MA Principles of Conservation 2023-24
Coordinator (academic and personal tutor):
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MA IN PRINCIPLES OF CONSERVATION
DEGREE PROGRAMME HANDBOOK 2023-24

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Teams:
https://teams.microsoft.com/l/team/19%3anaTeWjpKHzOZzslSpz05P663r0VeRvQfP0fXfoP4
reM1%40thread.tacv2/conversations?groupId=2d3be733-d06c-4747-9f64-
9f491d665833&tenantId=1faf88fe-a998-4c5b-93c9-210a11d9a5c2

Moodle: https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=38580

Blog: http://uclconversationsonconservation.blogspot.co.uk

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ConversationsOnConservation

Twitter X: https://twitter.com/CCCH_UCL

Office hours: Times may vary but Caitlin is usually available online on Wednesdays from 12.00 to 13.00 or Thursdays from 11.00 to 14.00. Sign up here: Book time with O'Grady, Caitlin: Office hours (15 minutes)

Please refer to the IoA Student Handbook and IoA Study Skills Guide:
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-student-handbook
https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide
for instructions on coursework submission, IoA referencing guidelines and marking criteria, as well as UCL policies on penalties for late submission.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

This Handbook outlines the aims and objectives, structure and content of the MA Principles of Conservation degree. It includes outlines of the core modules and a list of the most relevant options available this year. It should be used alongside the materials distributed in your information pack at the beginning of the year.

IoA Handbook

Please follow the links below to see important information about the IoA and degrees:
>   IoA Student Handbook
>   IoA Study Skills Guide

Moodle Website

There is a Moodle website for this degree which is used to notify you of anything relevant to the whole MA group. For example, it will feature opportunities for volunteering, advice on dissertations and details of informal tutorials during the first term.
>   MA Principles of Conservation 23/24 Moodle website

2. What is conservation?

There are probably as many definitions of conservation as there are conservators. We hope your ideas about conservation will change and develop through the year and that by the end of the year you will be able to add your own definition. What is certain is that conservation can no longer be considered to focus solely on repair (the department where conservation training first took place in the Institute of Archaeology in the late 1930s was known as the 'Repair Department'). Over the past half century there has been a growing emphasis on preventative conservation (stopping things from going wrong in the future) rather than relying solely on remedial conservation (putting right what has gone wrong in the past). Conservation now has a firm scientific basis, and there is a strong emphasis on investigative conservation (what can an object tell us about the past?). More recently the social importance of conservation has also been recognised (who is interested in this object and its conservation; why are conserving this object? what are the implications of doing so? What are the benefits for society?).

Useful introductions to **the history of conservation** can be found in:

Caldararo, L.C. (1987). An outline history of conservation in archaeology and anthropology as presented through its publications. *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 26(2), pp.85-104. Available online
http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1179/019713687806027889

Clavir, M. (1998) 'The social and historic construction of professional values in conservation', *Studies in Conservation* 43(1), pp.1-8. Available online http://www.jstor.org/stable/1506631

O'Grady, C.R. (2017) 'The model conservator – unpicking the past to understand discipline development', in Bridgland, J. (ed) ICOM-CC 18th Triennial Conference Preprints, Copenhagen, 4–8 September 2017, art. 1906. Paris: International Council of

Museums. Available online: https://www.icom-cc-publications-online.org/1638/The-model-conservator--Unpicking-the-past-to-understand-discipline-development

Plenderleith, H.J. (1998) 'A history of conservation', *Studies in Conservation* 43(3), pp.129-143. Available online:
http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1506740.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A3a93640c97864c794397bc0ac3d8e82a

3. The programme

Students have been trained in conservation at the Institute of Archaeology since it first opened in 1937. In 1958 the Institute moved into its present premises in Gordon Square Read the following article in case you are interested in more historic details:

The programme is suitable for:
- students who need a good understanding of conservation issues before going on to research in conservation.
- students who wish to become practising conservators by continuing to the two-year MSc in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums.
- students who have received training and experience in practical conservation during their employment and are now looking for a theoretical background and a recognised qualification.
- students who wish to work with collections care and preventative conservation.

