MAUT-LS Statement on the LAC Code of Conduct

The Librarians' Section of the McGill Association of University Teachers strongly encourages Library and Archives Canada to revise its draft code of conduct. In its current form, the code unreasonably restricts the ability of LAC staff to contribute to their professional communities and infringes upon their personal freedom of expression.

Contrary to Section 4.4.2 of the code, activities such as teaching and speaking at conferences are not "high risk." They are essential activities in a domain built on the principles of open and free exchange of information. By restricting the freedom of its employees to speak publicly in professional forums LAC diminishes its ability to collaborate effectively with, let alone lead, Canadian libraries and archives in our common task of safeguarding and promoting the nation's intellectual riches. Furthermore, the extension of these restrictions to include personal communications is chilling. We question whether such limits deny LAC employees the personal freedoms guaranteed them in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

While we recognize the necessity of establishing organizational norms, we deplore the excessive restrictions imposed by the current draft of the LAC Code. Librarians and archivists work within a longstanding culture that values professionalism, confidentiality, the public good, and open access to information. We urge LAC to revise its code of conduct to seek a reasonable balance of these values.

The Librarians' Section of the McGill Association of University Teachers

Adopted at the MAUT-LS Spring General Meeting of April 24, 2013