ARCL0113 Researching and Understanding Objects



2023-24: Term 2

MA module: 15 credits

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING ASSESSMENTS:

The **coursework coversheet** is available on the course Moodle pages and here: <u>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students</u> under "Policies, Forms and Guidelines".

Please enter your five-digit candidate code on the coversheet and in the subject line

when you upload your work in Moodle. Please use your five-digit candidate code as the name of the file you submit.

Please refer to <u>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/13-information-assessment</u>

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide/referencing-effectively-and-ioa-guidelines

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/academic-integrity https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-Al

for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission, over-length work, the use of text generation software (AI) and academic misconduct.

1. MODULE OVERVIEW

1.1 Module description

This module focuses on the nature of the objects we conserve. It enables you to explore the ways in which objects are made, regarded, and used, and the ways in which their condition and meaning can shift over time or in different contexts. It aims to give you experience in examination and condition assessment of objects, and development of statements of significance.

1.2 Module Aims

This module aims to train to examine objects and assess their condition and significance. It enables to explore the ways in which objects are made, regarded and used, and the ways in which their condition, values and meaning can shift over time, or in different contexts.

1.3 Learning Outcomes

- Application of acquired knowledge and skills
- Observation and critical reflection
- Safe handling and examination of objects
- Team-working
- Documentation and report writing skills
- Translation of information across formats

1.4 Methods of Assessment

- Video Presentation (four minutes): 30%, submission due February 9th 2024
- Report (2000 words): 70%, submission due March 22nd 2024

1.5 Communications

- Moodle is the main hub for this course.
- Important information will be posted by staff in <u>the Announcements section of the Moodle page</u> and you will automatically receive an email notification for these.
- Please post any general queries relating to module content, assessments and administration in the <u>General</u> <u>Queries Moodle forum</u> (or via email if you prefer).
- For personal queries, please contact the PGTA (<u>su.yin.19@ucl.ac.uk</u>) or co-ordinator (j.m.saunders@ucl.ac.uk) by email.

1.6 Week-by-week summary

Week	Date	Details	Lecturers
12	08.01.24	11:00-12:50 410 Module Introduction	JS
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Object Allocations	JS, SY
13	15.01.24	09:00-10:50 405 Photography 1	AR
		11:00-12:50 410 Inorganic Materials	JS
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Raw Materials and Technologies	JS, SY
14	22.01.24	09:00-10:50 405 Photography 2	AR
		11:00-12:50 410 Organic Materials	DS
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Raw Materials and Technologies	JS, SY
15	29.01.24	09:00-10:50 405 Photography 3	AR
		11:00-12:50 410 Ceramic Objects	COG
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Condition	EK, SY
16	05.02.24	09:00-10:50 405 Photography 4	AR
		11:00-12:50 410 Metal Objects	JS
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Significance	JS, SY
	09.02.24	Submission of Video	
17	READING WEEK (no classes)		
18	19.02.24	11:00-12:50 410 Modern Materials	CR
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Future Care	JS, SY
19	26.02.24	11:00-12:50 410 Human Remains	BW
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Finishing the Report/Optional	SY
20	04.03.24	11:00-12:50 410 Fibre Identification	JS
		14:00-16:00 OBLL Finishing the Report/Optional	SY
21	11.03.24	11:00-12:50 617 Waterlogged Organics	DS, SY
22	18.03.24	11:00-12:50 410 Module Review	JS
	22.03.24	Submission of Report	

1.7 Lecturers and other contributors

AR	Antonio Reis	Heritage Photographer	IoA
BW	Barbara Wills	Senior Conservator	British Museum
COG	Caitlin O Grady	Lecturer	IoA
CR	Cordelia Rogerson	Head of Collection Care and Metadata Management	The British Library
DS	Dean Sully	Associate Professor	IoA
EK	Emilia Kingham	Conservator	LCCOS*
IE	Ignacio Echeverria	Collection Manager (Care and Teaching Facilitation)	LCCOS
JS	Jill Saunders	Lecturer (Teaching)	IoA
SY	Su Yin	Postgraduate Teaching Assistant	IoA
RFP	Renata F. Peters	Associate Professor	IoA
SC	Sarah Carr	Curatorial and Collections Assistant	LCCOS

* Library, Culture, Collections and Open Science (previously UCL Culture)

1.8 Weekly Module Plan

The module is taught predominantly through lectures, seminars, and practical activities. Sessions which you must attend on campus each week take place **Mondays 11:00 am - 12:50 pm in 410 (IoA)** and will consist of lectures, planned activities/handling sessions, and discussions. Students are required to undertake the essential readings as stipulated in this handbook before each live class to support understanding and facilitate participation. See 3. SYLLABUS and check Moodle for information on weekly requirements.

In addition, the first eight teaching weeks of term also comprise focused study sessions which you must attend on **Mondays 14:00-16:00 in the Object Based Learning Lab.** You will be responsible for how you spend most of your time during each session, but we suggest you focus on specific topics. These will be introduced by the lecturer at the beginning of each session and are also outlined in this handbook under each week, with questions to consider about your object in Appendix A (these will also be provided in handouts on Moodle and in hard copy each week). Weekly topics relate to information needed for your assessments (see <u>Assessment Booklet</u>). The lecturer and teaching assistant will be present during sessions for one-to-one discussions and guidance.

Please note that these sessions are for object-based observation and examination. You will not be permitted to work with your laptops at your desk for reasons of object safety. You should only bring your laptop to the OBLL sessions for Dinolite use (see below), for which there will be a dedicated table.

Finally, in the second-fifth weeks of term there will also be digital photography workshops **Mondays 09:00-10:50** in **405 (IoA)**. Professional standards of photography are critical to the production of quality object reports. When done correctly photographs can provide useful information about dimensions, manufacture, and condition. These workshops will train you in the use of digital equipment and support you in taking images of your object for use in the assessments.

1.9 Workload

This is a 15-credit module which equates to 150 hours of learning time including session preparation, background reading, and researching and writing your assignments. With that in mind you should expect to organise your time in roughly this way:

- 30 hours Staff-led teaching sessions (lectures, seminars, tutorials, discussion-board sessions)
- 60 hours Self-guided session preparation (reading, listening, note-taking and online activities), c.6.5 hours a week
- 20 hours Reading for, and creating, Assessment 1
- 40 hours Reading for, and writing, Assessment 2

1.10 Preparation for class

You are expected to read the <u>essential readings</u> as well as watching any <u>videos</u> and completing any <u>online activities</u> on Moodle each week. Completing the readings is essential for your effective participation in the activities and discussions that we will do, and it will greatly enhance your understanding of the material covered. Ideally this should be supplemented with selected readings from the recommended list. Further readings provided on the online list give you a sense of the range of current work on a given topic and are a starting point for your research for assessments.

