

## **University of Birmingham**

### **University Archive Collection Policy**

#### **Purpose and scope**

1. The University maintains 'the University Archive' as a way of identifying, collecting, and preserving those original and unique records that document the history of the University and its predecessor bodies, including academic and research interests. The holding of such records in a 'University Archive' is then intended to help staff, students, the academic research community and the wider public in accessing information about the University's history.
2. The purpose of this Policy is to guide the way in which the University Archive is managed, in order to:
  - identify and collect records of permanent legal, administrative, financial, or historical value;
  - keep such records safe and in good condition;
  - provide a means of determining what should or could be added to the University Archive, including records that are recommended through the separate University Records Management Policy for preservation within the University Archive;
  - sort, catalogue and manage the records in order to maximise their usefulness as an information and research resource, using appropriate tools and adhering to the relevant accepted international standards;
  - take all necessary steps to ensure the continued preservation and conservation of the records;
  - raise awareness of the existence of the information held in the University Archive, and encourage its use for educational, research or other purposes.
3. This Policy may be considered in conjunction with the related but separate University Records Management Policy.

#### **Additions to the University Archive**

4. Information and documents to be preserved in the University Archive should reflect and provide the essential evidence of the University's most significant functions and activities. They should also serve the legitimate research needs, either on the part of the University itself, or the wider academic and research community. The following themes should be used to determine what material should be considered as having archival value:
  - Records that document the origins, growth and organisation of the University of Birmingham and its predecessors;

- Records that demonstrate how major policies and strategic plans for the University's teaching, research and support services were formulated;
  - Records that provide a summarised view of what subjects were taught, how they were taught and assessed and how the curriculum developed;
  - Records relating to students and staff;
  - Selected records relating to the University's finances and estate development;
  - Records relating to the University's relationship within the wider community;
5. All types of media including paper, photographs, electronic or digitised or born-digital records, and sound recordings will be considered for incorporation, whether received by internal transfer from within the University or by gift.
6. All records from internal sources within the University are already the property of the University; records received from other sources are normally only accepted as a gift. The University does not normally purchase records or accept them on loan for inclusion into the University Archive.
7. All records to be permanently preserved by being incorporated into the University Archive should be appraised to ensure:
- duplicate sequences of materials are identified and disposed.
  - duplicate sets of Minutes and other Records of University Bodies and Committees are identified and disposed.
  - gaps in Minutes and Records of University Bodies and Committees are identified and, where possible, completed.
  - material not of permanent value for historical, informational or legal purposes are identified for exclusion from University Archive, recognising that their retention may be separately considered under the proposed University Records Management Policy.
  - material requiring specialist conservation treatment is identified.
  - principles are established through which material may be added to the University Archive where it has been identified under the proposed University Records Management Policy as being worthy of permanent preservation.
8. Records which, having been appraised for incorporation into the University Archive, are deemed to be unworthy of permanent preservation will, after consultation with the transferring department or officer, be destroyed or disposed of using secure methods.

### **Loans from the University Archive**

9. Subject to prior approval by the University, original material from the University Archive may be loaned to other registered archives, museums or

libraries, on the condition that the borrowing institution takes full responsibility for the care of the item/s and covers the full cost for transport, insurance and if necessary conservation of the item/s on loan.

10. The use of copies of original material will be encouraged unless borrowers can provide satisfactory reassurance that original materials to be considered for loan can be held in accordance with BS5454, the British Standard for Archive Collections.

### **Access to the University Archive**

11. The University Archive will be available to staff and students of the University, academic scholars and the research community. Access to the University Archive requires a letter of recommendation and proof of name and address. Readers are required to sign an application and undertaking form which outlines their responsibility under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Copyright Act 1988.
12. In line with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004, the general records held in the University Archive will be open to the public unless a specific exemption applies. Records containing personal data may be exempt from disclosure under the provision of the Data Protection Act 1998. Fragile items may also be withheld for preservation reasons.
13. All users of the University Archive should conform to rules drawn up by the University which are designed to protect the physical wellbeing of the records. Readers will be supervised whilst consulting the records.

### **Responsibility for the Governance and Management of the University Archive**

14. Responsibility for the governance of all matters relating to the University Archive as an area of University property is delegated by Council via the Senate to the Information Services Policy Committee of Senate.
15. Responsibility for the on-going conservation, preservation and management of the University Archive is delegated by the University to the Head of Special Collections through the Registrar and Secretary. The Head of Special Collection exercises such responsibility on behalf of the University, acting in the capacity of University Archivist within the parameters of this Policy. In this capacity, the Head of Special Collections reports to the Registrar and Secretary, and is accountable to the University through the Information Services Policy Committee for the range of actions taken and services provided in support of this Policy.

Version 1.0

Date: 21 January 2007

Approved and Adopted by Council on 4 April 2007

Due to be reviewed in 2012