
***bfi* COLLECTING POLICY FOR MOVING IMAGES**

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1 Introduction

1. The *bfi*'s purpose is to champion moving image culture in all its richness and diversity, across the UK, for the benefit of as wide an audience as possible and to create and encourage debate.
2. Moving image culture includes cinema, television, documentary and social history, artists and experimental works and the new forms of moving image media enabled by digital technology.
3. The *bfi* is also responsible for collecting examples of such works to create a record of the nation's moving image heritage, making it widely accessible and ensuring that the collections will be available for future generations to enjoy. The *bfi*'s constitution is described in appendix A.
4. This document is the Collecting Policy for the *bfi*'s moving image collections of film, video and digital images. Separate policies cover related collections of stills, posters and designs, the Museum of the Moving Image collection, and the collections of the *bfi* National Library.
5. It describes the "cultural arena" in which the *bfi* operates, sets the selection criteria for acquisitions and defines the procedure for collecting. It also describes the process by which material may be removed from the collections. It serves to inform stakeholders and the public of the *bfi*'s activities.
6. The policy will formally be reviewed every three years.

2 The collections

7. The *bfi* holds one of the largest and most important archives of moving image material in the world. These comprise around:
 - 50,000 fiction film titles
 - 100,000 titles broadly categorised as non-fiction.
 - 575,000 television titles.
 - Recordings of the proceedings of the two houses of Parliament and select committees.

The current collections are described in detail in appendix B.

8. The collecting policies of the *bfi* have evolved over time. While always driven by opportunities and dependent on the cooperation of donors, for many years advice from external Selection Committees ensured that the moving image collections had an international focus, with less emphasis on British production (television collecting was always British-oriented). In the 1970s the collecting practices for the moving image collections expanded to include all domestic production.
9. The previous version of this document - *bfi* Collections Department Acquisition and Disposal Policy - was approved by *bfi* Governors in March 2000. The previous edition was the first formal collecting policy for the moving image collections, defined and bounded the *bfi*'s holdings, confirmed

the focus of the collections on British and British-related materials, placed collections within a preservation and access context, and established acquisition priorities for a three year period.

10. This 2004 edition of the Collecting Policy provides more context for the purpose of the *bfi*'s collecting activities, reduces the focus on precise criteria to allow for curatorial discretion while establishing subject categories with guidance for the desired breadth and depth of holdings. Overall, this edition is less prescriptive, with an emphasis on the purpose of our collecting.

3 The cultural arena

11. The moving image is a distinctive part of modern visual culture – an art form, a communication tool and a form of entertainment. It also provides a unique documentary record spanning from the late 1890s to the present.
12. Although each of these can be seen as distinct and separate, the boundaries between them are blurred. Many works combine elements of all four. With the passage of time, the moving image can also be interpreted from perspectives not intended by the maker.
13. Moving image culture includes material produced and viewed on a wide range of media including film and video, and distributed through different channels, including the cinema, broadcast and others.
14. It also includes new cultural products and records enabled by modern technology: moving images embedded or presented with sounds and texts; interactive computer games with close links to film culture; animated shorts produced with games authoring tools; CCTV and webcam images; works are created for websites, game consoles, PDAs and mobile telephones. Here, the transitory, cross-platform, and non-narrative nature of the product, and the usage constraints of hardware, encryption and digital rights present new challenges.
15. Moving image culture is also inherently trans-national. As the communication medium of choice in the modern, globalised world, it cannot be otherwise. Nor is it possible fully to understand moving image culture without a global perspective.
16. The history and heritage of moving image culture in the UK embraces all of these forms and includes material produced around the world.

4 Collecting

17. The moving image collections are part of the national collection, and *bfi* has specific, defined responsibilities for their development and care.
18. Materials are collected both to meet the Royal Charter objective to create a record of the UK's moving image history and heritage (the **preservation collection**). They are also collected because they can be used in support of the *bfi*'s wider mission to champion moving image culture in all its diversity, and to create and encourage debate (the **reference collection**). The *bfi* has an obligation to provide access to both.
19. Outside the purpose of this collecting policy, the *bfi* also holds the **distribution collection**, consisting of prints of films licensed from the

rightsholders to ensure their accessibility in the United Kingdom. The *bfi* does not accept preservation responsibility for this collection, as these copies are held for a specific purpose, and replacement copies are accessible from the rightsholders.

