

Special Collections Policy

Overview of the collections

The Charles Seale-Hayne Library Special Collections have been developed over many years with a focus on literature, fine art, illustration, typography, design, and lithography. The collections also include the University archives, and a national collection of educational history. There are no other local collections that hold a similar range of content.

The Collections:

Rare books: Most of the collection was originally assembled for its artistic merit. Ranging from the 16th Century to the 20th Century it provides examples of typography, illustration, lithography and fine art. It includes a complete set of Penguin first editions (numbers 1 -1194, 1934-1952), and Pelican first editions (A1-A335). Today this eclectic collection of rare books is a useful resource for all areas of research within the fields of Arts, Humanities and Business and beyond. There is a close historic connection between the rare books and the University's core library teaching and research holdings.

Rare journals: This collection showcases the golden period of journals and magazines from the 19th and early 20th century for Art, Illustration, Design and of course Literature.

Artists' books and Zines: This collection is wide ranging, not focused on any particular theme, with no restriction on date of publication.

Marjorie Blamey Collection: Botanical illustration index cards. Bequeathed to the University on permanent loan by Marjorie Blamey's family.

National Association of Small Schools National Archive: An important snapshot of the political history surrounding small schools in England and Wales, mainly covering the period from 1960 to the mid-1970s.

Exeter College of Art & Design Archive: The archive traces and reflects the Faculty of Arts and Humanities from its beginning as a school of Art, founded in the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter in 1854, until its relocation in 2007 to the University main campus in Plymouth. The archive includes photographic material mainly from the 1940s & 1950s, and examples of students' work, degree show posters, minutes, newspaper articles etc.

Archives of The University of Plymouth, South West Polytechnic, Plymouth Polytechnic, and Plymouth College of Technology: Consists of Board of Governors' papers; Academic Board papers; annual reports; publications; photographs, and other ephemera from the 1960s to early 2000s

Purpose of the collections

The primary purpose of the University Special Collections is to support teaching, learning and research at the institution. The Library will promote the collections, and make them discoverable to support this purpose. With the exception of the University Archive, the collection is classified using the Dewey Decimal system. Special Collection items are discoverable on the Library catalogue, Primo.

The collections are actively used to support teaching, and are held in high regard by Academic Staff, who request library sessions for students on the Special Collection and its holdings. Although the Special Collection was developed primarily for the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business, it is of potential interest to scholars across the university, due to its range of rare, unique or specialised materials, for example, a number of scientific texts selected for their artistic value, age or rarity which have historic value to scientific courses.

Access to the collections

All those wishing to access the Special Collections must undertake an induction first.

The Library offers time-tabled sessions which are arranged by many programmes within the Arts, Humanities and Business faculty, or individuals may book an induction via an Information Specialist (informationspecialists@plymouth.ac.uk). Inductions are available to anyone within the University regardless of Faculty and to Researchers from other institutions.

Everyone who goes through induction is asked to sign a form, agreeing to comply with the rules and regulations of access. These forms are stored for the duration of permission and will be disposed of safely once they expire. Once inductions and forms are completed, access can be arranged.

Access to the Special Collections is available between 8am-8pm, 7 days per week. Users must vacate the room by 8pm and return the keys to library reception.

The Special Collections Room: Preservation and Housing

The University maintains its unique Special Collections within the Charles Seale-Hayne Library. The Special Collections Room is on Level 3.

The majority of the collections are kept within the Special Collection room in lockable cabinets. Extremely rare, delicate or expensive materials are stored in the adjacent temperature-controlled room and can be accessed by special request to the Information Specialist team.

Artists' books are embodied in a vast range of physical formats. The collection includes items that are comprised of unusual, delicate, and potentially unstable materials. This broad variety of material, size, shape, and complexity brings preservation challenges ranging from unusual materials to unique shapes that dictate housing and shelving decisions.

A guide for those wishing to handle our Special Collections can be found in the [Rules and Regulations page](#) of the Special Collections library guide.

The Zines Collection is an exception. This is housed in lockable file cabinets on level 0 to allow room for further growth of the collection and to reduce barriers to access. However, access to this collection still requires an induction.

The Library will digitise some items in the collections to better preserve and showcase them.

Development of the Special Collections

This Policy may be considered in conjunction with the Library's *Collection Development and Reading List Policy*.

The core aims of the Library's Special Collections Policy is to guide the way in which the University's Special Collections are developed and managed, in order to:

- Develop appropriate and regularly assessed collections that are responsive to shifts of emphasis in teaching and research at Faculty, School and course level;
- To support teaching, learning and research of the Arts, Humanities and Business Faculty, as well as any broader Faculty needs;
- To reflect the Arts, Humanities and Business Faculty's interdisciplinary approach to learning and teaching;
- To optimise the range and level of resources available to students, staff and researchers;
- To ensure that collection of resources are up-to-date, relevant and comprehensive; and
- To optimise the use of resources in terms of their arrangement, access, preservation, retrieval and promotion.

