

Collection Development Policy

University of Kent Archive

January 2015

Introduction

The University of Kent Archive is a unique resource as documentary evidence of how the university was conceived, built and managed. Our archives are a primary source of information on our environment, governance and vision throughout the university's existence, an institutional and community identity. The remit of the University Archive is inclusive of both historic records, and the records of the university's innovative and vibrant present.

As an educational asset, the University Archive offers grounding and context for research and learning, and facilitates the reuse of information. The archive is at the core of the university, being an organ that connects the diversity of ideas, places, people, decisions and actions that have shaped the university. The University Archive will encourage a culture of collaborative and interdisciplinary thinking, as a place where the archives of the different schools come together.

The core function of the University Archive is to collect, preserve and make accessible records which relate to or illustrate the historical, cultural, evidential and administrative development of the university and individuals within and connected to it. It can be utilised to build stronger internal and external relationships. The archive will actively develop collection areas to support the institutional identity of the UK's European university and as cultural focus for Canterbury and Kent.

Purpose

This document provides a strategic framework for the collection development of the University Archives. It is intended to:

- Define the collecting remit of the University Archive.
- Ensure that the University Archive captures an accurate history of the University of Kent, its corporate and community memory.
- Identify key focus areas of collection for the University Archive.
- To ensure that curatorial decisions on accession and disposal are guided by a recognised strategy.

This policy is supported through the [Special Collections Development Strategy](#), the upcoming Digital Preservation Policy, and forthcoming Special Collections and Archive documentation required to support [Archive Service Accreditation](#). It is applicable to archives irrespective of format, whether analogue or digital. It identifies separate areas that require development, whilst giving the adaptability for curatorial decisions to be made through consultation with archive creators and users.

Collection background

The University of Kent was founded in 1965 in Canterbury and has developed to include a campus in Medway and centres in Tonbridge, Athens, Brussels and Paris.

There is an existing holding of University Archive material in the Templeman Library, which requires metadata to be searchable and discoverable. This holding can be developed through a reactive and routine approach to ensure that the completeness of these holdings is maintained.

This part of the University Archives covers the following content:

- Council, Senate and other key committee papers,
- Student newspapers,
- Press clippings,
- Gulbenkian collection,
- Exam papers and associated documentation,
- Prospectuses.

Outside of this holding, university records recognised as of archival significance have been stored over multiple buildings, which limit accessibility and put them at risk from environmental factors. There is a recognised need to target these archives for preservation, and to create a centralised archive service that is both physically and digitally accessible.

Community

There are extensive communities of students, former staff, alumni, and people associated with the University who have a wealth of documented archives and memories. The development of the University Archive cannot be achieved in isolation, but also has to balance the contributions, opinions and expectations of these communities.

The University Archivist was appointed in April 2014 to establish and manage, appraise, ensure preservation of, and provide access to the University Archives, directly reporting to the Council Secretariat and Information Services.

The University Archive will develop through the cooperation and collaboration with archive creators and users by offering a forum for these groups to express their needs. Interest groups will be encouraged to ensure that the archive represents both the corporate enterprise of the university and the communities within and connected to the university. These will be small, separate groups including the different departments and services of the university, each attended by the University Archivist. These groups will enable archive creators to express their interests in the development of the archive service.

Wider outreach and engagement will further the aim of enabling all stakeholders to express their vision for the archive.

Collection priorities

Records must be appraised as being of enduring value by archive staff to be included in the University Archive. Record is used to describe any document, either analogue or digital, which contains information that may be textual, visual or audio, or any combination of these.

The University Archive will focus on selecting records from the foundation of the University of Kent to the present day, which capture a **concise representation** of the following areas:

The university as a self-governing institution, including:

- The administrative and corporate development of the university;
- Institutional strategic planning, processes and performance management;
- Papers of the governing bodies of the university which reflect how and why major decisions and actions have been taken;
- Records of prominent figures involved in the founding, development and management of the university;
- Official minutes and related papers of the Senate and Council and all their official sub committees, and Faculty Boards and their official committees;
- Evidence of the development of university policies and principles;
- Advertising, marketing and official publications from the university.

