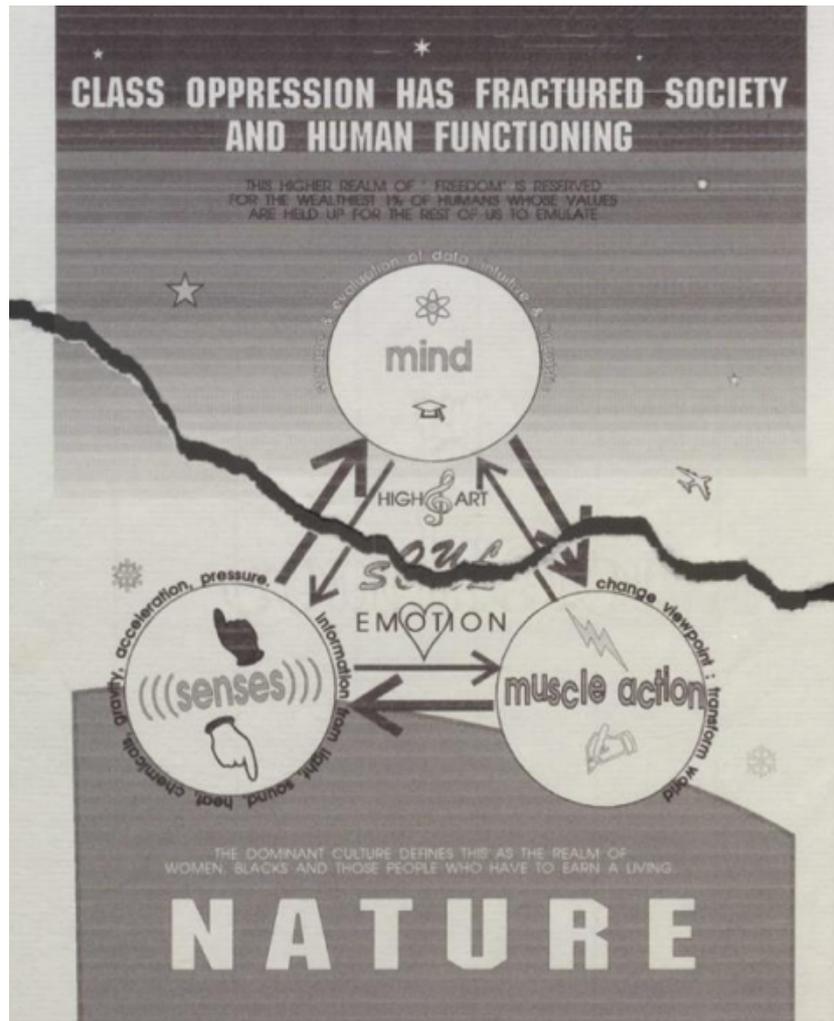

Study Guide to Accessing and Using Archives at UCA and Beyond



What is an archive?

The word 'archive' has different meanings to different people. It may be seen as just 'old stuff', 'old books', 'documents' or 'a newspaper backlog' you store away. You may talk about 'archiving' research outputs/publications; your own work. When you come to use our archives, however, an Archivist's definition of an archive can be taken as original records of value kept permanently, naturally accumulated or generated by an individual or organisation within their or its lifetime regardless of format.

An archive usually does not include finished outputs of work, which may include published library books, rare books and artist books. Archives can be seen as the work in progress, the mind in motion, which shows you how the final product is made. For example, governor minutes produced by a university, show you how a university is run.

An archive can be made of any format. This includes physical material, such as paper, parchment, analogue photographs, paintings, drawings, acetate cels etc. Increasingly there are a number of digitally born records, which are records that started life in a digital format, which includes websites, emails, or social media, such as Twitter, Facebook or Flickr.

There are different types of archival records. This may include records of individuals, such as an artist, or a writer. Records here may include correspondence, sketchbooks and draft manuscripts.

There are also business or institutional records, including archives such as Boots (the chemists), or university archives, which may hold advertising material, such as posters, and records such as minutes from meetings. You can also find records from local government, which may include coroner files and parish records (which include records of births/deaths and marriages).