The programme is set within a broad heritage context and deals with the conservation of objects and structures of all kinds. Much of what you will learn is relevant to many areas of conservation.

The programme will <u>not</u> train you to conduct treatments on objects; that is the focus of the MSc in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums. In fact, if you are just wanting to know about 'recipes', you are going to be disappointed with both programmes. But if you seize the opportunity, you can become a leader in the new generation of conservators, who can set their work (either practical conservation or research) into the wider context of collections management, risk assessment, conservation strategies, ethics, management, professionalism, public outreach, presentation, and interpretation.

The coordinator of the MSc in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums will get in touch to invite you for a meeting later in Term 1 in which he will discuss the degree.

4. Aims and objectives of the programme

The programme aims to
- provide a wide-ranging and challenging introduction to issues involved in collections care, the conservation of objects and structures.
- encourage critically aware perspectives on the management of conservation, professional practice, and research processes.

- provide an in-depth understanding of approaches to preventative conservation, collections management, risk assessment, conservation strategies, ethics, conservation management, professionalism, presentation, and interpretation.
- prepare students for further training in research or in professional practice.

These aims are pursued through a programme with a core structure designed to provide a good understanding of conservation, and a range of options from which you can define an individual pathway through the programme, tailored to your specific interests and personal educational objectives. You will also undertake a supervised research project leading to a dissertation of approximately 15,000 words, which enables you to develop specific practical, analytical, and interpretive skills as well as broader research skills.

Programme objectives

On successful completion of the MA in Principles of Conservation, you will, among other things, have:
- gained a detailed understanding of theoretical and ethical perspectives in conservation.
- learned about the history and development of conservation, and the range of contexts in which it is practised today.
- gained understanding of the processes by which pre-industrial (and some industrial) objects were (are) made from their raw materials, and the processes by which they deteriorate.
- obtained a knowledge of the use and significance of archaeological, ethnographic and social history objects in society today, and learned how to develop statements of significance.
- become aware of the role of international charters and codes of ethics.
- gained an understanding of current developments in the conservation profession.
- acquired an understanding of the nature and implications of conservation processes.
- acquired an awareness of current approaches to the management of conservation.
- learned the skills required to undertake a condition assessment.
- learned to monitor the environment in a gallery, storeroom or show case, and make recommendations for implementing any necessary improvements.
- carried through a substantial programme of independent research embodied in a dissertation.

5. Learning outcomes

By the end of the programme, you should be able to demonstrate:
- awareness and critical reflection
- application of acquired knowledge
- oral and written communication skills
- familiarity with relevant aspects of information technology

6. Prerequisites

You will have been accepted to the programme on the understanding that you already have sufficient background in archaeology, conservation, heritage, or other relevant field, either through your previous degree, or through relevant experience, to be able to follow the programme and modules for which you have been accepted. If, however, you wish to change your programme, or the modules in which you indicated an interest in your application, you should discuss this with the relevant Degree and Module Coordinators.

7. Programme structure

The programme of study for this degree is intended to help you meet the objectives outlined above and to provide an opportunity for you to achieve any additional personal objectives. It comprises two compulsory core modules (each in two parts), one 30 credit module of your own choice (i.e., one 30 credit module or two 15 credit modules) selected from a range of options, and a dissertation on a research topic related to the field of the degree. Each module addresses a specific subject and has its own Coordinator.

Core Modules:

Conservation in Cross-Disciplinary Contexts. Coordinator: Caitlin R. O'Grady
ARCLG112, 15 credits, 11 weeks – Term 1
This module examines the nature and history of conservation, and discusses practical, professional, and ethical issues. It focuses on the role of conservation in related disciplines, and on political, cultural, and institutional contexts and their effects on conservation practice.

