



Strategic
Collections
Advisory Group



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE

Minimum Standards for the Management of Cultural Collections

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Title page image: Inge King, *Sun Ribbon*, 1980-1982, black painted steel, University of Melbourne Art Collection, Acc. No. 1982.0023.000.000. Gift of Mrs Eileen Fox in memory of her parents Ernest and Fannie Kaye, 1983

1. Background

Since its inception in 1853, the University of Melbourne's cultural collection has grown to become one of the largest and most important in Australia. There are now over 30 recognised cultural collections, as well as individual heritage objects which do not form part of a collection.

The collections encompass a vast range of material and format types both tangible and intangible, including born digital and digitised collection material. Amongst other purposes, these cultural assets provide a platform for students, staff and the wider community to gain understanding of contemporary and traditional cultures, values and knowledges. Our cultural collections have been developed with the purpose of benefiting society through the transformative impact of education and research.

The University of Melbourne's *Collection Policy* ([MPF1309](#)) identifies the responsibilities of the collection custodians and the responsibility of the University to develop and manage its collections according to legislative and regulatory obligations, and professional and ethical codes and standards.

2. Purpose

The *Minimum Standards for the Management of Cultural Collections* (henceforth referred to as the *Standards*) sets out the minimum standards which the endorsed cultural collections of the University are required to satisfy to responsibly manage and develop the cultural collections.

Local cultural collection level guidelines and protocols are to be developed or reviewed in line with these *Standards*.

3. Application

The *Standards* apply to all endorsed cultural collections owned or in the permanent custodianship and stewardship of the University (listed in Appendix 3).

If a cultural collection is unable to be managed in accordance with the *Standards*, the matter should be considered by the Strategic Collections Advisory Group (SCAG), a sub-committee of the Museums and Collections Steering Committee. SCAG will consider all available and appropriate options for the collection, taking into account the collection's deaccession and disposal protocols, and make recommendations to the collection's Custodian and relevant governing body.

4. Governance, authority and responsibility

The University's cultural collections are managed in accordance with the *Collections Policy* ([MPF1309](#)) and under the broad governance of the Museums and Collections Steering Committee and the Library and Scholarly Services Advisory Group (LSSAG).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections are governed by the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy* ([MPF1289](#)) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Oversight Committee (ATSICHO Committee).

Non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Ancestral Remains and burial artefacts are governed by the *Human Remains and Burial Artefacts Policy* ([MPF1226](#)) and the University Repatriation Oversight and Compliance Committee (UROC Committee).

The designated Custodian of each cultural collection is responsible for the development and maintenance of local guidelines and protocols to develop, manage and govern the cultural collection according to ethical and professional standards, informed by relevant University policy and guidelines, including but not limited to the *Standards*.

The Collection Custodian will delegate the responsibility of the day-to-day operational management of each cultural collection to an identified role who is nominated as the Collection Manager.

The Museums and Collections Department is responsible for maintaining a register of the core documents, protocols and guidelines for each cultural collection (see 5.2.1 & 5.2.2).

5. Minimum standards for endorsed cultural collections

5.1 Codes of ethics and industry standards

The Collection Manager will actively comply with the code of ethics of an appropriate, recognised industry or professional organisation (e.g. Australian Museums and Galleries Association, International Council of Museums, Australian Society of Archivists, Australian Library and Information Association).

5.2 Required core documents, protocols and guidelines

5.2.1 Core documents

Each cultural collection is required to have the following in place prepared and maintained by the Collection Manager:¹

- **Statement of Purpose** clearly articulating the function that the collection fulfills.
- **Collection Strategy** that clearly articulates the collection's development goals in alignment with University of Melbourne strategy.
- **Significance Assessment** that is reflective of the current state and scope of the collection.

Approval and noting: These documents will be submitted for approval by the collection's relevant governance advisory group or committee and Custodian. On local approval, each document is to be submitted to the Strategic Collections Advisory Group for noting.

Review: Each core document will be reviewed on a regular scheduled basis (at least once every five years) to ensure currency. Any revised version is to be submitted for approval and noting as outlined above.

Availability: The Collection Custodian will ensure that the Statement of Purpose, the Collection Strategy and the Statement of Significance from the Significance Assessment are made accessible to interested parties.

Records management: All core documents will be managed by the Collection Manager in accordance with the University's *Records Management Policy* ([MPF1106](#)). A register of all core documents will be maintained by the Museums and Collections Department.

