

Special Collections

Collections Management Policy

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Mission Statement

The Special Collections' mission statement is to curate unique collections for teaching and research. The statement reflects the role of Special Collections in acquiring, preserving, and making accessible specialist collections of published and unpublished material for the purpose of learning, teaching and research.

The Collections Management Policy outlines Oxford Brookes' Special Collections' commitment to appropriate and consistent collections development, to the creation and dissemination of accurate collections information, and to the care and conservation of its collections.

Collections Development

Acquisitions

The Special Collections Guidelines for Acquisitions (Appendix I) set out the priorities and considerations for accepting new collections. In summary, new collections will be assessed with regard to: their relevance to the current undergraduate and research programmes of the University; their relation to the five collecting themes represented in Special Collections; funding availability; available space; proposed deposit status; conditions of access; and collection format(s).

The process of acquiring new acquisitions is largely passive. There is no designated budget for purchasing new collections. The majority of the Library's Special Collections have gift or permanent loan status. Offers of new collections are generally made one of two ways: (i) direct from the collecting institution/individual in order to secure a permanent home for the collection; (ii) via academic members of staff who either request or are offered collections from/by relevant contacts within their professional network. These methods of acquisition have proven to be effective and are appropriate for a small-scale repository with space and budget limitations.

Appraisal decisions are made at two stages. Potential new acquisitions are considered by the Special Collections Group, and broad appraisal conditions (e.g. accepted core material, duplication) are specified in the deposit agreements. Further appraisal may take place during accessioning and cataloguing, as the collection is examined in more detail, and additional appraisal decisions may be made in consultation with the depositor. Due to its nature as a growing institutional archive, the Oxford Brookes University has its own collection guidelines (Appendix II).

In line with the Library's Collection Development Policy, the Special Collections does not censor materials on the basis of the author or subject's race, gender, sexuality, creed, nationality, religion, political party, social affiliations, beliefs or opinions. Material which can

be deemed offensive is retained as part of the historical record but does not reflect the views of Oxford Brookes University or its staff.

Deaccessioning

The deaccessioning of collections may be considered under one or more of the following conditions: (i) the University ceases to offer programmes of study in the collection's subject area, (ii) lack of use, (iii) the identification of a more appropriate archive repository, (iv) a reduction in storage facilities or service provision. Candidate material for deaccessioning will generally be offered to the original depositor in the first instance, but the University may also seek/suggest an alternative repository to which the collection may be transferred.

Collections Information

Deposit agreements should be completed for all new accessions. A Gift Deposit Form is used for small donations. Large gifts, and all collections deposited on permanent loan require an agreement drawn up by Legal Services. Copies of accession paperwork and related correspondence is to be kept permanently in the institutional archive (staff access only). A summary of the accession information should be entered into the Calm accession record and linked to the collection-level description. Individual depositor and intermediate records can be created on Calm and linked to the accession records.

The Special Collections consist of either published material (i.e. books, journals) and/or archival material. The published material is catalogued by the Library's metadata team on OCLC WorldShare (the Library catalogue). The archival material is catalogued by the Archivist on Calm (Archive catalogue). Items on the Library Catalogue are catalogued using the Dewey Decimal system in accordance with MARC standards. Collections on the Archive Catalogue are catalogued in accordance with ISAD(G). Collection-level descriptions of all published and archival collections exist on the Archive Catalogue. Information pertaining to the Library's principal collections is also present on the Special Collections web pages. Where a collection is unlikely to be catalogued (to ISAD(G) or Dewey/MARC standards) for some time, an interim finding aid may be produced in order to make the collection more accessible. If appropriate, these interim finding aids will be made available on the web page for the relevant collection. Cataloguing and processing guidelines may be produced for individual collections of published material depending on the nature of the material (e.g. personal library vs publisher's imprint). Cataloguing Guidelines exist for archival material - the guidelines cover Special Collections' accessioning, cataloguing, and storage procedures.

Cataloguing priorities are based on the level of potential use of a collection, interest from our stakeholders, and on the availability of external funding to employ additional staff.

Externally, information relating to new accessions is submitted annually to The National Archives, and collection-level records are published on The Archives Hub and The Archives Portal Europe.

Collections Care and Conservation

The Special Collections Preservation Policy and Digital Preservation Policy are available in Appendices III and IV.

The Preservation Policy makes provision for a preservation survey to be carried out periodically, using the MLA's *Benchmarks in Collection Care*, to assess the existing provisions for preservation and identify potential areas of improvement.

