerset region;
- f) maintain Library-related professional knowledge and practice; and
- g) engage in partnerships and collaborations to progress these values.

3.2.3 Council is committed to providing Library services that are inclusive, relevant, accessible and easy to use, and that meet Somerset community's needs.

3.2.4 When using the Library, customers are expected to:

- a) treat Council officers and other Library customers with respect and courtesy;
- b) care for Library facilities, equipment and collections provided for their use; and
- c) follow directions given by Council officers, including directions to leave the Library.

3.2.5 Customers are encouraged to provide the Library with feedback on how it can improve services or resolve a service problem.

3.3 Collections

3.3.1 Customers must not copy, print, scan, download or record Library materials in any way that infringes the *Copyright Act 1968 (Cth)*.

3.3.2 The management of the Library's physical and digital collections is described in the Somerset Libraries Collection Management Statement as outlined in the Service Level Agreement between Somerset Regional Council and the Library Board of Queensland.

3.3.3 The following collections may only be used in the Library and are not available for loan:

- a) Local and Family History Collection;
- b) newspapers; and
- c) not for loan items (e.g., toys for use in the Library).

3.4 Public Computers, Wi-Fi and Multimedia Equipment

Somerset Libraries provides free access to public computers, Wi-Fi and selected multimedia technologies to support the community's information, recreational and learning needs. These services are offered in accordance with Council's commitment to equitable access, digital inclusion, and lifelong learning. Use of these services must comply with relevant legislation, Council policies, and the terms and conditions set out below.

General Use

3.4.1 Customers must use public computers, Wi-Fi, and multimedia equipment in a lawful, respectful, and responsible manner.

3.4.2 Customers are expected to:

- a) be mindful of others when viewing potentially sensitive or controversial content;
- b) use headphones when accessing audio or video content;

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- c) refrain from disruptive behaviour or activity that interferes with others' use of the Library; and
- d) follow all directions given by Library staff.

3.4.3 Customers must not knowingly display or access material that is:

- a) harmful to children;
- b) obscene, offensive, or pornographic; or
- c) illegal under Federal, State or Local laws.

3.4.4 Customers must not engage in:

- a) cyberbullying, harassment, or intimidation;
- b) the dissemination of defamatory or unlawful material; or
- c) any fraudulent or criminal activity using Library technology.

3.4.5 Inappropriate use may result in:

- a) suspension of technology access;
- b) removal from the Library; and/or
- c) referral to relevant authorities.

Children and Young People

3.4.6 The Library supports young peoples' safe access to online information.

3.4.7 Parents and guardians are responsible for supervising internet use by children under 18 years of age.

3.4.8 Young people under 18 living independently may access internet services in accordance with Library membership conditions.

Filtering and Access Limitations

3.4.9 Council does not use internet filtering software on its public networks.

3.4.10 Library computers are located in public view to support responsible use. Customers are responsible for evaluating the accuracy and appropriateness of online content.

3.4.11 Use of Council's internet services implies acceptance of these terms.

Wireless (Wi-Fi) Access

3.4.12 Free Wi-Fi is available for use with personal devices during Library opening hours.

3.4.13 Wireless access is provided on a public network. Users should be aware that:

- a) communications are not secure; and
- b) users are responsible for protecting their own devices and data.

Liability

3.4.14 The Library is not responsible for:

- a) loss or damage to personal devices or data;
- b) viruses or other security risks;
- c) equipment malfunction or failure; or
- d) any legal liability arising from internet use.

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- 3.4.15 Customers are responsible for:
- a) complying with copyright and software licensing laws; and
 - b) ensuring all downloaded and printed materials comply with applicable legislation.

Bookings and Usage Time

- 3.4.16 Public computers may be prebooked and a session may be extended up to three hours subject to demand.
- 3.4.17 A maximum of two (2) people may use a computer at one time unless otherwise directed by staff.
- 3.4.18 Wi-Fi use is not time-limited.

3.5 Using the Library and Membership

Behaviour and General Use

- 3.5.1 Parents and guardians are responsible for their children's behaviour, well-being and care while using the Library's physical and online collections, services, facilities, internet and while attending programs.
- 3.5.2 If Council becomes aware of unaccompanied children that may be at risk or who are behaving inappropriately in the Library, Council will in the first instance attempt to contact their parents or guardians. Council has a duty to report children who are potentially at risk to the appropriate authorities.
- 3.5.3 Food snacks and non-alcoholic drinks in spill-proof or covered containers may be consumed within the Library.
- 3.5.4 Customers may make and receive mobile phone calls on the conditions that:
- a) their use of their phone does not disturb or disrupt other customers' use of the Library; and
 - b) they are not being served by Council officers, with the exception of assistance requiring phone use.
- 3.5.5 The Library will not distribute or display external promotional materials.
- 3.5.6 Soliciting, petitioning, interviewing, campaigning, survey-taking, canvassing or selling in the Library is not permitted.

