

Collections Development Policy

The purpose of this document is to define the present state and use of UCL's collections and to state the current policies for acquisition and disposal. It ensures material is acquired and disposed of in accordance with recognised standards, requirements and organizational strategy and serves as a reference document to guide curatorial decisions.

Policy review procedure: The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. Policies are reviewed by the Collections Advisory Group (CAG) in consultation and with final approval from the governing body, UCL Culture, Heritage and Museums Committee (CHMC)

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

Overview of current collections

UCL Culture holds approximately 200,000 objects within the following collections and accredited museums:

- Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology
- Grant Museum of Zoology & Comparative Anatomy
- UCL Art Museum
- UCL Pathology Collections
- The auto-icon Jeremy Bentham
- UCL Galton Collection
- UCL Noel Collection
- UCL Historical Sciences Collection

For a full overview of current collections, please see Appendix 1-3.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

- 1.1. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.2. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.3. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.4. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary

procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.5. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

1.6. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

2. History of the collections

For a full overview of current collections, please see Appendix 1-3.

3. An overview of current collections

For a full overview of current collections, please see Appendix 1-3.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

Themes and priorities for future collecting will be different for each individual collection therefore details for each is provided in the Appendix. For a full overview of priorities for collecting, please see Appendix 1-3.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1. UCL Culture recognises that the principles which determine the priorities for rationalisation and disposal of accessioned collections will be through a formal review process. Non-accessioned material is assessed, and disposal undertaken, by due diligence. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will result in a more useable, better-managed collection, without diminishing the quality of the collection.

5.2. The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

UCL Culture Advisory Group (CAG) authorize disposals for UCL Culture museums and collections. All disposal requests are authorized and passed up by the Head of Museums and Collections to the Culture, Heritage and Museums Committee (CHMC) for final approval. Disposals are submitted as requests from curators, by completing a Disposal Form following the Disposal Flowchart with comments concerning approval, recommendations or rejections from CAG.

6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

UCL Culture recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7. Collecting policies of other museums

UCL Culture will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

Natural History Museum

Horniman Museum
Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons,
Manchester Museum
Museums at the Universities of Cambridge, Oxford and Reading.
British Museum
Tate Britain

8. Archival holdings

UCL Culture holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002). Care of records will make reference to UCL's Records Management Policy (2015).

9. Acquisition

9.1. The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:
UCL Culture Advisory Group (CAG) authorize acquisitions for UCL Culture museums and collections. All acquisition requests are authorized and passed up by the Head of Museums and Collections to the Culture, Heritage and Museums Committee (CHMC) for final approval. Acquisitions are submitted as requests from curators, by completing an Acquisition Form following the Acquisition Flowchart with comments concerning approval, recommendations or rejections from CAG.

UCL Culture will exercise due diligence and will refrain from acquiring any object or specimen where valid title is in question, regardless of whether offered by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange.

9.2. The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

9.3. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10. Human remains

UCL Culture holds human remains from any period. UCL Culture holds a HTA Public Display License. UCL Culture will follow the HTA Code of Practice and Standards and procedures in the "Guidance for the care of human remains in museums" issued by DCMS in 2005.

11. Biological and geological material

So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12. Archaeological material

- 12.1.** The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2.** In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

13. Exceptions

Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

14. Spoliation

UCL Culture will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

- 15.1.** UCL Culture, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the "Guidance for the care of human remains in museums" issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. UCL Culture will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.
- 15.2.** The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the "Guidance for the care of human remains in museums". Reference will also be made to UCL's "Policy, Principles and Procedures for the Care and Treatment of Human Remains at UCL" (February 2007).

16. Disposal procedures

UCL Culture Advisory Group (CAG) authorize disposal from UCL Culture museums and collections. Any object disposals within UCL that fall outside UCL Culture is not the responsibility of the CAG but falls under the UCL Cultural Property Policy.