Last reviewed October 2021

Next review due October 2024

Appendix I - Guidelines for acquisition

Oxford Brookes University Special Collections and Archives

Guidelines for acquisition

1. Academic priorities

Collections must support the University's academic priorities.

Factors to be considered in relation to research include:

- the subject area has a long-term future at Brookes
- the collection has potential for attracting external funding for research
- the collection does not duplicate existing collections
- the collection offers a unique research opportunity
- the subject area is also of interest outside Brookes.

The major factor in relation to teaching is:

- the collection has relevance to a substantial number of students.

2. Relation to other collections

The University is interested in developing its special collections around the following main themes:

- Publishing and contemporary literary prizes
- Food and drink
- History and development of public and allied health
- Art and Architecture
- Oxford Brookes University Archives

This does not preclude the consideration of collections in other subject areas, but in such instances thought will also be given as to whether a specific collection would be better located in another institution.

3. Management and funding considerations

Funding is required for cataloguing, preserving, housing and making available each special collection. The probability of receiving external funding for these purposes will be a major factor in accepting a special collection. Opportunities for raising funding for a collection by the development of services based on that collection will also be considered.

Availability of space to house the collection will also be a major consideration.

4. Status of the collection

Types include gift, purchase, permanent deposit and long term deposit. Appropriate agreements will be entered into between the original owner of the collection and the University.

5. Conditions of access

Preference will be given to acquiring collections which can be made available for consultation by any scholar. Very restrictive conditions of access will generally not be acceptable.

6. Format of material

The primary format of any collection will be printed (hardcopy/digital) materials and/or archival materials. Materials in other formats (for example, paintings, photographs, artefacts) will be accepted only where they form an integral part of a collection.

HW, July 2001

Last revised Special Collections Group, June 2016

Reviewed October 2021

Appendix II - Oxford Brookes Archive Collecting Guidelines

Oxford Brookes University Collection: Collecting Guidelines

The aim of the collection is to document the history of Oxford Brookes University and its predecessors. Accepted material should demonstrate the history and work of the institution.

In the first instance, the records management retention schedule should be consulted during appraisal. Categories of records whose action is specified as 'Archive' should be deposited with the Archivist, with the following exceptions:

- 6.12.1 Relationships with pension schemes to which all or part of the workforce belongs – the archive should only accept policy documents documenting the existence of the pension schemes.
- 7.5.1 Legal advice requested by and provided to Oxford Brookes University – these records are kept permanently by legal services.
- 13.5.1 Action taken to raise awareness of environmental issues among employees, other staff and students – the action is to destroy but a selection of promotional material should be deposited by Corporate Affairs.
- 16.5.1 Development and establishment of policies on the operation, management and development of an internal service – the archive should only accept high level policy documents and minutes.
- 17.2.8 Records Management authorisations for the disposal of records – these records are kept permanently by the Records Manager.
- 17.4.1 Development and maintenance of the publication scheme as required by the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – these records are kept permanently by the Information Compliance Officer.
- 17.6.7 Monitoring and control of archival storage areas – the action is to review, it is suggested that the archivist may wish to keep the full records for ten years and summarise older data for permanent retention.
- 19.2.5 Final versions of taught course assessment procedures – the archive should only accept policy documents.
- 19.8.2 Final version of taught module materials – the archive should sample these materials rather than accept all module materials.
- 19.10.2 Final versions of taught module assessments – this refers to exam and course work questions, it is suggested that the archivist may wish to sample the assessments every five years.
- 20.4.1 Final reports of all research projects [conduct] - these records are kept permanently on RADAR
- 20.5.3 Final reports of all research projects [management] - these records are kept permanently on RADAR
- 20.6.3 Final versions of research publications, presentations etc - these records are kept permanently on RADAR
- 20.6.5 Data generated in the course of the research project - these records are kept permanently on RADAR
- 20.10.2 Awards and classifications including reviews in response to notifications of mitigating circumstances or academic appeals – these records are kept permanently by the record creator.
- 21.6.2 Personal data of individual students – these records are kept permanently by the Academic Management Office

- 21.6.3 Core Student Data - these records are kept permanently by the Academic Management Office
- 21.7.1-4 Student progress administration - these records are kept permanently by the Academic Management Office
- 23.2.1 Personal data of individual alumni – these records are kept permanently by the Alumni Office
- 31.1.4 Issue of ISBN numbers – these records are kept permanently by the Records Manager

In addition to the instructions outlined in the retention schedule, the following general principles apply:

No research material such as journals, research papers, conference proceedings, and text books should be accepted. Research material may be included in the Oxford Brookes University Collection if it meets one or more of the following conditions:

- It is produced solely by Oxford Brookes the institution (rather than a single member of staff or an editorial group including Brookes staff)
- It is not readily available elsewhere (i.e. the Oxford Brookes Libraries or the British Library)
- There is not an unreasonably large amount (in relation to its research value). Sampling may be an option for important but large collections.
- It relates to the provision of education or the running of a higher education institution (i.e. it will affect how Brookes is run).