4.1 General principles

20. The scope of the cultural arena is intentionally voluminous, including, for example, artist installations, amateur film and hybrid new media products, as well as cinema and television. It is international in scope and not confined to any one distribution channel or medium.
21. The *bfi* does not, however, aim to collect exhaustively in all areas: the resources are not available and it would lead to duplication of the work of other organisations.
22. The decision to accept material into the national collections is multi-faceted, and subject to three tests:
 - Cultural and/or historical significance
 - Fitness for purpose
 - Affordability
23. These three tests are described in detail below. They are listed in order of precedence. They must, however, be considered individually and with respect to each other. They are independent of the medium in which a particular moving image work was created.
24. Priorities for collections development will be expressed in annual business plans and project plans.

4.2 Cultural significance

25. The overriding criterion for acceptance into the national collection of moving image material for the United Kingdom is that the work should be of cultural and/or historical importance to the British people, recognising the diversity of British communities.
26. Because this is the national collection of moving image material in the UK, acquisition of British-produced and British-related material will be prioritised over non-British material, especially for the preservation collection. However, much non-British material is also of cultural importance and some non-British material may be highly relevant to particular cross-cultural audiences for the reference collection.
27. The *bfi* does not aim to hold a comprehensive collection, even for British-produced material. It aims to collect works that have or had real cultural impact, or historical significance, or that are highly representative of production, society or cultural values, or which are valuable for educational purposes or as information resources for study. Examples include:
 - High quality productions, where the production values and treatment are of a high artistic merit or information content.
 - Cultural reference points: productions that will be referenced regardless of quality or style.

- Influential works or collections that have had significant impact on British moving image culture, measured through commercial success, critical acclaim or influence.
- Representative works that illustrate production or distribution, with an emphasis on new cultural forms, formats and distribution channels as they appear.
- Portrayals of society: drama series, soaps, magazine style programmes, minority programming.
- Items which help to create a composite picture of the social history of the nation, for example, a prominent person's career or the development of a scientific technique.
- Works which illustrate everyday consumption of the moving image, particularly popular television seen in the context of its transmission.
- Social-historical records including actualité material, records of people, places, events and processes, cultural histories, news.
- Items which record developments in scientific, medical or industrial history.
- Examples of the moving image as art, the avant-garde and experiment.
- Items which are characteristic of contemporary attitudes.
- Works representative of the *bfi* or its activities.

Detailed guidance on subject areas and depth of coverage, priorities for proactive collections development and collecting opportunities will be expressed in annual business and project plans.

28. Materials offered to the *bfi* that do not meet the cultural significance criterion, but which are not known to be preserved elsewhere, will generally be referred to an appropriate alternative archive or the rights holder. An exception may be made where rights-holders and archives in their country of origin have no interest in their preservation, or lack adequate facilities, or where the works may be endangered for political or other reasons.

4.3 Fitness for purpose

29. There are three distinct but inter-related aspects to fitness for purpose. First is clarity about whether the material is being held for preservation or reference. From this flow the issues surrounding technical characteristics and appropriate usage rights.
30. Material that meets the cultural criteria and is not preserved elsewhere will be placed in the **preservation collection**. Such material is accorded the strongest protection against deaccession and disposal (section 7, below). It receives the highest standards of care, with special controls to guard against damage or loss through use (see *bfi* Collections Care Policy).
31. The *bfi* must have confidence in preservation: if there is doubt about the survival or availability of material elsewhere then material will tend to be designated for preservation.
32. Material that is judged to be adequately preserved elsewhere (ideally in another public sector organisation, although major studios, for example,

normally care for materials to an acceptable standard, in view of their commercial value) may still be acquired, but will generally be placed in the **reference collection**.

