



**Library Services**

## **Archives Appraisal Policy**

**January 2014**

## **Synopsis**

The Appraisal Policy outlines the methodology used to appraise records for their archival value. The Policy applies to records created by Queen Mary and its predecessor bodies (Queen Mary College, Westfield College, East London College, East London Technical College, People's Palace Technical Schools, People's Palace).

The Appraisal Policy ensures consistency and accountability for appraisal decisions. Record series with archival value are identified on the College Records Retention Schedule by the University Archivist, and coordination with the College Records and Information Compliance Manager takes place concerning the transfer of records to the Archives, for permanent preservation and dissemination.

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## 1. Introduction

1. The Archives contain unique and valuable records which collectively preserve the corporate memory of the College for posterity, and provide evidence of its significance and contribution to teaching and learning, research and innovation, the College, local, national and international communities, and the wider political, economic, environmental and cultural landscape.

1.1. It would not be practicable or desirable to retain a copy of every record created by the College. To ensure effective and consistent decision making, Guiding Principles are required for the selection of records worthy of permanent preservation.

1.2. This policy outlines a methodology for appraising records to identify those with archival value and worthy of permanent retention in the Archives.

1.3. This policy complements other policies and procedures concerning the management of records, acquisition of additional records from external depositors, and collection care and access provision. A list of policies and associated documentation is provided in Appendix 2.

1.4. This policy will ensure that users of the Archives have access to high-quality and informative records documenting the College's past activities. It will also ensure consistency and accountability for appraisal decisions.

### 1.5. Statement of Purpose

- a. The Archives are part of the Library and Student Services, which supports all College knowledge creation and knowledge dissemination.
- b. Specific objectives are:
  - To preserve and protect the Archive collections.
  - To support the College's teaching and research programmes by affording appropriate access to the collections in the Archives.
  - To transfer knowledge generated by the College to business and the community regionally, nationally, internationally by providing and promoting appropriate external access to the collections in the Archives, and as such support the College's dedication to the public good.

### 1.6. Commitment and Accountability

- a. It is intended that the Archives should meet or actively work towards the following standards:
  - Archives Service Accreditation Standard
  - PD 5454: 2012 Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials
- b. The Archives is committed to providing access and managing collections in compliance with legislative requirements including the Re-use of Public Sector Information 2005, Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998, Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988, and

any other relevant legislation. Access is provided in support of the principles of equality and diversity.

### 1.7. Community

- a. The Archives serves Queen Mary undergraduates, postgraduates, academics, professional staff, former college students or staff, and other regional, national and international undergraduates, postgraduates, academics, family historians, media, researchers and members of the public.
- b. Access to services and collections is provided on an equal basis to all members of the community served by the Archives, and the Archives aims to provide a consistently high standard of customer care.

## 2. Scope

- 2.1. The Appraisal Policy applies to those records created by Queen Mary, University of London and its predecessor bodies (Westfield College, Queen Mary College, East London College, East London Technical College, People's Palace Technical Schools, People's Palace).
- 2.2. It applies to records in all formats, irrespective of age, including paper and digital records. Although specific guidance will be required for the management of digital records, the Guiding Principles outlined are applicable to digital as well as paper records.
- 2.3. Those records without archival value can be disposed of when no longer required for operational purposes, as outlined in the College Records Retention Schedule. Maintenance of the schedule and guidance on management and disposal of records is provided by the Records and Information Compliance Manager.
- 2.4. This Policy does not apply to the records of Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry and predecessor bodies, St Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College, and the London Hospital Medical College, whose records are managed by St Barts and the London Hospital Archives.

## 3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 Appraisal decisions are primarily the responsibility of the College Archivist, (accountable to the Director of Library Services). Appraisal is carried out according to the Guiding Principles outlined in section 4.
- 3.2 The College Archivist ensures that the Records and Information Compliance Manager is informed of appraisal decisions and coordination takes place concerning the transfer of records to the Archives.

3.3 Appraisal decisions, and the transfer of records, are also recorded in the archives management system. Following the transfer to the Archives, the processing and preservation of records by the Archives Team is managed by the College Archivist.

## 4. Guiding Principles

4.1. Appraisal of the College records should focus on:

Substantive *functions*, (i.e. Teaching, Research)  
Substantive *elements* (e.g. Strategy Development) of *facilitative functions* (e.g. Governance)

4.2. Archival value will be determined by the relative evidential, informational and cultural value that records provide of the University's key functions and activities. The records selected for permanent preservation, should be able to show:

*What* the College did  
*Why* it did it in a particular way  
*When*, where and how it did it  
*Who* were the key staff involved  
*What* impact did it have and who was affected by it  
*How* successful it was

4.3. Records with archival value should be identified at the earliest possible stage in the record life cycle. With digital records this may need to be at creation or electronic system design stage.