To ensure that all clients have equitable access to Library resources all Library clients must;

- a) adhere to Library policies and directives;
- b) be appropriately dressed. Appropriate footwear and clothing must be worn at all times and all clients must meet an acceptable level of personal hygiene;
- c) be respectful towards Library employees and other Library patrons;
- d) comply with directions of Council Officers;
- e) leave the Library promptly at closing time and during emergency drills and real emergencies;
- f) be responsible for all personal belongings and property; and
- g) respect the designation of particular areas in the Library for particular purposes.

The following behaviours are deemed unacceptable:

- a) use of offensive, racist or discriminatory language; and
- b) abuse of other Library patrons or Somerset Council employees including intimidation and harassment;
- c) operating or soliciting a business;
- d) consumption of alcohol or drugs or the appearance of intoxication;
- e) interference with personal or Somerset Regional Libraries property including theft or vandalism;
- f) bringing a dog or other animal into the Library (including foyer), with the exception of certified Guide, Hearing or Assistance dogs.

Membership Eligibility, Entitlements and Responsibilities

3.5.7 Everyone is welcome to use and/or join the Library. Membership of the Library is free and available to anyone including residents and visitors. Library membership categories are:

Customer Category	Definition	Physical items - Loan conditions	Other conditions
Adult	Person aged 18 years and over	40 items/4 weeks 40 reservation limit	
Junior	Person aged under 18 years	40 items/4 weeks 40 reservation limit	Aged restricted access to MA 15+ and R rated DVD/videos and graphic novel related materials. Parent/ guardian permission to book Public Internet Terminals.
Institution	Business, Aged Care facility, Kindergarten, local organisation.	50 items/12 weeks 40 reservation limit	Need to register with proof of placement.

3.5.8 The Library's information services are available to all customers, irrespective of whether they are a member of the Library.

3.5.9 Full Library membership entitles child, adult and institutional members to use all services offered by the Library, including:

- a) borrow items from the Library. Members will be advised at the time of borrowing of the loan period and return date of items;
- b) reserve items for pick up at a preferred Library branch;
- c) renew loaned items if they are not reserved;
- d) suggest items for purchase by the Library;
- e) use digital collections and online resources;
- f) use public computers, and the printing, scanning and copying services provided at each Library; and
- g) participate in Library programs and activities.

3.5.10 Adult membership is available to any person 18 years of age and over. Adult members are entitled to full access to Library services as described in 3.5.9.

- 3.5.11 Membership is available to children and young adults under the age of 18 years. Children and young adult members are entitled to full use of Library services as described in 3.5.9.
- 3.5.12 Online membership is available to customers 18 years and over. Online members may:
- a) borrow eBooks, eAudiobooks and eMagazines;
 - b) use online resources provided by the library;
 - c) reserve Library items for pick up at preferred Library branch (upgrade to full membership to borrow reserved items); and
 - d) suggest items for purchase by the Library.
- 3.5.13 Customers may be asked by a Council officer to present their Library membership card when borrowing items or using public computers. If a card is not presented, proof of identification may be requested.
- 3.5.14 Library membership cards are non-transferable and remain the property of the Library.
- 3.5.16 Membership is not required to use the Library's public Wi-Fi on personal devices. Printing, photocopying and scanning services are available to customers and subject to fees itemised in Council's Schedule of Charges.
- 3.5.17 Members may renew a loan, unless:
- a) the item is reserved;
 - b) with interlibrary loans the lending Library declines to renew the item; or
 - c) the member's card has expired or is otherwise blocked or suspended.
- 3.5.18 Borrowed items may be returned to any Library branch.
- 3.5.19 Members may request items not held by the Library. Customers will be advised of costs prior to an item being ordered. Once a customer's item has been sent from a loaning Library, charges are payable even if the loan is cancelled or not collected.
- 3.5.20 Other fees and charges apply if an interlibrary loan item is lost or damaged. Members may place an interlibrary loan request for items that:
- a) are not held by Somerset Libraries;
 - b) are not readily available for purchase or are out of print; or
 - c) do not meet the Library's selection criteria for purchase.
- 3.5.21 Items that are not obtained through interlibrary loan include:
- a) items that have been recently published and are readily available for purchase;
 - b) reference and not-for-loan items;
 - c) magazines and serials; and
 - d) multimedia items.
- 3.5.22 Items on loan will be automatically renewed twice if the customer has provided the Library with an email address and the item has not been reserved by another customer.
- 3.5.23 Council will issue overdue reminders when Library items are overdue. Once items are 53 days overdue, members will be issued with a third reminder and will not be able to:
- a) borrow additional items; and
 - b) at the discretion of the Library, may not be able to renew existing loans or make reservations.

