

WESTMINSTER MENSWEAR ARCHIVE

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

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Revision History

DATE	VERSION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGED BY
01/11/2025	2.0 Collection Development Policy	Review and revision of policy to align with University of Westminster Archive Collection Acquisition and Development Policy, 2025	Danielle Sprecher
28/01/2019	1.1 Collection Development Policy	Approved by Research Committee 28 January 2019	
22/01/2019	1.1 Collection Development Policy	Review and revision of policy	Danielle Sprecher
25/07/2017	1.0 Collection Development Policy	Review and revision of policy	Danielle Sprecher
11/04/2017	Guidelines: Policies and Standards	Collection policy details included in guidelines produced by White Line Projects	White Line Projects
01/09/2016	2016 Westminster Menswear Archive – collections development policy	First collections development policy by White Line Projects	White Line Projects

Digital Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring our websites and content is digitally accessible according to the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations (2018). This policy is published on our website and can be requested in a range of formats e.g. Word, PDF, plain text, alternative formats such as large print or Braille.

1. Scope

1.1. This policy sets out how the Westminster Menswear Archive develops its holdings, including what we collect, how we make collecting decisions and the terms on which we collect.

1.2. The Policy forms part of the mission of Student and Academic Services to help meet the university's strategic objectives relating to teaching, research and administration.¹

2. Introduction

Mission

2.1 The aim of the Westminster Menswear Archive is to collect, preserve, and make accessible garments and related objects for the study of menswear. The collection enables the examination and research of existing garments to inform the design, development, and production of new garments and related outcomes, and to advance the general knowledge of menswear as a design discipline.

Background

2.2 After many years of informal teaching practice using garments, the collection was more formally started by fashion design teaching staff of the Department of Fashion, Westminster School of Media, Arts and Design in 2012 after the BA Fashion Design course moved into new studios.² It was established as a teaching resource, given a dedicated space and garments were acquired and donated. In 2015, inspired by the work and legacy of Italian menswear designer Massimo Osti, plans to expand the collection were in process with consultants White Line Projects (Fiona McKay and Xenia Capacete Caballero). In parallel with renewed attention on men's fashion at this time the department was developing a new fashion design postgraduate course with a focus on menswear. These factors contributed to the decision to focus the teaching collection solely on menswear with an emphasis on functionality of design.

The collection was formally named the Westminster Menswear Archive in an application to the Quintin Hogg Trust. In 2016 the project was granted £350,385 from the Quintin Hogg Trust over three years to expand and develop the collection. Consultants White Line Projects were engaged to set up the collection and in 2017 a Menswear Archive Curator was appointed (0.8 for the first year, subsequently full-time). A significant part of the project grant was to fund new acquisitions which enabled the collection to grow rapidly from 2016 to 2019, primarily through purchases but also through donations. Since the end of the Quintin Hogg Trust project grant the Westminster Menswear Archive has been managed through University Records and Archives. In 2022, after a review of the URA team, a 0.6 NG3 Menswear Archive Assistant Curator role was created to support collections management activities.

2.3 The Westminster Menswear Archive collection has grown in response to teaching and learning needs of our students and staff, research projects, industry use and partnerships. These uses have led to some changes in scope since the collection was established, and from the Collections Development Policy 1.1, to include a small representative number of the following:

- Dated garments from 1780s to present day³
- Boy's wear⁴
- Primary source material in analogue and digital formats including packaging, printed and promotional materials and ephemera⁵

¹ This policy complements the University of Westminster Archive Collection Acquisition and Development Policy (2.0 2025) and the *Library Services Collection Development Policy* (December 2013).

² For the history of the Westminster Menswear Archive see Andrew Groves & Danielle Sprecher (08 Nov 2024): 'Westminster Menswear Archive', *Fashion Theory*, DOI: 10.1080/1362704X.2024.2423585

³ Previous collecting was post-1900. This has been moved back to 1780, cognisant of potential conservation requirements, in response to teaching and learning needs, particularly concerning the history of tailoring and shirting, and the inclusion of sustainability in all aspects of recently re-validated fashion courses.