There are no additional set preliminary readings for the OBLL; your research will be guided by the object and information needed for the assessments. However, you should prepare for each weekly session by thinking about how you will use your time according to the weekly topics. It is important to have a plan and make the most of your limited time with your object to support production of your coursework.

We will have Dino-Lite digital microscopes available to use in the practical sessions. These connect to a laptop with a USB and enable you to examine objects at a high level of magnification and to capture images to use in your report.

You will need both the software *and* a driver for the digital microscopes to work. These can be downloaded from this website: <u>http://www.dino-lite.com/download.php.</u>

Please see 'Basic texts and Online Resources' on the Moodle Module Homepage for important background information to complement the week-by-week readings. Please also refer to the <u>Online Reading List</u> linked to the library for easy access to extended reading suggestions.

2. ASSESSMENT

Each assignment and possible approaches to it will be discussed in class, in advance of the submission deadline. If students are unclear about the nature of an assignment, they should discuss this with the module co-ordinator in advance (via office hours or class Moodle forum). You will receive feedback on your written coursework via Moodle, and have the opportunity to discuss your marks and feedback with the co-ordinator in their office hours.

For more details see the 'Assessment' section on Moodle, especially the <u>Assessment Booklet</u>. The coursework coversheet is available on the course Moodle pages and here: <u>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students</u> under "Policies, Forms and Guidelines".

Please make sure you enter your five-digit candidate code on the coversheet and in the subject line when you upload your work in Moodle. Please use your five-digit candidate code as the name of the file you submit.

The <u>IoA marking criteria</u> can be found in the IoA Student Handbook (Section 13: Information on assessment). The <u>IoA</u> <u>Study Skills Guide</u> provides useful guidance on writing different types of assignment.

Please note that late submission, exceeding the maximum word count and academic misconduct (unacknowledged use of text generation software and plagiarism) will be penalized and can significantly reduce the mark awarded for the assignment and/or overall module result. Please do consult:

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook/13-information-

assessment with sections 13.7–13.8: coursework submission, 13.10: word count, 13.12–14: academic integrity

- <u>https://www.ucl.ac.uk/students/exams-and-assessments/academic-integrity</u> for UCL's guidance on academic integrity

- <u>https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-AI</u> for UCL's guidance on how to acknowledge the use of text generation software.

N.B. The use of software to generate content is not allowed for assessments for this course and will be penalised; the use of software for language and writing review and improvement is permitted, and the software and the way it has been used must be indicated in the relevant boxes on the coursework coversheet. UCL defines language and writing review as checking "areas of academic writing such as structure, fluency, presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation, and language translation".

2.1 Assessment 1: Video (four minutes)

The video presentation should be a technical description of the object you are working with in the OBLL. This will include a clear account of material present and construction. Please include information on size, shape, colour etc., as well as possible methods of manufacture. Your slides should exploit visual means of communication and should feature photograph(s), sketch(es) and/or diagram(s) of the object. Include relevant views of the object, label specific features, and make annotations when deemed necessary throughout your object description. Include general (front and back) views, cross-sections or any other details that will help to illustrate the structure and key features of the object. Number your figures, and use captions to explain what they are illustrating. You should include citations where relevant and your closing slide should be a list of references and other sources of information (but no need read out/give this slide a voiceover!).

Your video will be worth 30% of your final mark for this module.

2.2 Assessment 2: Report (2000 words)

The report is also based on your OBLL object and will cover key aspects of important to conservators: significance, condition, and preventive advice. In addition, you will need to complete three distinct critical evaluation sections. Your report should contain high quality visuals to support communication and understanding of your object. You must follow the content guidelines provided precisely and take note of marks allocations when considering the length of each stipulated section (see <u>Assessment Booklet</u>).

Your report will be worth 70% of your final mark for this module.

3. SYLLABUS

All essential readings are available online through <u>www.ucl.ac.uk/library</u> or via the link provided with the entry. All recorded lectures will be made available on Moodle or via the link provided with the entry.

Week 12

VIDEOS TO WATCH Looking at Things (RFP). *In three parts on Moodle*. Introduction to Significance (RFP). *On Moodle*.

CLASS 410 -11:00-12:50 BST

Module Introduction (JS). Overview of what we will achieve this term with a focus on the assessments followed by a significance activity to introduce this important approach to understanding objects.

ESSENTIAL READING

Appelbaum, B., 2007. *Conservation treatment methodology*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. INST ARCH LA APP. Also available as an e-book. Read pages 65-71 and 341.

Mason, R., 2002. Assessing values in conservation planning: methodological issues and choices. In: M. de la Torre (ed.),Assessing the values of cultural heritage. Research Report. Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute, 5-30. INST ARCHAGDEL.Alsoavailablehttp://www.getty.edu/conservation/publicationsresources/pdfpublications/pdf/assessing.pdf

Reed, C., 2018. *Reviewing Significance 3.0: a framework for reviewing museum collections' significance, management and use*. London: Collections Trust. <u>https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/reviewing-significance-3-0/</u>

Russell, R. and Winkworth, K., 2009. *Significance 2.0: A guide to assessing the significance of collections*. 2nd Edition. Rundle Mall, SA: Collections Council of Australia. <u>https://www.arts.gov.au/sites/default/files/significance-2.0.pdf?acsf_files_redirect</u>

RECOMMENDED READING

Ravanel, N. and Mirling, L. D., 2017. *Inside decoys from Shelburne Museum. What's this all about?* Shelburne, VT: Shelburne Museum. <u>http://scalar.usc.edu/works/inside-decoys-from-shelburne-museum/index</u>

CLASS OBLL -14:00-16:00 BST

Object Allocations (JS, SY). In the first session you begin to familiarise yourself with your object in a general sense before the week-by-week focused sessions. The approach outlined below can be equally useful for objects from storage or display, or for recently excavated materials. How to look?