- 3.5.24 When borrowed items are lost, stolen or damaged, members may be charged the applicable replacement cost recorded in the items catalogue record. The charge may include processing fees. Issued replacement charges will be waived if:
- a) the item has been in the Library's collection for more than three (3) years;
 - b) the item is returned within two (2) years;
 - c) the item is returned after two (2) years (issued replacement charges up to \$150 may be waived, on the basis of hardship, at the discretion of the Library Council officer in charge); or
 - d) a police report is provided as proof that items have been stolen.
- 3.5.25 A request to waive issued replacement charges greater than \$150 on the basis of hardship, may be considered at the discretion of the Library Services Coordinator.
- 3.5.26 The Library will accept brand new copies accompanied by a purchase receipt to replace items that customers have lost, damaged, had stolen or returned incomplete.
- 3.5.27 A Bulk Loan Service is available to the region's aged care facilities. Bulk loan items are generally loaned for a period of four (4) weeks.

4. PROCEDURE

4.1 Library Membership Application Procedures

4.1.1 Customers may apply for full Library membership in-person by completing the application process and providing the required documents. Member information will be managed in line with the Somerset Regional Council's C015 Information Management and Security Policy.

4.1.2 To apply for full Library membership, customers must provide:

- a) proof of identity and contact details [current residential address OR an email address]; or
- b) proof of address and contact details [current residential address OR an email address].

4.1.3 Children and young people under 18 years of age need to be registered by a guarantor 18 years of age and over who can show an acceptable form of identification as described in 4.1.2.

4.1.4 To upgrade online membership to full membership, customers must provide proof of identification as described in 4.1.2.

4.2 Members are required to renew their membership every three (3) years by confirming their details.

4.3 Council will maintain records of member transactions, including but not limited to loan histories.

4.4 The Library uses various platforms to distribute online resources. Use of these platforms is subject to agreeing and complying with each platform's own terms and conditions. It is a member's responsibility to check the platform's privacy terms and be aware of how they use and store personal information.

5. REPORTING

5.1 Council will monitor the implementation and effectiveness of this Policy through regular reporting on key Library service indicators, including:

- Library usage and membership data
- Program participation and community engagement
- Customer feedback and satisfaction
- Staff training and development
- Compliance with legislative and contractual obligations

These reports will support the delivery of Council's Corporate and Operational Plans, identify emerging issues, and inform future service improvements and policy reviews. Performance will be assessed against the *ALIA-APLA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries (2020)* and Council's strategic priorities.

1. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Artificial Intelligence (AI)	Artificial Intelligence refers to an engineered system that generates predictive outputs such as content, forecasts, recommendations, or decisions for a given set of human-defined objectives or parameters without explicit programming. AI systems are designed to operate with varying levels of automation.
Customer	Anyone who uses a Council Library, including members and non-members. It also includes people who use the Library's online services available through the Library's website and a range of mobile apps.
Employee/Council officer	Any person working in a casual, temporary or permanent capacity at Somerset Regional Council.
Library	All libraries run by Somerset Regional Council.
Library items or materials	Includes magazines, books, audiobooks, DVDs, newspaper, digital and online resources, any printed matter including maps, pictures and films. Any matter or thing whereby words or images are recorded or reproduced. Includes physical and digital materials.
Member	A customer who has registered as a full member or an online member and has been issued with a Library membership number or card.
Membership number/card	The physical or digital card issued to customers when they join the Library. Each card or number sequence has a unique ID and PIN that members use for Library transactions including borrowing physical or digital collections and registering for events.
Overdue loan	A borrowed item that has not been returned to the Library by the due date.
Staff	Includes a person employed by Somerset Regional Council on a permanent, temporary or casual basis and, also, includes a person engaged to perform standard employee functions under a contract for services (e.g. contractor, consultant, etc.).

2. ENDORSEMENT

This policy was adopted by the Somerset Regional Council at the Ordinary Meeting of 28 January 2026 and has subsequently been endorsed for application from 28 January 2026 by the Chief Executive Officer.

Signed:

Date: 28 January 2026

Name: Andrew Johnson

Title: Chief Executive Officer

3. REVISION HISTORY

REVISION HISTORY	Date of Council Decision	Decision Notice (Doc Id.) or Resolve Item Ref No.	Effective Date	Notes
C007 Library Membership Policy	29/06/2009	407836	8/07/2009	This policy consolidates; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C007 Library Membership Policy • C008 Interlibrary Loans Policy • C009 Public Internet Use Policy • C023 Collection Development Policy • C024 Young People in the Library Policy • C032 Local History Collection Policy • C035 Conditions of Entry Policy into one (1) single, unified document. It provides clear direction for the delivery of Library services in alignment with Council's strategic priorities, community needs, and the ALIA-APLA Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries (2020).
C008 Interlibrary Loans Policy	29/06/2009	407836	1/07/2009	
C009 Public Internet Use Policy	29/06/2009	407836		
C023 Collection Development Policy	08/07/2013	667004	27/03/2013	
C024 Young People in the Library Policy	27/03/2013	667004	27/03/2013	
C032 Local History Collection Policy	13/05/2013	818252	13/05/2013	
C035 Conditions of Entry Policy	10/04/2019	1107199	10/04/2019	
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