

University of Glasgow Library

Archives & Special Collections

Collection development policy

Introduction

Archives & Special Collections (ASC) manages and provides access to internationally significant collections of archives, manuscripts and rare books. This policy sets out the purpose, scope and methods of activities to develop these collections.

ASC is part of the University Library. The Library has a Collection Development and Management Policy, which sets the framework for this Archives & Special Collections development policy.

This policy will be reviewed regularly, with a mandatory review five years after each revision.

Statement of purpose

ASC seeks to collect archival records, manuscripts, rare books and other primary sources to support teaching and research in the University of Glasgow and the wider community. Selected secondary sources are acquired where these directly support collection strengths.

Collecting activity is generally focused on areas of existing collection strengths; however, new collecting areas may be developed to meet the demands of teaching and research within the University.

We operate within a larger network of public archive and special collection services across Scotland, the United Kingdom and worldwide. Efforts will be made to avoid duplication of collecting activities, or conflict over acquisition of particular collections with other public services.

Core collecting areas

Our collections have developed since the foundation of the University in 1451. The following five core collecting areas have been established to allow the continued, focused, development of our collections; supporting the work of the University, its staff and students, and enhancing existing research strengths. Collecting activity is concentrated in these areas: ASC staff must demonstrate that all acquisitions (whether by purchase or donation) are both pertinent to these collecting areas and enhance ASC's research strengths. We seek to acquire:

- i. University of Glasgow records
- ii. University of Glasgow related records
- iii. Material which enhances existing strengths within our Special Collections
- iv. Records of Scottish business
- v. Records of Scottish theatre

i. University of Glasgow records

ASC is the central place of deposit for the records of the University, its predecessors and affiliated bodies. We will acquire:

- any records created before 1900 in the course of University business.
- any records created before 1900 in the course of the work of University amalgamated or associated institutions.

- after 1900, University records will be selected as worthy of permanent preservation using retention scheduling procedures and functional analysis. (The seven main functions are teaching, research, conferring qualifications, fostering socialisation, maintaining and promoting Scottish culture, sustaining the University and providing a public service).
- after 1900, the records of University of Glasgow affiliated colleges and institutions identified as worthy of permanent preservation through retention scheduling procedures where there is no suitable alternative provision.

ii. University of Glasgow related records

In order to place the life of the University in a broader social context, we actively seek to acquire material which supports its official records. These records often provide an insight into the history of the University which official administrative records may not convey. These records have usually been created by individual staff and students or groups and societies. The University is also willing to acquire the records of cross-institutional Higher Education bodies. ASC seeks to acquire:

- records of University staff including official, professional and personal correspondence, biographical material, photographs, tape recordings, class lecture notes and syllabi, research files, manuscripts of articles and books written, diaries, notebooks and memorabilia. (While attempting to acquire a broad range of personal and professional papers, Archives & Special Collections must be selective to best serve the research needs of the user community. The following criteria are applied when appraising the personal and professional papers of staff members: national or international reputation in one's respective academic field, records of one's service with the University or affiliated institution and contribution to its growth and development and service and contribution in local or national affairs.).
- records of individual University students including lecture notes, diaries, biographical material, photographs, personal correspondence whilst at University, memoirs of University days and memorabilia.
- records of University staff or student societies particularly minute books, pamphlets, leaflets and membership rolls.
- records of cross-institutional Higher Education bodies which have a particular connection with the University of Glasgow and for which there is no suitable alternative archival provision

iii. Material which enhances existing strengths within our Special Collections

We will collect materials to support and extend the following Special Collections:

- Ferguson Collection: alchemy (until end of 18th century and selectively from 19th century), including peripheral areas such as witchcraft, Rosicrucianism, secrets and recipes, etc.
- Hunterian Collection: primarily anatomy, obstetrics and gynaecology, perinatal illness, infancy diseases (pre-1800); also pre-1800 material relating to Hunter's other interests, including coins, inoculation, syphilis, botany, works of TS Bayer, conchology and exploration and travel; early 19th century material in the same subjects acquired selectively.
- Kelvin Collection: manuscripts, papers and printed works relating to Lord Kelvin (William Thomson).
- Laing Collection: all manuscript, papers and printed works relating to R D Laing
- Edwin Morgan Papers: all manuscripts, papers and printed works (especially first editions) of Edwin Morgan.