33. The fundamental test is that it must be replaceable, meaning that a new copy can be made from materials in another public-sector archive or other reliable source.
34. Material that is replaceable and designated for reference is not afforded the same level of protection against damage or loss as preservation materials, nor is it given special protection from disposal. However, in view of the cost of replacement, it is still subject to an appropriate standard of care.
35. The *bfi* must have confidence in the replaceability criterion, and will carry out examination and comparison and make enquiries of other archives as required.
36. The requirement for preservation dictates certain preferred technical features:
 - For film, early generation materials such as original camera negatives or pre-print materials such as internegatives or fine-grain duplicating positives are preferred. For film sound materials, similar priorities apply.
 - For video, similarly, master edited tape is preferred, with general emphasis on professional and broadcast standard formats.
 - For born-digital material, consideration will be given to preserving playback hardware and software alongside the content; otherwise, the material may be converted to a standard preservation format.
37. Reference materials, on the other hand, must be of sufficient quality for the intended use and conform to preferred technical features:
 - Common exhibition or distribution formats are preferred such as combined prints, digibeta and VHS tapes, and DVD.
 - The material must be of sufficient quality for the intended use.
38. When acquiring materials the *bfi* will therefore always seek to do so with the minimum of restrictions on use. Use may include some or all of:
 - Study by students, researchers and other members of the public
 - Educational and teaching use including screenings for students and teacher training and inclusion in teachers' resource packs
 - Screening in *bfi* seasons and those of appropriate regional organisations
 - Use in *bfi* displays or touring exhibitions or publications
 - Use in approved non-*bfi* festivals/events
 - Online access via public kiosks or the internet
39. Acquisition without at least some of these usage rights will only be considered if there is a risk that culturally significant material will otherwise be lost, or the material is subject to statutory restrictions on access (some public record material deposited by the National Archives, for example).
40. Where possible, commercial rights (distribution, footage sales, etc) will be acquired, resources permitting.

4.4 Affordability

41. As a matter of general principle, cultural significance and utility take precedence over immediate costs of acquisition or ongoing costs including those of conservation, documentation and storage.
42. Nevertheless, the *bfi* recognises its responsibility to ensure the proper care and use of material and therefore takes into account limitations on collecting resulting from limitations in staffing, storage and conservation resources.
43. The *bfi* will seek, where possible, contributions from donors to the costs of acquisition and ongoing care, taking into account the terms and conditions of the donation, especially those concerned with use. Financial support from a donor may allow the acceptance of a more comprehensive sample of materials than would otherwise be selected.
44. Donors occasionally request complimentary copies of their own or other materials in return for donation. The resource implications of such requests can be significant and will be weighed carefully against other issues such as cultural significance and usage rights, and are subject to negotiation with the potential donor. Where the value of the material is felt to outweigh the cost of a complimentary copy, the request will normally be granted. Otherwise, it may be necessary to refuse the donation.
45. Access and copying arrangements can also be made for donors (and rights holders) to both preservation and reference materials, subject to costs and in accordance with the *bfi* Collections Care Policy.

5 Policy links with other organisations

46. In the UK, organisations with a specific remit for collecting moving image material include the *bfi* National Film and Television Archive, the Imperial War Museum Film and Video Archive, the BBC, the Scottish Screen Archive, the National Screen and Sound Archive of Wales, and the regional film archives.
47. The National Archives (of which the Public Records Office is now part) is responsible for selecting public record moving image materials, but contracts with the *bfi* and the IWM to provide a preservation and access service for moving image materials on traditional media.
48. Other national organisations also hold moving image and related material, such as the British Library, museums and galleries such as the National Museum of Science & Industry and Tate Modern. There are also many non-national collections of moving image material in the public sector, including local authority museums and archives, universities and independent museums.
49. The *bfi* will work with these organisations, through the Film Archive Forum (FAF) and other appropriate means, to share information and draw up guidelines and joint policies to ensure materials are held in the most appropriate organisation, that unnecessary duplication is avoided, and that synergies are identified and exploited.
50. Many private collections also exist. Here, the *bfi* will seek to establish relationships wherever possible, with a view to ensuring that culturally important material not held in the public sector is preserved.

51. The *bfi* also will seek to develop policies that take account of international standards by working with appropriate regional and international organisations including the Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA), the Federation International d'Archives du Film (FIAF) and the International Federation of Television Archives (FIAT/IFTA).

