



Voluntary Validation of WEST Low Risk Level Materials

Guidelines and Best Practices for Exposing Low Risk Level Archives 'Elevated by Stealth'

Introduction & Executive Summary

WEST requires physical validation of medium and high risk level archived materials, and does not require validation of low risk level archived materials.¹ However, some Archive Holders subject low risk level materials to physical validation as a matter of routine in certain standard collection management workflows, essentially making them 'elevated by stealth' by confirming what materials are held. These activities are highly valuable not only to the local institution but to the wider shared print community, and serve to make the WEST archives more trustworthy.

While WEST does not require that these actions be performed or that, if taken, information about these actions be added to disclosure records, Archivers that do voluntarily validate their low risk level materials in storage are highly encouraged to record this in their disclosure records to support public understanding about the state of the WEST archives.

The following guidelines are intended to support Archiver identification of workflows where they may be validating their low risk level materials in storage and to encourage best practices for disclosure of this valuable voluntary work.

Common workflows with physical validation

WEST has identified two common workflows that libraries engage in that include actions that mirror the WEST Validation Standards. Archive Holders that have performed this work on their low risk level archived materials are encouraged to take steps to record this validation activity and, as possible and reasonable, the outcomes, including affirmative statements of missing materials and of condition problems identified in the WEST archives.

Both of the workflows described below typically include the following actions that mirror WEST's Validation Standards:

1. Comparing the materials in hand with the holdings noted in the ILS/LSP to confirm completeness of the held run
2. Updating the summary holdings and individual item statuses to reflect any missing materials

These workflows may also include additional actions that produce valuable information:

3. Recording what materials are missing from the held run (an affirmative statement of missing materials)
4. Reviewing the physical condition of the materials

Archivers that house their low risk level materials in closed access storage locations are encouraged to disclose voluntary validation activities and outcomes in 583 notes as they are able.² See the [Validation & Disclosure](#) section for details.

WEST members who wish to provide feedback on this policy may do so by [submitting comments to the WEST project team](#) through the WEST website. Edits and suggestions will be reviewed and, as appropriate, accepted by the WEST Operations and Collections Council (OCC). The WEST Operations and Collections Council (OCC) may review and update this Disclosure Policy periodically to ensure currency of the contents.

¹ See WEST's [Risk Mitigation During WEST Archiving](#) for a summary of required actions for each risk level. See the [WEST Validation Standards and Procedures](#) and [WEST Disclosure Policy](#) for detailed instructions on performing physical validation and recording the outcomes.

² Some Archive Holders may perform physical validation activities on their low risk level materials held in open stacks; however, these guidelines are optimally deployed for materials housed in closed-access storage. Materials stored in open stacks are more susceptible to damage or loss, reducing the long-term reliability of physical validation without regular re-validation.

A. Transferring materials to storage

If you are transferring materials to a closed storage facility, especially to high-density storage facilities that shelve materials by size rather than by call number or title, you are likely physically validating those materials. Workflows for transferring materials to storage facilities frequently include an item-level review during the accessioning process. If your accessioning workflow includes comparing the materials in hand against the holdings statement in the record, these materials have been validated for completeness.

When deciding what materials have been physically validated to the standards described in these best practices, Archivers should take into account whether all materials in the storage facility have undergone the same accessioning workflow. Archivers may choose to apply these best practices only to new retention commitments that are transferred to storage to ensure accuracy of the validation disclosure statements. Retrospective projects to disclose physical validation activities for all legacy WEST-archived materials in storage are also encouraged, as appropriate and within reason for the Archiver.

B. Binding

Binding offers an excellent chance to confirm the presence of the pieces in a journal backfile. Binding may involve sending the materials to a commercial bindery or may be an in-house workflow that gathers multiple loose issues together into a single unit. Bindery workflows can involve several checks of the materials:

- when the pieces are pulled and prepared for sending to the bindery;
- when the materials are physically gathered together by the binder (either commercial or in-house) and a statement is placed on the outside of the new volume describing what is contained within; and
- when the newly-bound volumes are received back at the library and staff check the work to confirm accuracy.

Physical validation in bindery workflows is considered especially trustworthy when followed immediately by transfer to access-secured shelving (closed stacks or storage facility), and disclosure of these activities is encouraged when materials are housed in access-secured shelving after the completion of bindery workflows.