A selection of ephemeral/promotional material (e.g. invitations, leaflets) should be accepted if the material demonstrates the work of the University and events organised by the institution.

The work/personal papers of staff members should only be accepted if the staff member was sufficiently senior or performed a unique role.

Eleanor Possart, Archivist
 24 May 2012
 Reviewed October 2021

Appendix III - Preservation Policy

Oxford Brookes University Library – Special Collections Preservation Policy

1 Introduction

The Special Collections' mission statement is to curate unique collections for teaching and research. This preservation policy sets out what the Special Collections does to achieve its duty of preservation - in order to maintain and promote access - both currently and in the future.

The Library also recognises the importance of preserving the corporate memory of the University (and its predecessors) through the permanent retention of certain records produced by the institution, as recommended by the University's Records Management Policy.

1.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, Oxford Brookes University Library has adopted the following definitions:

1.2.1 "archive material"

Material within the special collections that is not in book, journal or pamphlet format, and that is catalogued on CALM as opposed to the library catalogue, e.g. documents, photographs, ephemera, audiovisual material, digital material.

1.2.2 "conservation"

"Specific practices taken to slow deterioration and prolong the life of an object by directly intervening in its physical or chemical make-up. Examples would be repairing damaged bindings or deacidifying paper."

1.2.3 "preservation"

"A broader term than conservation. It includes all managerial and financial considerations including storage and accommodation provision, staffing levels, policies, techniques, and methods involved in preserving library and archive materials and the information contained therein."

1.2.4 "zone 1"

Storage and user areas within the main Library building. These areas have a general level of security. All stock bears electronic triggers to deter theft. The zone is not temperature or humidity controlled and has no fire suppressant system but is protected by the University's fire and smoke detection system. The zone is cleaned as part of the Library's cleaning programme.

1.2.5 "zone 2"

Special Collections Reading Room, storage and user area. This area has a greater level of security than one 1. Users are required to present an appropriate form of identification. The room is supervised by staff during use and users can browse the special collections held in this zone freely. The zone is temperature and humidity controlled (21°C and 45% RH), with the temperature higher than zone 3 for

user comfort. The zone is protected by an Inergen fire suppression system and the University's fire and smoke detection system. The zone is cleaned on a regular basis.

1.2.6 "zone 3"

Special Collections Archive Room, storage area. This area has greater levels of security than zones 1 and 2. Access to zone 3 is limited to staff with appropriate card clearance. Only staff can retrieve special collections from zone 3 at a user's request. Material from zone 3 can only be viewed by the user in zone 2. The zone is temperature and humidity controlled (18°C and 45% RH). The zone is protected by an Inergen fire suppression system and the University's fire and smoke detection system.

2 Strategic objectives for the preservation of the collections

Oxford Brookes University Library will ensure that the management of its collections, their security, safe housing, documentation and care are sufficient to meet the requirements of the collections and their users according to agreed priorities and responsibilities.

2.1 Accommodation, security and environment

The Library stores the majority of its special collections in conditions which meet PD5454:2012, the current professionally approved standard at the time the building opened. All storage areas are safe and secure so as to minimise the risk of theft or malicious damage to collections. The Library currently has three storage areas, zones 1-3. Book, journal and pamphlet collections will be stored in zone 1 when there is a practical need (e.g. greater flexibility required for browsing, under agreement with the depositor). The majority of book, journal, and pamphlet collections will be stored in zone 2, under controlled conditions, for ease of browsing. The most valuable and rare book, journal and pamphlet collections, and all archival material will be stored in zone 3 for maximum security.

Relative humidity and temperature levels in zones 2 and 3 are recorded by the building management system and independent monitors within the zones. General maintenance of the building is undertaken by the University's Directorate of Estates and Facilities Management.

Where practicable, appropriate archival packaging is used to store archival material and fragile published material.