6 Acquisition procedure

52. Materials may be acquired by donation, purchase, transfer, exchange, copying, recording, deposit or loan.
53. Acceptance of material by recording or copying, or on deposit or loan is subject to a written agreement or equivalent legal understanding between the depositor and the *bfi*.
54. For material donated, purchased, transferred or exchanged, the *bfi* will not acquire any item unless it can acquire full and valid title to the item in question.

6.1 Acquisitions process

55. The Collections are defined as being the materials for which the *bfi* is legally responsible, on behalf of the nation, which are identified by the inventory, which records our holdings, their provenance and their current location.
56. It also includes materials that have been assessed against the criteria set out in this Policy and scheduled for accession, but which have not yet been put on inventory. A glossary of these technical terms is included at appendix C.
57. In principle, the addition of material to the Collection requires the approval of the Head of Curatorial Group. In practice, decision-making is normally delegated to individual curators, in accordance with their specialism.
58. The Head of Curatorial Group is responsible for ensuring that acquisition decisions are made in line with the Collecting Policy, including the assessment of materials against the collecting criteria and for ensuring that relevant sections of the *bfi* are informed and involved in the process.
59. All acquisitions will be recorded on the inventory and documented to record the rationale for the decision, with respect to all criteria in the Policy.

6.2 Acquisition Review Board

60. The *bfi* Acquisition Review Board, chaired by the *bfi* Director, with membership drawn from subject specialist curators, representatives from other *bfi* departments – Distribution, NFT, DVD Publishing, Bookings, Special Collections – and external advisers as appropriate, will advise on the implementation of the Collecting Policy.
61. The Review Board will meet quarterly to review acquisitions for the preceding quarter, potential acquisitions for the upcoming quarter, and any proposed deaccessions of works from the collection.
62. The Review Board will also review selected subject specialisms, using curatorial reports on existing holdings and acquisition plans, and how specific acquisitions support *bfi*'s cultural programme.

63. The Review Board will advise on whether to approve or reject acquisitions for which:
- There are major resource implications.
 - An appropriate balance between cultural significance, intended use, resource requirements and terms cannot be achieved.
 - The acquisition falls outside the Collecting Policy.

7 Deaccession and disposal

64. By definition, the *bfi* has a long-term purpose and holds permanent collections in relation to its Royal Charter objectives. The governing body accepts the principle that there is strong presumption against deaccession and disposal (see appendix C for definitions) of any items in the collections except as set out below.
65. Once a decision to deaccession and dispose of a work has been taken, priority will be given to ensuring the work is preserved in another public sector archive, although this will be subject to the terms of the acquisition agreement.
66. Any funds generated from disposal by sale will be applied for the benefit of the collections.

7.1 Reasons for deaccession

67. Authority to deaccession all copies of a production may be sought because of a review of the collections or following an assessment of individual works or items, and the item:
- No longer matches the cultural criteria in the Collecting Policy
 - Is a duplicate copy in excess of the needs of preservation or reference
 - Is damaged or deteriorated beyond repair or use
 - For reference material only, is of insufficient quality for intended use
68. Depositors and/or copyright owners occasionally request the return of material that the Archive would prefer to retain. This is exceptional and subject to negotiation and the terms and conditions of the original acquisition. In general, the Archive reserves the right to copy those elements before releasing them.

7.2 Deaccession authority

69. Most moving image material is reprographic in nature: it is designed to be copied. Moving image conservation depends on copying to overcome the inevitable deterioration of physical carriers and format obsolescence.
70. In most cases, our interest is primarily in the quality of the content, not the object (though some materials may be kept as examples of particular film formats or stock types, etc.), and it is normal for an archive to preserve content by copying and to hold multiple copies for different purposes.
71. Deaccession and disposal of duplicate copies is therefore a different matter to deaccession and disposal of unique materials, or all the materials associated with a work.