Records can be found at universities (depending on subjects taught), local record offices and businesses. No single archive covers one single subject, for example, an artist archive, as well as covering the artistic process, can also cover areas of social history, including politics, feminism, and art education.

Understanding the archive catalogue

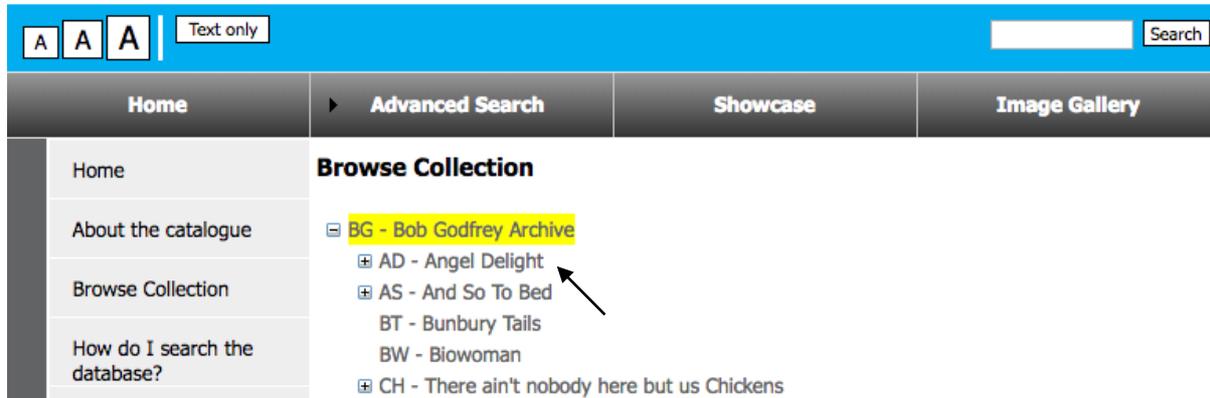
To understand how to use an archive catalogue, it is necessary to look at why an archive is catalogued differently to library material.

An archive can only be understood within the context of a creator, which may be an individual person (such as an artist, or writer) or an organisation (such as a university, or artist book publisher). An archive has to reflect the way a creator has organised it, so an archive is always in a hierarchy.

Here is an example of an archival catalogue – Bob Godfrey’s; an animator’s archive. At the top level, it says Bob Godfrey Archive, Fonds Level, which is an archival term for collection level. The top level or collection level describes all the items within the archive.

The screenshot shows the website for the University of the Creative Arts Archives and Special Collections. The header includes the university logo and the text 'Archives and Special Collections'. Below the header is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Advanced Search', 'Showcase', and 'Image Gallery'. The main content area is titled 'Browse Collection > Record' and features a record for 'BG - Bob Godfrey Archive'. The record includes a 'Ref No' (BG), a 'Title' (Bob Godfrey Archive), and a 'Description' (The archive contains records relating to Bob Godfrey's Animation work. The archive is 2D hand drawn animation. Records include scripts, pre-production, production, post production, publicity, distribution, and exhibitions. These include scripts, storyboards, correspondence, animation cels, pencil drawings, award certificates and photographs. The archive also includes personal drawings from Bob Godfrey and photographs of Bob Godfrey, his animator and scriptwriter colleagues, and his family and friends. The animation shorts, films, commercials, and images that we have records of the processes of include: Angel Delight, And So to Bed, Basil and Bertha Blueberry, Brumble Brumble, Bunbury Tails, Biowoman, Chickens).

The next level is a series level. The series level are records arranged together because of coming from the same filing system (of the organisation or individual), or relating to the same activity. These may include governor minutes, personal correspondence or work records, for example.



The next level shown is a sub-series level. There are not always sub-series levels needed. A sub-series of records are records that are a sub-set within the series level. For example, within this catalogue, the series level is further broken into pre-production records, and production records.

A file level is a group of items within a series, relating to the same activity, or filing process, for example, a file of correspondence between two people. An item is the smallest possible unit, which may be a letter in the correspondence.