Validation & Disclosure

Information about physical validation and outcomes is highly valuable to WEST and the wider shared print community. WEST Archivers that voluntarily validate their low risk level materials are encouraged to disclose this information by adding 583 notes that describe the actions taken and any outcomes.

WEST's [Disclosure Policy](#) and [Validation Standards](#) both employ the [Good, Better, Best](#) framework articulated by the Partnership for Shared Book Collections. These guidelines, since they are related to voluntary rather than required activities, adopt a modified version of this framework to acknowledge the voluntary nature of the activities and the resourcing considerations Archivers may face for each level:

- **Good:** Collection management actions that mirror WEST's Validation Standards. These are things that libraries may already be doing as part of their regular, routine (shared) print stewardship work.
- **Better:** Information that would be beneficial for the community, and which WEST recommends the Archive Holder record if they are easily able to. These are practices libraries are encouraged to adopt as good stewards of collections and as Archivers for WEST.
- **Best:** Information that would be beneficial for the community and which WEST recommends the Archive Holder consider recording, but which may require more substantial effort from the Archive Holder. This information is considered ideal to include, as resourcing allows.

At the Better and Best levels, Archivers are strongly encouraged to include additional 583 disclosure notes describing the validation actions and, at the Best level, outcomes, on top of the standard 'committed to retain' 583 notes.³

Validating for Completeness

- **Good:** Compare the physical materials in hand against the holdings statement / item records in your local ILS/LSP to confirm all pieces are present and accounted for, and update the summary holdings statement and/or item statuses for missing materials to make clear what is not included in the holdings.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** No additional 583 note added.
- **Better:** In addition to the 583\$a "committed to retain" note, add a 583\$a "completeness reviewed" note to the holdings record to disclose that you have performed this activity; add the level at which the materials were validated in the \$i (volume-level, issue-level, page-level). This note may be added to records in batch.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** 583\$aCompleteness reviewed\$c20220714\$fWEST\$ivolume-level
- **Best:** For holdings with completeness problems,⁴ add affirmative statements of what materials are missing in a \$l/\$z pair in this 583 validation note. This note will be specific to the holdings, and should be added individually.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** 583\$aCompleteness reviewed\$c20220714\$fWEST\$ivolume-level\$lmissing volumes\$zmissing v.2-v.4

Validating for Condition

- **Good:** Inspect the physical pieces for major condition problems, such as mold, insects, significant pieces missing or damaged, and unreadable text. If any of these condition problems are found, do not retain these volumes for the WEST Archives. If materials are removed from the collection, update the summary holdings statement and/or item statuses for missing materials to make clear what is not included in the holdings.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** No additional 583 note added.
- **Better:** In addition to the 583\$a "committed to retain" note, add a 583\$a "condition reviewed" note to the holdings record to disclose that you have performed this activity; add the level at which the materials were validated in the \$i (volume-level, issue-level, page-level). This note may be added to records in batch.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** 583\$acondition reviewed\$c20220714\$fWEST\$ivolume-level
- **Best:** For holdings with condition problems,⁵ add affirmative statements of the condition problems that were found, and in which pieces, in a \$l/\$z pair in this 583 validation note (if multiple condition problems are found, include multiple \$l/\$z pairs). This note will be specific to the holdings, and should be added individually.
 - **Example validation disclosure note:** 583\$acondition reviewed\$c20220714\$fWEST\$ivolume-level\$lmarginialia\$zmarginialia v.6\$lbrittle paper\$zbrittle paper v.1, v.7

Transfer to Optimal Storage

Archivers with storage facilities that meet the [Environmental Standards for WEST Archives](#) at or above the medium risk level are also encouraged to include an additional 583 disclosure note that the materials have been 'transferred to optimal storage':

- **Example validation disclosure note:** 583\$atransferred to optimal storage\$c20220714\$fWEST

³ See [Appendix 2](#) for example disclosure records with the additional validation notes.

⁴ See [Appendix 1](#) for a list of common completeness problems and resolutions.

⁵ See [Appendix 1](#) for a list of common condition problems and resolutions.