Additions to Special Collections

The collections can be added to, providing the additions meet any of the following criteria. Additions may be received from the main library stock, active purchase or donation.

Donors:

Prospective donors to the Library's Special Collections must contact the Library in advance to discuss their intention to make a gift (please email informationspecialists@plymouth.ac.uk).

The Library reserves the right to accept or refuse prospective donations according to the guidelines and conditions outlined below, and the "Conditions for the acceptance of gifts and donations" set down in the Library's main *Collection Development and Reading List Policy*. All donors must complete a 'Charles Seale Hayne Donation Agreement Form' which transfers legal ownership of the gift or donation to the Library.

Selection Criteria:

The following criteria may determine whether an item/s is added to the collection:

- Whether it is rare or valuable;
- Whether it has a local affiliation with the area or University;
- Whether it is a private press or limited edition publication;
- Whether the copy is signed;
- Whether the copy is annotated or contains manuscript additions;
- Whether the binding is of particular historic or other interest;
- Whether its physical format, condition, sensitivity, or other characteristic makes it inappropriate for open shelves;
- Whether it adds to the existing strengths of the collections, or is pertinent to the teaching or research interests of the University;
- Whether the item will diversify the collection;
- Whether we have physical capacity for the addition due to a finite amount of space; or
- In the case of entire collections, (particularly of rare books and journals), consideration is made as to whether the entire body of material has a range and depth of content which justifies its status as a discrete research collection, even where the individual items may not fulfil any of the above criteria.

Rare Books and Rare Journals. Both the rare books and rare journals collection are comprised of library materials that, because of their age or rarity, vulnerable physical condition or other special significance, are housed and managed separately from the general library stock.

The management of the rare book collection is based on the premise that they have long term value and significance for research and teaching supporting the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business as well as the wider University community, and should be preserved for the use of future generations.

The collections are static, added to only if items fit the criteria outlined above and are considered to be of value to the collection.

Zine Collection. A variety of formats are collected to provide representative examples of all types of Zines from which students and faculty would benefit. The collection aims to increase access to diversity of voices in line with decolonisation themes of gender, sexuality, race, class and other hierarchies/ power structures.

Items for the collection will be added through purchase from either academic recommendations or Information Specialists' own experience with Zine retailers etc.

When considering additions to the Zine Collection, the following criteria are considered:

- Requests for individual items made by Academic staff
- Items that will increase diversity of voices represented by the collection.
- Local voices, content from or about Plymouth or the surrounding areas.

Artists' Books. The collection is not focused on any particular theme, so regional, national and international artists are all of equal relevance; there is no restriction on date of publication, although retrospective collecting may be constrained by budget limitations. The only limitations of purchase are of budget and physical space.

Books are added by a version of standing order from the collaborative artist David Dellafiora and the publishers Bookworks and Photoworks both specialising in artists' books.

Special requests for the purchase of individual items may be considered on a discretionary basis and are dependent on space and need, considering the teaching and learning needs of the faculty.

De-accessioning and disposal

The University reserves the right to keep its Special Collections under review using criteria consistent with those to be used to consider additions to the Special Collections. Where material is deemed as the result of such reviews to be no longer appropriate for the Special Collections, the University will consider such material for de-accessioning.

The University will only remove or dispose of material from the Special Collections where it has a legal right to do so. The preferred method of removal is by donation elsewhere such as another collection or repository. The University may consider de-accessioned items for sale if it is within the University's right to sell.

All decisions regarding de-accessioning and disposal of material will be made by the University Library on the advice of the Information Specialists.

Glossary / Definitions

Rare books and journals. A rare book or rare journal is one which may have the following characteristics: it has market rarity; is out of print; is of financial value; was published in a limited or special edition; or is a first edition.

Artists' books: Artists' books are books produced by an artist through reprographic means for mass distribution. They are conceived and designed by artists, rather than books written on or about artists. Hence, they exist as art in their own right, rather than documenting pre-existing art.

Zines: Zines are defined as self-published small, self-distributed print run magazines. They are forms of expression by anyone (not necessarily artists), for anyone, often freely available or at low cost to cover material outlay. The ideology is to express oneself rather than to make money. They are outside the mainstream publishing industry and low budget in production.

Diverse collection: Content in multiple formats and created by a variety of producers, including self-published and independent authors, and people in marginalized or underrepresented groups.