

## LSE LIBRARY: COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY FOR ARCHIVES, MUSEUM OBJECTS AND EPHEMERA

### 1. Scope of the policy

This policy covers the following categories of material:

- **Archives:** materials that have been created by individuals, groups or organisations during the course of their life or work and are deemed to be worth keeping permanently for the purposes of research.
- **Museum objects:** visual materials (eg postcards, photographs, posters, banners, badges) and 3D objects and other realia (eg ceramics, clothing)
- **Ephemera:** literature of a fleeting or fugitive nature, produced outside of official or normal commercial channels, encompassing both political concerns and a wide variety of currently topical social, economic and ideological issues.

It excludes the following:

- the School's institutional archives, and associated material collected in order to document the history of the School. These fall under the remit of the LSE Archivist and is the subject of a separate policy document.
- published materials, including books, journals, grey literature, data, statistics, official publications, pamphlets. These fall under the remit of Library's Collection Development Team and are the subject of a separate policy document

### 2. Purpose of collecting

To strengthen, support and encourage the School's research, learning and teaching activities.

### 3. Collection scope and strengths

#### 3a Main Collection

The Library's main archive holdings range in subject focus across the broad scope of the social sciences, and include the personal papers of politicians, academics, campaigners, and the historical records of pressure groups, political parties, think-tanks, charities and businesses.

#### 3b The Women's Library @ LSE

The archive collections in The Women's Library @ LSE include the papers of women's emigration societies, women's campaigning organisations, women's employment organisations, and the personal papers of women activists and other women prominent in public life. The collections have a strong emphasis on women's campaigns for equality and rights, and the involvement of women in public life.

### **3c Hall-Carpenter Archives**

The archive collections in the Hall-Carpenter Archives include the papers of LGBT campaigning organisations, support groups, social networks and the personal papers of LGBT activists, with a strong emphasis on campaigns for LGBT+ equality and human rights.

### **3d Ephemera**

The Library has since its inception collected ephemera documenting political, social and economic movements or developments. Political ephemera, focussing on election addresses and other election campaign materials, is a particular strength.

In addition:

The Hall-Carpenter Archives includes a discrete collection of ephemera produced by LGBT+ organisations, assembled from donations over a period of years. Ephemera relating to campaigns for LGBT+ equality is a particular strength.

The Women's Library @ LSE collection includes a discrete collection of ephemera produced by women's organisations, assembled from donations over a period of years. Ephemera relating to campaigns for women's equality and rights are a particular strength.

### **3e Visual materials and objects**

The Library has since its inception collected visual materials and occasionally 3D objects as part of archive collections. A small number of collections consist exclusively of visual materials (eg posters, photographs) with a common theme or provenance.

In addition:

The Women's Library @ LSE collection includes a discrete series of 'museum objects', consisting primarily of visual materials (notably photographs, postcards, posters, banners and badges) but also including items of clothing, ceramics and other 3-D objects.

## 4. Future collecting

Acquisition going forward will focus on the following:

### 4.1 Acquiring new collections

- Development of the main archive collections will focus on the Library's core areas of specialisation in the social sciences, concentrating on the archives of organisations (eg pressure groups, think-tanks) and individuals (eg reformers, activists, thinkers and practitioners) who have shaped the development of legislation, policy and services at a national level, or significantly influenced the public agenda.
- Development of TWL@LSE archive collections will focus on women's equality, rights and citizenship, concentrating on the archives of pressure groups, think-tanks, reformers, activists, thinkers and practitioners who have shaped the development of legislation, policy and services at a national level, or significantly influenced the public agenda in this area.
- Development of the HCA archive collections will focus on the equality and rights of LGBT+ people, concentrating on the archives of pressure groups, think-tanks, reformers, activists, thinkers and practitioners who have shaped the development of legislation, policy and services at a national level, or significantly influenced the public agenda in this area.

### 4.2 Building existing collections

The main collection, The Women's Library @ LSE and the Hall-Carpenter Archives all include a significant number of accruing collections (ie collections deposited by 'live' organisations). We will continue to build these collections, prioritising those that best meet the collection development establishing more structured policies and procedures for the appraisal, arrangement, description and transfer of accruals, to ensure that this development is more actively managed and that accruals are processed and made available to researchers in a timely manner.

### 4.3 Ephemera

We will continue to collect ephemera where this supports teaching and research within the School, as resources permit. Collection will be undertaken according to the following principles:

- collecting of ephemera should be organized by target area
- ephemera collecting should be prioritized

- Ephemera collecting for any given target area should continue only so long as developments in that area remain of critical interest.
- Collections of ephemera should supplement and enhance already existing strong collections.
- Collections of ephemera should be limited to representative sampling of available source materials.

Collection of ephemera for the Hall-Carpenter Archives will focus on campaigns for LGBT+ equality and human rights, and will be undertaken in accordance with the principles above.

Collection of ephemera for The Women's Library @LSE will focus on campaigns for women's equality and human rights, and will be undertaken in accordance with the principles above.

Offers of ephemera will be considered against the criteria outlined in section 5.1

#### **4.4 Visual materials and museum objects**

We will continue to acquire visual materials as part of archive collections, selecting them for their informational value, as evidence of activity, or for display purposes.

Collecting of other visual materials and objects will be primarily led by audience development and exhibition needs. Other selection criteria as outlined in 5.1 will also be taken into account.

Offers of visual material and objects will be considered against audience development and exhibition needs, as well as the selection criteria as outlined in 5.1.

#### **4.5 Collecting methods and approach**

Collecting is currently primarily reactive, based on the selection acquisition of collections that are offered to us, but we aim in future to move towards a more proactive model of collecting.