2.2 Handling

The Library recognises that preventative measures to preserve its collections as a whole are the most effective means of conservation. Book support pillows and weighted book snakes are available in zone 2 to help minimise damage to materials. Documents deemed to be at serious risk of damage through use will be withdrawn from public use but the Library will endeavour to provide a surrogate.

2.3 Copying

Photocopying/scanning of special collections stored in zone 1 may be undertaken by users themselves, subject to current copyright law or individual item exclusions. A mediated scanning and photography service is available for material held in zones 2 and 3. Users are permitted to use personal cameras (without a flash) to photograph special collections held in zones 2 and 3.

Photocopying guidelines are available for staff in zone 2. Fragile or damaged items, tightly bound volumes, and oversize items that would have to be manipulated excessively to obtain a complete image will not be scanned but may be photographed at the discretion of appropriate Library staff.

Where appropriate, material will be selected for substitution, e.g. digitisation, to limit unnecessary handling of originals and to facilitate access. Readers are encouraged to use surrogates where these are available.

2.4 Selection for conservation

Direct intervention in the physical or chemical make-up of an object is not normally carried out unless the item is unusable in its present condition or in danger of imminent decay or destruction. Minor conservation work (e.g. removal of staples, cleaning of dry mould, basic book repair) will be undertaken by appropriately trained Library staff. External conservation services may be approached in order to seek advice on best practice, and to undertake more complex or extensive conservation work.

Criteria for selecting items for conservation include:

- the physical condition and format of the material;
- the significance/value/rarity of the material;
- the amount and type of usage;

2.5 Digital preservation

Please see the Special Collections Digital Preservation Policy.

2.6 Pest management

Appropriate measures are taken to minimise the risk of infestation. Insect traps have been placed in zones 2 and 3 and are checked regularly for signs of infestation. All new accessions are assessed for physical condition and cleaned if necessary. If infestation is detected, appropriate pest control measures will be taken to eradicate the problem.

2.7 Needs assessment

A preservation survey will be carried out periodically (minimum every five years), using the MLA's *Benchmarks in Collection Care*, to assess the existing provisions for preservation and identify potential areas of improvement.

2.8 Risk management

Replacement and/or restoration values for the Special Collections will be submitted annually as part of the University's insurance renewal declaration. The insurance status of collections will be reviewed regularly (minimum every five years).

If material from any of the special collections is loaned out for external exhibitions, an additional risk assessment will be undertaken and adequate insurance cover arranged. The Library will also seek assurance that all items will be packaged, dispatched and displayed in accordance with appropriate preservation guidelines. Loans of material must be approved by the Special Collections Group in accordance with the Loans Policy.

2.9 Disaster preparedness

The Learning Resources Incident Response Plan covers Special Collections and the Library. The Special Collections Reading Room and Archive Room are identified as priority areas for recovery.

Disaster boxes containing equipment and materials for use in the event of a disaster are available in the University's Library buildings, including one in the Special Collections Archive Room.

The Library has an ongoing subscription to the Harwell Document Restoration Services (HDRS) Priority User Service which will provide emergency resources in the event of a disaster.

2.10 Budgeting

No separate Library revenue budget heading is identified for special collections preservation. Ongoing revenue needs are supported from appropriate Library budget headings e.g. Equipment or Stationery. Budgetary needs for specific projects would need to be identified in advance and a case and application made to appropriate internal or external funding bodies.

3. Bibliography

The following documents have been used in the compiling of this policy and provide points of reference for standards, guidelines and benchmarks for best practice.

BS5454:2000, *Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents* (2000).

IFLA, *Principles for the Care and Handling of Library Material*.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, *Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries: a self-assessment checklist* (2002).

National Preservation Office, *A national preservation strategy for library and archive collections in the United Kingdom and Ireland: principles and prospects* (2001).

National Preservation Office, *Good handling principles and practice for library and archive materials* (2000).

National Preservation Office, *Preservation Policies: Glossary*.

April 2007

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Appendix IV - Digital Preservation Policy

Oxford Brookes University Library – Special Collections Digital Preservation Policy

1 Introduction

The Special Collections' mission statement is to curate unique collections for teaching and research. This Digital Preservation Policy complements our Preservation Policy and sets out what the Special Collections does to achieve its duty of preservation for digital records - in order to maintain and promote access - both currently and in the future. The majority of our special collections are in analogue formats, predominantly paper-based, but we do hold some digital records and expect that born digital material will become a larger and more significant part of future deposits. We have also created digital surrogates of some of our collections to improve access to the collections and preserve the original records.