5.2.2 Protocols and guidelines

The Collection Manager is accountable for developing a suite of local protocols and guidelines, including but not limited to:

- **Acquisition and Accession Protocols** consistent with the provisions of *Appendix 1* of the *Standards*.
- **Deaccession and Disposal Protocols** consistent with the provisions of *Appendix 2* of the *Standards*.
- **Incoming and Outgoing Loans Protocols** that ensure the appropriate legal and obligatory frameworks are in place.
- **Collection Access Guidelines** that meet the teaching, learning and research priorities of the University, and the interests of staff, students, researchers and the public as appropriate, which ensure the long-term management, preservation and care of the collections.

¹ The principle of each of these elements is to be addressed in either the form of separate documents or within the scope of a combine document (for example as part of a significance assessment or overarching collection management document). Local level terminology for these elements may vary across collections.

- **Copyright, Reproduction and Publication Guidelines** for the reproduction and publication of objects from the collection in accordance with the [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cwlth\)](#).

Approval: The protocols and guidelines will be submitted for approval by the collection's relevant governance advisory group or committee and Custodian.

Review: The protocols and guidelines are to be reviewed on a regular scheduled basis to ensure currency. Any revised version is to be submitted for approval and noting as outlined above.

Records management: All local protocols and guidelines will be managed by the Collection Manager in accordance with the University's *Records Management Policy* ([MPF1106](#)). A register of all local protocols and guidelines will be maintained by the Museums and Collections Department.

5.3 Standard legal agreements

Legal Services has prepared a range of standard legal agreements for use by the cultural collections. Changes to the standard terms and conditions should not be made without consultation with Legal Services.

Available standard legal agreement templates include:

- **Deed of Gift:** The *Deed of Gift* template is used to document gifts of collection material to the University. All gifts must be documented via a Legal Services approved legal agreement.
- **Loan Agreements:** A suite of loan agreement templates have been developed for incoming and outgoing loans. The *UoM Outward Loan Agreement* template is to be used for all external loans of material from UoM cultural collections. If an external party insists on using its own loan agreement for an incoming loan, this is considered a non-standard agreement and must be managed in accordance with the University's *Contracts Policy* ([MPF1247](#)).
- **Acquisitive and Non-acquisitive Commission Agreements:** Both acquisitive and non-acquisitive commission agreement templates are used when commissioning works of art.

Retention of Records: Following execution, the executed version of the agreement or deed should be submitted for recordkeeping in accordance with Records & Information processes, available at <https://records.unimelb.edu.au/services/agreements>.

5.4 Collection documentation (cataloguing)

- A record is to be maintained of all objects forming part of a collection.
- The most appropriate metadata standard for the collection type is to be used for documentation (e.g. Dublin Core, Darwin Core).
- Ideally, all collection objects will be adequately documented in electronic format (metadata), including, core cataloguing fields, ownership details, information on provenance, copyright ICIP and other rights and access considerations, and physical or digital location, within three months of acquisition.

5.5 Management of digital collection assets

- Digital assets, including born digital and surrogate assets, are to be stored within an appropriate technology platform that safeguards from loss, corruption, or dissociation and ensures data integrity.
- Each digital asset must have appropriate identifying metadata embedded to meet the needs of asset management, discoverability, and consumption.
- Access and digital rights information are to be included in the metadata for each digital asset.
- Access controls will be applied at the level of the digital asset management platform to ensure security.

5.6 Physical collection care

5.6.1 Storage conditions/environment

- Physical collections are to be kept in well maintained dedicated stores equipped with appropriate furniture and space for safely storing all objects.
- Environmental conditions within the stores must be appropriate for the types of collections being held.
- OH&S considerations will be applied in the set up and maintenance of all collection storage facilities, and the housing and storage of collections.

5.6.2 Security

- Collections are to be kept in secure locations, including while on display, that are only accessible to authorised staff.
- Security administration systems must be in place such as SOPs and regular audits of keys and/or access profiles.
- Access provided for the purpose of cleaning, maintenance and other related tasks carried out by contractors or UoM staff not directly associated with the collection must be supervised. This supervision must be provided by staff with the ability to identify and mitigate risks posed to the collections by such activities.

5.6.3 Location tracking and auditing

- Systems and processes must be in place to adequately track the location of all collection objects.
- Random sample audits are to be conducted annually to verify locations data.