Objects should be handled cautiously and supported fully during examination. If the condition of the object allows, try to examine all surfaces including the underside and/or inside. Examination should involve more than just the naked eye; all of the following are useful:

- A hand-lens, a stereoscopic microscope, and a raking light (a beam of light directed parallel to the surface which will reveal surface irregularities).
- A needle or soft brush may be used very gently to probe, or to clear the surface of dust.
- A colour atlas (if available) should be used to help in observing and recording variations in colour.

What to look for?

> Technology

Careful visual examination can yield a considerable amount of information about how the object was made and what it was made of. Things to look for include:

- Main material(s) used in the construction.
- How the main material was shaped e.g. by building up (additive) or cutting away (reductive).
- Size, shape, colour, texture, weight.
- Indication of technique(s) of manufacture -tool marks, flash-lines etc.
- Decoration:
 - o applied directly to surface e.g. paint.
 - o modification of surface e.g. stamping, carving.
 - o attached to structure e.g. beads attached to textile.
- Condition

The condition of both body and surface should be noted. It is important to note whether the deterioration of one component is affecting another, e.g. a weakened thread threatening the loss of beads, a corroding metal causing damage to another material. Look for the following:

- Physical condition:
 - o whole, broken, folded, cracked, crushed.
- Chemical condition:
 - o corroding, fading, disintegrating.
- Biological condition:
 - o signs of insect or fungal attack e.g. insects, larvae, flight-holes, fungal strands.
- Accretions:
 - o dust, dirt, grease -dust, dirt, grease.
 - o salts -flaking surface, white powder, crystals.
 - o material which may not be obviously identifiable.

N.B. Evidence of use may be indicated by material condition. Signs of wear on an object, or deposits on the surface associated with the original use e.g. greasy marks left by food, or traces of pigments left inside a pot are important to record.

> Earlier repairs

Signs of earlier repairs should be looked for. Try to decide whether these are original (i.e. part of the history or archaeology of the object) or "museum" repairs. Indicators of repairs or earlier treatment are:

- adhesives, coatings.
- backing, patches or other support.
- repairs, stitching, riveting etc.

Records e.g. accession, previous treatment

Excavation or museum accession numbers may be marked on the object or on associated packaging, these should be noted. All available records should be consulted for information on the history of the object, including earlier treatments (if available).

N.B. Because of the nature of the ARCL0113 assignment, only basic information about earlier treatments will be provided (if available).

> Further investigation

If further information is needed which cannot be provided by visual examination, it becomes necessary to undertake more detailed investigation (e.g. investigative cleaning which may involve removing a small area of corrosion or accretion). It may be necessary to turn to more complex examination techniques such as chemical spot-tests, X-radiography, X-ray diffraction, scanning electron microscopy etc.

These techniques may be needed, for example, to distinguish between one metal or alloy and another, or to find out what has been used as a varnish or as a medium for a paint, or to identify the species of a piece of wood.

N.B. 'Further investigation' is not a required section of the ARCL0113 assignment, but you can certainly recommend it where appropriate throughout your reports.

Week 13

VIDEOS TO WATCH

Introduction to Inorganics (JS). In six parts on Moodle.

CLASS 405 –09:00-10:50 BST Photography Workshop 1 (AR).

LASS 410 -11:10-12:50 BST

Inorganic materials discussion and activity (JS). Focus on glass and stone.

ESSENTIAL READING

Caple, C. (2006). Objects: Reluctant Witnesses to the Past (1st ed.). London: Routledge. Chapter 3, 94-137 (feel free to skip over entries relating to organic materials, though this information will be useful for Dean's class next week). <u>https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.4324/9780203409060</u>

González-Ramírez, A. (2019). Stone sculpture wear: Alteration/Fragmentation processes and their impact on carving traces of tenon heads of chavín de huántar, peru. *Advances in Archaeological Practice*, 7(2), 152-168. <u>http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.1017/aap.2018.34</u>

May, E., and Jones, M. (Eds), 2006. *Conservation Science: Heritage Materials*. Cambridge: RSC. Chapter 7 Glass and Ceramics, 160-184. <u>https://doi.org/10.1039/9781847557629</u>

Szczepanowska, H.M. 2012. Conservation of Cultural Heritage: Key Principles and Approaches (1st ed.). London: Routledge. Chapters 8 & 9 <u>https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.4324/9780203081198</u>

Online Museum Training, Museums Australia Victoria. How to photograph collection items <u>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oUgG7HEpvyo</u>

RECOMMENDED READING

PowerhouseMuseum.Simpleconservationphotographyanddocumentationhttp://www.powerhousemuseum.com/pdf/research/dress_register/ADR2.2_simple_conservation_photography_andhttp://www.powerhousemuseum.com/pdf/research/dress_register/ADR2.2_simple_conservation_photography_anddocumentation.pdf

CLASS OBLL –14:00-16:00 BST

Raw Materials and Technologies (JS, SY). Exploring materials, and the visible traces indicating how objects were made.

Things to think about:

Reductive technologies Cutting away material to create a shape. Wood, bone, ivory, stone. Visible tool marks.

Alteration through heat (pyro technology) Ceramics, plasters, glass, enamels, metals. Evidence of mobile/molten stage in manufacture e.g. twisting of iron, flowlines in glass. Evidence of moulding ('seam lines'). N.B. ceramics can also be moulded (slip casting) but this does not involve heat.

Colouring and surface finishes Paints: ceramics, glass, stone, plasters, wood, ivory, textiles etc. Dyes: leather, textiles. Colourants glass, glazes. Glazes: ceramics. Patination: metals. Waterproofing: leather, textiles.

Re-use, recycling Further change/transformation. Scrap metal, grog in ceramics, cullet in glass. Re-fashioning of costume to re-use valued textiles.

Composites

Composite objects made of more than one material with different properties which may affect each other.

Complexity

Complexity may not be visible on the surface e.g. prisms in binoculars, e.g. the layers in a painting. Each component, even if invisible, may be contributing to change.

Inclusion of 'foreign' materials

Effect of trade thus in 'indigenous' objects (e.g. from N. America, Africa, India) we may find European dinner plates, trade cloth, trade beads.

'New' materials

Plastics; new metal alloys; new ceramics; medical drugs (see Living and Dying exhibition at the BM).

Additive technologies Adding material to create a shape. Ceramics, plasters, glass, woven structures. Added materials e.g. temper in ceramics, plasters. Added features i.e. building an object up. Visible tool marks, added features e.g. handles, evidence of construction (e.g. weaving).