The university as a leader in research, learning, innovation and academia, including:

- Teaching and learning principles, processes and changes in education approaches and how this has affected staff and students;
- Records that capture the development of the curriculum, and faculty and school handbooks;
- Key staff and student academic works, and supporting documentation;
- The collegiate system and records of the colleges;
- Teaching quality, standards and assessment;
- Significant research and innovation projects;
- Records of the careers of alumni and former staff who have made a national or international contribution in their field; which can be used for current or future research and academic needs.

The university as a community of people:

- The experience of staff and students as part of the university community;
- Political involvement, protest and movements which university staff and students participated in;
- Records of Kent Union;
- Records of the development of equality, diversity and inclusion.

The university as an employer and contributor to the local economy:

- Staff and student welfare, learning, employment and work cultures;
- The economic and social impact that the university has had in Kent;
- Records which give the perspective of local people relating to the university.

The university as a cultural focus in Kent, including:

- Records which portray sports, arts and music activities of university staff and students;
- The Gulbenkian collection;
- Local, national and student publications reporting on university activities.

The university in Europe, including:

- The impact of the university for the communities in the surrounding areas of the European study centres;
- Records of national and international collaborations;
- Staff and student exchange programmes.

The university as a physical location including:

- The built environment of the University of Kent and each of its international study centres;
- Architecture, construction and building documents;
- Records of the environmental impact of the university;
- Maps of Kent, with focus on the Canterbury and Medway campuses.

Accession

The University Archivist will work closely with staff across university departments to ensure that archives are transferred to the University Archive to be stored, catalogued and accessed centrally. This will be achieved by working with various departments to identify which materials meet the collection development criteria, and by setting transfer schedules for such records.

The archive will only accept donations of records from external donors as a gift, or as a fixed term loan. A deposit agreement, which covers the terms of deposit and any special conditions, such as closure periods, will be signed at the time of acquisition. Archive material will not be purchased except in exceptional circumstances.

We will work to ensure that accessions are collected in an honest, transparent and responsible manner. Full documentation which details contextual information and provenance must be made for all new acquisitions. Archive staff must be satisfied that all depositors have full legal authority to deposit items into the archive.

Appraisal

The University Archivist will appraise potential records for inclusion, to assess their enduring value to the archive collection. Records will be appraised based on their relevance, uniqueness, importance and long-term value as part of the identified development categories. Appraisal is an essential process that will ensure resources are allocated towards records that have been determined as of permanent value.

Duplicates of existing records will only be accepted in the cases that they are better condition than the existing copy, or where they have been recognised as having significant value for exhibition and outreach activities.

Records which are identified as not meeting the collection development criteria will not be accepted into the University Archives. Where pragmatic, records may be transferred to the University Archives for appraisal, however records not subsequently selected for permanent preservation will be returned to the depositor, or disposed of, after appropriate consultation with the depositor.

Access

Access to the University Archive will be enabled both physically and digitally, onsite through the Special Collections and Archives reading room and online on a dedicated archive catalogue website and LibrarySearch.

The University Archive collection will be made available to everyone who wants to use it. In cases that there is a legal or moral reason for a closure period on any item/s in the archive, measures will be set to ensure that material is held securely and is only accessible after the closure period has expired.

Digitisation

Prioritisation decisions for digitisation **for access** will be considered within the wider digitisation activities of Special Collections and Archives, with focus on core University requirements.

Digitisation with the **primary intent of preservation** will only be considered when the original material is unstable, and/or has a limited lifespan.

Though there is a preference to accept donations of primary source material, digitised material in lieu of the original material will be considered on a case by case basis.

Collaboration

The University of Kent Archive will grow with consideration of other archive, museum and library services, to ensure that new material is deposited in the most suitable repository. We will aim to work collaboratively and build partnerships with other institutions to support access, engagement and development with relevant collections.

Glossary of archive specific terms

Accession

The process of formally accepting and recording the receipt of records into archival custody.

Appraisal

The process of determining whether records and other materials have permanent (archival) value.

Archive

1. Records, either physical or digital, that are preserved permanently because of their enduring value.
2. The part of an institution in which archival materials are stored.

Collection development

The collection development plan specifies the actions the archive service will take to appraise and rationalise existing collections, and identify, prioritise and fill gaps for future collecting. *Archive Accreditation Standard 2014*

Record

Any document, either analogue or digital, which contains information that may be textual, visual or audio, or any combination of these. In short, recorded evidence of an activity.