5.6.4 Preventative conservation

- All stores are to be cleaned regularly and kept clutter free of items not directly associated with the collection.
- Collection displays must be well maintained and kept free of dust and insects.
- A regular inspection of collection objects in open storage be scheduled to inform annual cleaning or other item level procedures, changes to object housing and other preventive maintenance activities.
- An active Integrated Pest Management Program must in place to mitigate against risks posed by insects, rodents and other biological risks; including the quarantining and inspection of items prior to placement in stores.
- A program for the environmental monitoring of temperature and humidity levels within stores and display spaces is to be implemented and resulting data records retained in an accessible format for reference.

5.7 Risk management

5.7.1 Risk register

- The Collection Manager is to develop and maintain a risk register for the collection, as well as a risk management plan. The risk management plan will address both preventive and remedial approaches to managing risk.

5.7.2 Collection incident response plan

- The Collection Manager will develop and maintain a collections incident response plan.
- All necessary materials, equipment and resources for the mitigation and management of risks associated with the collection are to be sourced and maintained.

5.7.3 Compliance with hazard management and legislation requirements

- Collection objects containing hazardous materials, drugs, poisons and controlled substances, firearms, prohibited weapons etc. must be stored and managed in accordance with relevant legislation, regulations and guidelines.
- A register of specialist training and licences for relevant staff is to be maintained and periodically reviewed for currency. This may, for example, include for handling dangerous goods or operating specific equipment.

5.8 Loans management

5.8.1 General

- The Collection Manager will maintain a record of all incoming and outgoing loans, including loans to other Departments within the University.
- All loans are to be for an agreed period not exceeding five years, renewable or variable by written agreement, for a clearly stated purpose and must be adequately resourced.

5.8.2 Documentation – external loans

- All outward external loans must be documented via a Legal Services approved *UoM Outward Loan Agreement* template (see 5.3).
- A loan agreement must be in place for the loan to be considered eligible for coverage under the University's Fine Art Insurance Policy.
- The corresponding *UoM Inward Loan Agreement* template can be used for inward loans unless a lender insists on the use of their own loan agreement, in which case any such agreement (as a non-standard agreement) must comply with the University's *Contracts Policy* ([MPF1247](#)).
- Any inward loan agreement provided by an external lender must include provisions for conservation, insurance, packing, transport, and the allocation of costs and responsibilities.

5.8.3 Documentation – internal transfers

- All internal transfers between departments within the University, be it for exhibitions, teaching or research, must be documented. An *Inter-UoM transfer receipt* template (aka inter-collection and campus loan agreement) is available for this purpose.
- Internal transfer receipts between collections are to include provisions for conservation, packing, transport, and the allocation of costs and responsibilities.

5.8.4 Review of outstanding and 'legacy' loans

- A regular review of existing loan arrangements, whether incoming or outgoing, will be undertaken to ensure currency of loan agreements, valuations, documentation and ongoing contact with the lender/borrower.
- Any existing loans which are not covered by a current loan agreement consistent with the collection's loans protocol, or for which the loan agreement has expired, are to be reviewed by the Collection Manager. The review will result in one of the following:
 - Return of the objects to the lender or the lender's legal successors; or recall of the outgoing loan.
 - Renewal of the loan for a set period and for a specific purpose, to be documented in a formal loan agreement signed by both parties.
 - Recommendation for acquisition into the collection with the approval of the title holder, and in compliance with the collection's acquisition protocols.
 - Recommendation for acquisition into another collection of the University, with the approval of the title holder, and in compliance with the receiving collection's acquisition protocols.

5.9 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections

- The stewardship of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections must comply with the principles set out in the University's *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy* ([MPF1289](#)).
- The storage, display and access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collections, with the exception of items made for the commercial market, is to be informed by the relevant communities of origin to ensure these activities are conducted in a culturally appropriate manner.
- The University recognises the significance of Indigenous material or materials about Indigenous peoples for communities of origin. When Indigenous materials or materials about Indigenous people are identified in a collection, they should be noted as such, and the associated documentation and metadata should be reviewed as soon as practicable to ensure that they accurately reflect whether the material is either by or about Indigenous people. These notes should be discoverable.
- Collections managers will consider the application of the [CARE](#) and [FAIR](#) principles in relation to Indigenous data and documentation, including the documentation and metadata associated with Indigenous cultural heritage collection material.

5.10 Non-Australian Indigenous collections

- The stewardship of non-Australian Indigenous collections must be informed by the ethical principles that underpin both the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy* ([MPF1289](#)) and the *Human Remains and Burial Artefacts Policy* ([MPF1226](#)).
- The storage, display and access to Non-Australian Indigenous collections, with the exception of items made for the commercial market, is to be informed by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the relevant communities of origin to ensure these activities are conducted in a culturally safe manner.

