Archives and Research Collections

Teaching, Learning and Outreach Policy

This policy sets out how we engage in learning activities in and beyond the University of York, with users of collections and with fellow collection holders.

1. Policy

1.1 We share what we learn about the collections in our care and what we learn about how we care for collections. We share with members of the public, stakeholders and fellow collections-holding bodies.

1.2 We promote using the collections in our care to support teaching, research, and learning.

1.3 We encourage learning in all forms, regardless of age or academic ability, from informal self-guided learning to formal module content and provision.

1.4 We encourage and enable users to acquire and refine skills in using and interpreting collections in our care.

1.5 We advocate for a wider understanding of the importance of our collections and their creative, cultural, societal and academic potential.

1.6 We build an understanding of the content of the collections in our care by publishing guides, finding aids and other introductory and explanatory material (including audio and visual), using any available means to do so.

1.7 We promote understanding of the care and conservation of collections through volunteer placements, events, lectures and addresses, published writings and work placements.

1.8 We develop lasting and sustainable relationships with University of York departments, students and staff, creating, fostering and maintaining links with other educational bodies and providers.

1.9 We proactively seek to gather data points and feedback on our activities.

1.10 We improve our services in response to feedback from our activities and best practices in the sector.

1.11 We promote new discoveries, services, activities and events relating to our collections using social media platforms.

1.12 We deliver group visits and talks to groups external to the university to promote our collections, services, and knowledge.

1.13 We deliver structured adult learning opportunities in partnership with adult learning bodies.

1.14 We work with University bodies and external providers to develop and deliver teaching, learning and engagement events for students and young people. This may be via the provision of whole course modules, individual teaching sessions, or the selection and provision of collection items to support teaching, either in-person or via online means.

1.15 We see engagement with the media as a critical part of learning and outreach work. We work with University press and communications providers to help us showcase the collections and our events to our research community.

1.16 We provide work experience, volunteering and structured student internship opportunities.

1.17 We evaluate all our learning and outreach activities, using any appropriate means to do so, including recording numbers attending events and activities, feedback from group organisers and participants, harvesting and analysing diagnostic and analytical data from our web resources and social media channels, and monitoring audience information collected through user surveys.

1.18 We act upon evaluation findings as soon as it is appropriate to do so.

2. Scope
2.1 This policy covers all our learning and outreach activities.

2.2 This policy encompasses our archive collections in the Borthwick Institute for Archives; collections in the University of York Rare Books Library; and items within the University Art Collection.

3. Oversight

3.1 Overall responsibility for Access is with the Keeper of Archives and Research Collections

3.2 The Archives and Research Collections Leadership Team oversees policy implementation.

4. Policy implementation documents

4.1 This policy is supported by the following policies and implementation documents:

- Access to Collections Policy
- Volunteering Policy
- Work Experience Policy

Document history and status

November 2017	Borthwick Senior Management Team	Approved
January 2024	Archives and Research Collections Leadership Team	Updates agreed

Review cycle 5 years
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