All requests for de-accession are authorized and passed up by the Head of Museums and Collections to the Culture, Heritage and Museums Committee (CHMC) for final approval. Disposals are submitted as requests from curators, by completing a Disposal Form following the Disposal Flowchart with comments concerning approval, recommendations or rejections from CAG.

- 16.1** All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2** The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3** When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4** When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5** The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.
- 16.6** A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9** The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or

destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

- 16.11** The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12** Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13** The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1** In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2** If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.13.3** If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4** Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15** It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16** Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Definitions

Object = a material thing and its associated documentation with historic, scientific or other cultural significance.

Permanent Collection = an assemblage of accessioned objects owned by UCL and safeguarded according to the standards outlined in the UCL Culture Collections Care Policy.

Collections Management System (CMS) = the method of capturing, recording, storing and retrieving the data associated with the objects forming the collections. The current software used in the implementation of the CMS is ADLIB.

Documentation = gathering and recording information about objects, their histories, associations, and the processes they undergo within the organisation. The purpose of documentation is to account for, manage and use objects to achieve the stated aims and objectives of the holding organisation.

Accessioning = the process by which an identifiable object is recorded as being the property of a UCL Permanent Collection.

Documented = identifiable object listed as being present in an identifiable location. This is Inventory Level Documentation.

Fully Documented = object has CMS entry and label with unique number. This is Catalogue Level Documentation.

De-accessioning = the documented process by which a UCL Collection disowns an object and ceases to safeguard it according to the standards outlined in the UCL Culture Collections Care Policy.

Disposal = the documented transfer of an object or objects to an owner outside a UCL Collection, or the recorded destruction of an object or objects.

Handling Collection = a collection within UCL that is distinct from a Permanent Collection and is exempted from the full set of standards of object care outlined in the UCL Culture Collections Care Policy.

APPENDIX 1 UCL Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology

An overview of current collections

UCL Petrie Museum houses around 80,600 Egyptian and Sudanese objects dating from the Palaeolithic period through to the present day. The collections are largely based on the work of W. M. Flinders Petrie, his colleagues and successors, from their excavations in the Nile Valley from 1880 to 1983. The objects from excavations include: those from the British School of Archaeology in Egypt (previously the Egyptian Research Account) which was disbanded, and all its assets and copyright vested in the Department of Egyptology, UCL, in 1953; and from the Egypt Exploration Society (previously the Egypt Exploration Fund) which still undertakes work in Egypt to the present day. Unprovenanced material was acquired by Petrie in Egypt by purchase. The collections cover prehistoric, dynastic, Greek and Roman and, to a lesser extent, the Islamic periods. The Nile Valley, especially Upper Egypt, is the main focus, with some oasis and desert materials.

The collection is a Designated Collection of National Significance. As a reference, research and teaching collection, the collection is of international importance to the study of Egyptian Archaeology and the history of Archaeology in Egypt.

Themes and priorities for future collecting

Future collecting will concentrate on enhancing the research and teaching potential of the Petrie Museum's Egyptian collections. However, for ethical and legal reasons the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology will not acquire ancient Egyptian or Sudanese objects by purchase or via new field work, nor will the Petrie Museum acquire unprovenanced archaeological material.

The Petrie Museum will acquire by donation or bequest, where appropriate, provenanced objects and archives relating to the past fieldwork of Flinders Petrie, his colleagues and successors in the British School of Archaeology in Egypt, the Egyptian Research Account and the Egypt Exploration Society without obligation.

The Petrie Museum may acquire by donation, bequest or purchase, modern objects (post-AD 1900) which help to interpret, illustrate or encourage new readings of archaeological collections, especially by working with artists and communities culturally connected to the Nile valley.

APPENDIX 2 UCL Grant Museum of Zoology & Comparative Anatomy

An overview of current collections

The Grant Museum contains around 68,000 zoological or zoology-related objects from across the world and representing half a billion years of animal diversity. The collection was founded in 1827 to allow research and teaching of comparative anatomy.