5.11 Human remains and burial artefacts

- The acquisition and stewardship of human remains and burial artefacts must be compliant with the principles set out in the University's *Human Remains and Burial Artefacts Policy* ([MPF1226](#)), and *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy* ([MPF1289](#)).
- Issues associated with the acquisition and stewardship of human remains and burial artefacts should be directed to the University Repatriation Oversight and Compliance Committee (UROCC).

5.12 Reporting requirements

5.12.1 Annual compliance reporting

- Collection Managers are required to contribute to annual compliance reporting processes as requested by the University. These requirements include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Acquisitions via the Cultural Gifts Program (if eligible, see A1.8)
 - Deaccessions
 - Collection impairment
 - Insurance liabilities (i.e. inward short and long-term loans).

5.12.2 Reporting to custodians and governing bodies

- Collection Managers will prepare and present reports on collection related activities to the collections' Custodian and relevant local area governing body on a regular basis. The frequency of this reporting is to be determined by the Custodian and relevant local area governing body in consultation with the Collection Manager.

6. Definitions

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ancestral remains: Means the whole or part of the bodily remains of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person but does not include:

- a. a body, or the remains of a body, buried in a public cemetery that is still used for the internment of human remains;
- b. an object made from bodily hair or from any other bodily material that is not readily recognisable as being bodily material, or
- c. any human tissue:
 - i. dealt with or to be dealt with in accordance with the Human Tissue Act 1982 (Vic) or any other law of a State, a Territory or the Commonwealth relating to medical treatment or the use of human tissue; or
 - ii. otherwise lawfully removed from an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander person.

Accession: The act of processing and documenting an item into the Collection.

Acquisition: The process of obtaining legal Title to objects. Objects can be acquired through various methods including but not limited to gift, purchase, bequest or commission.

Collection Manager: The principal staff member with delegated responsibility for the operational management of a collection.

Core documents: Key documents that clearly outline the function, development and significance of the collection which should be in place for every collection.

Cultural Collections: Refer to all collections or individual items that are recognised as cultural assets of the University following a formal process of assessment and endorsement. Collections may include items of all forms including tangible and intangible material and are not limited to particular material or format types.

Custodian: Head of Academic Division (Dean) or non-academic Departmental Director responsible for the development, management and governance of the collections as outlined in the *Collections Policy* (MPF1309).

Deaccession: The process of permanently removing an item from a collection.

Deed of Gift: A formal, legally binding agreement that establishes transfer of Title to an object when given to the University as a gift and outlines the terms and conditions of the gift and its acceptance.

Disposal: The process which results in the permanent removal of an object from the University's care and custody.

Due Diligence: Due Diligence means the thorough assessment of an object to evaluate its authenticity, ownership and provenance and to identify and assess any gaps.

Indigenous Data: Data generated, intentionally or not, by, about, or for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Indigenous data refers to information, in any format or medium, collected, analysed, stored, and interpreted within the context of Indigenous individuals, collectives, populations, entities, lifeways, cultures, knowledge systems, lands, biodiversity, water and other resources. (Indigenous Data Network, 2023). See the [Indigenous Data Network website](#) for the full definition.

Object: Any item, either physical or digital, that forms part of a collection.

Provenance: The history and ownership of an item from the time of its discovery or creation to the present day, which assists in the assessment of authenticity and ownership.

Secret or sacred object: Includes an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander object directly associated with a traditional Aboriginal burial.

Title: The legal right to ownership of property.

