

Oral History Program Statement - UNSW Archives	
Records and Archives Office	Contact Officer: Karin Brennan
Approving Authority: Paul Macpherson, Manager, Records and Archives	
Date of approval: 1 March 2007	Date of Review: Ongoing

Contents

1. Preamble
2. Background
3. Definition
4. Objective
5. Authority
6. Responsibility
7. Scope
8. Records generated by the Oral History Program
9. Standards of practice
10. Communication

.....

1. Preamble

This statement outlines the purpose, objectives and nature of the University’s Oral History Program.

The purpose of the Oral History Program is to complement the University’s collective memory as preserved in official records through the capture of personal memory.

2. Background

The University Archives began collecting records of oral history interviews from the time it was first established in 1980. It has been developing its collection of oral history interviews continuously until now, through

- the creation and acquisition of oral history interview records within the University Archives’ Oral History Program and
- the acquisition of oral history interview records generated by other creators.

The Program has primarily been funded from the University Archives’ budget although the U Committee has also provided substantial and generous support for related activities through annual grants. The first Oral Historian was appointed in the University Archives in 1983. At the

end of 2006 the Program had generated over 200 interviews which, as a whole, are considered to be of national significance.

3. Definition

Oral History is a method of gathering and preserving historical information through recorded interviews with participants in past events and ways of life.

4. Objective

The objective of this program statement is to support the activities of the Archives in the conduct of oral history interviews which take place within the Oral History Program. Program activities include those towards the creation, acquisition and management of oral history interview records.

5. Authority

The Oral History Program is a function of the Archives. The University Archivist is the officer who authorises any activity undertaken within the Oral History Program.

6. Responsibility

The University Archivist is the officer who has responsibility for the conduct of the Oral History Program, allocates resources to the Program in accordance with approved business plans and budget limitations and appoints and supervises officers who undertake activities within the Program.

7. Scope

The scope of the Oral History Program is to generate oral history interview materials that will be of enduring research value as a complement to the University's official archival record. The Program generates interviews that provide a diversity of perspectives on topical issues, events and developments pertaining to the University's history.

8. Records generated by the Oral History Program

8.1 Creation

The conduct of interviews within the Oral History Program results in the creation of several records including archival records. These records usually include the original audio recording, reference copies of the audio recording, transcripts, logs or summaries of the audio recording, surveys, questionnaires and legal documents.

8.2 Management

The management of archival records generated by the conduct of interviews within the Oral History Program, including creation, acquisition, preservation and access processes, is subject to the operations and procedures applicable in the University Archives.

8.3 Ownership

Interviews conducted within the Oral History Program take place on the understanding that the interview will eventually be available to bona fide researchers and that the University will own the property interests attached to the materials generated by the interviews; legal agreements may be entered into between the University and other parties to effect the transfer of property ownership including copyright to the University.

The University Archives ensures that the University meet its obligations in relation to the moral rights of authors.

The University Archives is committed to respecting the wishes of interviewees or their legal representatives as regards access to the materials generated by oral history interviews.

8.4 Transcripts, logs and summaries of interviews

Where practicable, the University Archives endeavours to create transcripts, logs and/or summaries of oral history interviews conducted within the Oral History Program for the purpose of enhancing the accessibility of the interview's information content.

Where practicable, transcripts undergo a light editing process to improve the readability of the document without compromising the spontaneous quality of the interview. Interviewees are usually given the opportunity to comment on the transcripts.

The University Archives provides interviewees with one print copy of the transcript when finalised.

Interviewees may request one copy of the audio recording of their interview.

8.5 Access

All access to records held in the University Archives is subject to the Archives' *Guidelines on Access to Records in the University Archives*.

The University Archives negotiates with interviewees the conditions under which access to the interview records, including transcripts, logs and summaries, may be given to researchers in the University Archives.

When making decisions about providing access to records generated within the Oral History Program, the University Archives ensures that the University meets its legal obligations and exercises its legal rights; the University Archives balances the interests of interviewees with those of others having regard to the research purpose of the Program.

9. Standards of practice

The University Archives adopts professional standards of best practice of relevance to the conduct of the Oral History Program.

The University Archives secures the services of qualified and skilled oral historians and other skilled personnel to carry out the activities undertaken within the Oral History Program.

The University Archives uses materials, equipment and processes that meet relevant standards to ensure the long-term preservation of the records.

10. Communication

All communications concerning this program statement and the conduct of the Oral History Program should be addressed to the University Archivist.

