

Accessing the Avon Papers

The Avon Papers collection includes personal and political papers of Anthony Eden, 1st Earl of Avon, and Prime Minister, 1955-1957, including material on the Suez Crisis.

Please note that in addition to the usual ID, readers* requesting access to this collection need to supply in advance a brief statement of their research and a letter of introduction in order for permission to be obtained. The letter of introduction needs to be from someone who knows you well and is not a family member. It only needs to be brief, just a few lines explaining how they know you and confirming that they support your application to access archival material of the nature in which you are interested.

* University of Birmingham staff or University of Birmingham students do not need to submit this statement or letter of introduction.

The political and official papers include material relating to the offices he held: Secretary of State for the Dominions, 1939; Secretary of State for War, 1940; Foreign Secretary, 1941-1945 and 1951-1955; and Prime Minister, 1955-1957. The collection also includes private political and general correspondence, political diaries and notebooks, constituency correspondence, papers relating to elections; and texts and recordings of his speeches. These papers are of outstanding importance for the understanding of relationships in British conservative politics between 1925 and 1960 and include material ranging from his involvement with the Midlands, as an MP for Warwick & Leamington to world diplomatic manoeuvres from Locarno to Suez.

Most Conservative politicians of significance for 40 years are represented in the collection as well as many minor figures. The collection also includes papers relating to his chancellorship of the University of Birmingham and other offices. Personal papers include correspondence, papers relating to his education, press cuttings, photographs, personal diaries, materials relating to his publications, letters of congratulation, best wishes etc on significant events in his career. Family papers include some 18th century family documents; letters and other papers of his mother, Lady Sybil Eden; and correspondence with his brothers, Timothy and Nicholas, his wives, Beatrice Eden and Clarissa Eden, his sons, Simon and Nicholas and other relatives.