

QA819 ACQUISITION POLICY FOR THE JAMES HARDIMAN LIBRARY ARCHIVES

ARCHIVES GROUP

1. Purpose of the Archives Service

1.1 The purpose of the archives service is to acquire, preserve and make accessible archival collections held by the James Hardiman Library, and provide services in support of the research and information needs of the University Community and other appropriate users. It will also endeavour to attract researchers to the Library, enhance the range of topics available to researchers and provide a valuable resource within the overall library service.

2. Statement of Authority to acquire material

2.1 The authority for the acquisition of material by the archives service comes from the Librarian of the James Hardiman Library, NUI Galway.

2.2 The authority to manage the acquisitions process for the archives service is vested in the archivist.

3. Definition of terms

Records: Documents containing data or information of any kind and in any form, created or received and accumulated by an organisation or person in the transaction of business or the conduct of affairs. They are subsequently kept as evidence of such activity through incorporation into the recordkeeping system of the organisation or person. Records are the information by-products of organisational and social activity.

Non-current records: Those records that are required so infrequently in the conduct of current business that they can be transferred from offices to separate storage areas.

Archival Value: The values, evidential and/or informational that justify the continuing retention of records as archives.

Evidential Value: The value for providing evidence of the origins, structure, functions, policies and operations of the person or agency that created the records. The three major categories of records having evidential value are those that:

- (1) have continuing administrative, legal or fiscal value for the individual or body that created them, or for any subsequent bodies;
- (2) record details that may serve to protect the civic, legal property or other rights of individuals or the community at large
- (3) reflect the development of the creating body, its structures, functions, policies, decisions and significant operations; or which reflect the evolution of the individual's career, interests or activities.

Administrative Value: The value for the conduct of current and future administrative business.

Financial Value: The value for the conduct of current and future financial or fiscal business.

Legal Value: The value for the conduct of current and future legal business

Informational Value: The value for reference deriving from the information the records contain, as distinct from their evidential value. Records and archives often contain information that has reference or research uses not envisaged by its creators.

Archives: Those records that are appraised as having continuing value. Traditionally the term has been used to describe records no longer required for current use which have been selected for permanent preservation.

Archivist: A person, professionally educated, trained and experienced, responsible for the management or administration of archives and/or records by appraising and identifying records of continuing value, by documenting and preserving archives in their context and by enabling and facilitating their continuing use.

Deposit: An addition to the holdings or collection of an archives service. A deposit is usually a transfer of material but may also be a donation or a loan for either a short-term or an indefinite period.

Depositor: The person legally responsible for the records deposited.

Disposal: A programme of activities to facilitate the orderly transfer of non-current and inactive records from current office space into low-cost or archival storage. It includes surveys, scheduling and records destruction.

Donation: A voluntary deposit of records, involving the transfer of legal ownership as well as custody of the archives.

Donor: A person or organisation who has donated records to the archives service.

4. Method of acquisition

4.1 The James Hardiman Library Archives will acquire material by donation, loan or purchase. In the case of donation or loan, material deposited with the archives service will be covered by an agreement, which will outline the conditions of transfer of the material to the archives service.

5. Focus of Acquisition

5.1 The James Hardiman Library Archives already contain a number of collections, and the focus of acquisition is on Irish Language and Literature collections, Academic papers of relevance to NUIG, Landed Estate papers, Political, Theatre and Business collections.

5.2 There are also a large number of collections that reflect the socio-economic, cultural and political development of the region. The service hopes to work with other places of deposit in the development of coherent and comprehensive access to archival collections connected with the west of Ireland.

5.3 The archive will take records in any format once their preservation and access can be maintained to archival standards. In general, memorabilia and objects will not be accepted.

6. Statement of Acquisition Priorities

6.1 Over the next five to ten years, the priority will be to acquire the records of institutions, associations and individuals that augment the strengths of our current holdings.

6.2 In the case of institutions giving us accruals of material, the development of a coherent records management programme would be desirable, to ensure that the archives service acquires that material which most fully reflects the business of the institution.

7. General conditions covering acquisition

7.1 Material brought into the repository should comply with the areas of interest outlined in section 5.

7.2 In the case of all material brought in under transfer, loan, donation or purchase, the depositor must be the authorised person to transfer legal title to the material.

7.3 Material must undergo archival appraisal and be recommended for retention by the archivist of the James Hardiman Library. The material must be of archival value, as outlined in Section 3, and be in reasonable physical condition, allowing the archives service to care for it in the appropriate manner.

7.4 Material should, in as far as possible, be free of legal encumbrances and access restrictions. In the event of restrictions being placed on access by the depositor for reasons of privacy etc., these restrictions shall be clearly outlined in the deposit agreement, and should not unduly inhibit the research potential of any acquired collection.

7.5 Material will either become the property of the James Hardiman Library Archive, or its responsibility, to be administered in accordance with the policies and procedures of the institution.

8. Contact Information

8.1 For further information about our acquisitions policy, or for discussion about material for potential acquisition, please contact the Archivist, James Hardiman Library, NUI Galway.

James Hardiman Library Archives Service
E-mail address: kieran.hoare@nuigalway.ie

Procedure for Evaluating Offers of Donation of Archival Collections

Introduction

The purpose of the Archives Service is to acquire, preserve and make accessible archival collections held by the James Hardiman Library, and to provide services in support of the research and information needs of the University community and other appropriate users. It will also endeavour to attract researchers to the Library, provide a valuable resource within the overall Library service, and co-operate with other repositories at regional and national level.

All archives acquisitions are subject to the Archives Acquisition Policy which governs the procedures followed for managing offers of donation.¹

Offers of archival collections may be received through a range of channels, but any initial offer must be referred to both the Librarian and to the Head of Customer Focus and Research Services. An archival collection can consist of anything between one item and a sizeable number of boxes.

Procedure

1. Having been informed of an offer of a donation, the Librarian will acknowledge the offer in writing and will inform the donor that the collection will be appraised by the Archivist in terms of its alignment with our standing collections, teaching and research needs, and our resources.
2. The Archivist will then appraise the collection, either by visiting the donor or by viewing it on Library premises if the donor has brought it to us, to assess its content and volume. The Archivist will inform the donor again of our donations policy and the resource restrictions that necessitate our selectivity, also giving him/her a realistic view of how long it would take to list the collection should it be accepted. Digital photos may be taken for the report.
3. An appraisal report will be prepared of the content and volume of the collection and any conditions specified by the donor, submitted to the Head of Customer Focus and Research Services and by him to the Librarian. The Archives Group will normally be consulted except in cases where there is a very narrow timeframe for action or where the scale of the acquisition is small.
4. The final decision concerning acceptance or otherwise of the collection will be the Librarian's, based on the recommendations of the Archivist and any advice from the Archives Group. Decision-making is based on whether the collection is deemed of continuing value, whether it is a) aligned with our existing collections (see Acquisition Policy section 5), b) relevant to the University's teaching and research, and c) manageable in size regarding staff and storage resources. This decision will then be communicated to the donor.

¹ As sanctioned by the Archives Group; see

http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/media/jameshardimanlibrary/content/documents/collections/acquisition_policy.pdf

5. If it is decided to accept the collection, a donation agreement will be drafted, incorporating any special conditions specified by the donor and the Library.
6. The final donation agreement will be signed by all parties and each party will retain a copy. The original Library copy will be lodged in the Librarian's Office, with a copy in the Archives Service.
7. The donation procedure will be complete when the material has been received by the University and appropriately acknowledged by the Librarian and relevant personnel.

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