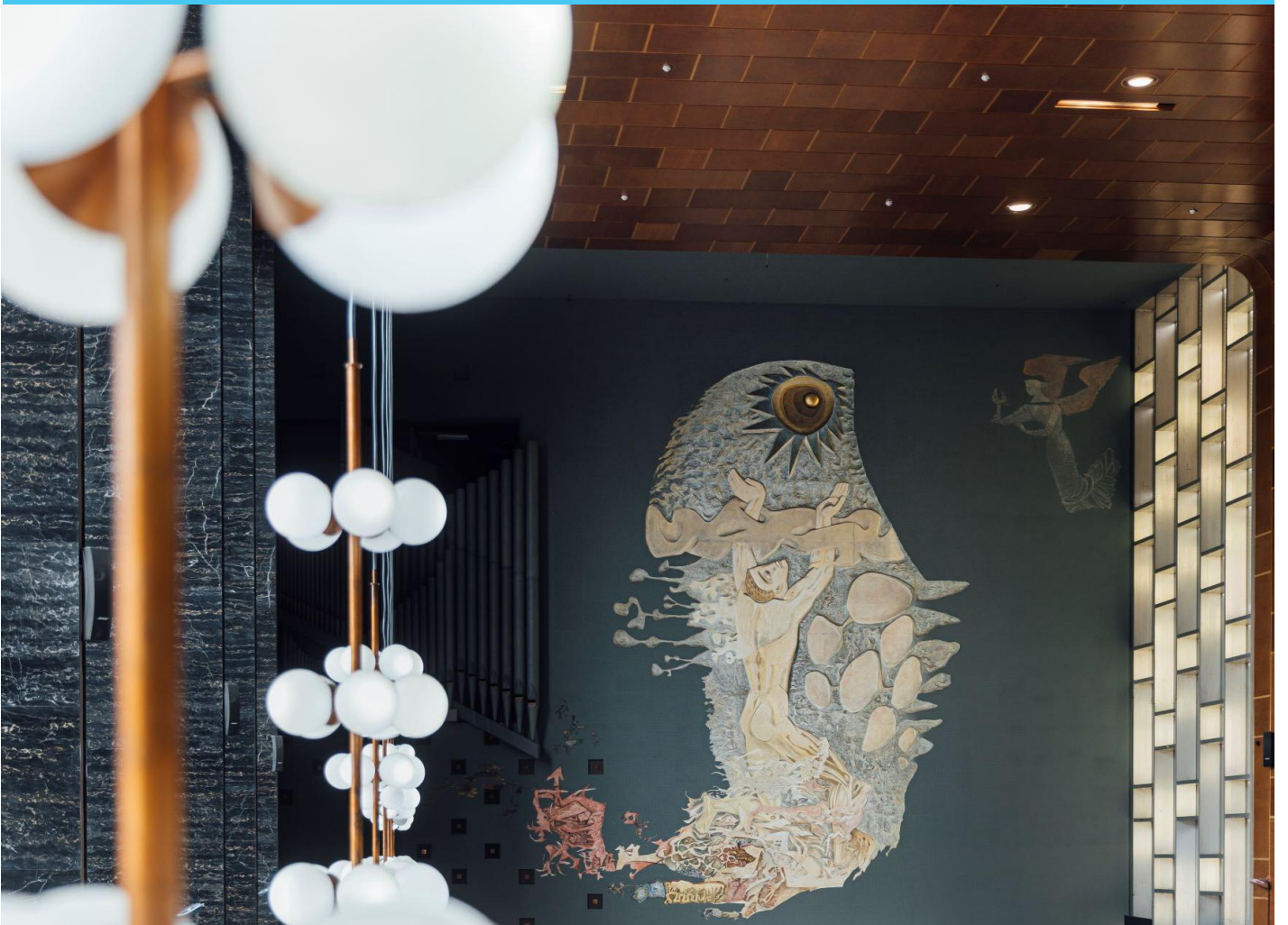
7. Review

This document is to be reviewed by 1 November 2027 in alignment with the *Collections Policy (MPF1309)*.

8. Version history

Version	Authorised by	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections modified
1	Strategic Collections Advisory Group	9 October 2024	1 November 2024	Document adapted from the <i>Policy and Minimum Requirements for Management of Cultural Collections</i> 2006, updated 2009. Minor amendment to numbering (section 2) and identification of internal staff only resources, June 2026.

Appendices



Appendix 1: Acquisition and Accession: Minimum Requirements

(relates to clause 6.2.4)

Each cultural collection is required to have an acquisition and accession protocol in place to ensure that its development is sustainable and informed by the ethical and legal considerations. The information below provides an outline of key considerations, principles and elements that this protocol should include or be informed by.

An example protocol is available from the [UoM Collections Network SharePoint site](#) (internal UoM staff only resource). This example can be used as a template for the development of a collection specific customised protocol.

A1.1 Scope and application

The acquisition and accession protocol should be applied when there is an intention to acquire, through any means, objects for inclusion in a collection.

The protocol refers only to objects that will be accessioned into the collection. All non-collection related purchases, such as furniture and equipment, are subject to the University's procurement and other relevant policies and procedures as applicable.

A1.2 Ethical considerations

All acquisitions must be consistent with the terms of the code of ethics with which the Collection Manager complies (see clause 5.1) and the *Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material* (Office of the Arts).