72. Hence, the level of authority for deaccession depends on whether the item is held for preservation or reference purposes, and whether it is a duplicate:
- Preservation collection materials that are not duplicate, or where all materials associated with the work are being considered en bloc, will be referred to the Director and the Acquisition review board, on the recommendation of the Head of the Curatorial Group.
 - For preservation collection materials that are duplicate, deaccession can be approved by the Head of the Curatorial group, acting on the recommendation of the relevant curator, who must obtain advice on the conservation aspects of the case.
 - For reference collection items, deaccession can be approved by the Head of the Curatorial group, acting on the recommendation of relevant curator, who should obtain advice on the material's fitness for use.
73. In cases where existing acquisition agreements require it, donors will be consulted about deaccession and, where necessary, asked for their approval. Full records will be kept of all deaccession decisions, which will require recommendation and approval signatures.
74. Note that material that is on the *bfi*'s premises but not been accessioned or scheduled for accession can be disposed of, subject only to specific provisions made in any provisional acquisition agreement.
75. The Head of the Curatorial Group is responsible for ensuring that deaccession decisions are made in line with this Policy, and for ensuring that relevant sections of the *bfi* are informed and involved in the process.

7.3 Reasons for disposal

76. There are only two:
- Either the work has been deaccessioned, in accordance with the procedures outlined above
 - Or it is on the *bfi*'s premises, assessed against acquisition criteria and not selected for acquisition.

7.4 Methods of disposal

77. Once approval for deaccession has been received, or material has been rejected at the acquisition stage, the materials will be disposed of by one of the routes described below.
78. Disposal will include arrangements for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned. Records of the disposal method for all material will be retained for audit purposes.

7.4.1 Transfer to another institution

79. Preference will always be given to offering items free of charge (except transport and insurance where applicable) to another public sector archive, where the terms of existing acquisition agreements permit and permission of the depositor and/or copyright owner can be obtained.
80. When disposing of material for which no copyright owner can be traced, it will first be offered to an appropriate public institution in the UK.

81. Where appropriate, material may also be offered to overseas national archives that are members of FIAF.

7.4.2 Return to donor / rights holder

82. Although the *bfi* may hold title to the physical material in its collections, it may not own the rights to exploit or reproduce that material. Hence, when considering disposal of an item in which such rights exist, disposal will be discussed and where necessary agreed with the rights holder, unless alternative provision was made in the acquisition agreement.
83. Priority is nevertheless given to retaining the item in a public institution and items may therefore be offered to another public institution with the donor/rights holder's agreement. Alternatively, at the donor/rights holder's request, material may be returned to the donor/rights holder or destroyed on their behalf.

7.4.3 Return to country of origin

84. In the case of material originating from overseas, materials designated for disposal will generally be referred to an appropriate public institution in the country of origin.
85. Care will be taken to ensure that any receiving institution in the country of origin is able to ensure the preservation of the materials in question.

7.4.4 Sale

86. Any monies generated from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. Ideally, this means the purchase of further acquisitions but expenditure on collections care may sometimes be justified.
87. If the item has been acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation, permission from that organisation may need to be sought.

7.4.5 Destruction

88. In the case of an item that is so badly deteriorated that there is no further use for it, destruction may be the only appropriate action. Destruction shall be documented and carried out in accordance with Health and Safety law and regulations.

Appendix A: Constitution of the *bfi*

The British Film Institute (*bfi*) was founded in 1933 and constituted under Royal Charter on 18 July 1983 (amended April 2000). The Charter sets out the following objectives:

- To encourage the development of the arts of film, television and the moving image throughout Our United Kingdom
- To promote their use as a record of contemporary life and manners
- To promote education about film, television and the moving image generally, and their impact on society
- To promote access to and appreciation of the widest possible range of British and world cinema
- To establish, care for and develop collections reflecting the moving image history and heritage of Our United Kingdom.

The *bfi* is governed by a Board whose Chairman is appointed by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. The Board of Governors appoints a Director who is responsible for achieving the objectives.

The task of establishing and caring for the collections is delegated to the National Film and Television Archive (NFTVA) and the *bfi* National Library. The Archive:

- Carries out research and develops relationships within the field of film, television and media studies in order to develop knowledge resources and direct collecting activities.
- Collects relevant materials for the National Collections.
- Documents the materials to facilitate access and maintain accountability.
- Conserves the materials to ensure that they will be available for future generations.
- Provides direct and mediated access to materials and information, through many channels and to the widest possible audience.
- Strives for high standards of collections care and customer service.

