



University of Westminster Records and Archives Collections Management Policy

This policy sets out how our archive collections are managed by the University of Westminster Records and Archives service. It is a high-level policy explaining the principles underlying our management of the archives in our care.

1. Policy

Mission

1.1. University Records and Archives provides a professional archives and records management service to the University of Westminster and is positioned in the Library and Archives Service department, part of the Student and Academic Services Directorate within Professional Services. It leads on the management of institutional records and is responsible for two archives with a mission to collect, preserve and provide access to the University of Westminster Archive (hereafter the University Archive) and the Westminster Menswear Archive collections.

1.2. The University Archive's mission is to collect and preserve records, the corporate memory of the university, created by the university and its predecessors to make them accessible to students, colleagues and the public both now and in the future.

1.3. The Westminster Menswear Archive preserves menswear history and advances fashion research. It is a leading collection of garments and artefacts dedicated to advancing the study of menswear design. With a focus on technical and functional aspects, the archive informs contemporary menswear design and serves as a vital resource for students, researchers, and designers.

Legal status and authority to collect

1.4. We are:

- a service unit of the University of Westminster, a Company Limited by Guarantee and an exempt Charity, incorporated in 1970, whose objectives are to 'advance learning and knowledge in all their aspects and to provide industrial, commercial, professional and scientific education and training'
- the designated repository for the records of the University of Westminster
- a repository with holdings subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- a repository with holdings subject to the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

Standards

1.5. Collecting and preserving archives and making them available is best practiced when repositories adhere to international and national standards where available.

1.6. For the University Archive, we work to standards recognised by the International Council on Archives, The National Archives in the United Kingdom, the Archives and Records Association UK, and the Information Records and Management Society UK.

1.7. For the Westminster Menswear Archive, we work to standards recognised by the International Council on Archives, the Museums Association and the International Council of Museums.

Archive Service Accreditation

1.8. Accreditation schemes represent externally validated recognition of the extent to which we meet the agreed standards required of a well-managed repository. Accordingly, we seek to acquire and maintain Accredited Status as a mark of our good practice in managing our collections.

Stakeholders

1.9. We work with stakeholders to ensure that our good management practice is informed by stakeholders' needs and insights. Our stakeholders include, but are not limited to:

- Communities and data subjects represented within collections
- Owners and depositors of collections
- Users of the collections, wherever located in space and time
- Other archive repositories, libraries and private owners of archives
- Funders, who might be charitable bodies, research councils or private individuals

Why we collect

1.10. We collect archives to:

- support and facilitate learning, teaching and research at the University of Westminster
- enhance the student experience
- preserve and make available to everyone archives as an act of public good
- preserve and make available the legal and historic archive of the University of Westminster.

What we collect

1.11. We give priority to collecting that fulfils the University of Westminster's legal obligations and supports:

- the University of Westminster's strategic priorities to 'provide curricular and cocurricular opportunities for students to engage in research and knowledge exchange, ...to explore creative ways of using research and KE to support authentic and active learning and assessment.'¹

¹ University of Westminster Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy 2022-2029: Making a Difference.

- the University of Westminster’s commitment to ‘the enrichment and benefit of the wider community by making knowledge available to all’ and to ‘finding solutions to make a difference for our communities and the world.’²

1.12. Our overall approach to and principles behind our collecting is set out in the University of Westminster Archive Collection Acquisition and Development Policy and the Westminster Menswear Archive Collection Development Policy.

How we collect

1.13. For the University Archive, the Head of University Records and Archives, in consultation with Heads of College and the Chair of the University Research Committee as appropriate, decides whether to acquire archives using the University Archive’s published acquisition criteria. In making decisions, we seek to secure the most appropriate repository for the archives, whether at the University Archive or elsewhere.

1.14. The Westminster Menswear Archive’s governing body decides whether to acquire items using the Westminster Menswear Archive’s published acquisition criteria. The governing body is made up of the Archive Director, the Head of University Records and Archives and the Menswear Archive Curator.

How we care for the collections

1.15. We apply the highest standards of care to our holdings. Our Collection Care and Conservation Policy and Digital Records Preservation Policy set out the ways in which this is achieved.

How we dispose of collections

1.16. Archives are acquired with the intent of permanent preservation. Nonetheless, it may occasionally be necessary to review our holdings so that resources are most effectively used to ensure that the collections are cared for, and able to be accessed in the best possible way. This process is informed by our Collection Acquisition and Development Policies.

How we provide access

1.17. Access is the purpose for which archives are collected and preserved. Accordingly, we seek to make access as unrestricted as possible, balanced against statutory protections, contractual constraints, and the preservation needs of the collections. Our Access Policy sets out the ways in which this is achieved.

2. Scope

2.1. The policy applies to all the collections in the care or custody of the University Archive and the Westminster Menswear Archive.

3. Implementation and review

3.1. The policy is managed by the Head of University Records and Archives and approved by the Library and Archives Service Management Team.

² *University of Westminster Public and Community Engagement Strategy 2023-2029: The University of Westminster – an Institution for the Public Good.*

3.2. All staff in University Records and Archives are responsible for implementing and adhering to this policy.

3.3. This policy will be reviewed at least every five years.

4. Feedback and complaints

4.1. We welcome feedback on our procedures and policies and will review all feedback as appropriate.

Version Control

DATE	VERSION	DESCRIPTION	CHANGED BY
Aug 2025	1.0	New Policy. Ratified by L&AS Mgt Team 31/10/25	Elaine Penn

Date of next review: August 2030

Appendix A – Legislation and standards

We manage the collections in our care within the following statutory, contractual and standards framework. We will adapt our services to meet any applicable legislation introduced over the lifetime of this policy.

Legislation

- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- Equality Act 2010
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- Public Records Act 1958, amended 1967

Standards

- EN 17820:2023 Specifications for the management of cultural heritage collections
- BS 4917:2017 Conservation and care of archive and library collections
- EN 16893:2018 Conservation of cultural heritage
- ISAD(G) General international standard archival description, 2nd edition

Codes of Ethics

- International Council on Archives, Code of Ethics 1996
- Archives and Records Association, Code of Ethics 2024
- Information and Records Management Society, Code of Ethics 2019

Related URA policies

- University Records and Archives Access Policy 2025
- University Records and Archives Privacy Notice 2025
- University of Westminster Archive Collection Acquisition and Development Policy 2025
- University of Westminster Archive Collection Care and Conservation Policy 2025
- University of Westminster Archive Collection Information Policy 2025
- University of Westminster Records Management Policy 2023
- University of Westminster Records and Archives Digital Preservation Policy 2024
- Westminster Menswear Archive Collection Development Policy 2019