Acquisitions must also comply with all relevant State and Commonwealth legislation and be consistent with relevant international protocols. This includes, but is not limited to:

- *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006 (Vic)*
- *Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 (Cth)*
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984 (Cth)*
- *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (UNESCO Convention 1970)*
- *Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (1973).*

No objects should be acquired that are suspected to have been collected through unauthorised or unscientific excavation of archaeological sites or other fieldwork, the destruction or defacing of cultural heritage, monuments, historic places or buildings, or the theft from individuals, communities, museums or other repositories.

Any real or perceived conflicts of interest that may arise through the acquisition process, must be declared and managed in accordance with the University's *Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy (MPF1366)*.

A1.3 Due diligence

The Collection Manager must undertake research and due diligence before proposing an object for acquisition to establish the provenance, authenticity and that it has not been identified as having been looted or illegally obtained or exported.

A1.4 Valid title and rights management

Objects should only be acquired if valid and unencumbered legal title can be secured. If in doubt, refer the matter to Legal Services.

Where applicable, any ownership of intellectual property rights is to be established prior to acquisition and any assignment of ownership or license to use documented in the Deed of Gift.

A1.5 Stewardship

Only objects that can, in the opinion of the Collection Manager, be adequately housed, preserved, documented and made accessible are to be acquired. The acquisition of objects in poor condition can be a burden on the University and is to be avoided unless there are compelling reasons for the acquisition.

The Collection Manager may, in consultation with Advancement if appropriate, negotiate with the donor or person in control of the objects, at the time of acquisition, sufficient resources to care for the objects.

A1.6 Specific conditions imposed by donors

Objects offered to the collection will generally be accepted only if, in the opinion of the Collection Manager, they are free of any restrictive covenant or special condition imposed by the donor beyond legitimate cultural, ethical or legal reasons. For example, the object/s may or may not be displayed in a particular place or manner or period of time. Any proposed exception to this rule must have the prior approval of the collection's relevant governance advisory group or committee and Custodian.²

It is recognised that the storage, display and access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and other First Nation Collections, in keeping with relevant UoM policies, is subject to the rights of communities of origin to inform if and how items are used, stored and displayed.

A1.7 Methods of acquisition

Acquisition can be via bequest, donation, gift, purchase, a paid commission, or by collection in the field in the course of research, teaching or other professional activity.

A Loan is not a method of acquisition but a temporary administrative arrangement (see 5.8).

A1.8. Acquisition via Cultural Gifts Program

If a donor gives a culturally significant item to a public art gallery, museum or library they may be entitled to a tax deduction for the market value of the gift. Also, property donated under the program is exempt from capital gains tax (CGT). The [Cultural Gifts Program](#) is administered by the Federal Office for the Arts.

Institutions must be endorsed as a Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR) under the Cultural Organisations category by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to receive donations via the Cultural Gifts Program. The University does not have an enterprise-wide Cultural Organisation DGR status, and each collection must apply for individual endorsement. Details of the endorsement process are available from the [ATO website](#).

Collections with Cultural Organisation DGR status are required to report all finalised cultural gifts annually (see 5.12.1).

A1.9 Approval of acquisitions

All acquisition proposals must be subject to governance oversight and approval. This function may be performed by a specially constituted committee, the collections dedicated advisory group or an existing departmental or faculty committee with governance oversight of the collection. It may include members external to the department or faculty. The acquisitions committee will consider the advice of the Collection Manager.

An individual staff member is only authorised to accept objects for a collection on behalf of the University with the prior approval of the relevant governing body or Custodian.

² This clause will not always be applicable to the University of Melbourne Archives, due to the various statutory and privacy considerations and sensitivities relevant to many archival holdings.

A1.10 Documentation and record keeping

All acquisitions, regardless of method, require documentation at the time of acquisition. Invoices and receipts are required for purchases. A signed Deed of Gift from the donor is required for all gifts and donations, or from the executor for all bequests (see 5.3). Appropriate documentation and collecting permits are required (if applicable) for all material collected in the field by staff or other individuals acting on behalf of the collection.

In accordance with the *UoM Records Management Policy (MPF1106)*, the Collection Manager is to maintain records for each new acquisition, including proposed acquisitions that are not approved. These records are to include information on approval processes, key decisions, consultations, transactions, negotiations, provenance, due diligence undertaken including copies of all research and documentation compiled, and signed Deeds of Gift, purchase agreements and any other agreements in relation to the relevant acquisition. All records must be kept securely and permanently.

A1.11 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander human remains, burial artefacts and secret or sacred objects

Commonwealth and Victorian State legislation must be followed in relation to Australian Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander ancestral remains, burial artefacts and secret or sacred objects. Refer to the *University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy (MPF1289)*.

