

Liverpool John Moores University

Learning and Information Services

Special Collections and Archives Development Policy

1. Introduction

The [LIS Collection Management Policy](#) provides a framework for the systematic maintenance and management of all LIS collections supporting teaching, learning and research. This Special Collections and Archives development policy is a supplement to that document.

Special Collections and Archives are usually defined as collections of print and non-print material having a particular characteristic other than form, gathered together and held separately from the main collections to maintain their integrity. They often contain unique materials in manuscript or artefactual form and although these materials may not always be rare, valuable or old they receive special treatment in terms of housing, cataloguing, conservation and means of consultation.

In LIS the Special Collections and Archives are stored in climate-controlled accommodation in the Aquinas Basement and Aldham Roberts LRC. They are managed by the LIS Archivist, reporting to the Director via the Academic Services Manager. The collections and access arrangements are listed on the [LIS Web pages](#).

2. Mission, purpose and objectives

The **mission** for the special collections and archives is twofold:

- to contribute to LJMU's teaching, learning and research objectives
- to preserve older institutional records documenting the University's history

LIS's **purpose** in relation to Special Collections and Archives is to preserve the collections and provide the resources necessary to ensure that they are accessible, promote their use as educational, cultural and research resources and develop, by the means of acquisition (and sometimes disposal) the range and depth of collections when appropriate.

The principal **objectives** are:

- to extend intellectual and physical access to the collections, including making digital surrogates available in [LJMU Digital Collections](#)
- to promote increased awareness, discovery and use of the collections through exhibitions, displays, web pages, publications, special events and other appropriate means
- to fulfil a duty of care towards the collections by meeting appropriate standards for management, housing, security and preservation
- to collaborate effectively with other relevant archival collections, regional and national bodies in order to seek advice, share expertise, collaborate on projects and to rationalise decision-making, including decisions on acquisitions

3. Criteria for acquisition and disposal

The key principle determining the development and growth of Special Collections and Archives is to strengthen or support areas of research and teaching activity at LJMU. The existing strengths in the collections are in areas of post-war British popular culture and these will be enhanced through acquisition and donation to create a centre of excellence around this theme. Collection development will also reflect LJMU's commitment to the preservation and appreciation of the cultural heritage of the university and the city of Liverpool.

Individual items or collections offered for sale or donation will be assessed for acquisition using the following criteria:

Place: complement or supplement existing collections; preserve regional heritage; add to knowledge of LJMU history

Priorities: add value to areas of research or teaching strength at LJMU

Financial considerations: independent valuations of collections or individual items should be provided before acquisition.

Purchase/deposit agreement: sellers or depositors must discuss the conditions of deposit with the Archivist and sign one of the standard agreements for outright purchase or deed of gift

Physical condition: the size, format and physical condition of collections or individual items will be assessed and likely preservation and conservation costs estimated before acceptance

Access conditions: individual items or the majority of items in a collection must be available for use by all researchers. Copyright or data protection restrictions may apply to specific items and should be declared at the time of deposit and specified in the agreement

Consultation with other archives: acquisition of collections will, where appropriate, be undertaken in full consultation with other archives in the region

Proposals for major acquisitions will be circulated to the Special Collections and Archives Stakeholder Group for approval. Academic staff in the relevant subject areas will also be consulted during the acquisition process to determine the level of research and teaching interest.

3.1 Exemptions:

Where a collection is offered to LJMU that is more appropriate to another known archive, the seller or donor will normally be referred to that archive. Materials that duplicate or are very similar to current holdings will not be accepted. Copies of archives held elsewhere will not normally be accepted unless there are exceptional reasons for keeping them (for example to use alongside existing collections).

3.2 Criteria for disposal

Disposal of individual items or collections will be considered when they are judged no longer to contribute to the purposes of Special Collections and Archives, or if physical deterioration or damage means they cannot be preserved in a usable state. Materials will only be disposed of when LJMU has a legal right to do so. The disposal conditions set out in the original deposit agreement will be followed. When possible and if appropriate, efforts will be made to ensure that the items disposed of remain in the public domain. The Special Collections and Archives Stakeholder Group will be consulted on major disposals.

4. Stakeholder Group

The Special Collections and Archives Stakeholder Group is chaired by the LIS Academic Services Manager. Representatives from all areas of the university with an interest in the collections will be invited to join. The Group will meet infrequently but at least once per academic session. It is recognised that decisions on collections facing imminent discard or destruction may be required quickly and in these instances the process of consultation will be carried out by e-mail.

5. Preservation and security

The ability to provide adequate standards of physical care and access are a basic condition of the acquisition and retention of collections, including the provision of appropriate professional staffing and skills.

As a standard, LIS aims for 95% compliance with BS5454, which makes recommendations on the environment and storage conditions for archival documents.

The LIS Archivist will undertake regular monitoring of environmental conditions and take appropriate actions to eliminate risk. The [LIS Disaster Plan](#) includes specific provisions for Special Collections and Archives and these will be regularly reviewed and monitored by the LIS Facilities Manager.

Special Collections and Archive materials are insured against loss or damage with LJMU's insurers and the cover will be reviewed annually.

Special Collections and Archives are protected by security alarms which are regularly tested.

All Special Collections and Archives materials will be consulted under supervised conditions. Rules for consultation will be maintained by the Archivist and made clear to all users. In any conflict between the needs of users and integrity of the materials the security and preservation requirements of the collections will be paramount.

6. Special Collections and Archives: key collection strengths

The current collections have been built up through acquisitions, donations and the deposit of older LJMU archival materials. Individual items or collections contributing to LJMU history can now be deposited more systematically in the central archives as the accommodation has been extended and improved. Some of the named archives have been acquired as a result of a long-standing personal connection with LJMU. In recent years there has been a deliberate policy of building up the holdings in post-war British popular culture and this has resulted in new donors or sellers wishing to place their own archives alongside the existing collections

The main collections are:

LJMU History

Various papers, photographs and registers relating to the individual institutions which came together to form the University including Liverpool School of Art, the colleges in the Byrom Street area and the IM Marsh campus.

The Everyman Theatre Archive

Play texts, posters, photographs, press cuttings and the administrative papers from the theatre.

The Stafford Beer Archive

The personal library and collection of artefacts belonging to Professor Stafford Beer, founder of management cybernetics and an Honorary Professor at LJMU.

The Liddell Hart Collection of Costume

Books, fashion plates and journals on 19th and 20th century fashion history collected by Sir Basil Liddell Hart.

England's Dreaming: the Jon Savage Archive

A large archive of punk-related materials collected by journalist and cultural historian Jon Savage as the source materials for his history of the Sex pistols and punk rock.

International Times: the Barry Miles Archive

A complete run of Europe's first underground newspaper and associated administrative documents.

The Beatles Interviews: the Ray Coleman Archive

Taped interviews compiled by Ray Coleman in the preparation of his definitive biographies of Brian Epstein and John Lennon.

The Frankie Vaughan Archive

Sheet music, scores and band arrangements used by Frankie Vaughan during the 1950s and 1960s.

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