4.4. Archival retention decisions should be applied at series level, applying a process of macro-appraisal. This also applies to unstructured correspondence series, although further refinement may be required at file level, as and when the records are accessioned following the transfer to the Archives.

4.5. Records of continuing value to the College are likely to have potential archival value. Records relating to substantive functions are more likely to be of archival value than transactional records. Transactional records will only be of value if aggregated or analysed.

4.6. It is essential to retain the context in which documents are created in order to ensure the evidential value of records for future researchers. It is therefore not advisable to appraise below file level (i.e. assessing each document within a file).

4.7. It is not advisable to assign archival value on the basis of record trends, but the advice of the research community concerning the likely research value of groups of records should be considered.

4.8. The realistic potential use and benefit of preserving records should also be taken into account when assigning archival value.

4.9. These criteria can be used to reevaluate existing archival holdings.

## **5. Implementation**

5.1. The guiding principles have been applied to the functions outlined in College Records Retention Schedule in Appendix 1.

5.2. Record series assigned with archival value are identified on the College Records Retention Schedule.

5.3. Consultation takes place between the College Archivist and Records and Information Compliance Manager concerning the review of records, for disposition or transfer to the Archives.

5.4. In the longer-term an Annual Review of records against the College Retention Schedule will be established which will ensure the transfer of records on a routine basis.

## **Appendix : Appraisal Methodology**

### **Function 1. Teaching and Research**

Preserve evidence of the College's:

Provision of teaching to deliver taught undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

Undertaking of research and delivery of supervised research programmes and the research carried out by academic staff (insofar as this is reflected in the College's administrative records\*).

This is likely to include:

- Development of strategies for teaching and research.
- Management planning and policy development for teaching and research.
- Quality and standards management for teaching and research.
- Development, review and assessment of taught curriculum, taught programmes and courses and research programmes.
- Development and management of research projects, dissemination and exploitation of research.

### **Function 2. Student Administration**

Preserve evidence of the:

Recruitment and administration of students.

Provision of support services to students throughout their relationship with the College, including bursaries, grants and scholarships, advice and counseling, disability and dyslexia, careers and residential services.

This is likely to include:

- Development of strategies for student administration, student support services.
- Management planning and policy development for student administration, student support services.
- Recruitment and admission of students.
- Administration of student records, student progress and assessment, award ceremony.
- Promotion and delivery of student support services.
- Management of customer relations and student relations.

### **Function 3. Resources management**

Preserve evidence of the management of College's resources:

Finance, estates, human resources, security, facilities, information services, the Learning Institute.

This is likely to include:

- Development of strategies for finance, estates, human resources, security, facilities, information services, the Learning Institute.
- Management planning and policy development for finance, estates, human resources, security, facilities, information services, the Learning Institute.
- Management of accounting, investment and asset management, capital projects, facility development and relocation, environmental awareness, workforce and industrial relations, workforce planning and welfare, patents, insurance, intellectual property, training quality and standards.
- Property acquisition, development and disposal.
- Workforce remuneration.
- Records, archives and libraries collection development.
- Allocation of awards and prizes.

### **Function 4. External relations and knowledge transfer**

Preserve evidence of how the College:

Manages and maintains its public profile and manages its relationships with groups or individual members of the public outside the College.

This is likely to include:

- Development of strategies for public relations, HE sector relations, publishing, media relations, community relations, alumni relations, fundraising.
- Management planning and policy development for public relations, HE sector relations, publishing, media relations, community relations, alumni relations, fundraising.
- Management of communications (public, HE sector, media, community, alumni), corporate identity and brand, sponsorship and donations, alumni relations events, fundraising campaigns.
- Honorary degrees awarded.
- Administration of membership of HE sector organizations.

## **Function 5. Corporate Management**

Preserve evidence of:

The origins and growth of the College.

The College as a corporate entity and as a community in itself.

The governance of the College.

The College's corporate and strategic planning and development.

The management of health and safety and occupational health.

This is likely to include:

- Development of strategies for the institution, organisational development, risk management, quality assurance, audit, government and HE regulator relations strategy, Health and Safety, occupational health.
- Development of policies and procedures for strategic planning and performance management, legal affairs management.
- Management of strategic performance, governing and executive bodies, senior officer appointments, contracts, agreements, litigation and legal claims and advice, government and HE regulator communications.
- Planning and policy development for risk management, quality assurance, audit management, government and HE regulator relations management, Health and Safety management.
- Organisational restructuring and development of individual units within the College.
- Development of legal framework and governance structure.
- Quality and Health and Safety audits.
- Development of HE sector legislation.

\*The private papers of former academic staff including their research notes, lecture notes, correspondence, may be of archival value. The deposit of these records in the Archives would be considered in accordance with the Archives Collection Policy, which outlines the terms under which external donations are accepted or rejected.