Preventive Conservation. Coordinator: Jill Saunders
ARCLG111, 15 credits, 11 weeks – Term 1
The module aims to provide a wide-ranging and challenging introduction to preventative conservation. It introduces environmental management and to some of the practical aspects of preventative conservation. It also examines some of the underlying issues, such as the appropriateness and feasibility of prescriptive guidelines for environmental control.

Skills for conservation management. Coordinator: Caitlin R. O'Grady
ARCLG110, 15 credits, 11 weeks, Term 2
The module will develop skills related to conservation management and discuss their implementation within the wider context of heritage institutions. Students will also gain experience with some of the practical aspects of getting the conservation job 'done'. Practical skills will include documentation, grant applications, team working, use of collection catalogues, among others.

Investigating and Understanding Objects. Coordinator: Jill Saunders
ARCLG113, 15 credits, 11 weeks, Term 2
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.

Options

You must take option courses of your own choice valued at 30 credits in total (i.e., one 30 credit module, or two 15 credit modules). Normally, you select options from those particularly relevant to this degree programme, but you may select other options from those available in other Masters' degree programmes taught in the Institute of Archaeology, after discussion with and subject to the agreement of the Degree Coordinator. More exceptionally, it is possible to take a module provided by another Department at UCL, or one of the other Colleges of the University of London – you should discuss this with your Degree Coordinator.

Please note that for some modules, there is a cap on student numbers due to capicity (please see the main timetable) and you should contact the teacher concerned to check whether you can join the course.

Other options which can be taken (bearing in mind potential timetable clashes), after discussion and approval from your Degree Coordinator, are listed in the directory of MA and MSc degrees.

Subject to space, and the agreement of the Module Coordinators involved, you are welcome to attend courses (for no credit) in addition to those for which you are formally registered.

8. Practice Essay

This exercise is intended to give you practice in writing essays and may be particularly helpful for those of you not familiar with the UK academic system.

You are asked to write the essay so that you can benefit from feedback and advice.
Please read the guidelines on essay writing, referencing and plagiarism carefully. They can be found here in the IoA Study Skills Guide.

Word count: between 1,300 and 1,500 words
Deadline: 13 October 2023

Please submit your completed practice essay to Caitlin (caitlin.r.ogrady@ucl.ac.uk) via email.

TOPIC
Essay Question:
Objects are often described as having 'biographies'. How can **the past and present significances and histories of museum/art objects** affect conservation decision-making? Please illustrate your essay with reference to examples of object/s in the exhibition of your choice.

Visit one of these displays/exhibitions and answer the essay question (listed above) in relation to the exhibition, or an object or group of objects on display (make sure you explain

your choices). Please note that there are online exhibits (numbers 1 – 4) while others are available for in-person visits (numbers 5 – 7):

1. Addressing the Statue (online)
   https://www.amnh.org/exhibitions/addressing-the-theodore-roosevelt-statue?fbclid=IwAR1k0quYOvwhQtKzMqpx_I-b8R9tscRXB3JH8lFbXsqF0UyVKmF1OK_G_6E

2. The Colston statue (online)
   https://exhibitions.bristolmuseums.org.uk/the-colston-statue/

3. Unsilencing the archives: The laborers of the Tell en-Nasbeh excavations (1926-1935) (online)
   https://storymaps.arcgis.com/collections/dc601d4d131145f88f828196860b8a44

4. Contested Histories: Photographs from Mandate Palestine in the JH Illiffe Collection (online)
   https://uqantiquitiesonlineexhibitions.omeka.net/exhibits/show/contested-histories/contestedhistories

5. Materials and Objects: Pascale Marthine Tayou (in person) Tate Modern
   https://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-modern/display/materials-and-objects/pascale-marthine-tayou

6. Art Now: Rhea Dillon – An Alterable Terrain (in person) Tate Britain
   https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-britain/rhea-dillon

7. The Frieze Sculptures 2023 (in person) Regents Park
   https://www.frieze.com/article/frieze-sculpture-2023-announced

You must include images of relevant objects/artefacts, and consult a minimum of 5 relevant publications and refer to them in your text.

