

Archives and Collections Glossary

Access: How users can interact with archive or museum collections e.g. when users can visit an archive / museum, what information is available for users to see online etc.

Accession: To accession something means to add it to an archive repository or museum's holdings. An accession is an item or group of material recently added to an archive repository or museum's holdings. See also *Deposit*.

Acquisition: An acquisition is an item or group of material that has been obtained (usually purchased) by a museum or archive repository. The acquisition is then accessioned into the museum or archive repository's holdings.

Appraisal: To sort through a collection and decide what to keep / what not to keep.

Archives: Records created by an individual or organisation as part of their everyday activities and then kept for the long-term.

Arrangement: How a group of archive material or artefacts is organised.

Authentic: An item is authentic if it has not been tampered with.

Cataloguing: Describing archives or artefacts. A catalogue can take the form of a typewritten list or a searchable database.

Collection: A group of artefacts and/or documents brought together by an individual or organisation.

Conservation: This term can be used to refer to both *Preservation* and *Interventive Conservation*.

Deposit: An artefact or collection that has been given to an archive repository or museum (see also accession). A deposit can be gifted to the repository / museum or it can be given on a long-term loan basis.

Documentation: Usually two dimensional paper-based material that forms part of a collection (see also *Archives*). Examples include letters, tickets, flyers, minutes of meetings and photographs.

Finding Aid: A document or database containing information about archive collections or museum holdings e.g. a catalogue or an *Index*

Index: A list of terms relating to an archive/museum collection e.g. a list of individual's names which appear in an archive, a list of technical terms that relate to the items within an archive or collection (e.g. lithography, screenprint, etching etc.).

Interventive Conservation: A chemical or physical interaction with an artefact or archive item to repair damage that has occurred to it e.g. removing dirt, mending a tear, removing creases.

Material: This term can refer to a single or group of archives and/or museum objects.

Museum Object: This term normally refers to three dimensional objects within a collection, Examples include artworks, archaeological finds, zoological specimens, and scientific instruments, as well as everyday objects such as household items, furniture, garments, jewellery, computers and pieces of machinery.

Preservation: Preventing damage being caused to archives / artefacts by their environment, packaging or handling. Activities can include repackaging archives / artefacts and making changes to the environmental conditions they are stored in. Such activities can also be referred to as Preventative Conservation.

Provenance: The origin of an archive or artefact.

Reading Room: The area in an archive repository / museum where visitors can view/handle archives and artefacts.

Reliable: A record / archive document is reliable if its content is trustworthy.

Repository: An archive repository is the physical building which houses archives. It usually includes storage areas for the archives and a Reading Room or Search Room where visitors can access the archives.

Restoration: Returning an archive item or artefact to how it would have originally looked. This is different from conservation in which damaged items may be fixed but they are not made to look like new.

Searchroom: See *Reading Room*.

Surrogate: A copy of an archive item / artefact (this can be a digital copy or a physical copy) which is used in place of the original item to prevent damage to the original