Alteration through chemical modification Leather, some textiles (e.g. mercerisation of cotton, weighting of silk). Dyeing.

Material character of objects

Extraction and processing of raw materials.

Change from one state to another.

Skill of craft workers in selecting materials and controlling these changes.

Using the same starting material and ending with products with different properties

metal worker controlling copper alloys [copper, brass, silver, even gold];

tanner producing soft gloving leathers or buff-leather jerkins

Limestone can be used for: building, carving, plasters and mortars (all calcium carbonate), also essential to manufacture of iron (blast furnaces).

Ironstone can be used for: building, pigment, metal (all will yield iron on analysis).

Imitations and copies

Many materials imitate others:

pots imitating baskets.

imitations of gold (tumbaga; silver+yellow lacquer, gilded metal, gold paint).

early plastic imitating ivory, tortoiseshell.

Fakes

Imitations intended to deceive, may or may not be made of the 'same' material.

Week 14 VIDEOS TO WATCH Introduction to Organic Materials (RFP). On Moodle Animal Fibres (RFP) Introduction to Wood and Wood Analysis (ADA). On Moodle. OPTIONAL BONUS VIDEOS

Bone and Ivory (RFP). *On Moodle.* Hard Tissue Keratinous Material (RFP). *On Moodle.*

CLASS 405 –09:00-10:50 BST
Photography Workshop 2 (AR).
CLASS 410 –11:10-12:50 BST
Organic Materials Discussion and Activity (DS).

ESSENTIAL READING Baker, B. W. *et al.* (2020) *Identification Guide for Ivory and Ivory Substitutes*. 4th edn. Edited by Crawford Allan. World Wildlife Fund. Inc. https://c402277.ssl.cf1.rackcdn.com/publications/1361/files/original/R8_IvoryGuide_07162020_highres.pdf?1597151486

Florian M. E., Kronkright D. P. and Norton R., 1990. *The Conservation of Artifacts Made from Plant Materials*. Marian del Rey: The Getty Conservation Institute, 140-186. All content is very relevant, try to read as much as possible. INST ARCH L FLO <u>http://d2aohiyo3d3idm.cloudfront.net/publications/virtuallibrary/0892361603.pdf</u>

Norton, R., 1990. Technology of plant materials. In: M-L. Florian *et al.* (eds), *The Conservation of Artifacts made from Plant Materials* Los Angeles: Getty Conservation Institute. 83-138. INST ARCH L FLO <u>http://d2aohiyo3d3idm.cloudfront.net/publications/virtuallibrary/0892361603.pdf</u>

Passmore, E., Ambers, J., Higgitt, C., Ward, C. Wills, B., Simpson, S., and Caroline Cartwright, 2012. Hidden, looted, saved: the scientific research and conservation of a group of Begram ivories from the National Museum of Afghanistan. *British Museum Technical Research Bulletin* Volume 6, 33-46.

https://www.academia.edu/3488913/Hidden_looted_saved_the_scientific_research_and_conservation_of_a_group of_Begram_lvories_from_the_National_Museum_of_Afghanistan

LASS OBLL -14:00-16:00 BST

Raw Materials and Technologies (JS, SY). Exploring materials, and the visible traces indicating how objects were made. (See guidance under Week 13).

Week 15

Set VIDEOS TO WATCH Exploring Pottery and Ceramic Objects (COG). In three parts on Moodle.

CLASS 405 -09:00-10:50 BST
Photography Workshop 3 (AR).
CLASS 410 -11:10-12:50 BST
Ceramic objects discussion and practical (COG).
ESSENTIAL READING
Crown, P.L. 2007. "Life histories of pots and potters: Situating the individual in archaeology," American Antiquity 72(4):
677-690. https://www.jstor.org/stable/25470440?seg=1

Maniatis, Y., 2009. The emergence of ceramic technology and its evolution as revealed with the use of scientific techniques. In: A.J. Shortland, I.C. Freestone and T. Rehren (eds), *From Mine to Microscope: Advances in the Study of Ancient Technology*, 69-120. Oxford: Oxbow Books Ltd. INST ARCH K SHO <u>https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1cd0p5n</u>

Orton, C., Tyers, P. and Vince, A. 2013. "Making pottery." In *Pottery in archaeology*, 120-139. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. INST ARCH KD 3 ORT <u>https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.1017/CBO9780511920066</u>

Orton, C., Tyers, P. and Vince, A. 2013. "Craft specialisation and standardisation of production." In *Pottery in archaeology*, 144-149. Second edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. INST ARCH KD 3 ORT <u>https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.1017/CBO9780511920066</u>

Sillar, B. and Tite, M.S. 2000. "The challenge of 'technological choices' for materials science approaches in archaeology," *Archaeometry* 42(1): 2-20. <u>https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-4754.2000.tb00863.x</u>

CLASS OBLL -14:00-16:00 BST

Condition (EK, SY). As you observe condition issues, try to ascertain the cause as well as the sequence (in the case of multiple issues).

Week 16

VIDEOS TO WATCH
Introduction to Metals (JS). In three parts on Moodle.
Introduction to Copper Alloys (JS). On Moodle.
OPTIONAL BONUS VIDEOS
Introduction to Iron (GM). On Moodle.
Introduction to Precious and White metals (GM). On Moodle.

CLASS 405 – 09:00-10:50 BST
Photography Workshop 4 (AR).
CLASS 410 –11:10-12:50 BST
Metal objects discussion and activity (JS).

ESSENTIAL READING Cronyn, J.M., 1990. *The Elements of Archaeological Conservation*. London: Routledge. Chapter 5, especially Section 5.1. <u>https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.4324/9780203169223</u>

Ferretti, M., Miazzo, L., & Moioli, P, 1997. The Application of a Non-Destructive XRF Method to Identify Different Alloys in the Bronze Statue of the Capitoline Horse. *Studies in Conservation*, 42, 4, 241-246. <u>https://doi.org/10.2307/1506754</u>

Hurcombe, L. M. 2007. *Archaeological Artefacts as Material Culture*. Chapter 10, 190-208. <u>https://ucl-new-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/5qfvbu/UCL_LMS_DS51321451370004761</u>

Killick D. (2014) From Ores to Metals. In: Roberts B., Thornton C. (eds) Archaeometallurgy in Global Perspective. Springer, New York, NY. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-9017-3_2</u>

Schorsch D. (2014) A Conservator's Perspective on Ancient Metallurgy. In: Roberts B., Thornton C. (eds) Archaeometallurgy in Global Perspective. Springer, New York, NY. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-9017-3_12</u>

RECOMMENDED READING

Siatou, A., Nurit, M., Castro, Y., Le Goïc, G., Brambilla, L., Degrigny, C. and Mansouri, A., 2022. New methodological approaches in Reflectance Transformation Imaging applications for conservation documentation of cultural heritage metal objects. *Journal of Cultural Heritage*, *58*, 274-283. See also Moodle for extended metals readings list.

