

## **Referred Items Review – Staff Guidelines**

1. REASON. Paper Based Items (PBI) are referred for a number of reasons:
  - a. Required referrals (In most cases, the reason is checked on a “SF1-Referred” form):
    - i. Assessors are required to refer some items because of the degree of damage – this applies to books with flexible paper or nearly brittle paper. Items in this category will be marked as either:
      - 1) Flexible – Significant damage – Repair or advanced preservation action needed (more than level 2, pam bind, or thermal bind).

For example, even a simple “page replacement” is a level 2 since it involves getting replacement copies in addition to a tip-in. That means an item will be referred if it needs any repair in addition to the page replacement.
      - 2) Nearly brittle –Significant damage – Repair or advanced preservation action needed (more than level 2, pam bind, or thermal bind).
      - 3) Assessors are required to refer all PBI with brittle paper - with or without damage. These will be marked as:
        - a) Brittle with little to no damage (C.1)
        - b) Brittle with moderate damage (C.2), or
        - c) Brittle with significant damage (C.3)
    - b. Other reasons:
      - i. Books with multiple types of paper. These will not have a referral form unless they also qualify in one of the above categories. If you recommend de-acidification of the acidic portions, complete a referral form and change the SF1 data to C.3.
      - ii. Books or other items in protective covers or enclosures that are acidic or a bad fit.
      - iii. In addition, assessors might refer an item as “significantly damaged” because it needs repairs that do not fit into a level 1 or level 2 definition.
        - 1) Page Replacement.

- a) For example, tipping in 6-10 non-contiguous pages is a level 2 but they have no option for 11 or more. So, if a book has more than 10 loose or mutilated pages, they will refer the book.
  - b) If more than 5 color copies or 20 b/w copies are needed, the item is automatically referred. With that many pages to replace, the item might need to be rebound or it might be better to obtain a replacement copy.
- 2) Broken text blocks will be referred if the block is broken in more than 2 or 3 places.
- 3) “Significant Damage” that doesn’t fit any neat category. “Significant Damage” can be difficult to define with precision.
- a) It includes books or other items that the assessor thinks staff should look at for some reason they cannot quite define. (Questions will go to the questions shelf).
  - b) Some items might be referred that we would currently handle with book repairs, including items that we are defining as having significant damage. Since the assessors are not trained in book repair, they have no way to determine how long any group of repairs would take.
    - (i) For example, a spine mend, hinge mend with glue, and simple page repair might require less than 2 hours for all repairs on a single book.
    - (ii) On the other hand, the same repairs might take quite a bit longer (leather spine, nearly brittle endsheets and/or pages that require a tissue mend).
    - (iii) For that reason, we have asked assessors to refer any items that require level 1 and/or 2 book repairs that exceed a total of 2.

2. BUMPING back to C.2.

- a. On occasion, staff might decide to change the degree of damage to a C.2. (moderate). This is *not an option for brittle books* and not recommended for most nearly brittle books which are more likely to require a technician for repairs.
- b. As a rule, it is best to leave an item as a C.3. in recognition of the degree of damage. All C.2. options for action are available on the Referred item form.
- c. We should always err on the side of caution. Review the assessors guidelines for referrals in [SF1: Detailed Instructions](#). If the item really can be repaired in less than 2 hours, consider

bumping it back down to a C.2. If you do, make sure you change the SF1 condition to C.2. AND make an entry in the comments section that you changed it. Otherwise, it will show up as an error.

3. Considerations for staff:

a. Flexibility:

i. Flexible books.

1) Students can perform:

a) level 1 or 2 repairs, pam bind, or thermal bind flexible books.

b) Some tip-ins.

(i) If the pages are contiguous and the gutter is fairly "clean" this might be a level 2 repair.

(ii) If the gutter is not "clean" it might be better for a technician to make the repairs. For example, pages were cut out and many stubs have to be removed. If the book is oversewn, tip-ins can be tricky. Either of these conditions might require a level 3 repair. They might also need conservator review for alternative methods and/or Brittle Books Analysis to consider replacement, depending on the degree of damage.

c) If the pages are non-contiguous this might be a level 2 or a level 3 repair, depending on how many repairs and what type(s) of damage. For instance, if the pages fell out (common in the previous bindery's work) they are easier to tip in. If they were cut out, then it can be more time consuming (do the stubs need to be removed or can they be used to re-attach the page?) and might need a technician (or even conservator or BBA)

2) For purposes of this project, only technicians can perform level 3 repairs (repairs that will take 2 hours or more). In reality, some simple but time consuming tasks that require more than 2 hours to complete might be performed by student assistants (for example, erasing many pages of pencil marks or cutting open pages.)

3) Books with more than 2 or 3 breaks in the text block.

a) These might be bumped back to C.2 if the paper is flexible. Consider rebinding or recasing.

b) Another option, depending on type of leaf attachment and condition of paper would be to rebind or recase the item. Factors here would be the general condition of the item (is the board warped? Is the text block sprung

or otherwise a bit loose? Is the glue old, dried up, or brittle?) These options are available on the referral form.