- Stirling Maxwell Collection: emblem books and some related material such as fete books
- Whistler Archive: books about Whistler, and selective purchases of manuscript material where price allows.

We will selectively collect in the following areas to support existing holdings in the highlighted Special Collections:

- Glasgow imprints (pre-1800) and local history (pre-1850); historical printed material relating to the University of Glasgow [Murray and Wylie Collections]
- Left Book Club (editions not already held), and West of Scotland/Glasgow left-wing, anarchist and nationalist imprints (pre-1945) [Bissett & Broady Collections]
- Manuscripts and published works of Constantin Von Tischendorf [Tischendorf Collection]
- Works of Trotsky (up to c.1980, plus more selectively thereafter) [Trotsky Collection]
- 19th – 21st century Scottish artists' papers (University of Glasgow related)
- 20th – 21st century Scottish writers' papers (University of Glasgow related)
- Dance of Death [Gemmell Collection]
- Darien scheme [Spencer Collection]
- Pre-1850 dictionaries
- Works by Ian Hamilton Finlay [Scottish Poetry Collection]
- Graphic art (up to end of 19th century) [Printed art archive and artists' papers collections]
- Bindings of Talwin Morris [Morris Collection]
- Music (of composers already represented)
- Scottish photography (19th century) [Dougan Collection]
- Spanish Golden Age literature (especially plays) [Scarfe-La Trobe Collection]
- 18th Century Scottish Enlightenment (including Adam Smith)
- William Cullen and Thomson family material
- Contemporary suffragettes material (particularly relating to West of Scotland)
- 19th century triple-decker novels [Novel Collection]
- University of Glasgow Old Library related books (1691 catalogue)
- Items with important provenances related to existing collections
- Gaelic material that complements existing holdings (eg. Henderson and McLagan collections)
- Material related to early development of television/John Logie Baird (1920s-1940s)

iv. Records of Scottish business

The prime purpose of collecting the records of business is to support research and teaching in the University. Nevertheless, the records are open to the public and are well used by the international academic community, local and family historians and many others. The major types of record which are sought are board minutes and supporting papers, correspondence of major figures in business, financial, technical, production and personnel records, plans, photographs and marketing material. Live businesses wishing to deposit records in Archives & Special Collections should be aware that storage, cataloguing, conservation and retrieval charges may be applied. Archive & Special Collections primarily seeks to acquire:

- records of Scottish business in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries; in particular the industries of the west of Scotland: shipbuilding and shipping, heavy engineering, railways, the drinks industry, banking, insurance, retailing, textiles, tourism and new technologies.

v. *Records of Scottish theatre*

With strong links to teaching and research in the University, the Scottish Theatre Archive preserves and promotes Scotland's theatrical heritage. The major types of record which are sought are programmes, playscripts, production notes, photographs, posters, presscuttings, and corporate records, Archives and Special Collections seeks to acquire:

- records of Scottish theatres in the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries; reflecting theatre companies, dance companies, and arts festivals.

Methods of acquisition

ASC acquires collections and items through gift, bequest, purchase, and by internal transfer from University Colleges and Services. Where acquisition is by purchase, this is generally dependent on external funding being available as ASC's acquisitions budget is extremely limited.

The transfer of ownership of collections and items to the University of Glasgow is the preferred method of acquisition. Whilst collections and items may be accepted on long-term deposit; this option is generally reserved for business clients.

Condition and scale of collections

In acquiring collections, ASC reserves the right to reject a collection where the quantity is judged to outweigh the quality of the information contained in it. Similarly, the right to reject is reserved where the poor physical condition of the collection or item is such that access would never be permitted, or where the University would have to spend an amount of money disproportionate to its informational value to make it accessible.

Appraisal of collections

Collections and items are acquired by ASC to be permanently preserved by the University Library. Collections may, however, be subject to periodic appraisal to ensure that they support the aims of this Collection Development Policy.