



## **Borthwick Institute for Archives**

### **Collections Development Policy**



This policy outlines how we develop our archive holdings, including what we collect, how we make decisions on what we collect, and the terms on which we collect archives.

#### **1. Policy**

##### What we collect

1.1 The Borthwick was founded before the University of York and the network of UK archive repositories was established. As a result, we have acquired a great variety of archives through a direct approach from their owners, proactive collecting, and archive rescue operations since our establishment in 1953.

##### 1.2 The Borthwick

- cares for the University's archive
- continues to serve the organisations, businesses, individuals and families whose archives we hold and to acquire archives from them
- acquires archives that have a demonstrable connection to existing holdings
- acquires archives that support current or future research or teaching in the University of York, not limited by date, geographical location, subject, origin or theme
- acquires archives in any format or media.

1.3 We use the University Strategy and Research Strategy 2023-2030 to inform and direct collecting:

<https://features.york.ac.uk/strategy>

1.4 We give priority to collecting that fulfils the University's legal obligations and supports the University's Research Objectives

- A thriving research community
- A centre of research excellence
- Public good through our research
- A trusted and effective partner
- An environment that ensures we realise our ambitions

1.5 We work with University staff and students, professional and social networks, researchers, donors and owners to identify archives in private hands that would benefit from our professional care and fill gaps in our holdings relating to the University's strategies.

#### The Process of Acquisition

1.6 The Borthwick's Collections Development Group decides whether to acquire an archive using the Acquisition Criteria at 1.8 below. In making decisions, the Collections Development Group seeks to secure the most appropriate home for archives, whether here or elsewhere.

1.7 The Group is responsible for identifying potential for collecting activity, having regard to the University strategy and the activities and interests of the University.

#### How acquisitions are decided

1.8 The Collections Development Group uses the following Acquisition Criteria in deciding whether to acquire archives:

- the archive's significance to the University's current actual, latent or unfulfilled future research needs
- the archive's significance to actual, latent or unfulfilled public research needs (international, national, local, and not time-dependent)
- the archive's potential to lead or influence national collecting
- the relationship with the archive's owner and the potential to realise relationship benefits
- the importance of cooperating and collaborating with repositories having, or wishing to acquire, archives in areas relating to our collecting activities
- the archive's links to, or ability to enhance, existing holdings.

1.9 The Group seeks external advice when decisions are complex or contentious. Such assistance comes from various sources, including experts in the field, other repositories with experience in related archives, and stakeholders.

1.10 The group does not distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable formats when making acquisition decisions. However, our capacity to act as responsible stewards for the formats in question may inform decision-making. Specifically, the group may consider what resources would be needed to sufficiently preserve and provide access to the formats in question and the likelihood that we could support such resourcing within the necessary timelines.

#### Terms of acquisition

##### 1.11 The Borthwick

- prefers to acquire archives by gift to secure the permanent future of the archive
- accepts archives by deposit (loan), especially where a continuing organisation (such as the York Diocese or the York NHS) is not able to transfer the ownership of its archive
- purchases archives when this is the only way to secure them for public use
- expects that the owner's intellectual property rights in the archive will be assigned or licensed to the University
- makes a specific agreement between the owner and the Borthwick on behalf of the University for each archive acquired
- explains any charges for archive services at the point of acquisition and reserves the right to charge for such services at any point while an archive is in our care
- works with donors and depositors to achieve the most cost-effective solution for the long-term stewardship of the archive
- adheres to the conditions required by funders in the case of archives acquired through grant aid.

1.12 Where public access to the whole or part of an archive is restricted by law or the owner, we may require the owner to work within an agreed records management framework before we accept records for permanent preservation.

1.13 Where the whole or part of an archive is in a format for which we cannot provide appropriate preservation standards at the time of acquisition, we will work with the donor or depositor to mitigate the effects of inappropriate storage. Such measures may include the sub-deposit of records in a specialist archive, with agreement with the donor or depositor.

#### Transfer of records from elsewhere in the University

1.14 Guidance for the transfer of University records is given at

<https://www.york.ac.uk/records-management/records/policy/>

1.15 The collection and preservation of data supporting university research is governed by the UK Research Councils, which require research data to be preserved for re-use. Each Research Council has its policy on research data, and the University of York undertakes to follow the relevant policies and guidance. The University's Research

Data Management Policy and associated guidance and plans to ensure that research data are kept and disposed of properly and responsibly is here:  
<http://www.york.ac.uk/about/departments/support-and-admin/information-services/information-policy/index/research-data-management-policy/>

Where appropriate, these data are managed by our digital archive.

### Processing acquisitions

1.16 All acquisitions must be assessed to ensure they contain records of enduring value. Sometimes, it is clear at their acquisition that some records do not have enduring value; sometimes, this becomes clear at a future date. Our Appraisal and Disposal Policy explains the principles underpinning the allocation of archive status to new acquisitions.

1.17 Archives given to or purchased by the University will not be sold.

1.18 If archive owners require the return or transfer elsewhere of archives or records, we will charge the owners a fee representing the cost of storing, managing and making accessible the archive since its deposit with us, the fee to be calculated at prevailing rates at the time of withdrawal.

1.19 We continue to serve the organisations, businesses, individuals and families (including Public Records bodies) whose archives we hold and to acquire archives from them. We maintain contact with these organisations in the manner most convenient to the depositor or donor concerned.

1.20 Where information about the terms of acquisition was not captured at the time of the archive's acquisition (for example, in the early days of the Borthwick or later, where a non-archive body collected material and subsequently transferred to us), the Collections Development Group will review the need to establish appropriate terms and conditions on a case by case basis.

## **2. Scope**

2.1 The policy applies to all records in the care or custody of the Borthwick Institute for Archives.

## **3. Oversight**

3.1 The policy is managed by the Archives and Research Collections Leadership Team.

## **4. Implementation**

4.1 All staff are responsible for implementing and adhering to this policy.

4.2 This policy is supported by the following policies and guidelines:

- Borthwick Institute policies and terms definitions guide
- LALS Roadmap and Action Plan
- Collections Access plan and procedures
- Digitisation policy, plan and procedures
- Collections care and conservation policy, plan and procedures
- Preservation and conservation procedures
- Digital preservation plan and procedures
- University of York Data Protection Policy
- University of York Freedom of Information Policy and Publication Scheme
- University of York Information Security Policy

#### Document history and status

August 2017	Information Services SMT	Approved
August 2023	Archives and Research Collections Leadership Team	Updates agreed

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