

University Library Special Collections and Galleries

Student Support Policy 2017

Introduction

Using the Library's special collections of rare books, archives and art in teaching offers both the academic tutor and student a unique experience. It introduces students to vital research skills with primary sources that can be used throughout their university studies. This valuable exposure to collections has equal benefit for undergraduates and taught postgraduates. This also applies to the early career researcher, especially if they haven't studied at a University with such a rich and diverse cultural heritage.

Service emphasis has changed in the last 18 months. For the Library the opening of the Treasures Gallery, changes to core staff priorities, and a new emphasis on work placements and student research projects has highlighted variations in teaching support and provision across Schools and between individual academics.

Special Collections and Galleries are committed to offering student opportunities for engagement with collections. We want students to become independent researchers, using collections for their research projects and inspiring post-graduate study. A realistic and consistent teaching support offer is defined based on *core* staff capacity to achieve these goals.

Special Collections and Galleries staff are not subject specific tutors and where additional support is required to deliver modules and offer work placements this should be negotiated with the Head of Special Collections as part of module planning and development.

Our commitment

We will work collaboratively with academics to facilitate their module specific teaching in our spaces

- Academic tutors can enhance their module teaching with delivery of group sessions in the Brotherton Room with (archive/ print) collection objects or in the Stanley and Audrey Burton Gallery Education room with (art) collection objects.
- Curatorial staff can advise on collection items that would be suitable to use in these sessions. Special Collections and Galleries staff are not involved in delivery of the session. Introductory information to the service is available on the website.

- The academic tutor is responsible for booking the space and any items for consultation at least 2 weeks in advance of the session. Special Collections & Galleries staff will review all item requests. We reserve the right to refuse access to specific items on conservation grounds.
- Schools are encouraged to supply a research assistant/ intern to work with curatorial staff and academics to map collections and subjects as a means of building 'reading lists' for students considering using primary sources in their research projects.

We will offer research skills resources online and in workshops. We will train academic staff to deliver workshops using our collections

- A suite of online resources has been created to introduce archival research skills for undergraduate and taught post-graduate students
- A hands-on complimentary workshop has been devised and will be offered to all students as part of the skills@library programme from the 2017/18 academic year
- Resources will be advertised to students at the relevant time in their studies through the Portal and VLE
- Curatorial staff will offer train the trainer sessions for groups of academics, to enable them to deliver hands-on research skills sessions to their own groups. This includes plans with suggested lists of archive/ print objects.
- Academics wanting to deliver a session to their own students should book the space and any items to be consulted at least 2 weeks in advance of the session. Curatorial staff will not be involved in session delivery.

We will consider hosting/ delivering elements within modules and work placements on a case by case basis, where it is mutually beneficial to the School and Library service

- Special Collections and Galleries staff may collaborate with an academic to devise activities and projects. The role of curatorial staff must be agreed with the Head of Special Collections and Galleries at least three months before a module is advertised.
- Use of collections and spaces may be an assessed element in a module but curatorial staff will not assess student work. The academic remains the supervisor and is responsible for student conduct.
- Public engagement activities must benefit the visitor experience and be considerate of the service brand and collections care.
- The commitment made by the Library service must be explicit in course handbooks.
- Schools are encouraged to supply research assistant/ intern support to deliver bespoke projects in conjunction with curatorial staff

- Students will be made aware of and expected to follow a code of conduct when working in our environments and with our staff.

We will consider hosting postgraduate research student placements to enable in-depth access to uncatalogued collections on a case-by-case basis, where it is mutually beneficial to the student's research and Special Collections.

- Some research at postgraduate and post-doctoral level is considerably enhanced by access to material in collections that are not yet available through the reading room or galleries, usually due to lack of a useable catalogue or other finding aid.
- Academics who wish their research students to carry out a placement in Special Collections should contact the Head of Special Collections at least three – six months in advance of when they wish a placement to take place.
- A member of the Special Collections and Galleries team will collaborate with the supervising academic and student to create a clear set of mutually beneficial goals – well-defined research aims for the student and access enhancements for the collection.
- Academics should ensure that researchers are a good fit for a placement in terms of skills and knowledge, and are willing to undertake work to benefit Special Collections' wider access goals.
- Special Collections will give the student the necessary basic training and induction.
- Students will be made aware of and expected to follow a code of conduct when working in Special Collections and Galleries environments. The academic remains the supervisor and is responsible for student conduct.