Appendix B: The Collections

The *bfi's* collection is one of the largest and most important moving image archives in the world. It comprises:

- 50,000 fiction film titles, including features, on all gauges of film and formats of videotape
- 100,000 titles broadly tracing the history of the use of the moving image in non-fictional settings and for non-fiction purposes
- An estimated 575,000 television titles including material recorded off-air, as it was seen by the viewer, as well as production and transmission material.
- Recordings on audio and video tape of the proceedings of the two houses of Parliament and select committees.

The Collection is of national and international importance as a record of the history and culture of filmmaking and television production, and as a record of the contemporary life of the UK from the late nineteenth century to the present.

It is an unparalleled resource for researchers, students, filmmakers and television producers, historians and any interested member of the public. It is an essential part of the *bfi's* purpose to champion moving image culture in all its richness and diversity, across the UK, for the benefit of as wide an audience as possible and to create and encourage debate.

The following paragraphs describe the collections in more detail.

1 Fiction Film

The collection currently numbers some 50,000 titles on all gauges of film from 8mm to 70mm and various formats of videotape. These have been collected both from UK and overseas donors and depositors, who include film and video distributors, production companies, laboratories, studios, other archives, trade organisations and individual filmmakers.

The majority are British produced or British related. There are also significant international holdings including silent films (some 80% of total output of silent film has been lost; surviving materials are found in archives around the world); abandoned titles, where rights-holders and archives in their country of origin have no interest in their preservation; and productions that may be endangered in their country of origin for political reasons.

The collection covers the range of fiction production from the earliest examples to recent Film Council sponsored titles, including experimental and avant-garde material, animation and student and amateur works. It comprises an exceptional collection of silent films, including the largest collection of 1920s British titles in the world and extensive holdings of material by major early producers. It is valuable not just as a record of the development of film production in Britain since its beginnings but also for its reflection of the different modes of film circulation in this country. The unrivalled collection of "quota quickies" illustrates the effects of government intervention in the film industry in the 1930s and we hold censor cuts and alternative edits of films made for different markets where available.

The main area of weakness in the collection in terms of feature holdings is from the late 1950s onwards, when the Archive did not focus on current collecting. Much of the material we do have from this period is well worn and colour-faded.

While the 1930s are relatively well covered, there are still important omissions, as highlighted by the “Missing Believed Lost” project set up in 1992. Holdings of British Avant-Garde, experimental film and video art are also weak.

Despite agreements built into Film Council funding contracts it has also proved difficult to acquire current production materials, especially shorts. There is currently no provision for research into or acquisition of ‘born digital’ material. The collection is currently under-represented in terms of films of specific interest to certain UK minority groups.

2 Non Fiction Film

The collection of approximately 100,000 titles broadly traces the history of the use of the moving image in non-fictional settings and for non-fiction purposes. As well as its place within British moving image culture, the collection forms a powerful record of contemporary life and events, from the end of the nineteenth century to the present. The collection also includes public record material as defined in the Public Records Act 1958, held on behalf of the National Archives.

Relative strengths in terms of subject matter include such subjects as national identity, industry, location, transport, gender, sport, leisure and arts, and science, medicine and natural history. It is particularly strong in areas such as newsreel and the documentary tradition from 1930-1960.

The collection ranges from the earliest British film known to survive: Birt Acres’ record of the 1895 Derby at Epsom to documentaries made by students at the National Film and Television School for their graduations.

The work of British Transport Films, and that sponsored by the National Coal Board – collections held almost in their entirety - well illustrate the dual function of the non fiction collections. Both are products of important public sector film sponsors, and provide rich records of the activities and impact of two of the most important nationalised industries in the UK. Similarly, early films by Mitchell and Kenyon provide a unique record of Edwardian Britain but have also prompted a re-evaluation of the place of non-fiction in early film.

Weaknesses in the collection have arisen largely because collecting is essentially opportunistic. The lack of funds for the purchase of new titles inevitably results in gaps in the collection and imbalances in subject coverage. Dependence on donation over purchase has also meant that in many cases we do not hold the quality preservation materials we require.

