



arkivum
Bringing archived data to life

CASE STUDY

THE UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON



About the University of East London

The University of East London (UEL) is a Post-92 institution with a long history of serving its local community in the borough of Newham and a vision of being a careers-led university. It has around 13,000 on campus students across six schools which provide undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, as well as around 5000 students at partner institutions.

The 2014 REF demonstrated UEL had almost doubled its output of world-leading research, with particular strengths in psychology, health, and communication & cultural studies. UEL was awarded 2nd place worldwide for reducing inequalities in the 2020 Times Higher Education rankings and their Office for Institutional Equity, with specific responsibility for addressing inequalities within the institution, is the first of its kind in the UK.





Imperative to Safeguard Research and Special Collection Data

UEL's primary focus had traditionally been archiving data from research projects conducted by their academics. However, this focus has evolved with UEL's Archivist, Paul Dudman, in the Library, Archives, and Learning Services having acquired a rich collection of oral histories and other digital objects over recent years.

UEL has been home to the Refugee Council Archive since 2002 and many of the Library Archive's oral histories focus on refugees and migration, including Voices of Kosovo in Manchester (VOKIM), Gujarati Yatra, and Crossing the Borders which focusses on the testimonies of people who migrated to the UK from China after the Second World War.

The data takes the form of a broad range of audio-visual files (.WAV; .MOV; .MP3; .MP4), images (JPEG), and text-based documents (.PDF; .DOCX). These materials are of value and importance to scholars and the communities whose heritage has been captured. It was therefore imperative to ensure the robust long-term safeguarding and accessibility of these records.



UEL's Digital Safeguarding Journey

The university has been an Arkivum customer for several years. Although it was a service the university believed in, it had historically been underutilised due to the research data archiving practice having not yet been embedded at the institution.

However, with Open Science becoming a greater priority at UEL, Arkivum will play an increasingly key role in research infrastructure going forward. This is in addition to the renewed focus on the Archives collection data.

Data security and integrity are of paramount importance to UEL and the developments released in the latest version of Arkivum's Perpetua (V5), including UEL's move from an on-prem solution to SaaS, the ease of ingest, and enhanced record management, all convinced the university of the benefits of the continued use of Arkivum for both research data and the project to safeguard the Archives collections.

The main challenges the team faced in successfully archiving this data were logistical. These primarily were;

- Finding the best method and format for the Archivist to provide the large datasets to the team for ingest
- Fixing corrupt zip files
- Using the most appropriate File Transfer Protocol (FTP) client.

UEL's Digital Safeguarding Journey *(Cont.)*

Arkivum ably supported UEL on this journey onto the new version, offering assistance while ingesting data into the new system and familiarising the team with the dashboard, particularly in relation to the records managements.

As referenced previously, during the project UEL identified the requirement to store and safeguard their Archive data, in addition to the research data. Expanding the project beyond this research data has enabled the organisation to maximise the value gained from the solution, by securing their institutional and community assets for the future.

There are two important lessons that can be learnt from this; the first is to ensure that anyone working on a digital safeguarding project is maximising the use of their archiving solution to ensure that all appropriate data is being archived and that stakeholders, whoever they may be, can access that information.

The second lesson is that often the best approach is to start smaller and then expand from there. In this way initial funding can be secured at a lower level and the value of the solution can be demonstrated, justifying additional investment in digital safeguarding.

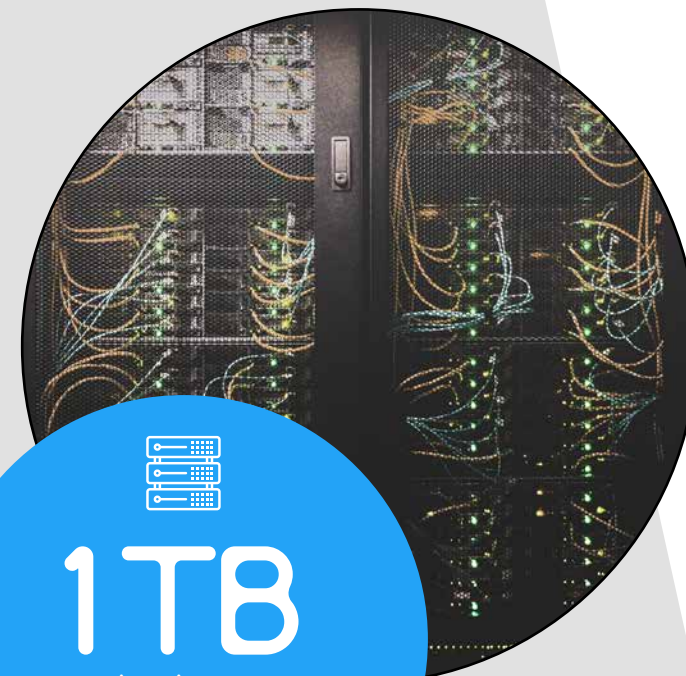



The Benefits of Effective Digital Archiving

Beyond the foundations of secure long-term storage and the data integrity guarantee, the Arkivum solution enables the university greater control and flexibility in managing the data in the archive. This shift has resulted in greater accessibility to the information, rather than simply transferring a dataset and ultimately forgetting about it.

Other benefits UEL have realised from the solution include;

- Simple ingest of the data via the WebDav. Around 1 terabyte has also been ingested to the system using an sFTP integration
- Single sign-on (SSO) ensures easy but secure access to the dashboard
- The dashboard provides clear information on activity in each of their data-pools
- The audit trail provides better oversight of who has accessed the archive.
- File management functions, such as creating record sets
- Metadata upload
- Setting of retention rules for the data.




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The last 2 years have seen UEL's approach to digital archiving evolve from a focus on research data to an expanded strategy including the Library's archive collections. The role played by the Arkivum solution has been key to this, allowing us to better manage data as we scale up the volume being archived.

Carly Lightfoot
Scholarly Communications Manager, UEL

About Arkivum

Arkivum is recognised internationally for its expertise in the archiving and digital preservation of valuable data and digitised assets in large volumes and multiple formats. The long-term security, integrity and accessibility of data is crucial for all Arkivum's clients and partners, who share a commitment to good practice in its stewardship and governance.

Arkivum's specialist software and services are chosen by major institutions and commercial organisations in a diversity of sectors, including life sciences, research (CERN), financial services, and organisations in higher education, culture and heritage. Confident in Arkivum's reputation and resources, they are in a position to maximise insight and discovery by deriving optimum long-term value from their data, collections and intellectual property.

Headquartered in the UK, with presence in the US, Arkivum advocates the use of the FAIR principles in data management: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. Arkivum is also certified in ISO 9001 and 27001.

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