

# Policy

## Circulation & Membership Policy

Responsible Manager (Title)	Regional Librarian		
Adopted by Council	Date:	Minute Number:	
File Reference Number	DWS	Version:	Review Due: 2026
Community Plan Linkage	1 Society		
Community Plan Linkage	1.3 We will have a diverse and creative culture		
Community Plan Linkage	1.3.1 Supports arts, learning, cultural services and festivals		

### 1. Purpose

The policy has a number of aims to

- promote freedom of information
- to ensure equal access to the Library's materials and information for members for the Clarence Regional Library
- It ensures the member understands his/her responsibilities when using the Library's resources
- Safeguards the Library's resources.

### 2. Definitions

Membership – as defined in *item 5.8 Membership Categories*.

Registration – the process of providing identification details to access library services.

Overdues – library items that have not been returned by the due date.

Loan Periods – length of time an item can be borrowed.

### 3. Background/legislative requirements

*Library Act 1939: Section 10(5)* sets out that the Library Council of NSW may issue guidelines to local authorities for the purposes of Section 10.

Section 10(1)(a) "Any person who is a resident of the area of the local authority or a ratepayer of the local authority is entitled to membership of the Library free of charge."

The intention of this provision is to ensure that membership of the library for residents and ratepayers is provided free. free membership is membership of a local authority library, including if required, provision of a library card for residents of that local authority's area and for residents of other local authorities who are signatories to *Reciprocal Membership Agreements*. **Reciprocal membership is enabled by s10(3) of the Act**

Section 10(1)(b) "Any person (whether or not a member of the library) is entitled free of charge to access to any library material of the library and any information forming part of the information service of the library (other than information excepted from free access by guidelines issued by the Council) for use on the library premises."

The intention of this provision is to ensure that no charge is made for the use of library materials or access to the information services of the library by any person on the library premises, other than information excepted from free access by guidelines issued by the Council.

The *Library Act 1939* defines library material:

Library material includes book, periodical, newspaper and any other printed matter and also includes map, music, manuscript, picture, photographic plate and film and any other matter or thing on or by which words, sounds or images are recorded or reproduced.

This definition includes electronic publications and information that is accessible via the internet, and it means that members of the public can enter a public library and access information, regardless of its format, free of charge (other than information excepted from free access by guidelines issued by the Council).

Section 10(1)(c) "Any person who is a member of the library is entitled to borrow free of charge from the library for use away from the library premises any library material of the library which has been classified by the librarian of the library as being of literary, informative, or educational value or as being fiction."

## 4. Policy statement

Clarence Regional Library is committed to serving the information and recreation needs of the communities of Clarence Valley and Bellingen Shire Councils. The library strives to provide access to resources free of charge to its communities, these resource can include:

- Fiction and non-fiction (study and recreational books)
- Magazines
- Non-Print resources ie) DVD's, eResources, eAudio, eBooks, eMagazines
- Console Games
- Internet access
- Assistance from staff in accessing collections and information

- Public access computers, including Internet access
- Pre-school storytime
- Space for activities and study.

## 5. Implementation

### 5.1 Registration of Borrowers

An individual who applies for a library card is required to sign the application (in blue or black pen) and accept responsibility for all items borrowed. If a person is unable to sign his/her name then another person may sign on their behalf.

Individuals under the age of 15 require a parent or guardians signature and proof of the guardians address must also be provided.

Cardholders and parent/guardians of junior and young adult members are responsible for all the items borrowed by that member.

Members are required to present their library cards at the service counter for the most efficient service. If an individual has forgotten his/her library card Library staff may ask to see some identification before issuing items if that person is not personally known to them.

Members details will be checked at regular intervals to ensure records are accurate. Inactive cards are deleted every 2 years from the Library's records.

A library card will be issued upon membership; individuals that have lost or damaged their cards are responsible for paying for a replacement card (See Clarence Regional Library Schedule of Library Fees & Charges).

- 5.1.1** All permanent residents and ratepayers of the Clarence Valley Council and Bellingen Shire Council are eligible to register for membership to the Clarence Regional Library service (Proof of residency or rate payment is required).
- 5.1.2** Individuals who are not permanent residents but are current members of another public library service may also join as a reciprocal member (Proof of reciprocal membership is required).
- 5.1.3** Non-permanent residents who are not registered with another library service may also join as a temporary member, provided suitable identification is provided and the payment of a partly refundable deposit is made (See Clarence Regional Library Schedule of Library Fees & Charges). A driver's license or other photo identification along with proof of current address is required for verification of residency.

## 5.2 Loan Periods and Renewals

All material available for borrowing has a loan period of 28 days. Items with 5 or more reservations are classified as high demand and will have the loan period adjusted to 14 days in order to provide fair access. Additional copies of these items are usually purchased.

Renewals may be made by phone, through the online catalogue or in person.

Items will be automatically renewed after 28 days and then again, after further 28 days unless they have Reservations from other borrowers placed on them.

