Archives and Special Collections collection policy

Introduction
Archives and Special Collections houses a unique and internationally important collection of archives and special collections. It is part of Library and Information Resources within the Information Services Directorate in the University of Strathclyde.

The University of Strathclyde Library has a general collection development policy underpinning its strategy. The collection policy below relates specifically to Archives and Special Collections but should be read in conjunction with the general policy.

This collection policy is reviewed regularly.

Aims
The aims of Archives and Special Collections are:

- to act as the guardian of the University’s collective memory
- to support and stimulate creative research and learning within and beyond the University
- to enhance the reputation of the University as a leading international technological university

Objectives
The objectives in pursuit of these aims are:

- to identify and select archives and special collections of enduring value
- to preserve the University’s archives and special collections for current and future use
- to provide access to the University’s archives and special collections and to promote their use as informational, cultural and research resources

Definitions
Archives
The records created or received and accumulated by a person, family or organization in the conduct of their affairs and preserved because of the enduring value of the information contained or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator.

Special Collections
Special Collections are defined as those collections of library materials which, by virtue of the uniqueness or rarity of the items contained within them, their physical form, content or depth of subject coverage or other special significance, are distinguished from the general stock of the Library and require special treatment in terms of housing and security, management, cataloguing, handling, consultation, preservation and conservation.

Collection Scope
We collect in the following areas:

University records
Archives and Special Collections is the central place of deposit for the records of the University of Strathclyde and its predecessors, created or accumulated since its foundation in 1796. We collect those records of enduring historical and evidential significance which document the main functions
of the University. These functions are teaching and learning, research, knowledge exchange, corporate management, academic administration, resources management and public relations.

**University related records**

Records of individuals and organizations which relate to the University. These records often provide an insight into the history of the University which official administrative records may not convey.

Records in this category include:

- Records of University staff including official, professional and personal correspondence, photographs, class or lecture notes, syllabi, research papers, manuscripts of articles and books written, diaries, notebooks and memorabilia. Please note that electronic copies of current research output are deposited in Strathprints, the digital repository of research publications from the University of Strathclyde.
  
  While attempting to acquire a broad range of personal and professional papers, we must be selective. The following criteria are applied when appraising the personal and professional papers of staff members: national or international reputation in the respective academic field, records of service with the University of Strathclyde or predecessor body and contribution to the University’s growth and development and service and contribution to local or national affairs.

- Records of individual students including class and lecture notes, diaries, photographs, personal correspondence whilst at University, memoirs of University days and memorabilia.

- Records of University staff or student societies particularly minute books, magazines, newsletters, leaflets and photographs.

**Archives and special collections relating to University teaching or research interests**

We are committed to enhancing and expanding our archives and special collections in continued support of the University of Strathclyde’s teaching, learning and academic research community.

Existing areas of strength include:

- History of science, technology and engineering
- Labour and political history
- History of education
- New towns and town planning
- Investigative journalism
- Occupational and environmental health
- Oral history
- Glasgow history
- Scottish topography, canals and Scottish tours
- Mountaineering, travel and exploration
- Company annual reports
- Publications (excluding periodical articles) by members of staff of the University of Strathclyde

We seek to build on and develop these strengths. We also actively seek to acquire archives and special collections in new areas in anticipation of or in response to changing academic needs and interests.
Format
We accept all types of media including paper, photographs and digital material. In the case of digital material, we will work to devise procedures for its preservation over time. Films will normally be offered to the Moving Image Archive at the National Library of Scotland. Facilities do not exist for the curation of artefacts. We reserve the right to refuse material which is of a particularly specialist nature, requiring skills or equipment beyond the Library’s resources to preserve, exploit or interpret.

Current and semi-current records
We do not accept records which are still in current or semi-current use by their creator(s).

Duplicates
Space considerations mean that we do not collect duplicates of records we already hold or copies of records held elsewhere. In general, we do not collect duplicate copies of printed works already held in our collections except in the case of items with a significant provenance or association. We do collect later or earlier editions of a work already held if the edition in question differs substantively in content from that already held, where it fills a gap in otherwise comprehensive holdings or where it is of particular bibliographic or historical significance.

Quantity versus quality
We reserve the right to reject material whose quantity is judged to outweigh its quality.

Condition
We reserve the right to reject material whose poor physical condition prohibits public access and where the cost of necessary conservation treatment is disproportionate to the material’s historical value.

Cooperation with other institutions
In acquiring archives and special collections, every effort will be made to avoid competition, conflict and duplication with the collecting policies of other record repositories and libraries. We will seek to liaise with other institutions when necessary to ensure that material is secured in the most appropriate place of deposit.

Methods of acquisition
We acquire special collections and archives by internal transfer from University departments or by gift, bequest or purchase. We do not normally accept material on loan.

Disposal
We reserve the right to conduct periodic reviews of our archives and special collections and to select for disposal any material deemed no longer worthy of permanent preservation.

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