- c) Bumping is not recommended when the glue is old or brittle, it looks like a mend in one place will result in more breaks, or repairs in one spot will stress other weak places in the book. It is best to call these a level 3 (technician) repair.
- d) If it is not rebindable, BBA is an appropriate choice.
- e) *Conservator might be an appropriate choice* – bearing in mind the evaluation function of a conservator. See “When to select conservator” below.

ii. Nearly Brittle Books.

- 1) These are not to be repaired by a student. Pam bind, Level 1 and Level 2 are available under Technician. Technicians can also perform all levels of book repair and make special boxes.
- 2) “Conservator” might be an additional or alternative option. See “When to select conservator” - below.

iii. Brittle or unbindable books.

- 1) Brittle books cannot be bumped to C.1 or C.2
- 2) Brittle books cannot be repaired by a student. Therefore, Level 1, Level 2, Thermal bind, and pam bind (under Student) are not options for brittle items. However, they can be pam bound by a technician. It is also possible for a technician to perform level 3 repairs (under the supervision of a conservator, so check that as well.)
- 3) “BBA” will always be checked for brittle or unbindable books.
- 4) “Conservator” will always be checked for brittle books. It might be checked for unbindable books. See “When to select conservator” - below.

b. Items that show past preservation activity:

- i. Paper Based Items referred because of an acidic enclosure/protective cover or because the enclosure/cover is a bad fit:
  - 1) It is acceptable to check “Box – special” or “Box – vendor.”
  - 2) However, we also should consider additional options based on the condition of the item itself. Is it brittle and/or falling apart? Should it be assessed by a conservator? Should we re-do the Brittle Books Analysis (see below)?

- ii. Non-archival tape mends (such as “Scotch” tape) may require the use of chemicals in a fume hood. Check “Conservator.”
- iii. Some items in the samples have already gone through Brittle/unbindable review. We can identify only the ones that have been boxed.
  - 1) The condition(s) that caused the problem still exist, so we *should* select “BBA” as an option. There might be more options available (archival copy, other re-formatting, or conservation).
    - a) If the book can be rebound or recased, those are probably better options than boxing.
    - b) There might be situations when we don’t want to check “BBA.” A book might be in good condition with flexible paper, but has a very special cover that would be damaged by shelving and handling without the box. It might have a cover that could damage other books (e.g. metal). A book might have been boxed because it was falling apart but is not re-bindable. If it is flexible, we might be able to resew/recase.
    - c) Reformatting should also be considered. “Reformatting” includes digitization, microform, and archival photocopies.

#### 4. When to select “Conservator.”

The following is not a complete list of all conditions that might call for a conservator. A conservator might evaluate the condition of an item and make recommendations, but not work on the item. He/she might perform conservation actions on an item or they might supervise a technician performing conservation actions.

- a. Referred Paper Based items.
  - i. Specified collections - We will select Conservator for:
    - 1) all referred items that are part of Special Collections or Archives.
    - 2) all referred items that are part of any other “special” collection (such as Blue Room, Music special collections, and other).
  - ii. All other collections.
    - 1) Select Conservator for all referred items that are:
      - a) photographs (inclusions in Paper Based Item);
      - b) artist’s books;
      - c) mildewed or moldy;

- d) brittle or unbindable. However, “conservator” is not limited to brittle items. Note: in actual practice, these would probably go through the BBA process first.
- 2) Select Conservator for all referred items that have:
- a) damaged or dirty leather;
  - b) dirty covers or grubby pages that appear to need more than simple cleaning (paint, food, gum, unknown substances);
  - c) clay-coated pages that are stuck together; or have
  - d) acidic paper – including flexible, nearly brittle, brittle, and multiple paper types that are partially acidic.
    - (i) Also check “De-acidify?” for flexible & nearly brittle.
    - (ii) Also check “De-acidify – Still has some flexibility” for brittle items, but only if the pages still turn fairly easily.
    - (iii) If it seems too brittle to bother with de-acidification, we can still check “conservator” – there might be other options.
- 3) Select Conservator for all referred items that need:
- a) adhesive removed or an old repair reversed (especially when there is a special cover involved or the old repair in inside the text block);
  - b) extensive work or special repairs.
    - (i) Complicated recasing. Check “complex recase” (or write it in the comments section if you are using an older version of the form) if many or most of these conditions exist:
      - (1) might involve removing old/brittle glue or excessive glue;
      - (2) might involve mending or replacing pages before re-sewing;
      - (3) might have a special cover that is damaged or dirty;
      - (4) involves leather or an unusual cover material that we want to keep.
    - (ii) Multiple repairs or time-consuming repairs that might require a conservator’s input or supervision.
    - (iii) Items needing extensive work or special repairs might also be candidates for BBA. Are they replaceable? Do we have other copies? And so on.

- 4) Select Conservator when it is not clear whether the item can be repaired or when a second opinion seems like a good idea.
- b. Other than Paper Based Items:
  - i. Refer to Conservator all
    - a) Artwork
    - b) Bubble gum
    - c) Ceramics
    - d) film (microfilm, microfiche, 35 or 15 mm, other)
    - e) Other objects
    - f) Photographs
    - g) Textiles
  - ii. Refer to Audio/video technician all video tape, audio tape, cds, and dvds. Check "other – specify" and enter the accepted term.
5. Finally – use your best judgment.
  - i. There are so many variations and considerations that it is impossible to list them all.