Here are some ideas to get you started, **but please explore the UCL libraries to show and hone your research skills:**

You will need to log on to the UCL Library Catalogue https://www.ucl.ac.uk/library/ with your UCL ID to be able to download the publications below.

Clavir, M. (1998) 'The social and historic construction of professional values in conservation', *Studies in Conservation*, 43, pp.1-8. https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/stable/i266790

Gosden, C. and Marshall, Y. (1999) 'The cultural biography of objects', *World Archaeology* 31, pp. 169-178. https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/stable/i207295

ICOMOS (2013) *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance*. Available online: http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Burra-Charter-2013-Adopted-31.10.2013.pdf

ICOMOS (2013) *Practice note: Understanding and assessing cultural significance*. Available online: http://australia.icomos.org/wp-content/uploads/Practice-Note_Understanding-and-assessing-cultural-significance.pdf

Seip, L.P. (1999) 'Transformations of meanings: the life history of a Nuxalk Mask', *World Archaeology* 31, pp.272-287. https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/stable/i207295

Sloggett, R. (2009) 'Expanding the conservation canon: assessing cross-cultural and interdisciplinary collaborations in conservation', *Studies in Conservation* 54, pp.170-183. https://www-jstor-org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/stable/i27867080

de la Torre, M. (ed) (2002) *Assessing the values of cultural heritage.* Los Angeles: The Getty Conservation Institute. Available online: http://www.getty.edu/conservation/publications_resources/pdf_publications/pdf/assessing.pdf

9. Dissertation

The dissertation (15,000 words) is a report on research, the topic chosen being approved as being relevant within the general area covered by this degree. When first considering your dissertation topic, you should refer to the aims and objectives of the degree programme. During the first term, or early in the second, you should discuss your area of research interest with your Degree Coordinator, who will help you to focus your ideas for your dissertation or refer you to another member of staff who will be able to provide more specific advice and will probably be appointed to be your Dissertation Supervisor. Your supervisor will help you define your dissertation topic and provide guidance through the main stages of the work.

The dissertation must be the product of your own research. It allows you to explore a specific topic that interests you, in depth, over a period of four or five months. It provides a further opportunity to achieve your own particular objectives. You may use it to apply newly learned approaches to a conservation problem that has long been of interest, or to gain greater knowledge and experience of particular aspects of conservation. If you are studying part-time, you might choose a topic related to your own work. You can treat the dissertation as a one-off research project, as a pilot study for a further research during the MSc programme, or during a Ph.D. project, or you can use it to demonstrate your skills to potential employers.

The completed dissertation will be submitted on **2 September 2024**. Guidelines for researching, writing, and producing the dissertation are included in the MA/MSc Handbook.

Advice on the preparation of the dissertation will be provided in sessions at regular intervals through the year. See more here: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeology/current-students/ioa-study-skills-guide/dissertations

10. Teaching schedule

Timetables

Full details of the timetable for each module are included in the relevant module handbook. Taught modules are normally timetabled in the first two terms, though assessed work may be scheduled for submission in the third term, depending on which options you have selected. You are expected to use the remaining months to work on your dissertation. There is a reading week in each of Term 1 and Term 2; this time should be used to catch-up with reading, and to research and prepare assessed work.

The vacations are a break from structured teaching, but they provide an important time for intensive reading, writing and analysis. It is therefore advisable to plan your vacation times with this in mind. You should also remember that this is a 12-month programme and that you will need to work on your dissertation during the summer vacation.

Part-time students

If you are pursuing the degree on a part-time basis, you will normally be expected to take 60 credits (normally the core modules) in the first year and the remaining element and the dissertation in the second. You must agree your choice of courses with the Degree Coordinator. You may start work on the dissertation at the same time as full-time students, or you may wish to start later; either way you should consult the Degree Coordinator, and your Dissertation Supervisor, once the latter has been appointed.