The archive catalogue goes from the general to the specific. The further you go down the catalogue, the more detailed each description is. For example, the top level provides a general description of what material is in the archive and general keywords relating to all material, while item levels provide descriptions of individual names, and specific keywords.

A few difficulties that emerge within cataloguing include that it is not always possible to know the creator's intended filing system, or to know for a fact that there was even a filing system.

Descriptions about archives is also a key issue, as what is important to one person, may not be important to another.

Appraisal theory, which means what you keep and what you don't keep, is an area archivists need to explore when cataloguing – this can often be difficult as research trends are hard to anticipate.

For further information about any of these areas including archival cataloguing theory please contact us at archives@uca.ac.uk.

Using the archive catalogue

The catalogue has various different tabs. 'About the catalogue' provides a description of the archives and special collections at UCA's campuses. Please note that not all collections within UCA may appear on the catalogue, due to cataloguing backlogs. You can also use the 'browse' facility to look at our collections.

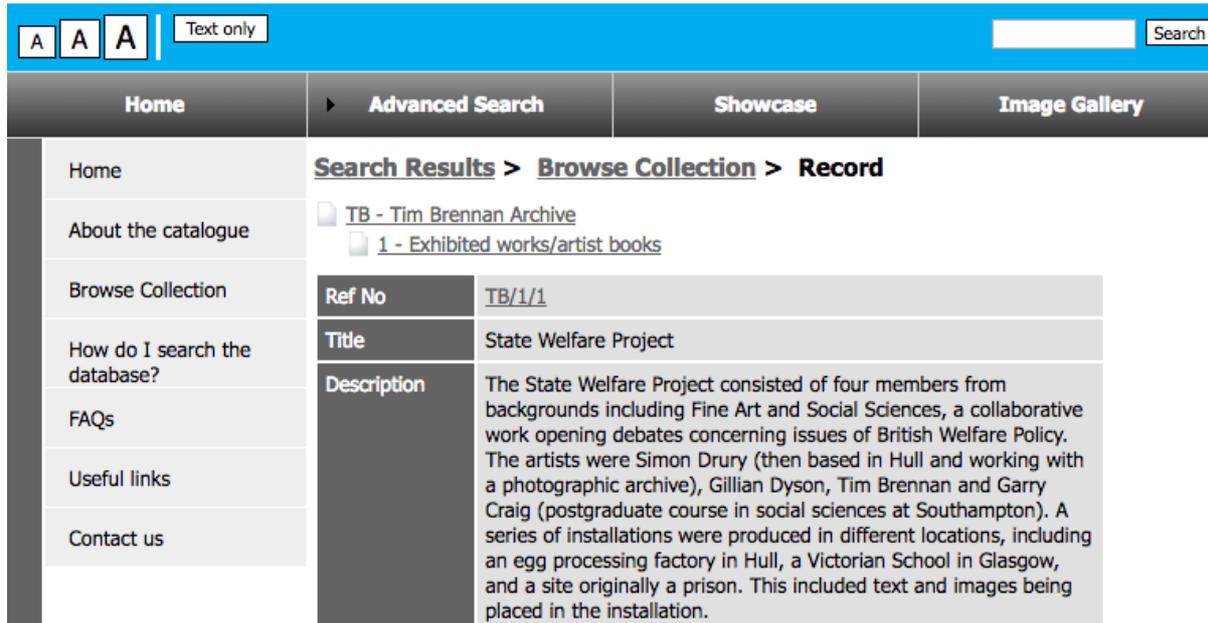
For queries on searching the catalogue, you can click on 'search the database', which brings up instructions for both 'simple search' and 'advanced search'. To use simple search, go back to the home page and use the 'search box' in the top right hand corner. The simple search searches across both the title and the description. If you add more than one word, then the search box will bring up both terms but not necessarily together. To search for an exact phrase, use double quotation marks. For example, putting in 'working class women' will bring up everything with the words working, class and women but "working class women" will only bring up items with that exact phrase.

To undertake an advanced search or more detailed search, click on the 'advanced search' button. This will bring up three options: Catalogue (search the whole catalogue), Person (search for a person, ie. Rhodes, Zandra) and Places (search records relating to a place). For further details on how to search, click on 'search the database' in the left hand column.