CLASS OBLL –14:00-16:00 BST Significance (JS, SY).

While a focus on physical stability continues to be fundamental to the processes of conservation, increasing importance is being given to significance. An assessment of significance identifies the important elements of an object's fabric, history, function, social and spiritual values and meaning. Once these features are understood they can be expressed in a statement of significance.

The aim of conservation is to retain, reveal or recover the cultural significance of an artefact. How this is to be achieved should be clearly defined in a conservation plan, which explains **what** the conservation treatment is designed to conserve. This differs from a conservation or treatment proposal, which seeks to define **how** it is to be conserved. Thus, the statement of significance guides the conservation plan and the conservation or treatment proposal sets out how the plan will be implemented.

Statement of Significance

Significance assessment should take place before conservation begins so that the object's values are thoroughly understood and as far as possible preserved in the conservation process. The assessment of significance provides part of the context for conservation decision-making. Conservators are better able to determine priorities and levels of conservation treatments if they first understand object significance.

Values: The values considered when writing statements of significance may include, for example: aesthetic, social, scientific, historic, religious, spiritual, legal, economic, political or cultural. These are values that an object or collection may have for past, present and future generations.

The statement does not provide an absolute measurement; it is likely to change over time.

Collaboration: Assessment of significance is most effective when it is collaborative and multivocal. Who defines the significance is a complex issue and is context specific. Ideally there should be an opportunity for the originating community, donor, or current owner/user to describe why an object is important to them. Occasionally there will be strongly contested ideas that reflect differing views about the value and meaning of objects.

The Burra Charter (2013) is a useful source and is often used by organisations as the basis of assessment in developing a conservation plan. It emphasises that the artefact itself is an important source of information, regardless of other forms of documentation since they are no substitutes for the experience of the actual artefact.

Object Biography

The concept of object biography also has a useful contribution to make to the understanding of significance. Object narratives provide a perspective on the changes to an object's meaning through time. However, it is important to remember that these tell us as much about the values of those who construct the narrative as they do about their subject matter. People constantly remake and reinvent perceptions and interpretations of the historical environment to meet their own ideas, needs and aspirations.

In order to extract meaningful information from a plurality of perspectives, standardised methodologies have been developed. However, many consider heritage values can never be objectively broken down and measured.

Standardised Methodology

In defining a statement of significance each case should start with an agreed method of characterising values from the range of interested parties involved. In defining a standard methodology, it is necessary to agree the range of values to be assessed. Institutions, funding bodies and planning agencies are likely to insist upon the use of a specific set of values to be assessed in preparation of a statement of significance.

A useful model to follow is the standard methodology for assessing significance recommended by the Heritage Collections Council of Australia (2001). This is intended to enable Australian museums to make decisions about conservation priorities that are comparable across collections and museums. Standardised methodology limits variation in significance assessment and takes the assessment beyond simple value judgment as it is supported by evidence, research and logical argument.

Nature of Significance

Assessment of significance involves:

- Examination of the object.
- Developing an understanding of its history and context.
- Identifying its value for the individuals or groups who have an interest in it.

As an example, Australia's Heritage Collections Council has applied four main criteria to assessing significance:

> Historic

An object may be historically significant for its associations with people, events, places, and themes. This could be through an association with famous people or important events. Alternatively, objects may be associated with ordinary lives, or typical of certain activities, etc.

> Aesthetic

An object may be aesthetically significant for its craftsmanship, style, technical excellence, beauty, demonstration of skill and quality of design and execution. It might be innovative or traditional, or represent indigenous culture, folk cultures, or high art.

Scientific, research, or technical

An object may have potential for further research scientific examination or study. Archaeological and ethnographic objects have research potential if they are provenanced, or recovered from a documented context, especially if they represent aspects of history not well represented in other sources. This can also apply to biological or geological specimens, documents and archives, etc.

Social or spiritual

Objects have social significance if a community holds them in esteem; this may be reflected in cultural, spiritual or social expression, and represent aspects of community identity and cohesion. Evidence for this can be found only by consulting with the relevant groups. Objects may acquire social significance with the passage of time. Sacred objects may have qualities that relate to the belief system of specific communities.

Degree or Level of Significance

Objects may be considered significant, but some may be considered more significant than others. Certain other criteria may be used to assess the degree or level of significance:

> Provenance

This refers to a chain of information that provides the object with a continuously documented history of ownership and use.

Representativeness

The object may be important because it is representative of a particular category of object, or way of life or historical theme.

Rarity

The object may be rare, unusual or a particularly fine example of its type.

Condition, integrity

The object may be unusually complete, or in original or exceptionally good condition. Later adaptations may be an important part of the object. In some cases, signs of use and wear may also be significant.

> Interpretive or research potential

The object may offer the possibility of demonstrating aspects of experience, historical themes, people's lives and activities. It may be valued as a focus for interpretation or education activities within a collection.

The information gathered from this process is summarised in a statement of significance, which indicates **how**, **why** and to **what** extent the object is significant. It lists the values, meanings, and importance of the object or collection. These, then, are the qualities that should, if possible, be conserved. Thus, the statement of significance provides a reference point against which to consider the impact of proposed conservation actions on the object.

Step-by-Step Approach

- Gather available details about the object: owner's details, photos, copies of reference materials and information on related objects.
- Research history and provenance of the object: evidence of use, where it was made, used.
- Talk with owners, users, and relevant associated groups. Examine cultural values, encourage owners to describe the meaning of the object to them and others.
- Understand the context of the object, how the object relates to other objects in the collection/group, its history and geographic area.
- Examine and assess the object.
- Analyse the fabric of the object: what is it made of; patterns of wear; repairs adaptations; condition.
- Assess significance against the main agreed values then determine the degree of significance.
- Write a concise statement of significance showing why the object is valued and outlining its cultural meaning.