Appendix 1: Decision Matrix and Expected Actions

When validating journal holdings, it is likely that multiple problems may be identified including problems of completeness, condition, or contribution. The following standard actions are expected and must be taken to address each problem. These actions are designed to keep validation effort to a reasonable minimum and to provide transparency across the partnership about actions taken to verify completeness and condition. These actions apply to all titles in the medium and high risk levels.

Problem Type	Problem	Action
Contribution	1. Content Partner does not wish to contribute recent volumes or issues.	Implement a 3 or 5 year rolling wall in the Shared Print Journal Archive agreement with the Content Partner or seek another Content Partner.
Contribution	2. Complete or near complete holdings are available among Content Partners, but none of the partners are willing to contribute a significant portion of the older volumes or issues (backfile issues).	The entire journal is not a candidate for the Shared Print Archive. Remove the journal from the Shared Print program. If a portion of the Shared Print Archive has already been processed, annotate the remaining unprocessed issues as missing issues in descriptive records in union catalogs and discontinue work on the journal.
Completeness	3. Missing volumes.	Seek missing volumes from Content Partners. If none are available, annotate the missing volumes in descriptive records in union catalogs.
Completeness	4. Different binding patterns for a volume.	Add multiple volumes. Do not dis-bind volumes or correct physical bindings. Document binding differences in descriptive records in union catalogs to facilitate discovery.
Completeness	5. Volumes with missing issues.	Accession multiple volumes into the Shared Print Journal Archive to complete the archive. Document any remaining missing issues in descriptive records in union catalogs.
Completeness	6. Missing issues. (for unbound issues)	Seek missing issues from Content Partners. If none are available, document missing issues in descriptive records in union catalogs.
Completeness	7. Reprints.	Seek another Content Partner. If no holdings are available among the Content Partners, accession reprints into the Shared Print Journal Archive. Document which volumes contain reprints in descriptive records in union catalogs.

Problem Type	Problem	Action
Completeness	8. Missing advertisements, images (graphs, photographs).	If upon a general inspection of the issues a significant number of advertisements or images appear to be missing, seek another Content Partner. If no holdings are available among the Content Partners, accession issues into the Shared Print Journal Archive. Document which issues are missing advertisements in descriptive records in union catalogs. It is not necessary to identify or enumerate all missing ads or images. Simply record the fact that some ads and images are missing. Accession multiple volumes into the Shared Print Journal Archive to complete the archive.
Completeness	9. Missing foldouts.	If upon a general inspection of the issues a significant number of foldouts appear to be missing, seek another Content Partner. If no holdings are available among the Content Partners, accession issues into the Shared Print Journal Archive. Document which issues are missing foldouts in descriptive records in union catalogs. It is not necessary to identify or enumerate all missing foldouts. Simply record the fact that some foldouts are missing.
Completeness	10. Missing pages	If upon a general inspection of the issues a significant number of pages appear to be missing, document which issues are missing pages in descriptive records in union catalogs. It is not necessary to identify or enumerate all missing pages. Simply record the fact that some pages are missing.
Condition	11. Tight binding.	Seek another Content Partner. If no holdings are available among the Content Partners, accession issues into the Shared Print Journal Archive. Document which volumes have tight bindings in descriptive records in union catalogs.
Condition	12. Loose binding	No action necessary. This condition is acceptable. Accession the volume into the archive.
Condition	13. Low quality binding/sewing	No action necessary. This condition is acceptable. Accession the volume into the archive.
Condition	14. Brittle paper	Document which volumes have brittle paper in union catalogs and accession the volume into the archive.
Condition	15. Yellowed/Browning pages	No action necessary. This condition is acceptable. Accession the volume into the archive.
Condition	16. Unreadable text block (e.g. glue damage, printing mistakes, shot text)	Not permitted in the archive. Seek another Content Partner.

Problem Type	Problem	Action
Condition	17. Highlighting, marginalia, pencil and pen markings	If a significant number of pages have highlighting or markings that render the text unreadable, seek another Content Partner. Otherwise, accession the issues into the Shared Print Archive and document that some pages have highlighting or markings in descriptive records in union catalogs. Do not attempt to verify this at the page level, only at a cursory level by flipping through the text block.
Condition	18. Loose or separated pages	<p>If more than 10 pages in a volume, seek another Content Partner. If none available, then reattach the pages or tie the volume with acid free string per local policies, and accession into the Shared Print Archive.</p> <p>If less than 10 pages in a volume, reattach the pages or tie the volume with acid free string per local policies, and accession into the Shared Print Archive.</p>
Condition	19. Missing issue covers	Document which volumes have missing issue covers in union catalogs and accession the volume into the archive.
Condition	20. Separated issue covers	Reattach the cover(s) or tie them with acid free string per local policies, and accession into the Shared Print Archive.