⁴ Previous collecting was restricted to clothes worn by men and excluded those worn by boys. This change is for three reasons. First, gaps in the collection that can be filled by boys' wear (sportswear, underwear, rural garments). Second, the influence of boys' wear on menswear (short trousers, short sleeves seen first worn by boys). Third, boys' wear showing different aspects of maleness and masculinity (boys' dresses).

⁵ These objects complement and support the garment collection and can also fill gaps where garment acquisition is difficult.

2.4 The Westminster Menswear Archive is managed as part of University of Westminster Records and Archives, Student and Academic Services. The Westminster Menswear Archive's governing body is made up of the responsible officers: the Archive Director, the Head of University Records and Archives, and the Menswear Archive Curator.

2.5 The University is using the Collections Trust SPECTRUM 5.1 collections management standard <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum/> to help it achieve best professional practice in safeguarding and making accessible the collections in its care.

3. Collection summary and strengths

3.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive is currently the only collection in the United Kingdom dedicated exclusively to men's clothing, fashion and design. It comprises men's and boy's garments, accessories and related primary source material in analogue and digital formats, from 1780 to the present day, primarily from the United Kingdom, United States and Europe.

- Workwear: a key strength of the collection are groups of work wear including uniforms and personal protection equipment featuring technical fabrics.
- Fashion Designers: clothing by fashion designers is particularly strong in pieces from the 1980s to the 2010s. Especially significant are the number of garments from labels Alexander McQueen; Jean Paul Gaultier; the Massimo Osti family of labels including Stone Island, C.P. Company, Boneville, Levi's ICD, and Massimo Osti Studio; Vexed Generation; Meadham Kirchoff; and Italo Zucchelli for Calvin Klein.
- Military Uniform: uniforms from the 1870s to the present including camouflage, combat, and dress uniforms from army, air force and naval services. Most garments are from the armed services of the United Kingdom, United States of America and a selection of European countries.
- Graduate Collection: the collection acquires a menswear outfit each year from University of Westminster graduate students from the BA Fashion Design and MA Menswear courses, and holds garments from alumni and some staff, most notably a large donation from alumni Liam Hodges of his work from 2013-2016.
- Sportswear and leisure wear: since 2019 sportswear has been a particular focus of collecting including over 200 garments from the British brand Umbro, an outcome of the Umbro 100 project in 2023-24. Sportswear casual garments reflect the influence of sports on men's clothing.
- Face Coverings: a collection of over 100 face masks and coverings was acquired in 2020-21 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. They include medical devices, uniform issue masks and high fashion masks.
- Black British Designers: a growing collection of garments from designers and labels including A-Cold-Wall*, Ahluwalia, Nicholas Daley, Joe Casely-Hayford, Soul II Soul, Wales Bonner, Charlie Allen, and Martine Rose.
- Personal Garment Collections: comprising of donated wardrobe collections these include pieces that reflect individual men's personal taste over different periods of time.
- Tailoring: A significant collection of tailoring from the 1780s to the present day. The tailored pieces showcase its development and how tailoring has been re-interpreted by designers. It includes a collection of tailoring pattern blocks from Creations Fischer in Paris for Christian Dior Monsieur, Givenchy and Yves Saint Laurent.

4. Future collecting priorities

4.1 Active collecting will take place in areas of existing strength, post 1780. Wherever possible appropriate analogue and/or digital contextual information should be acquired; this might include sound recordings, film, photographs, documents etc. Particular emphasis for collecting will be placed on:

- Clothing, work wear and uniforms made by British companies, designed by British designers or that have had significant influence on British menswear.
- Garments that feature excellent examples of design or technical innovation and/or construction.
- Archetypal garments significant to the history of menswear and contemporary design.
- Garments made or designed by staff or alumni of the University of Westminster.
- A more diverse range of fashion designers, including black designers.

4.2 We also seek to acquire items that are currently not well represented in the collection where these build upon and complement the existing holdings and address identified areas of weakness. These include:

- Pre-1960 garments, especially sportswear and work wear.
- Underwear, shirts and knitwear.
- Subcultural styles.
- Outerwear to cover the bottom half of the body (trousers, shorts, skirts).