RECOMMENDED READING

Avrami, E., Mason, R., and de la Torre, M. (eds), 2000. *Values and Heritage Conservation*. Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute.

http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/values_heritage_research_report.htm

Avrami, E., 2009. Heritage, values, and sustainability. In: A. Richmond and A. Bracker (eds), *Conservation: principles, dilemmas and uncomfortable truths*. London: Butterworth-Heinemann in association with the Victoria and Albert Museum, 177-183. INST ARCH L RIC; ISSUE DESK IOA RIC 9. Also available as an e-book.

The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013. http://australia.icomos.org/publications/burra-charter-practice-notes/ Clavir, M. 2002 Preserving What is Valued: Museums, Conservation and First Nations. Vancouver and Toronto: UBC Press.

Cultural Heritage Agency, 2014. *Assessing Museum Collections: Collection valuation in six steps.* Amersfoot: Cultural Heritage Agency NL. <u>https://cultureelerfgoed.nl/sites/default/files/publications/assessing-museum-collections.pdf</u>

De La Torre, M. (ed.), 2002. Assessing the Values of Cultural Heritage. Research Report, Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute.

http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/values_cultural_heritage.html

Reed, C. 2012. *Reviewing Significance 2.0: a framework for reviewing museum collections' significance, management and use*. London: Collections Trust. <u>http://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/reviewing-significance-2-0/</u>

Russell, R., and Winkworth, K., 2009. *Significance 2.0: a guide to assessing the significance of collections*. Adelaide: Collections Council of Australia. <u>http://www.environment.gov.au/heritage/publications/significance2-0/</u> Sadongei, A., 2004. What about sacred objects? In: S. Ogden (ed.), *Caring for American Indian objects: a practical and cultural guide*. Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 17-20. INST ARCH L OGD

ُ[®]ASSESSMENT 1 IS DUE THIS FRIDAY FEBRUARY 9th

Week 17 – READING WEEK NO CLASSES

Modern Materials (CR). Lecture and handling session.

ESSENTIAL READING

Plastics Subject Specialist Network website: https://www.modip.ac.uk/projects/plastics-ssn

Scott Williams, R. 2002. Care of Plastics: Malignant Plastics. WAAC Newsletter 24 (1). <u>http://cool.conservation-us.org/waac/wn/wn24/wn24-1/wn24-102.html</u>

Shashoua, Y. 2008 *Conservation of Plastics, Materials Science, Degradation and Preservation.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. Especially: Chapter 6 Degradation of Plastics. Chapter 7. Conservation of plastics, 7.1 Inhibitive conservation

RECOMMENDED READING

Rogerson, C., 2010. Preserving Jewellery Created from Plastics and Rubber: Application of Materials and InterpretationofObjects (Doctoraldissertation,RoyalCollegeofArt).Introduction:https://researchonline.rca.ac.uk/338/1/CordeliaRogersonPhDConservationPreservingJewellery2010.pdf

Shashoua, Y. 2016. Mesocycles in conserving plastics. *Studies in Conservation 61* (sup 2), 208-213. Available online.

CLASS OBLL –14:00-16:00 BST Future Care (JS, SY).

By now, you should have a good understanding of how different aspects of environment and use can cause and/or accelerate different deterioration mechanisms in objects, and preventive conservation approaches which can help to manage these risks (*refer to ARCL0111 Preventive Conservation class materials*). Not all agents of deterioration will be relevant for all objects in all contexts, but it may be a good starting point to go through these to ensure you have not forgotten something that applies to your object.

Week 19

CLASS 410 –11:00-12:50 BST The passive conservation of natural human mummies (BW). *Lecture*.

CLASS OBLL –14:00-16:00 BST Finishing the Report (SY).

Now that each major aspect of information needed about your objects has been introduced and worked on, you should use this session to focus on what more you need from your object to complete the second report. Are you missing a detailed sketch or diagram of an interesting feature? Have you got all your measurements (not just basic length, width, depth but also of key components)? Do you want to discuss a feature of the object with the lecturer and/or other colleagues in your cohort? Remember a great deal of research can take place outside of the lab – focus only on tasks for which you require your object in front of you.

ESSENTIAL READING

Cassman, V., Odegaard, N., and Powell, J., F. 2008. *Human Remains: Guide for Museums and Academic Institutions / Edited by Vicki Cassman, Nancy Odegaard, and Joseph Powell.* Lanham, Md; Plymouth: AltaMira. Chapters 4 & 5. <u>http://www.vlebooks.com/vleweb/product/openreader?id=UCL&isbn=9780759112285</u>

Lee, C. 2019. Excavation and Conservation Recommendations in Handling Human Skeletal Remains: Case Studies from Desert Oases, Cave Shelters, and Permafrost in China and Mongolia. Advances in Archaeological Practice, 7, 1, 68-76. https://doi.org/10.1017/aap.2018.39 Wills, B., 2014. Wrapping the Wrapped: The Development of Minimal Conservation of Ancient Human Wrapped Mummies from the Region of the Nile. In: Harris, S. and Douny, L. (eds) *Wrapping and unwrapping material culture: archaeological and anthropological perspectives*. Walnut Creek, California: Left Coast Press Inc, pp. 157–170. <u>https://www.academia.edu/9188920/Wrapping the Wrapped The Development of Minimal Conservation of A</u> ncient Human Wrapped Mummies from the Region of the Nile?email work card=title

Wills, B. and Antoine, D., 2015. Developing a passive approach to the conservation of naturally mummified human remains from the fourth cataract region of the Nile Valley. *British Museum Technical Research Bulletin*, *9*, pp.49-56. On Moodle.

RECOMMENDED READING

Bowron, E.L., 2003. A new approach to the storage of human skeletal remains. *The Conservator* 27 (1), 95-106. https://doi-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.1080/01410096.2003.9995193

Week 20

VIDEOS TO WATCH

Examination and Identification of Textiles (RFP). *In three parts on Moodle*. Processing the fibres of a banana stem with Katia Neves (RFP). *On Moodle*. How to spin on a drop spindle (A. Flagg). *On Moodle*.

CLASS 410 -11:00-12:50 BST

Fibre ID discussion and activity (JS) and Assessment videos showcase 1.