Appendix 2: Examples of Validation Disclosure

The following are intended only as examples of records for low risk level-archived materials that have been physically validated to illustrate disclosing validation activities and outcomes at the good, better, and best level. Examples are derived from disclosure records provided to WEST, and have been anonymized. Outputs from different ILSs are included to illustrate expected differences in outputs.

'Good' - validation action not recorded (Alma ILS Output)

```
LDR          02039cas a2200565 i 4500
001          2234500610003421
004          9910550009703421
005          20200625104028.0
007          ta
008          1107210u\\\\\\8\\\\\\1001aaeng0110728
022          \\$a0014-2565
035          \\$a (OCoLC) 1763869
561          \\$aABC
583         \\$aCommitted to
              retain$c20190621$d20351231$fWEST$uhttp://www.cdlib.org/services/west/docs/WE
              STProgramStatement.pdf
852          1\\$82234500610003421\\$aABC$bMAIN$hQP31$i.A28
853          33\\$82234500610003421.1\\$81$av.$i (year)
853          33\\$82234500610003421.2\\$82$av.$bno.$i (year)
853          33\\$82234500610003421.3\\$83$av.$i (year)
863          3\\$82234500610003421.4\\$81.1$a50-73$i1953-1959
863          4\\$82234500610003421.5\\$82.1$a74$b1-4,6$i1959$wg
863          3\\$82234500610003421.6\\$83.1$a75-159$i1959-1980$x1953-1958, 1959 (incomplete),
              1960-1980$zCANCELED v.159(1980)
```

'Better' - validation action recorded, outcomes not recorded (III ILS Output)

```
LDR          00660ny 22002053n 4500
001          .c10505222
004          .b19431259
005          20200615102732
007          ta
008          1107210u\\\\\\8\\\\\\1001aaeng0110728
014          \\$a1588960$bOCoLC
022          0\\$a0041-1612
030          \\$aTRNJA
035          \\$a (OCoLC) 1588960
561          \\$aXYZ
583         1\\$acommitted to
              retain$c20200630$d20351231$fWEST$uhttp://www.cdlib.org/services/west/docs/WE
              STProgramStatement.pdf
583         1\\$acompleteness reviewed$c20200630$fWEST
852          1\\$aXYZ$bmain$hHE1$i.T8
866          \\0\\$880$av.9:no.1(1959:Mar.)-v.16:no.1(1966:Mar.),v.16:no.3(1966:Sept.)-v.51:no
              .3(2005:Dec.)
```


'Best' - validation actions and outcomes recorded (Voyager ILS Output)

LDR 00660ny 22002053n 4500
001 1178321
004 1147367
005 20190515104504.0
007 ta
008 9004215p\\\\\\8\\\\\\o000uueng1990609
014 1\\\$a18161076\$bKU
022 0\\\$a1047-2665
035 \\\$a (OCoLC)18161076
561 \\\$aWOW
583 \\\$acommitted to
retain\$c20190306\$d20351231\$fWEST\$uhttp://www.cdlib.org/services/west/docs/WE
STProgramStatement.pdf
583 \\\$acompleteness reviewed\$c20190306\$fWEST\$iissue-level\$lmissing
volumes\$zmissing v.1:1-3; v.2:6; v.3:4
583 \\\$acondition reviewed\$c20190306\$fWEST\$iissue-level\$lmarginialia\$zmarginialia
v.7:2; v.10:6\$lbrittle paper\$zbrittle paper v.8-v.9
852 01\$aWOW\$bannex\$hQL640\$i.V58
853 20\$81\$av.\$bno.\$u6\$vr\$i (year) \$j (month) \$wb
863 40\$81.1\$a3-11\$b5-2\$i1992-2000\$j01/02-02/03
866 40\$81\$av.3:no.5 (1992:Jan./Feb.) -v.11:no.2 (2000:Feb./Mar.)