When search results appear, scroll through the search results using the First, Previous, Next and Last options. To open a catalogue record, click on the Ref No (reference number). A more detailed record will then appear. The record will also tell you what archive it is from, for example, TB/1/1 is from the Tim Brennan archive.

The screenshot shows the website header with the logo for the University of the Creative Arts Archives and Special Collections. Below the header is a navigation bar with tabs for Home, Advanced Search, Showcase, and Image Gallery. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area displays search results for 'TB - Tim Brennan Archive', specifically '1 - Exhibited works/artist books'. A table shows the record details for 'TB/1/1', with the title 'State Welfare Project'.

Ref No	TB/1/1
Title	State Welfare Project



[A](#) [A](#) [A](#) |

[Home](#) | [Advanced Search](#) | [Showcase](#) | [Image Gallery](#)

[Home](#) | [About the catalogue](#) | [Browse Collection](#) | [How do I search the database?](#) | [FAQs](#) | [Useful links](#) | [Contact us](#)

Search Results > Browse Collection > Record

[TB - Tim Brennan Archive](#)
 [1 - Exhibited works/artist books](#)

Ref No	TB/1/1
Title	State Welfare Project
Description	The State Welfare Project consisted of four members from backgrounds including Fine Art and Social Sciences, a collaborative work opening debates concerning issues of British Welfare Policy. The artists were Simon Drury (then based in Hull and working with a photographic archive), Gillian Dyson, Tim Brennan and Garry Craig (postgraduate course in social sciences at Southampton). A series of installations were produced in different locations, including an egg processing factory in Hull, a Victorian School in Glasgow, and a site originally a prison. This included text and images being placed in the installation.

If you wish to access the record, note down the reference number, and go to the 'contact us' section. If you email us, we can let you know how you access the record.

For information regarding accessing the archives, click on FAQs (frequently asked questions). This will give information regarding how to view the material and the opening times. Useful links provide information regarding other artistic archives, and ways of accessing other relevant archives and special collections.

The glossary provides information regarding unfamiliar archival terms that appear in the catalogue.

Find out how to contact us on the 'contact us' tab (archives@uca.ac.uk).

Other features include the Showcase and Image Gallery, which highlight interesting areas in our archives.

Handling of archives

To ensure the safety and future enjoyment of these collections, when handling the archives and special collections, please abide by the following rules. If unsure about handling any documents, staff will be glad to help with any queries.

- Food and drink should not be consumed as it can attract pests and damage material.
- Use pencils only, not pens, scissors or sellotape.
- Please leave rucksacks and large bags at the side of the room, to be looked after by staff.
- Do not lean on documents.
- Do not fold documents unnecessarily.
- Scanning will be undertaken at the discretion of the Archivist or Librarian in charge. Some rare books and archives will be too fragile to have photocopying undertaken. In both cases, you may be asked to sign a copyright form.
- Photography will be allowed without the flash. You may be asked to sign a copyright form.
- Cotton gloves will not be asked to be worn unless you are handling photographs or acetate cels, as wearing cotton gloves can cause clumsiness, which will mean a greater possibility of paper being torn.
- Self-adhesive/gummed labels should only be used on the exterior of folders.
- Brass clips to secure material only, not staples, sellotape or rubber bands.

Some useful links about looking after your records can be found on the [British Library's website](#).

Searching for archives – externally to UCA

When looking for archives across the UK and beyond, it is useful to be aware what material you are looking for, as different institutions will hold different types of records. For example, local government record offices will hold local government records, including coroners' files, museums will hold records complementary to their objects, and universities will hold records related to their research interests, and relating to the history of the institution. The National Archives look after Government records.

[Archives Hub](#) enables you to 'search across descriptions of archives held at over 250 institutions across the UK'. This includes the ability to search for more than one keyword, and includes tips on searching for keywords, subject terms, or via the regional search.

[Archiving the Arts](#) was 'a [National Archives] initiative to ensure that the records of the arts in the UK are well cared for and accessible, and that their value is recognised by the people who create and look after them and by the wider public'.