11. Teaching methods

The conservation core modules are taught through a combination of lectures, seminars, demonstrations, site visits (when possible), student presentations, practical exercises, tutorials, and object-based sessions. Further details are given in the module handbooks. The intention is that you be exposed to many different aspects of conservation and the opportunity to think about and discuss them at length.

UCL staff, with the addition of occasional guest speakers, will conduct the lectures and seminars. **Each module has required preparations and weekly recommended readings, which you will be expected to have done in advance**, to be able to follow fully and to contribute to discussion. Most classes will include a formal presentation by one or more lecturers and class discussions that may use the essential readings as a basis from which to examine the topic. Please also draw on your own experiences and knowledge to contribute to discussion.

12. Coursework

Weighting of individual elements, and pieces of coursework in the whole degree

Module	Weight of module within the whole degree	Teaching term	Type of coursework	Weighting of coursework within the specific course

ARCLG112 **Conservation in Cross-Disciplinary Contexts**	One-twelfth (8.33% of degree)	1	Poster Essay	40% 60%
ARCLG111 **Preventive conservation**	One-twelfth (8.33% of degree)	1	Technical report	100%
ARCLG113 **Investigating and Understanding Objects**	One-twelfth (8.33% of degree)	2	Video presentation Report	30% 70%
ARCLG110 **Skills for Conservation Management**	One-twelfth (8.33% of degree)	2	Bespoke mount + report Audio-visual report	35% + 35% 30%
OPTION(S)	Two-twelfths in total (16.67% of degree in total)	Varies and depends on module		
DISSERTATION	Six twelfths (50% of degree)	Research to be conducted throughout the year		

Method of assessment

Method of assessment varies from module to module but is always set out in the relevant module handbook. There are no written timed examinations; all modules are assessed on the basis of written papers/essays, reports, posters, presentations, etc. The intention of all assessed work is to evaluate your ability to research available literature and materials, to present this in a well-structured and professional way and make sound judgements on the significance of the material you discuss.

The nature and deadlines of individual assessments are defined in the module handbooks. If you are unclear about the nature of an assignment, you should contact the Module Coordinator in advance (via office hours or class Moodle forum).

Most assignments will be first marked by the module coordinator and second marked by another lecturer. Dissertations will be first marked by the dissertation supervisor and second marked (without knowledge of the first mark) by another lecturer. All marks are subject to scrutiny by an External Examiner (a specialist from outside UCL). 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. The IoA marking criteria can be found in the IoA Student Handbook (Section 13: Information on assessment). The IoA Study Skills Guide provides useful guidance on writing different types of assignment.

Please note that **late submission, exceeding the maximum word count** and **academic mis-conduct (plagiarism)** will be penalized and can significantly reduce the mark awarded for the assignment and/or overall module result. On requirements, please do consult the [IoA Student Handbook](#) in full including sections 13.8 (submission deadlines), 13.10 (word count), and 13.12-14 (academic integrity).

Use of Generative AI including Software
Module handbooks will indicate the degree to which generative AI is allowed using the following options:

- Use of software to generate content is not allowed for assessments and will be penalized (except as required by disability)
- Use of software for language and writing review/improvement is permitted, and the software and the way it has been used must be indicated in the relevant boxes on coursework cover sheets. **UCL defines language and writing review as checking "areas of academic writing such as structure, fluency, presentation, grammar, spelling, punctuation and language translation."**
- Use of software to assist with generation of substantive content, which is only appropriate for assignments that have been explicitly redesigned with the use of generative AI in mind

Where software or generative AI are permissible, students must indicate the software and the way it has been used on the relevant boxes included on **submitted course work coversheets**.

The library offers guidance on how to acknowledge the use of generative AI and associated software: https://library-guides.ucl.ac.uk/referencing-plagiarism/acknowledging-AI

13. Communication at the Institute

The primary channel of communication within the Institute of Archaeology is e-mail. Staff and other students will expect to be able to reach you through your College e-mail - which they can find in the UCL on-line directory (see http://www.ucl.ac.uk/directory).