A1.12 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural artefacts and artworks

Non-restricted Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander cultural artefacts and artworks may be acquired subject to the same requirements as for any other collection and in compliance with the *University's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy ([MPF1289](#))*.

A1.13 Review

The acquisition and accession protocols are to specify a date by which they will be reviewed.

Appendix 2: Deaccession and Disposal: Minimum Requirements

(relates to 5.2.2)

The deaccession and disposal of material from collections is an essential aspect of intentional and sustainable collection development and management to ensure they are maintained to an optimum level. Deaccession and disposal occurs within an accepted framework to ensure compliance with legal, ethical and cultural considerations.

Each cultural collection is required to have a deaccession and disposal protocol in place to ensure the consistent adherence to best practice and compliance requirements. These protocols may be combined within one document or presented as two separate protocols.

The information below provides an outline of key considerations, principles and elements that the protocols are to include or be informed by.

Example protocols are available from the [UoM Collections Network SharePoint site](#) (internal UoM staff only resource). These examples can be used as a template for the development of a collection specific customised protocols.

A2.1 Scope and application

Deaccession and disposal protocols are to be applied if there is an intention to dispose of individual objects, parts of collections and entire collections.

The protocols refer only to objects accessioned into the collection. All non-collection items, such as un-accessioned material, furniture, equipment and administrative records; are subject to the normal disposal procedures of the University.

A2.2 Ethical considerations

All activity and considerations relating to a proposed or actual deaccession or disposal must be undertaken in a manner consistent with the code of ethics with which the Collection Manager complies (see 5.1).

University staff and Council members, their family members, and other individuals formally associated with the University, may not purchase or otherwise acquire a deaccessioned object or collection, nor may they benefit personally in any way from the deaccessioning of an object or collection.

Any real or perceived conflicts of interest must be declared and managed in accordance with the University's *Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy (MPF1366)*.

A2.3 Ownership and right of disposal

Due diligence is to be carried out on each object being considered for deaccession to confirm that it is owned by the University and that the University has the full right of disposal. Any conditions specified or implied at the time of acquisition must be identified and honoured. If in doubt, the advice of Legal Services is to be sought.

All collection objects are the property of the University and must go through a process of review and approval by relevant governing bodies before being disposed of.

A2.4 Approval and reporting of deaccessions and disposals

All proposed deaccessioning and disposal of individual objects or insubstantial parts of collections require the approval of the relevant collection governance body and the Custodian or their delegate. Any decisions must consider the advice of the Collection Manager.

All proposed deaccessions of entire collections (disestablishment) or substantial parts of collections require the approval of the Custodian and the relevant governing body. The deaccessioning and disestablishment of

an entire collection also requires the approval of the Museums and Collections Steering Committee. Any decisions must consider the advice of the Collection Manager and the views of relevant stakeholders.

Deaccessions approved under a delegation must be reported annually to the relevant Custodian. All deaccessions must be reported to Finance as per the established annual deaccession reporting framework (see 5.12.1).

A2.5 Reasons for deaccessioning and disposal

The protocols are to articulate the criteria for informing deaccessioning decisions: These criteria may include:

- Statutory obligations
- Relevance of the objects
- Significance of the objects
- Conservation requirements
- Storage requirements
- Duplication
- Provenance
- Hazardous material
- Request for repatriation from an indigenous community or another nation.

A2.6 Method of disposal

Any recommendation for deaccessioning must indicate the method of disposal which is to be articulated in the disposal protocol. In general, the disposal of collection material will be informed by the below noted options:

- Gifts made under the Cultural Gift Program cannot be returned to the donor as the donor has already received the benefit of a tax deduction for the gift.
- With the exception of objects acquired under the terms of the Cultural Gifts Program, return to the living donor or the immediate heirs or trustees of the donor's estate, trustees of corporate donors, or the artist/creator.
- Return, Repatriation or Restitution to a legally proven owner.
- Return, Repatriation or Restitution to another party arising from ethical claims to the possession of the object.
- Donation to another UoM Collection, other UoM Department, School or similar, including for research, teaching, demonstration, or similar use.
- Donation to another university's collection, or another public collecting institution, with preference given to the collection, research and access priorities of the recipient institution.
- Public auction, sale or tender.
- Donation to a charitable organisation.
- Supervised destruction or recycling of materials or components. It is recommended that an item is only destroyed in certain conditions, including: with the agreement or on the instructions of the artist/maker; where no other form of disposal is viable or practicable; where the item poses a significant risk to health or safety; where the item has been deaccessioned due to its deteriorated condition or similar, such that the integrity of the item in its original form cannot be viably restored through conservation treatment.
- Depending on the manner and circumstances of the acquisition, consideration may be given to rescinding the purchase or donation by which the item was acquired.
- Other method approved by the Custodian and the relevant governance body.