More generally, the collection inevitably reflects the availability of certain types of materials, for example, a huge proportion of Britain's early film heritage is believed lost. Even in areas of relative strength there are many gaps. Holdings of works by major filmmakers, such as Paul Rotha are not complete either in terms of titles held, or in terms of preservation materials of sufficient quality. Major areas and collections of both filmic and wider cultural significance are either poorly covered - such as film and video activism, cultural diversity, and amateur filmmaking - or are in private hands. In certain areas there are significant gaps, most notably feature length, theatrically-released documentaries recording popular culture (concert tours, artists' biographies, benefit tours, etc.) dating from the 1970s to the present day, and examples of non-TV broadcast video 'home entertainment' such as health and fitness, transport, sport and home improvement.

Other categories such as advertising, educational and training film and video, and amateur production are sampled rather than collected comprehensively, but the sampling is much less adequate in some cases than others. Of particular note, there is effectively no 'born digital' or purely network-distributed content in the collection, despite non-broadcast production being increasingly associated with these technologies.

Materials are held on film, videotape and other media including digital formats.

3 Television

The collection currently consists of approximately 575,000 titles and comprises mainly material recorded, off air, as the viewer saw it. Transmission material is also held.

The shape of the collection has been determined by statutory responsibility, first under the auspices of the Independent Television Commission and now OFCOM, for the archiving of a proportion of the output of ITV, Channel 4 and Channel 5. The BBC is responsible for archiving its own material, although BBC 1 & 2 have been recorded continuously, for access purposes, since 1990, and BBC 3 & 4 since their inception.

The collection is representative of broadcast terrestrial television output in the UK, with emphasis on British or British-related productions, but including material representing the regional and cultural diversity of the nation as a whole, and is especially strong on commercial terrestrial broadcasts from 1985.

As well as the recorded material, significant collections of transmitted programming donated by broadcasters include the Rediffusion Collection - Rediffusion was the earliest ITV contractor - and the related THIS WEEK and Jack Hylton Collections. The other main donated collections are those on obsolete video formats, including material on 2" and 1" analogue videotape during the sixties, seventies and early eighties by the BBC, ITV and Channel 4.

Through an agreement with the PRU (Parliamentary Recording Unit) we also house the videotape recordings of the two houses of Parliament and the various committees, together with audio records that pre-date the use of video.

The main weaknesses in the collection lie in the gap between the decline in the use of 2" videotapes from 1980 and the start of our off-air recording operation in 1985; representation of ITV regional programming 1985-93 is poor and we do not currently collect any material broadcast solely on satellite or cable channels.

The collection is mostly on videotape, though much of the earlier material is held on film or telerecordings with a large number of viewing copies on VHS.

Appendix C: Glossary of terms and abbreviations

Accession	Accession is the process of adding item(s) to the Inventory. Items on Inventory (ie, that have been accessioned) are formally part of the National Collections, and are protected from disposal as described in the collecting policy.
Acquisition	Acquisition is the process of transferring item(s) from a third party into the care of the <i>bfi</i> . It includes assessment against the Policy, negotiation of terms & conditions and accessioning (adding to the inventory).
Conservation	Prevention of deterioration through environmentally controlled storage; protection against damage, theft and disaster; repair for items that are damaged; copying and restoration.
Deaccession	De-accession is the process of removing an item from the Inventory. Items not on inventory are not considered part of the National Collections, and are not protected from disposal.
Disposal	Disposal is the process of removing item(s) from the <i>bfi</i> 's premises. It includes negotiating with the original donor (if the terms & conditions require), followed by transfer to another institution, repatriation, return to owner, donor or rights holder, sale and destruction.
Documentation	Inventory for accountability, basic access and rights management; cataloguing to explain cultural meaning and support access, technical data for good physical care.
Inventory	Formal and auditable list of the <i>bfi</i> 's holdings (traditionally a bound document, today a suitably secure database is acceptable).
Preservation	The process by which we ensure that materials remain available for use indefinitely. It includes documentation to keep track of materials and their cultural meaning, and conservation to protect materials from loss through theft, disaster, deterioration and misuse.
Preservation material	Material held in support of the mission to create a permanent record of the Nation's moving image history and heritage. It is accorded the strongest protection against deaccession and disposal and receives the highest standards of care, with special controls to guard against damage or loss through use.
Reference material	Material held in support of the <i>bfi</i> 's overall cultural objectives, but which is adequately preserved elsewhere. In view of the value of the material it will still be accorded an appropriate standard of care, but replaceability means that it is held primarily for use and will be regarded as ultimately expendable.