You must consult your e-mail regularly (at least daily). If you move to another address during the year, **please ensure that you keep your contact details (especially your telephone number) up to date on Portico, in case you need to be contacted urgently.**

14. Conservation staff

The IoA conservation staff are listed below. Many other members of the Institute's staff also contribute to the conservation programmes.

Dr. Caitlin R. O'Grady (UCL-IoA rm. 203)   caitlin.r.ogrady@ucl.ac.uk
Lecturer in Conservation
Degree coordinator: MA in Principles of Conservation
Deputy Graduate Tutor

Dr. Renata F. Peters (on sabbatical leave this academic year) m.peters@ucl.ac.uk
Associate Professor in Conservation

Jill Saunders (UCL-IoA rm. 201) j.m.saunders@ucl.ac.uk
Lecturer (Teaching) in Conservation

Dr. Dean Sully (UCL-IoA rm. 403a) d.sully@ucl.ac.uk
Associate Professor in Conservation
Degree coordinator: MSc in Conservation for Archaeology and Museums

Staff office hours

Every member of academic staff has regular weekly 'office hours'. These are the times when they are available, usually without appointment. Please contact them by email to know when/how they will be available during the term.

15. Volunteer work

There may be opportunities for you to undertake volunteer work in various UCL collections, as well as some other museums. Further information will be shared by the degree coordinator throughout the year.

16. Lectures, Seminars and Events

The Institute hosts a wide range of lectures and seminars that are advertised on notice boards and via your e-mail. These are open to all staff and students at the Institute, and there is no assessment attached to any of them. You are encouraged to take up this unique opportunity to extend your learning.

17. Useful websites

There are many web sites and discussion lists relevant to conservation and cultural heritage. You may like to explore the following to start with:

- ICON, The Institute for Conservation http://www.icon.org.uk
- ICOM-CC, International Council of Museums, Conservation Committee http://www.icom-cc.org
- ICOM-CC, Publications online: http://icom-cc-publications-online.org/default.aspx
- AIC, The American Institute for Conservation https://www.culturalheritage.org/
- CCI, The Canadian Conservation Institute https://www.canada.ca/en/conservation-institute.html
- IIC, International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works https://www.iiconservation.org
- Conservation Bibliographic Database, BCIN https://bcin.info/vufind/
- Art and Archaeology Technical Abstracts http://aata.getty.edu/
- National Center for Preservation Technology & Training, National Park Service https://www.nps.gov/subjects/ncptt/index.htm

- Global Conservation Forum (used to be known as Conservation DistList).
  Go to the link below, create a log in and subscribe to the list
  https://members.culturalheritage.org/welcome

18. Feedback from students

In trying to make this degree as effective as possible, we welcome feedback during the course of the year. You will be asked to fill in Progress Forms at the end of each term, which the Degree Coordinator will discuss with you, which include space for comment on each of your modules.

At the end of each module all you are asked to give your views on the module in an anonymous questionnaire, which will be circulated at one of the last sessions of the module. These questionnaires are taken seriously and help the Module Coordinator to develop the module. The summarised responses are considered by the Degree Coordinator, the Institute's Staff-Student Consultative Committee and Teaching Committee, and by the Faculty Teaching Committee.

If you are concerned about any aspect of a specific module, we hope you will feel able to talk to the relevant Module Coordinator, but if you feel this is not appropriate or you have more general concerns, you should consult your Degree Coordinator (Dr. Caitlin R. O'Grady), your Personal Tutor (Dr. Caitlin R. O'Grady), or the Masters Tutor (Prof. Jeremy Tanner). Or you may consult the Academic Administrator (Judy Medrington), the Chair of Teaching Committee (Dr. Rachel King) or the Director (Prof. Kevin MacDonald).