

Job Description

Role Title:	Project Archivist – Bridgewater Estates
Dept:	Library, Careers and Skills
Reference:	MPF4158
Grade:	6
Full or Part time:	Full time
Hours:	36.25
Reports to:	Archivist
Responsible for:	No direct reports

Overview

About us

Welcome to the Library, Careers & Skills – a place to learn and share ideas, a virtual hub for research and discovery, a team of friendly faces delivering excellent customer service, and a community of experts playing a vital role in teaching, learning, research, employability, and enterprise at Salford. We are innovative, open, collaborative, and people centred. Our focus is to help our students get the very most out of their Salford journey, in support of the University's mission: "Innovating to enrich lives".

Across our teams, we manage study spaces and technology, provide access to print and online resources for learning and research, and help our researchers to share their work with the world. We are also responsible for working collaboratively with academic colleagues and external employers to develop students' academic skills and employability.

The Library Archives and Special Collections provide students and researchers with access to a diverse range of primary source collections to support teaching, learning, and research. We sit within the Content Team which connects students, university staff and researchers with the physical and digital content they require to support their work. We ensure that high-quality Library resources are provided promptly and cost effectively. We're here to provide students valuable and responsive support, and make our resources, easy to access, discover and impact directly on their studies. We are an ambitious and developing team with a focus on constantly seeking new ways to acquire, curate and evaluate the right resources to provide the optimum learning and research experience for our students, university staff and researchers.

Role Purpose

The Project Archivist will lead the cataloguing, preservation, promotion and engagement of Series 3-5 of the Bridgewater Estates Archive (BEA), as part of the National Archives 'Archives Revealed' funded project, Land and Legacy: Enabling digital access to the Bridgewater Estates Archive.

The Bridgewater Estates Archive comprises correspondence documenting the administration, ownership and development of land and assets in Salford and west Lancashire from 1890s-1950s. The archive provides extensive evidence of the region's social, economic and industrial history and is the University's most requested collection by the public.

Working with an AI Research Fellow the postholder will make 90 linear metres of previously inaccessible estate records discoverable online. The postholder will apply specialist professional knowledge to verify, enhance and enrich catalogue data generated through an innovative AI-assisted data extraction process. The role will involve applying professional archival skills to arrange and describe records in accordance with ISAD(G), assess

preservation requirements and develop collection-specific approaches to repackaging the collection. The postholder will contribute to sector-facing outputs that share learning from the project's innovative use of AI in archival cataloguing.

Alongside cataloguing work, the Project Archivist will play a key role in developing public engagement, learning and creative activities inspired by the collection. Working with community partners, artists, writers, students and academics, they will support the delivery of workshops, physical and digital exhibition, talks, open collection events, live briefs and educational resources. They will also work with the Library's Web Librarian and Salford Community Leisure to create a new web page to unite the Bridgewater Estates Archive with the related Bridgewater Estates collection held at Salford Local History Library.

Principal Duties & Responsibilities

Cataloguing, metadata and research

- Lead the arrangement, description and cataloguing of the Bridgewater Estates Archive in accordance with ISAD(G) and other relevant standards to make the collection accessible, discoverable and usable for research, learning and public engagement.
- Verify, quality assure and enhance catalogue data generated through AI-assisted extraction from historic card indexes, maintaining and updating metadata within the archive management system to ensure accurate, consistent and reliable archival descriptions.
- Determine appropriate levels of archival description, undertake research into the collection and provide contextual information to improve discoverability and support interpretation.
- Identify significant records, themes and stories within the collection to inform exhibitions, learning resources, outreach activities and public engagement programmes.
- Research and interpret the history, context and significance of the Bridgewater Estates Archive and related collections to support access for diverse audiences

Preservation and collections care

- Implement procedures for the safe handling, repackaging and rehousing of archive material to improve the long-term preservation and accessibility of records.
- Assess preservation and conservation needs and identify appropriate interventions and archival packaging solutions to safeguard the collection.

Access, engagement and interpretation

- Create interpretive and promotional content for webpages, exhibitions, learning resources and other engagement activities to increase awareness and use of the collection.
- Work collaboratively with the Digital Librarian and Salford Community Leisure to develop and maintain a shared Bridgewater Estates Archive/Bridgewater Estates Collection webpage that unites information on related holdings across the University and Salford Local History Library, enabling users to discover, navigate and access material more effectively.
- Collaborate with creative freelancers, community partners and academic colleagues to develop engagement activities and live briefs that inspire new interpretations of the archive.
- Plan and deliver talks, presentations, open collection events and outreach activities for community groups, students, researchers and other audiences to encourage engagement with the archive.
- Support the development and curation of a physical and digital exhibition to showcase the collection and broaden participation in local heritage.
- Collaborate with Salford Community Leisure to develop a schools' toolkit demonstrating how archives and local history can support creative writing and artistic practice.

Project Management and Evaluation

- Devise and adhere to a project work plan and timetable, contributing regular reports and updates to the Project Steering Group and other stakeholders to ensure successful project delivery.
- Maintain records of project outputs and outcomes to contribute to evaluation and share learning from the innovative use of AI in archival practice to maximise project impact.

Generic Duties

- Perform any other duties appropriate to the grade as may be required by the Head of School/Head of Division etc.
- Comply with the personal health and safety responsibilities specified in the University Health and Safety policy.
- To engage with the University's commitment to deliver services which are customer orientated, represent value for money and contribute to the financial and environmental sustainability of the University when undertaking all duties and aspects of the role.

- Advance equality, support our work towards eliminating unlawful discrimination, foster an inclusive study and work environment for students, staff and visitors in accordance with our public sector equality duties and university policy.
- This role detail is a guide to the work you will initially be required to undertake. It may be changed from time to time to meet changing circumstances. It does not form part of your Contract of Employment.

Person specification follows on next page

Person Specification

The successful candidate should demonstrate the following, which are 'Essential' (E) or 'Desirable' (D)

Qualifications

1. Postgraduate/professional qualification in Archives and/or Records Management or substantial practical experience working with archive collections and undertaking core archive functions such as cataloguing, access and collections care (E)

Background and Experience

2. Experience of archive cataloguing and using archive management systems (E)
3. Experience of planning and delivering archive engagement, outreach and advocacy activities for diverse audiences and stakeholders (E)
4. Experience of collaborative working with community, academic or external partners (D)
5. Awareness of and interest in emerging technologies and their application within archive services (D)

Knowledge

6. Knowledge of archive arrangement and cataloguing standards including ISAD (E)
7. Knowledge of archive preservation and collections care principles, with experience of applying these in practice (E)
8. Knowledge of the use of archives and special collections for teaching, learning and research in higher education (D)

Skills and Competencies

9. Excellent communication, interpersonal and relationship-building skills, with the ability to engage effectively with a range of stakeholders (E)
10. Excellent IT skills, including proficiency in Microsoft Office applications (E)
11. Strong organisational and project management skills, with the ability to prioritise workloads and deliver to agreed deadlines (E)
12. Ability to work independently and as part of a team (E)
13. Ability to demonstrate initiative and adapt effectively to changing priorities and changing demands (E)
14. A commitment to equality and diversity (E)