

Improving Student Access to Collections: the Department of Typography

Context

As part of its overall funding, CETL-AURS was awarded capital funding of £940,000 to invest in refurbishing teaching spaces across the University and to purchase state-of-the-art teaching equipments such as smartboards, visualisers and microscopes. The purpose of the capital investment was to enable and enhance the use of collections in teaching.

In Typography the collections had always been used in teaching and learning, but over time had become muddled. In addition there was no electronic catalogue of the contents, thereby making teaching using the collections limited in scope.

Aim

The project consisted of two parts: to sort the collections in to categories and re-house them in archivally-sound materials, and to design and populate an on-line database so that both staff and students could access the full collections.

Resources and Processes

The project was managed by the Departmental Curator of Archives and Collections with additional staff brought in to undertake the sorting and rehousing of the materials, to provide IT support, and to introduce students to the new ways of organising the materials.

In order to re-house the collection, special archivally-sound plan chests and storage materials were purchased. In addition specialist equipment such as a slide scanner and magnifiers, as well as a smartboard and laptops, were bought to assist in the use of collections material in teaching. Finally the space was re-organised and a dedicated area for student to use the materials created.

As part of the task of sorting and re-housing of the collections, a database was created to record descriptions and locations of the materials.

Results

The outcome of this project has been to provide a dedicated area for the Lettering, Printing and Graphic Design Collections at Reading. The collections have been sorted and re-housed in suitable archival furniture and a database recording description and location has been created. Students are benefiting from having space to work and by being able to locate the materials they need.

Sustainability

This project is now complete and does not require any further support.

Further information

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