5. Allied University of Westminster collections

5.1 The University of Westminster Archive holds material relating to the teaching of tailoring and fashion through the history of the institution including the Regent Street Polytechnic, the Harrow College of Higher Education and the current University of Westminster fashion courses. The Archive also holds the tailoring collection of Hogg & Sons and J.B. Johnstone Ltd.

5.2 The University of Westminster Library holds a number of physical journals with relevance to Westminster Menswear Archive collections including: Another Man (2012-2020), Arena (1986-2009), Dazed and Confused (1995-present), Face (1981-2004), Fantastic Man (2012-present), GQ (1990-present), i-D (1989-present), Linea Uomo and Linea Uomo Sport (1980-1984), Sport and Street Collezioni (2006-2019), Tailor and Cutter (1945-1967), Ten Men (2012-present), Uomo Collezioni (1998-2020), L'Uomo Vogue (1976-2017).

6. Terms and conditions of acquisition

6.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections are considered. The growth of the collection will be limited by giving due consideration to the storage space and staff time available to catalogue and care for the items to required standards.

6.2 In order to protect the rights of the donor or depositor and the integrity of the Westminster Menswear Archive, we abide by the following terms and conditions:

- No items will be accepted without an assessment form detailing the specific terms and conditions of donation/deposit (Appendix 1). The Westminster Menswear Archive will not accept donations or deposits on behalf of the University of Westminster where the Westminster Menswear Archive governing body has not been party to the agreement.
- No items will be accepted without clear and valid title of ownership. The Westminster Menswear Archive governing body must be satisfied that the donor/depositor has proper authority or title to transfer the records.
- Only items which, in the judgement of the Westminster Menswear Archive governing body, are of sufficient quality for long-term preservation will be accepted. Material which is judged to be ephemeral, unsuitable for public access, of no long-term historic value or duplicate will be disposed of or returned according to the agreement signed in advance with the donor/depositor.
- Items will only be accepted as donations or purchases. Loans will not be accepted.
- Individual items or collections may be purchased. Acquisitions purchased with the assistance of grant aid will be held subject to the terms and conditions of bodies from whom such aid has been received.
- Only items which can be made available for research, learning and teaching, will be acquired.

- All acquisitions will be recorded in the Accession Register. Information on the nature and circumstances of each acquisition will be recorded. This will include the date and terms of transfer, the name and address of the donor/depositor, brief details of the records and any reference number necessary to allow the records themselves and any related documentation to be traced.

7. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

7.1 Responsible, curatorially-motivated disposal takes place as part of a collection's long-term collections policy, in order to increase their public benefit. With limited room for growth in terms of physical storage space, the Westminster Menswear Archive will continue to review its collections to ensure it retains the ability to acquire new material that best relates to the aims of the collection.

7.2 The Westminster Menswear Archive has no immediate plans to dispose of large numbers of items from the collection. Any future disposals will be carried out in accordance with priorities outlined below:

- Where items are duplicates of multiples
- Where items are not designed or made with the intention of being worn by men or boys (i.e. women's or girl's garments)
- Where items are damaged beyond repair
- Where items can be proven to be outside the Westminster Menswear Archive's core collections.

Large scale, curatorially motivated disposals will only take place following a comprehensive review of collections. Items de-accessioned through such disposal will be offered by gift to another appropriate institution unless they are damaged beyond repair.

7.3 The Westminster Menswear Archive acknowledges that the Museum Association's Code of Ethics <https://www.museumsassociation.org/campaigns/ethics/code-of-ethics/#> does allow for financially motivated disposal in exceptional circumstances. This option would only be explored as a last resort and after all other fundraising options have been thoroughly explored. Items would only be considered for sale if they could be proven to be outside the Westminster Menswear Archive's core collections and not suitable for exhibition, display, teaching or research within the University. Any remuneration from financially motivated sales would be ring fenced for the long-term safeguarding of the Westminster Menswear Archive's remaining collections.

