

Somerville Library and Archives Donations Policy

Somerville College has over 120,000 books in its library collection, and as such is one of the largest college libraries in the University of Oxford. It supports the learning of both undergraduate and graduate students, with a focus on ensuring that most items undergraduates need for their studies are available, alongside additional materials to supplement designated texts. In addition, the library owns several special collections, including the John Stuart Mill library.

The archives record and preserve the history of the college, as well as providing a home to several special collections which are associated with Somervillians (whether students, Fellows or people otherwise associated with the college). Both college records and special collections are made available to researchers in accordance with the archives' access policy.

In order to ensure that both collections contain the resources that best support their respective aims and priorities, the library and archives will consider donations only if they meet specific criteria.

The library

Donations to the library will be accepted if they fulfil one of the following criteria:

- Items directly support the learning and teaching of undergraduate students;
- Items are written by or about Somervillians (whether students, Fellows or people otherwise associated with the college);
- Items fill gaps in the existing collection.

All large donations (numbering more than 20 volumes) should be agreed with the librarian in advance of their dispatch. Where possible donations should be offered with a list of available titles, but, if this is impractical, the librarian will consider assessing large donations in situ, if located within a reasonable distance of Oxford.

Where large donations are offered, the librarian reserves the right to select items from those on offer, and reject the remainder, either returning the unwanted items to the donor or disposing of the unwanted items appropriately to students, staff and academics, or to other libraries or booksellers. Where unwanted donations cannot be disposed of through any of these methods, items will be sent for recycling.

The donor is responsible for the carriage of donations to the library.

For any items accepted into the archives, the donor will be asked to sign a gift agreement. All donated items accepted into the library will be labelled with a gift label noting the donor's name, unless the donor specifies that this is not required.

The librarian reserves the right to dispose of donated items when those items no longer fulfil any of the criteria listed above. The donor should not assume that the donation will remain in the collection forever.

All such decisions will be taken only after appropriate consultation with tutors in the relevant area.

The archives

Donations to the archives will only be accepted if they fulfil one of the following criteria:

- Items directly record the history of the college;
- Items are about Somervillians, (whether students, Fellows or people otherwise associated with the college), preferably about their time at Somerville;
- Items supplement existing collections.

Donations should be offered to the archivist, and the archivist reserves the right to refuse donations. For any items accepted into the archives, the donor will be asked to sign a gift agreement.

The donor is responsible for the carriage of donations to the archives.

The archivist reserves the right to dispose of donated items when those items no longer fulfil any of the criteria listed above. The donor should not assume that the donation will remain in the collection forever.

All such decisions will be taken only after appropriate consultation with tutors in the relevant area.

Special collections and chattels

Donations of single special collection items and chattels (silverware, paintings, furniture, ceramics and similar items) may be offered to the librarian, who will consult with colleagues about the wishes of the college in relation to the donation. Larger donations should be discussed with the Development Team in the first instance.