New Frontiers - University Links

University Links is part of the outreach section of our Activity Plan, designed to bring students into the archives and promote the use of archives amongst courses across the university. Whilst we already have strong links with the History Department, this programme is designed to broaden that scope and reach out to other departments whose students may prefer to use archives as inspirational rather than source material. This year we have already welcomed students from Textiles, Architecture and English, who have used archives as a creative jumping off point for their own work.

We offer an Introduction to Archives talk which describes how to begin working with Archives and also includes a tour of the new Heritage Quay facilities. We continue to offer skills sessions on palaeography (historical handwriting) and are building awareness of our facilities amongst students by hosting Schools and Open Days for Schools and Colleges Liaison.

Heritage Quay actively supports the university’s commitment to providing students with work and voluntary placements that help them to build vocational and professional skills. In the past year we have hosted four students working on curating an exhibition on the History of Education hosted in the centre, two students who have catalogued in detail parts of larger sport and music collections, and seven students who worked to clean and preserve aspects of the collection in order to make them as widely accessible as possible. Two of our former placement students have gone on to apply for postgraduate study to train as archivists.

History students on the “Twentieth Century Britain” course use digitised version of archive material on iPads to explore the history of the British in India. Digital learning is supplemental to viewing archive material, as academics are keen not to lose the link to the original documents.

Our work placement and volunteer students carry out vital work preserving and cataloguing our collections. In cataloguing terms they contributed 0.4fte in the past year.