



ARCHIVE READER GUIDELINES

Admission

- The Archive reading room is open to all members of the public by appointment. Appointments are available on Mondays and Tuesdays, 10am-1pm, 2-5pm.
- Requests to view material must be made at least two weeks in advance, preferably by e-mail to archives@clare.cam.ac.uk. Please give a brief description of your intended research, along with details of the exact material you would like to see on your visit (with reference codes from the catalogues where possible). You may of course request to see further material during your visit, following discussion with the collections staff on duty.
- Reading space is very limited so if you intend to bring anyone to assist you please do let us know as we will need to book a seat for them as well.
- Admission is dependent upon the observance of our guidelines, and is at the discretion of the College.

General regulations

1. All visitors to the Archive must sign in on entering the office, and will be informed at the beginning of their visit that CCTV is operational in the College at all times.
2. On your first visit, we will require you to complete and sign a Readers Admission Form to confirm you understand and are happy to comply with our guidelines on using the archive. We also ask you to bring a form of identification which includes your permanent address (e.g. driving licence), to verify the details you give on your Admission Form.
3. An invigilator will be present in the office at all times to assist readers and supervise the use of archive material.
4. There is a closure period of 50 years from the date of creation on all College records. We are governed by the provisions of the Copyright, Design and Patents Act (1988) and Data Protection Act (1998) in our custody of the archive, as a result we may be prevented from allowing you to copy or view material if it would infringe the rights of third parties. We will of course discuss this with you should the need arise.
5. Digital photography of non-photographic archival material by readers is welcomed. We will ask you to complete a form, listing any items which you have photographed during your visit. We regret that other copying devices, such as handheld scanners, may not be used, and tracing is not permitted, owing to the possibility of damage to the documents.
6. No study materials may be taken out of the Archive office.
7. We need to provide as sterile an environment as possible for our archive material, so please ensure you wash your hands before handling material and do not eat or drink in the office. (This includes bottles of water, chewing gum, cough sweets etc.)
8. You will be asked to stow your bag, briefcase or laptop case behind the invigilator's desk when there are archive materials in the office, so come prepared to remove anything you may need during study. We have very limited space so please do not bring any large bags or suitcases to the archive.
9. While archive documents are in the office, you cannot use ink pens, biros, crayons or any other writing implements which may permanently mark the material. Making notes in pencil or on a laptop is fine as it is not detrimental to the documents.

10. We should be grateful if you would keep mobile phones on silent and only make or answer calls when outside.

Safe handling guidelines

To help us ensure the long-term preservation of our collections here at Clare, please adhere to the following guidelines while handling archive material:

11. When consulting bound volumes we will provide you with one of our book rests — it is important that these are used correctly to avoid damage to the spine of the book. The invigilator will place the book on the rest for you and remove it when you are finished. Manuscripts and books should never be turned face downwards when open.
12. If leaving a bound volume on a book rest for any length of time (e.g. over lunch), please make sure it is closed before you leave. There are acid-free slips provided in the Reading Room to mark your place.
13. When viewing unbound manuscripts, please be careful to keep them flat and centrally on the table (not falling off the edge!) and take care not to lean on them while making notes. Tracing is not permitted in the Reading Room — please ask the invigilator about our reprographics services (photocopying and scanning) instead.
14. Files of documents and manuscripts need to be kept in their original order. Please turn each page face down as you go through a file, to ensure the papers remain in the correct order.
15. When turning pages please take care not to lick your fingers — any kind of moisture is detrimental to manuscripts! — and not to bend or crease the corners of the paper.
16. In general, avoid touching the manuscripts wherever possible. Even with clean hands, microscopic oils and dirt build up on the fingers, accelerating deterioration of paper on contact — we must do all we can to avoid this.
17. We limit the number of files/items which you can read at one time — this is to avoid the mixing of items between files and allows us to keep an eye on things more easily. If you have a particular need to view more than two files at a time, please speak to the invigilator.
18. If you have any concerns about handling, or find a particularly fragile document, please don't hesitate to raise it with the invigilator.
19. Before leaving the office, readers must return all materials to the member of staff on duty who will check them. Readers remain responsible for any materials issued to them until they are returned and checked.