1.2 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, Oxford Brookes University Library has adopted the following definitions:

1.2.1 born digital material

Material which was created in a digital format.

1.2.2 digitised material

Material which was created in an analogue format and has since been copied into a digital format e.g. by scanning or photographing the original.

1.2.3 metadata

“A set of data that describes and gives information about other data.”

1.2.4 core metadata

Metadata which can be extracted directly from the digital record. This can include elements such as file type, file size, date of creation etc. Also referred to as technical metadata.

1.2.5 descriptive metadata

Metadata which adds elements of description not included in the core metadata. This can include elements such as creator, description, identifier etc.

1.2.6 migration

Moving a digital record from one file format to another, often to combat obsolescence.

2 Strategic objectives for the preservation of digital records

Oxford Brookes University Library will ensure that the management of its special collections' digital records, their security, documentation and care are sufficient to meet the requirements of the collections and their users according to agreed priorities and responsibilities.

2.1 File formats

In order to ensure long term preservation of the digital records in our care we will migrate each digital record into a suitable preservation format. We will also create an access copy to be used by researchers (see 2.3 Access and use). The original file will be retained and can be returned to if any issues of authenticity arise.

A metadata file, compliant with the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), will be created and kept with each copy of the record. This will record core metadata extracted from the digital record and descriptive metadata, in line with the Dublin Core element set, which can be added by the Archivist.

Preservation and access file formats will be chosen based on “community best practices, availability of open-source normalization tools, and an analysis of the significant characteristics for each media type”.

New accessions will be accepted in line with the Special Collections’ Acquisitions Policy. However, the Library does not have the facilities to accept all file formats into the archive; a list of file formats and their corresponding preservation and access formats are included in the Digital Preservation Procedures. In some circumstances we may investigate ways to accept and preserve formats not specified on the list but this will be assessed on a case by case basis.

2.2 Storage

Digital records and their accompanying files are stored in a secure folder on the LR Drive or in a shared drive on Google, both of which are backed-up regularly. Access to the digital records are limited to a small number of Library and IT staff. Additional access copies are also stored on the University’s Research and Digital Asset Repository and/or a stand-alone PC in the reading room. See 2.3 below for further information on access.

Storage space on the LR Drive is limited and it is the intention that a purpose-built storage service will be acquired for the long-term storage of the processed digital records. The long-term storage facility will limit access to the digital records, therefore only fully processed digital records will be stored in the facility, while unprocessed digital records will be stored on the LR Drive until they are ready to be transferred.

2.3 Access and use

Access copies of digital records for which we own the copyright, or for which we have obtained the relevant permissions from the copyright owner(s), are made available via RADAR, the University’s Research and Digital Asset Repository.

Digital records for which Oxford Brookes does not own the copyright to, or has not obtained the necessary copyright permission, but which are open to the public, are made available in the reading room in Headington Library, via a stand-alone PC to prevent unauthorised copying.

The same restrictions on use apply to digital records as records in analogue formats. Therefore some digital records will remain closed for a number of years (under the Data Protection Act or the wishes of the donor). These records will be processed in the same way as other digital records but no access copy will be made available to the public.

Where an electronic record is available, this is noted on the Archive Catalogue and either a link to the record on RADAR or a note to say it is available to view in the reading room is added.

2.4 Audit and risk management

The two storage methods used for digital records (LR Drive and Google drive) are independently backed up in order to minimise the risk of data loss. Checksums are generated for born digital records prior to processing. The checksum can be used to check for changes in the original record in the event of suspected deterioration of one of the original copies. Five-yearly spot checks will also be conducted on a range of file formats.

Preservation and access file formats for different file types will be reviewed at least every five years so that the University is using the most appropriate formats to ensure accessible, reliable digital records.

2.6 Budgeting

No separate Library revenue budget heading is identified for Special Collections digital preservation. Ongoing revenue needs are supported from appropriate Library budget headings e.g. Equipment. Budgetary needs for specific projects would need to be identified in advance and a case and application made to appropriate internal or external funding bodies.

2.7 Standards and guidance

The following standards and sources of guidance have been used in the development of this policy and the accompanying Preservation Strategy:

- ISO 14721:2003 Space data and information transfer systems – Open Archival Information Systems – reference model (OAIS)
- ISO 15836:2009 Information and Documentation – The Dublin Core metadata element set
- Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS), <http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/>
- The National Archives, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
- The Digital Preservation Coalition, www.dpconline.org

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