8. Collecting policies of other organisations

8.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive will take account of the collecting policies of museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following organisation(s):

Museum of London
 Victoria & Albert Museum
 London College of Fashion Collections & Archives
 Central Saint Martin's Museum & Study Collection
 Imperial War Museum
 Design Museum

9. Acquisition procedures

9.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the Westminster Menswear Archive can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

9.2 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is that the Westminster Menswear Archive will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the Westminster Menswear Archive will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10. Human remains

10.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11. Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the Westminster Menswear Archive will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12. Archaeological material

12.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive will not acquire archaeological material.

13. Exceptions

13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the Westminster Menswear Archive is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases, the Westminster Menswear Archive will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The Westminster Menswear Archive will document when these exceptions occur.

14. Spoliation

14.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects

15.1 The Westminster Menswear Archive's governing body, acting on the advice of the Westminster Menswear Archive's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The Westminster Menswear Archive will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate

16. Disposal procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM standard

<https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/deaccessioning-and-disposal-the-spectrum-standard/>

16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

16.3 When disposal of a Westminster Menswear Archive object is being considered, the Archive will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange, or as a last resort – by destruction.

16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the Westminster Menswear Archive's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as the University, donors, researchers and others served by the Archive will also be sought.

16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the Archive acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's *Museums Journal* or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

16.10 Any monies received by the Westminster Menswear Archive governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM procedure on disposal <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/deaccessioning-and-disposal-suggested-procedure/>

Disposal by exchange

16.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the Westminster Menswear Archive will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with an Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

16.13.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 14.1-5 will apply.

16.13.2 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

16.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's *Museums Journal* or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

16.13.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the Archive's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

16.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the Archive workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

17. Access and Security

17.1 All records which are open to inspection by the public will be clearly described, in publicly-available finding aids, whether in hard-copy or electronically. Information about new acquisitions and any restrictions on access or use will be added to the Westminster Menswear Archive catalogue.

17.2 Our aim is to make the archives collection as widely available as possible. Details of how to access the Archive can be found on our website: <https://www.mensweararchive.com/>

18. Donating to the Westminster Menswear Archive

Please contact the Menswear Archive curator at the Westminster Menswear Archive, University of Westminster, Watford Road, Harrow HA1 3TP, or email mensweararchive@westminster.ac.uk or telephone +44 (0) 20 3506 7950 if you would like further information about donating to the Westminster Menswear Archive.

19. Implementation and review

19.1. This Collection Development Policy is managed by the Curator of the Westminster Menswear Archive, University Records and Archives and is formally approved by the University of Westminster's Research Committee.

19.2. The Policy will be reviewed at least every five years in accordance with the recommendations of Arts Council England Accreditation Scheme for museums and The National Archives.

19.3. The policy will be made publicly available on the web site: www.westminster.ac.uk/archives.

Date for next review: October 2030

APPENDIX 1: Assessment of possible donation to the Westminster Menswear Archive

1. Background information

Potential donor's name and contact details
Date and venue of initial meeting with donor and names of those present

2. Details of the potential donation

1. What is the object or collection?
2. What is the format of the objects (e.g. garments, accessories, contextual material)? What are they made of (e.g. wool, fur, metal, synthetics, plastic)?
3. What is the approximate size of the gift (e.g. number of garments, size of garments)?
4. What is the general age of the material (e.g. pre-1945, post-1960)?
5. What is the general condition of the material (e.g. good, suspect mould or pest damage)?
6. If it is a collection of objects is the donor happy for us to select which objects we want or must the collection be accepted in its entirety?
7. Where is the material located? Is the donor able to provide any assistance with transport of the collection to the University?
8. Does the donor have a connection with the University of Westminster? If not, why has the donor decided to offer this gift to us?

9. Has a current or future research interest in this field been demonstrated (e.g. have researchers accessed the collection or published on it)?
10. Who owns the copyright in the content of the donation? Please provide contact details if different from above.
11. Are digital copies of the material in existence, and are these part of the donation?
12. Notes written by whom and when
13. Additional information
14. Actions agreed following initial meeting