ESSENTIAL READING

Brooks, M., M., and Eastop, D. 2006. <u>Matter out of Place: Paradigms for Analyzing Textile Cleaning</u>. *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 45, 3, 171-181.

Carr, D., Cruthers, N., Smith, C. and Myers, T., 2008. Identification of selected vegetable textile fibres. *Studies in Conservation*, *53*(sup2), pp.75-87.

Goodway, M., 1987. Fiber identification in practice. *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation*, 26(1), pp.27-44.

Schaffer, E., 1981. Fiber identification in ethnological textile artifacts. *Studies in conservation*, *26*(3), pp.119-129.

RECOMMENDED READING

Garside, P., 2009. The role of fibre identification in textile conservation. In *Identification of Textile Fibers* (pp. 335-365). Woodhead Publishing.

Markova, I., 2019. Textile fiber microscopy: a practical approach. John Wiley & Sons.

Lacey, C. 2018.*Backstrap Weaving.With Sra. Claudia Vega of Panchimalco, El Salvador*.https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2JlgXorWeg&list=PLhqHZnMnxd7Wr4OHfSk86kHph7VgHGCQc&i ndex=1&t=13s

Landi, S. (1992) 1998. *The textile conservator's manual*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. Pp. 8-11; 21-27; 28-36. <u>https://www.vlebooks.com/Product/Index/2046208?page=0</u>

CLASS OBLL -14:00-16:00 BST

Finishing the Report (SY). This is an optional session for those who want more time with their object.

Week 21

Here A VIDEOS TO WATCH Waterlogged Wood (JS). In four parts on Moodle.

LASS 617 –11:00-11:50 OR 12:00-12:50 BST

Waterlogged organics practical in the MSc conservation lab teaching area (DS, TG). Choose your group on Moodle.

ESSENTIAL READING

Bergstrand, T., 2001. In situ preservation and re-burial – methods to handle archaeological ship remains in the arcgipelago of Göteborg, Sweden. In Hoffman, P., Spriggs, J., A., Grant, T., Cook, C., & Recht, A., (eds.), 2001. *Proceedings of the 8th ICOM Group on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Conference*, Stockholm. Bremerhaven: Druckerei Ditzen GmbH und Co. 155-166.

Björdal, C., G., & Nilsson, T., 2002. Decomposition of waterlogged archaeological wood. In Hoffman, P., (ed.), *Proceedings of the 8th ICOM Group on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials Conference, Stockholm 2001.* Bremerhaven: ICOM Committee for Conservation Working Group on Wet Organic Archaeological Materials. 235-243.

Mouzouras, R., Jones, A., M., Jones, E., B., G., & Rule, M., H., 1990. Non-Destructive Evaluation of Hull and Stored Timbers form the Tudor Ship "Mary Rose". *Studies in Conservation*, 35, 4, 173-188.

Sully, D. and Domoney, K. 2014. Conservation Studies. In: Milne, G., and Sully, D, (eds.). 2014. The GreshamShip Project II: An armed Elizabethan merchantman wrecked in the Thames: cargo, contents and context. NauticalArchaeologySociety:Portsmouth,UK.Chapter3.https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1410625/1/UoA17A_10007784_SullyDM_19975.pdf

RECOMMENDED READING

Brunning, R., 1996. Waterlogged Wood. Guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood. *Compiled for the Ancient Monuments Laboratory, English Heritage.*

Brysbaert, A., 1998. A Late Bronze Age sickle from Shinewater Park: The treatment of a waterlogged composite. *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, *4*.

Jones, M., 2006. Conservation of Ancient Timbers from the Sea. In May, E., & Jones, M., (eds.), *Conservation Science: Heritage Materials.* Cambridge: RSC Publishing, 266-308.

Malea, E., Vogiatzi, T. and Watkinson, D.E., 1999. Assessing the physical condition of waterlogged archaeological
leather (Doctoral dissertation, CARDIFF). https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ekaterini-
Malea/publication/314209555 Assessing the Physical Condition of Waterlogged Archaeological Leather/links/58
ba032aa6fdcc2d14de44e6/Assessing-the-Physical-Condition-of-Waterlogged-Archaeological-Leather.pdf

Rowell, R., M., & Barbour, R., J., (eds.), 1990. *Archaeological Wood. Properties, Chemistry and Preservation*. Washington: American Chemical Society.

See also Extended Bibliography for Waterlogged Wood on Moodle.

Week 22

OPTIONAL VIDEOS TO WATCH Inorganic Case Studies (JS). *In four parts on Moodle.*

LIVE CLASS 410 –11:00-12:50 BST Module Review (JS) and Assessment videos showcase 2.

Strlič, M., Thickett, D., Taylor, J., and Cassar, M. 2013. <u>Damage functions in heritage science</u>, *Studies in Conservation*, 58, 2, 80-87, DOI: 10.1179/2047058412Y.0000000073

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Please note that **the Institute of Archaeology has adopted the standard Harvard Cite-Them-Right referencing system** in place of its former in-house style from the beginning of the academic year 2022–2023. This will align us with the standard University-wide guidelines set out through UCL Library Services to guide students in the use of this referencing style. Please use this style throughout your handbooks and other provisions like PowerPoint presentations, Moodle etc. For details regarding this system, please consult:

https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/harvard

https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide/referencing-effectively-and-ioa-guidelines

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONS ABOUT RAW MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGIES

Starting points to consider in this session and for further research:

What type of material is present?

E.g. ceramic, metal, wood, leather, skin, textile, ivory.

- Some cases may be obvious, but with more difficult ones you may want to discuss how you can tell that the object is what it is. If you are not sure of the material then looking at the object's record and conducting further research into your object and its origins might provide some clues. For example, if the object record states that the material is elephant ivory, you might want to research ivory characteristics (e.g. Schreger lines (cross-hatching) in cross-section) to see if your observations support that designation.
- Further research into the provenance of the object may also help you to be more specific with regard to hypothesizing the type of material present than possible simply by visual observation. For example, such research might indicate the likelihood of the presence of a particular type of wood or plant fibre and then you can assess whether or not this fits with your object.

How many components are there?

If there are several components then you might want to provide a sketch indicating the separate parts. What is each component made of? How are they joined together? E.g. dowels, stitches, nails, adhesive etc.

