Working With Our Collections

We welcome all researchers to the Wolfson Reading Room on the lower ground floor of the Sir Duncan Rice Library.

If you are not a member of the University, you will need to register for an Access Pass. This is free and can be done online (see our website). Please remember to bring photographic ID and proof of address to complete the process.

Some material is available on open access including the Local Collection, a collection of titles relating to bibliography and a selection of historical periodicals. As other materials are in closed access stores, please contact us before your visit if you wish to consult them.

Facilities and services include:
- Lockers
- 36 reader places
- Microfilm reader/printer service
- Map and plan table
- Research copy and self-copy services
- Research enquiry assistance

See our website for more information, including:
- Online catalogues - the portals to our collections
- Factsheets - on the range of media and subjects

Special Collections Centre
Zoology Museum

Wolfson Reading Room opening hours

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* Closed Saturday and Sunday

Staff office hours
Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Contact
Special Collections Centre, The Sir Duncan Rice Library,
Bedford Road, Aberdeen, AB24 3AA
T: 01224 272598 E: speclib@abdn.ac.uk

For enquiries about NHS Grampian Archives
T: 01224 274912 E: grampian.archives@nhs.net

We are online
web: www.abdn.ac.uk/special-collections
blog: http://specialcollectionslearning.wordpress.com
facebook: Special Collections Centre, University of Aberdeen
twitter: @scc_aberdeen

The University of Aberdeen is a charity registered in Scotland No:SC03683
Who We Are

The Special Collections Centre in the Sir Duncan Rice Library is home to the University’s historic holdings of rare books, archives and manuscripts. Comprising some 230,000 books and over 5,000 archive collections, they cover aspects of the history of the University, city and region and their relationship with the wider world.

Holdings can be consulted in the Wolfson Reading Room. Many of our collections and treasures are also accessible on our website. These include the Aberdeen Bestiary, the George Washington Wilson photographic collection, the rolls of graduates and provenance database for rare books.

As part of the University’s Museums and Special Collections, we have a conservation studio, digitisation suite as well as a lively exhibition and events programme.

Please see our ‘What’s On’ leaflet and website for the latest news and information.

Books

Among the books dating from the 1460s to the present are over 250 incunabulae (books printed before 1501), some 4,000 16th century titles and a sequence of rare books published in Aberdeen before 1800.

There are over 40 ‘named’ collections. These cover a wide range of interests, including Catholicism, Episcopalianism, Presbyterianism and Rabbinica, early science and medicine, Jacobitism, literature (including strengths in Walter Scott, Charles Dickens, Victoriana and writing for children), printing, pharmacology, and railways.

There are also collections from individuals associated with the University and a major local collection that relates to the history of the University itself, but also covers the former counties of Aberdeen, Banff, Moray and Nairn.

Archives

The collections date from antiquity to the present day, including fine medieval and early modern manuscripts and outstanding 17th–19th century holdings relating to science, medicine, and Scottish Enlightenment philosophy.

The University archives illuminate relationships between Aberdeen’s higher education institutions, the city and the region. There are archives from affiliated institutions: the ‘Aberdeen Colleges of Education’, Christ’s College Aberdeen, and the Rowett Institute of Nutrition and Health.

There are also thousands of collections, including the records of families, estates, churches, organisations and businesses, as well as the literary, academic and antiquarian papers of individuals. These include oral history records of the University and the oil and gas industry, the Scottish Catholic Archives from the 12th to the late 19th century, and the NHS Grampian Archives which contain material from over 100 hospitals and health organisations from the mid 18th century.