The loan limit is 30 items per card.

In addition to catalogued/barcoded stock the library also holds a selection of uncatalogued donated material that is also available for loan.

Borrowing rights may be adjusted to meet individual needs on a case by case basis at the discretion of the Library Staff or the Regional Librarian.

## 5.3 Overdue Material

It is the responsibility of members to be aware of the due date for items borrowed. The late return of library material prevents other users from accessing the material.

Borrowing privileges will be temporarily suspended when items are not returned after 28 days.

Items not returned after 28 days past the due date will be considered lost and a letter of demand may be sent as a result.

## 5.4 Lost or Damaged Material

Materials that are lost or damaged beyond repair must be paid for by the borrower. Payment for lost books includes the replacement cost (incl. GST) and processing fee per item.

In cases where there may be grounds for waiving fees, the matter should be referred to the Supervisor or the Regional Librarian.

## 5.5 Reservations

Individuals may reserve 20 items that are currently on loan, held at the various library service locations or on order. Reserves may be placed in person, over the phone or via the online catalogue.

Notification of availability of reserved material will be made either by written correspondence, email, or by SMS. Material awaiting collection will be held for 10 days at the on the Reservation shelves in each library.

Uncollected material will be made available to the next reserve request or placed back on the shelves.

A client may cancel a reservation request at any time by contacting the Library or through the clients account on the online catalogue.

Clients that no longer require a reservation for a particular item are requested to contact the Library as soon as possible. This will enable the Library to forward the item on to the next client on the reservation list or return it to the shelves and made available for general lending.

## 5.6 Inter-Library Loans

Material not available within the Regional Library Service may be requested through interlibrary loan (ILL). Members receiving ILL must abide by the due dates and any other restrictions that are set by the lending library. An administration fee is applied to each request. Any additional charge applied by the lending library will be passed on to the borrower. An outline of the inter-library loan fees can be found in the Clarence Regional Library Schedule of Library Fees and Charges.

Should a client no longer require an inter-library loan request, the client may cancel it at any time prior to that request being processed by the Reader Services Officer without a charge.

However, once the request is processed the standard administration fee does apply to each request.

Cancellations of an inter-library loan request can be made by contacting the library by phone, email, in person or through the clients account on the online catalogue.

The loan conditions for inter-library loans are largely determined by the lending library. Extensions to the loan period must be approved by the Reader Services Officer before the due date.

## 5.7 Return of Library Materials

The return of library materials can be made at any of the Clarence Regional Libraries: Bellingen, Dorrigo, Grafton Iluka, Maclean, Urunga and Yamba including the mobile library either in person or via the post.

## 5.8 Membership categories

Within our membership a number of different categories exist, these include the following:

- Adult
- Junior
- Reciprocal
- Temporary
- Visitor
- School
- Book Club
- Institutional
- Home Library Service
- No fixed address
- Online

Adult and Junior and Reciprocal memberships are the most common form of membership for the library service.

- Adult Membership:
  - Must be over 15 years of age
- Junior membership:
  - Is under 15 years of age
- Reciprocal
  - Must belong to another public library service
  - Proof of reciprocal membership required
  - Maximum of 6 items to borrow
- Temporary
  - To be used:
    - if you are not a member of another public library service
    - Or do not have your other public library membership card with you
  - Requires:
    - Completion of membership Form
    - Show proof of Australian home address
    - \$30 deposit, \$20 refundable on termination of membership
  - Maximum of 6 items to borrow

The other categories differ in the following ways:

- Visitor

- For computer use only
- School membership:
  - This is a membership organised by a school or preschool for a whole class group of children on the Mobile Library service stops.
- Book Club membership:
  - This membership is set up for the facilitators of Book Clubs and is used for borrowing and reserving Book Club Kits for the Book Club members only. This membership is in addition to their own individual membership.
- Institutional membership:
  - Institutional membership is for the use of schools, preschools, nursing homes etc where the institution is prepared to cover the costs of membership ie) lost and damaged items. Institutional membership can provide an extended borrowing period with a maximum of 100 items.
- Home Library Service membership:
  - A signature from a health professional recommending the service is required on the membership form.
  - A secondary contact is required
- No fixed address membership:
  - Maximum 2 items to borrow
  - Must provide a phone and/or email contact point
- Online member
  - only access to eLibrary provided
  - must provide identification in a digital format

## 6. Appeal/objections process

N/A

## 7. Related Documents

Access to Information in NSW Public Libraries: Library Council Guideline -

<https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/sites/default/files/accesstoinformation2007.pdf>

ALIA Statement on Free Access to Information -



BELLINGEN  
SHIRE COUNCIL



<https://www.alia.org.au/about-alia/policiesstandards-and-guidelines/statement-free-access-information>

Library Act 1939 (NSW)

Library Regulation 2018 (NSW)

CRL Membership brochure

## 8. Attachments