Consider material characteristics

Think about/research the material(s) present and how this will have affected the way the object was processed/shaped e.g. direction of wood grain and ease of carving.

How has the material been shaped/processed?

This will interrelate with point 3 (above): the way that the material is shaped will depend on its characteristics. Has material been cut away to create the shape (reductive technology) or has material been added to create the shape (additive technology)? Are there visible tool marks? Can you suggest the type of tool used based on these marks (and further research)? Perhaps include a drawing and/or detailed photograph of such tool marks.

Also think about looking into other methods of processing that might have been employed e.g. wood seasoning. If there is plant fibre, has it been woven? If there is skin/leather then you might want to research the tanning process. For ceramics consider firing. For metals consider casting/ cold-working/hot-working/welding etc.

Additional decoration

Is there additional decoration e.g. painting, engraving, dyeing, glazing, polishing? Again, consider the tools, materials and processes used. For example, if there is paint then you might want to research the way that paint was made in the region your object comes from including the types of pigment and binder used.

QUESTIONS ABOUT CONDITION

Aspects to think about for possible inclusion in your report:

Is the object complete?

Are there missing/broken pieces? If you have broken pieces, do they fit well together? Is the break likely to be old or recent? Why do you think these pieces were broken? Do they correspond with joins between different components, which have failed? Has the material deteriorated to become very weak? Is the object damaged in any other way - aside from being broken - e.g. crushed, scratched etc.?

Is the object structurally sound?

For example, can you see any cracks/splits? Do these appear to be structural or superficial: is there any movement in the split? Are joins between component parts stable?

Is the surface of the object, including decorative elements stable?

Are there any surface losses? Is the surface friable, cracked, flaking etc.? Surface instability might be linked to structural deformation/deterioration (see no. 7 below).

How clean is the object?

Is there only surface dust or is there also dirt that has become more ingrained? Handling marks.

Is there any evidence of biodeterioration?

Such as mould, pest activity etc. If there is evidence of pest activity, does this appear to be old or active? - is there any frass?

Are there any other signs of surface accretions?

E.g. salts - particularly in the case of some ceramic and stone objects. Leather may also precipitate mineral salts (white accretions - but check that this is not mould).

Are there any other signs of deterioration/deformation/chemical instability of the component materials?

E.g. corrosion of metals. Warping/deformation/embrittlement of organic objects due to movement caused by changes in relative humidity. Red rot of leather (orange-red colour and pungent smell, loss of mechanical strength). Evidence of photochemical deterioration processes e.g. discolouration/fading due to exposure to UV light? Evidence of interactions between the different components of the object e.g. metal stains on leather?

Are there any signs of past use?

E.g. patterns of wear on the surface. Handling marks.

Is there any evidence of past interventions: old repairs/conservation work?

If so, are these stable or failing?

Can you suggest any factors that might have caused the object to reach its current condition?

E.g. dropped, crushed, buried, damp etc. Physical damage is often focused in areas of chemical deterioration: it may be difficult to disentangle the two. Nonetheless, it is an important to be able to distinguish between signs of past damage, and issues which may be ongoing (object use and environment may affect these decisions).

General Principles

Conservation is concerned with all the processes involved in caring for an object in order to retain its cultural significance.

QUESTIONS ABOUT LAYERS OF SIGNIFICANCE

The following is a summary of questions/issues (based on the longer document above, which also includes suggested reading) that you might find useful to think about during this session; however, these should not be considered exhaustive. Thorough consideration of issues regarding significance will require additional research in your own time specifically relating to your object. It may not be possible to answer all of these questions for your object, or it may only be possible to surmise an answer based on comparison with similar examples. You will need to consider and analyse your answers in order to develop a statement of significance. This statement should discuss the cultural meaning of the object and explain why it is valued.

When was the object made?

Where was the object made?

The answers to these first two questions might be based on comparison with other examples and/or identification of materials/techniques/styles used in a particular region.

By whom was the object made?

E.g. Is it representative of the work of a particular indigenous culture?

Considering the questions above, how well provenanced/documented is the object? Are there many other similar objects?

Knowledge of the history of ownership and use of the object, as well as its age and provenance will affect its significance. An object with secure provenance may be useful for scientific research/further analysis/study into particular aspects of their context, especially if there are few similar examples. Is the object particularly unusual in any respect? Does it differ in any respects from other known examples? It might be older, or use slightly different materials/techniques, or display different patterns of wear. It might be more securely provenanced. It might be in better condition. All of these issues will influence the significance of the object.

Why was the object made/how was it used?

Visual analysis of patterns of use/repairs may be revealing. The reasons behind the creation of the object and its use will be reflective of its significance to those making/using it. E.g. ritual use may indicate spiritual significance. Or perhaps it was made to cater to tourist trade?

Can you identify possible stakeholders (those for whom the object is particularly significant)? It may be necessary to consult these stakeholders during development of a conservation plan (of course, you do not need to put this into practice).

What do you know about the biography of the object?

The ways that the object has been used and valued is likely to have developed over time. Do not forget to consider more recently developed significances, such as those acquired after incorporation into a university teaching collection.

Taking your answers to the above questions into account, discuss the past and present values of your object. How is the object significant now/in the future?

Past significances might include historic, aesthetic, scientific/research/technical/educational, social/spiritual values etc. Present/future values will include original significances (e.g. ritual, social, cultural) but also its research and teaching potential (particularly based on the answers to question 4).

QUESTIONS ABOUT FUTURE CARE

Consider the variables of relative humidity/temperature and light

How susceptible is your object to changes in condition caused by these variables? Does your object display evidence of any such condition changes? E.g. warping, fading etc. What might be the suitable environmental parameters for your object? Are they currently being met? Should they be improved? If so, how?

Pest activity

Is your object likely to be susceptible to pest damage? Is there any evidence of current activity? What measures can be put in place to reduce the likelihood of pest activity/damage?

Storage conditions

Describe the current storage/display conditions for your object. How suitable are they? (This will also overlap with question 1). Consider exposure to dust: is the object covered/in a closed cabinet? Is there overcrowding in the storage space? Is the object adequately supported? Does it move around when the drawer is opened/closed? Does it come into contact with other objects? Does it have a mount? Does it need a mount?

Handling

The object is part of a teaching collection and should be accessible to students. What handling instructions could be provided for those dealing with the object? If the object is fragile, perhaps it should be moved/handled while remaining on its mount.