

Pembroke College

Archive Management Policy

1. Aims of the Policy

This document constitutes a statement of the Archive Management Policy of Pembroke College, and aims to explain the basis on which material is acquired and managed. It ensures material is accepted according to a recognised strategy and serves as a reference document to guide curatorial decisions. Its purpose is to provide information and guidance to members of the College, the Library, and the wider scholarly and professional communities as to the principles governing the development and management of collections within the Archive. This document should be read in conjunction with the Library's Special Collections Management Policy, general Collection Management Policy and the Donations Policy.

2. Definitions

The Pembroke College Archive holds records and artefacts pertaining to the management, administration, and daily life of the College. The majority of these are no longer of current use by College officers; notable exceptions include some property-related papers. Records are retained where they are likely to be of long-term historical value and can be made available to scholars with minimal or no restriction. Although the majority of the records pertain to the business of the College, the Archive also holds records of student societies and personal papers of those closely connected to the College.

The Archive includes unframed paper-based artworks which form part of a larger archive collection. The Archive does not include other artworks or printed special collections material, which are managed by the College's Curator and Librarian respectively. Management of hybrid objects will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

3. Purpose of the Collection

The primary function of the Archive is to preserve the history of the College and its members and to make it available to researchers. The College recognizes the need to maintain its holdings in perpetuity to support the ongoing administrative functions of the College and to support the wider College aims of providing an outstanding teaching, learning and research environment. The main role of Archive staff is to enable physical and intellectual access to the collections while at the same time ensuring their long-term preservation.

4. Description of the Collection

The Archive consists of the administrative records and artefacts of the College going back to its foundation in the 14th century. These include governance records, financial records, estate papers and records of those attending the College. Records of student clubs and societies are also held. There are also personal papers collections of former members. The Collection is housed in secure storage on the College site.

5. Collection Readership and Access

The College recognizes that its archives are of interest to the wider scholarly community. To that end, archives and Special Collections material are available to any reader with a specific academic need according to the access terms posted on the Library's website. Archives can only be consulted under the supervision of Archive or Library staff and are not available for loan to individuals. Archive material may be made available for institutional exhibitions; please contact the Archivist in the first instance to discuss exhibitions.

6. Collection Strengths

The majority of the Archive collection consists of the College's administrative records. These include early foundation documents from Marie de St. Pol, accounts, estate papers, and admissions records. The personal papers collections are strong in the arts and humanities and particular highlights include the Barrie Cooke papers and other Ted Hughes related collections, the Thomas Gray papers, the Humphrey Jennings papers, the Ronald Storrs papers, and papers of the Rosenthal family.

7. Acquisitions Policy

The Archive does not currently have a budget for the acquisition of new collections. Consequently, items are now generally only acquired by gift or bequest.

8. Guidelines for Gifts and Bequests of Special Collections Material

The Archive is pleased to receive gifts of archives, provided that the material falls within the scope of this Collection Development Policy. Financial donations to support the purchase, storage, digitization, cataloguing, or conservation of the collections are also warmly welcomed; to discuss potential financial donations, please contact the Development Office. Material in paper and electronic formats will be accepted; material in other formats will be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to storage requirements. Gifts and bequests of archives will be accepted under the provisions that:

- All gifts of material become the property of Pembroke College Library;

- Ownership of legal title is established where appropriate;
- The Archive will not accept deposited material;
- The Archive will not normally accept records that will require closed or secure access unless they are of great importance;
- Items in need of significant conservation work will not normally be accepted unless their scarcity or provenance justifies the expense to the Archive;
- The Archive reserves the right to dispose of items that may contaminate the existing collection, of surplus copies of unmarked printed material, and of any material that falls outside the scope of the Collection Management Policy;
- Cataloguing of any gifted materials will take place as staff time becomes available and will be prioritized according to anticipated demand;
- Materials may be interfiled with existing collections depending on the nature of the item;
- If the donor wishes, an entry may be made in the annual Gazette to record the donation;
- A note of the gift may also be included in the online catalogue record for item/collection. This will enable a list of the contents of the original donation to be created, regardless of the physical location of the material in question.

As Archive space and staff time are limited, potential donors are asked to contact the Archivist in advance, particularly in the case of large collections of material, so that the receipt, storage, cataloguing, and conservation implications of the donation can be discussed in detail. “Large collection” may be defined as those gifts whose review, cataloguing, processing, storage, and conservation cannot be covered by existing Archive resources. The Archive cannot provide value estimates for any materials nor suggest materials for donation. Likewise, the limits of staff time mean that the Archive cannot normally make suggestions of other Archive repositories that may wish to receive donations.

9. Preservation of Collection

Insofar as possible, the Archive will store archive materials in secure, climate-controlled facilities to ensure their long-term preservation. In conjunction with the Library, the Archive is a full member of the Cambridge Colleges' Conservation Consortium and is arranging for conservation treatment of material that is at risk. This work is prioritized by relative vulnerability and perceived reader demand. In the case of fragile material, readers may be required to work from surrogates, including digital or microfilm. Where no surrogate exists, the Archivist reserves the right to make fragile material unavailable until it has undergone conservation treatment.

The Archive prioritizes conserving collection items to make them available for consultation. Interventions will be as non-intrusive and reversible as possible; however, ensuring safe handling conditions may require more intrusive work. All new conservation work will be fully documented to allow scholars to ascertain the extent of any such work while consulting collection items. Where historic repairs have been made, these will be identified and described as fully as possible and may, if necessary, be undone or further repaired in line with current best practice.

10. Data protection

Some records held by the Archive may contain information that falls under data protection legislation. Access to these records will be generally restricted and access granted only as made necessary by the business of the College.

11. Digitization

At present the Archive does not have a systematic digitization programme in place, but will digitize material as funding becomes available.

12. Review of Policy

The next review of this policy is expected to be the Michaelmas Term Library Committee Meeting in 2023.

Written 25/09/19

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