In addition, we will focus on developing:

- A holistic approach to collection development across the Library, considering plans for developing our archive collections as part of plans for developing our collections of primary resources more generally.
- A responsible and sustainable approach to collection development: we will not acquire collections that we cannot sort, describe and make available within a reasonable timeframe.

## 5. Criteria for selection

### 5.1 Core criteria

We will continue to develop our collections in line with subject parameters outlined above, but the pre-existence of a subject in the collections is not of itself sufficient justification for acquisition. All new acquisitions are assessed against the following criteria:

- **Research and teaching interest.** The extent to which a collection would have long-term research or teaching uses within the School.
- **Informational and evidential value of the collection.** The extent to which the collection contains substantive, unique, concentrated and significant information about a topic or topics, and the extent to which a collection documents how the creating person or body worked and/or conducted its business.
- **Relationship with other holdings.** The extent to which a collection links with our other collections. We are looking for collections which complement our existing holdings but do not duplicate them.
- **Collection strengths of other institutions.** The extent to which a collection might be more appropriately deposited elsewhere. Local record offices, for example, have a specific remit to collect material which documents their region, while many university and other specialist record offices specialise in particular subjects.
- **Resource considerations:** The extent to which the space and staff time involved in preserving, appraising, sorting and description are justified in terms the collection's historical value.
- **Physical condition:** Collections will be rejected if their poor physical condition prohibits public access and if the cost of undertaking the necessary conservation treatment is disproportionate to their historical value.
- **Access restrictions.** Careful consideration will be given before accepting collections with material that may have to be closed for a period of time because of the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. In these cases, the historical value of the material must be sufficient to justify the expense of their storage while not being available to the public.
- **Format:** We will accept material in any format usual in libraries and archives, including AV and digital material, providing this format can be safely stored and readily made available to users

## 5.2 Academics' papers

We will consider as potential acquisitions the personal and working papers of academics associated with LSE where they document impact on the wider world, in line with the collecting focus outlined in 4.1

Personal and working papers documenting teaching and research activities will be considered for acquisition in exceptional circumstances only, when there is a compelling case for their historical worth and significant potential for re-use. We will not acquire 'research files' (ie files containing generally-collected materials such as offprints, grey literature, notes, drafts and photocopies), or lecture notes or other teaching materials, as these tend to consist of surveys and summaries of information from secondary sources. However, original research data and/or substantive correspondence documenting the intellectual process of research may be of interest. Donation offers will be assessed against the criteria outlined in 5.1.

Documentation recording the work of departments, institutes, committees and task forces falls under remit of LSE Archivist, and is governed by the LSE Archives collection policy.

## 5.3 Specific exceptions

We do not collect the following categories of material.

- Records of local groups or branch organisations or archives of individuals which document strong local connections. Any such offers will be directed to the relevant local record office.
- Archives whose contents largely duplicate information held in other collections, either at LSE or in other libraries or record offices.
- Copies of material held in other libraries or record repositories.
- Photocopies, off-air recordings and other copies that we are not legally able to make available.
- Archives of foreign provenance.
- Records of local or national government. Formats
- Formats where size or physical qualities mean we cannot properly house or

manage them, for example large objects, framed artworks.

## **6. Terms of acquisition**

Archive collections are usually acquired by donation, either from private individuals, or organisations. Loan agreements may be considered in certain circumstances. All donations are governed by a donor or loan agreement, signed by the donor or lender and the Director of Library Services.

Special consideration will be given to the acquisition of archives from live organisations, as these collections will grow over time and thus involve an ongoing commitment on both side. Organisations have a responsibility to take care of their records and ensure that they are transferred to us in good order and to a mutually agreed schedule. In some instances we may require organisations to contribute resources towards the appraisal, arrangement and description of accruals prior to transfer to the Library.

Unsolicited donations, including unsolicited accruals to existing collections, are added to stock only if they fit within the subject scope of our collection policy (see section 4) and meet our criteria for selection in other respects (see section 5).

We retain the right to weed, return, transfer or dispose of material that does not meet our criteria for selection. In the case of large collections which are impossible to appraise fully in advance of their physical arrival, we would normally identify such material as part of the arrangement and description process.

## **7. Decision-making**

Archive collections are intended to be retained permanently. This has long-term financial, legal and managerial implications for the Library. Thus the decision to add new material is not taken lightly.

Decisions on minor, day-to-day, acquisitions will be made by the Archives and Special Collections Manager on the basis of the above selection criteria, in consultation with the Academic Services Manager if appropriate.

Decisions on major acquisitions rest with the Director of Library Services. Academic staff and other appropriate stakeholders will be consulted on all major acquisitions. Decisions on major acquisitions rest with the Director of Library Services.

## **8. Management of archive collections**

We aim to meet the standards outlined in the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts' Standards for Record Repositories. Storage for the archive collections complies with British Standard 5454 (2000) governing the storage and exhibition of archives. Other legislation that informs the management of archives includes UK Copyright legislation, the Data Protection Act 1998, and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

## **9. Reappraisal and de-accessioning**

We reserve the right to re-evaluate and reappraise our holdings on a periodic basis. De-accessioning will be considered for items or collections when they are judged no longer to contribute to the mission of the Library, or if physical deterioration or damage means they cannot be preserved in a usable state. When possible and if appropriate, efforts will be made to ensure that the items disposed of remain in the public domain. Materials will only be disposed of when we have a legal right to do so. Academic staff and/or other stakeholders as appropriate will be consulted on major de-accessions.

Anna Towlson | Archives and Special Collections Manager | June 2015