

Queen Mary University Archives and Special Collections Collection Development Policy

1. Background and scope

Queen Mary University of London has a rich and diverse history. The institution can be traced to the People's Palace, which began as a philanthropic endeavour to provide east Londoners with education and social activities in 1885 and saw the foundation of the People's Palace Technical Schools in 1887. From the technical schools emerged East London Technical College in 1896. This was renamed East London College in 1907, when it became a School of the University of London. A Charter of Incorporation was granted in 1934 for the renamed Queen Mary College. In 1989 Queen Mary College merged with Westfield College (established 1882, granted a Royal Charter 1932) to become Queen Mary and Westfield College. In 1995, two distinguished medical colleges, The Medical College of St Bartholomew's Hospital (established in 1843), and the London Hospital Medical College, (England's first medical school, founded in 1785), joined Queen Mary and Westfield.

Queen Mary University of London and its predecessor bodies have maintained their own records since their inception. Archive material including collections of private papers and organisations and business archives, have also been deposited and donated to the Archives over the years.

This policy relates to archival material held in the Archives, in Mile End Library, including the records of Westfield College, Queen Mary College and Queen Mary University of London, but excluding records of the Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry (which are held at Barts Health NHS Trust). It also relates to records donated or offered to the Archives by external depositors or organisations.

2. Collection strengths

Collection strengths include:

- The history of Queen Mary University of London and its predecessor bodies
- Social and political history of the East End of London
- Live and performance art and artists
- History of education, particularly the education of women
- Arts, humanities and social sciences

3. Collection remit

When collecting material, we will consider the following when deciding whether to accept it:

- Lasting historical value
- Relevance to Queen Mary and/or its predecessor institutions
- Additional relevance to the collection strengths outlined above

Collections are accepted in analogue and digital formats, but the Archives reserve the right to decline material that cannot be accessed or preserved at reasonable cost.

The following material is routinely declined by the Archives:

- Material with no connection to Queen Mary University of London or its predecessor bodies, or our collection strengths
- Material which duplicates existing holdings
- Material which duplicates holdings of other repositories
- Multiple copies of the same items
- Readily available published material
- Material relating to routine activities, such as Finance, IT, and maintenance
- Collections which were created within and relate to the cultural heritage of other nations, and which may be subject to disputed ownership or repatriation requests

Where material does not meet the collecting remit of the Archives, efforts will be made to suggest an appropriate alternative repository.

4. Acquisition

Records relating to QMUL will normally be acquired by transfer from other departments of the institution. Records of archival value are identified in the university retention schedule. Material from external sources will be acquired by gift, donation or bequest. Gifts, donations and bequests will be accepted on the basis that the depositor complete a Depositors Agreement, outlining the terms of the deposit, transfer of ownership of the collection, and retention or transfer of intellectual property, which will be signed by the depositor and the Archivist.

Purchases will be made only of material of outstanding importance to the University as funds allow.

Loans of collections from external bodies will only be accepted in terms that are set out in writing and formally agreed by the Archivist (e.g. for the purposes of temporary exhibition or digitisation or where an item is of exceptional interest to the University). Deposited collections, i.e. those on permanent loan, will be accepted but the Archives reserves the right to make appropriate charges for the care of such collections.

The Archives reserve the right to refuse any offer of material.

The Archives will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift or bequest, any item unless we are satisfied that the Archives can obtain a valid title of ownership for the item in question.

The Archives will not normally accept material which is of a specialist nature, requiring skills or equipment beyond Library Services' resources to preserve, disseminate or interpret.

5. Equalities/gaps

Queen Mary dates to the nineteenth century and as such some of our collections reflect the inequalities and biases of a large institution founded at that time. While we are committed to collecting as comprehensively as possible, we are aware that we need to reflect further on our current holdings and future collecting policies to ensure we are addressing any existing biases and gaps.

Areas for future development will include building up our holdings of material created by underrepresented groups in our collecting areas, specifically:

- Archives reflecting the experiences of BAME staff and students
- Archives reflecting the experiences of LGBTQA+ staff and students

6. Deaccession/disposal

The Archives reserves the right to de-accession and dispose of archive material under the following circumstances: material does not meet the archive collecting criteria; duplicates other holdings or is non archival; is of low information and evidential value; is badly damaged or infested and is not possible to conserve or treat.

Where possible, material identified as being suitable for de-accessioning will be offered to be returned to donors or transferred to another archive repository prior to disposal.

Approved by	Library Services Senior Management Team
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