Grant was the first Professor of Zoology and Comparative Anatomy in England and immediately began to amass specimens and material for dissection which form the basis of the museum today. The collection continued to expand as successive curators acquired additional material to aid in teaching and to facilitate research such as the collections of E.Ray Lankester, D.M.S Watson, J.P.Hill and Francis Musset.

The Grant Museum not only represents the history of biology and biological teaching at UCL, but it has also become a 'museum of museums' as material from other London institutions ended up at UCL either as transferal's to UCL zoologists or when other London Universities closed down their zoological collections.

A particular strength of the Grant Museum is therefore the comprehensive comparative anatomy collection which continues to be used widely in higher education teaching at UCL as well as by internal and external researchers.

The collection is now used to support teaching in a wide and increasingly diverse range of subjects and provide specimens for a diverse topics of research uses. The collection is also used to support public engagement with UCL research, through its use in exhibitions, events and activities.

Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Grant Museum will only acquire material that strengthens the existing collection and supports the delivery of teaching, research and public engagement. This may be by:

- Filling notable gaps in the collection, such as acquiring specimens from under-represented taxonomic groups
- Acquiring scientifically important zoological material, such as type and figured specimens
- Acquiring zoological specimens relating to current or past research conducted at UCL or zoological material associated with notable figures from UCL's history
- Acquiring specimens with a strong potential for display
- Adopting material under threat of disposal from other University zoology departments, with a view to rehousing or acquisition where appropriate

APPENDIX 3 UCL ART MUSEUM

An overview of current collections

UCL Art Museum contains the paintings, sculpture, and works on paper owned by University College London. These comprise holdings of over 10,000 objects. The collection contains European, Japanese and North American art from the 15th century to the present day, comprising paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs, books and electronic media.

The collections came to UCL primarily through gift (initiated by the Flaxman gift in 1847), bequest and through prizes awarded for student work by the Slade School of Fine Art. The collection includes old master prints and drawings, Flaxman plaster models and drawings and the Slade's prize winning drawings and paintings.

These core collections are of the highest quality. The prints and drawings collections are composed of three main gifts and bequests, the Grote Bequest (1872), the Vaughan Bequest (1900) and the Sherborn Gift (1936). These are significant in themselves as examples of collecting practice, and include individual items of international significance (works by Durer, Altdorfer, Rembrandt, Van Dyck, Beck, Huber, Heintz, Turner and Constable). Taken as a whole they form a first rate study collection of national significance.

The Slade collections form a unique document of English art practice in the twentieth century, illustrating the period with a thoroughness not matched by other national art schools. Once again, individual items are of undisputed importance and value and the collection as a whole is an archive of art education history of national importance.

The Flaxman models and drawings at UCL form the largest extant archive of original material relating to this important sculptor and are of international importance.

The UCL Art Museum are also responsible for all other fine art objects owned by UCL, including nineteenth century statuary, portraits of UCL officers, and many prints and drawings relating to the Wilkins building.

Themes and priorities for future collecting

Future collecting policy will concentrate on strengthening our holdings of paintings, sculptures, drawings, prints, photographs and electronic media in existing subject areas through gift, bequest and through purchase when funds are available, augmented by grant aid from Government bodies.

- Acquisitions will particularly focus on work by artists who were staff or students at the Slade. Collecting will focus on the following areas:
 - Annual Slade purchase prize works
 - Student and staff works from the fine art media department at the Slade
 - Slade student work which won a prize but was not subsequently kept by the school
 - Student work which illustrates an important aspect of the history or pedagogy of the Slade
 - Work by nationally or internationally renowned artists who studied at the Slade but who are not currently represented, or inadequately represented in the collection.
- We will also continue to build up our collection of work by or related to John Flaxman.
- Objects related to the history, architecture and personnel of the college will only be collected where they are of artistic as well as archival significance.
- The final area in which we will continue to collect will be that related to the teaching functions of the collection, particularly focusing on works relevant to courses taught in UCL Departments.