Objects are not to be disposed of by gift or private sale to an individual (other than by return to the original donor, owner or heir), whether or not the individual is associated with the University as a staff member or in any other way.

Objects must not be openly disposed of by dumping through the municipal garbage or recycling collection system, other than in the case of disposal of the properly packaged remains of an object which has been deliberately destroyed or defaced for the purpose of disposal.

A2.7 Documentation

Full documentation of the reason for deaccessioning and method of disposal, along with a full list of all objects being deaccessioned, are to be lodged with the records of the collection.

In the case of return to the original donor, owner or heir, or transfer to another collection or collecting institution, a copy of all documentation is to accompany the object at the time of return or transfer. The original documentation is to be retained by the Collection Manager.

Except where an object is transferred to another collection or collecting institution, the accession number and marks of University of Melbourne ownership are to be removed from the object or cancelled.

A2.8 Review

The deaccession and disposal protocols are to specify a date by which they will be reviewed.

Appendix 3: List of collections listed according to designated custodial responsibility

Faculty of Arts:

- Visual Cultures Resource Centre

Faculty of Economics and Commerce:

- MONIAC Economics Model Machine

Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology:

- Faculty of Engineering and Information Technology Collection

Faculty of Fine Arts and Music:

- Musical Instruments: Rare & Historic Examples
- VCA Film and Television Archive

Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences:

- Department of Microbiology Collection
- MDHS Museums
 - Harry Brookes Allen Museum of Anatomy and Pathology
 - Henry Forman Atkinson Dental Museum
 - Medical History Museum

Faculty of Science:

- Burnley Campus Archives
- Creswick Campus Historical Collection
- Dookie Campus Historical Collection
- Ed Muirhead Physics Museum
- F.A. Singleton Earth Sciences Collection
- School of Chemistry Collection
- Tiegs Zoology Museum
- University of Melbourne Herbarium
- Veterinary Science Anatomy Collection (Parkville campus) and heritage objects (Werribee campus)

Museums and Collections Department

- Grainger Museum Collection
- Place for Indigenous Art and Culture Collection
- University of Melbourne Art Collection

Student and Scholarly Services

- Architecture and Planning Library: Rare Materials Collection
- Archives and Special Collections
 - University of Melbourne Archives
 - Rare Books Collection
 - East Asian Collection
 - Rare and Historical Maps Collection
 - Print Collection
 - Rare Music Collection
- International House Collection
- Law Rare Books Collection
- Southbank Library Special Collection

Collections owned by the University but managed by other organisations:

- Godfrey Howitt Entomology Collection (on loan to Museum Victoria since 1904)

Appendix 4: Resources

University policies

[Collections Policy \(MPF1309\)](#)

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy \(MPF1289\)](#)

[Human Remains and Burial Artefacts Policy \(MPF1226\)](#)

[Managing Conflicts of Interest Policy \(MPF1366\)](#)

[Health and Safety Policy \(MPF1205\)](#)

[Gifts Policy \(MPF1348\)](#)

[Records Management Policy \(MPF1106\)](#)

[Contracts Policy \(unimelb.edu.au\)](#)

Victorian State Government Frameworks

[Asset Management Accountability Framework \(2016\)](#)

UoM Collection Network SharePoint site (internal UoM staff only resource)

The [UoM Collection Network SharePoint](#) site provides access to a vast array of information and links in support of managing the collections in compliance with the *Standards and Guidelines*. This includes UoM legal templates, example protocols and procedures, along with links to relevant Australian and International legislation, conventions, protocols and standards.

[Conservation \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Digitisation \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Emergency Preparedness and Response \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Health & Safety \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Indigenous Collections Resources \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Integrated Pest Management \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Legislation, Protocols and Declarations \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Loans \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Metadata Standards & Documentation Resources \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Professional Memberships, Standards & Ethics \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Significance Assessments \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

[Templates, protocols and procedures \(sharepoint.com\)](#)

Appendices dividing page image: Douglas Annand (designer), Tom Bass (sculptor), *A Search for Truth*, 1956, University of Melbourne Art Collection, Acc. No. 0000.0085.000.000. Commissioned, c.1956

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