

Museum of
Classical
Archaeology

MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Faculty of Classics,
Sidgwick Avenue,
Cambridge.
CB3 9DA

Tel. +44 (0)1223 335153

Fax. +44 (0)1223 335409

Email: museum@classics.cam.ac.uk

Website: www.classics.cam.ac.uk/museum

**COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY
(PREVIOUSLY THE ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY)**

2018

Name of museum: MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Name of governing body: COMMITTEE OF THE MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL
ARCHAEOLOGY, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Creation Date: May 2018

Created by: Dr. Susanne Turner (Curator)

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:

Policy review procedure:

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 29th October 2018

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.

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

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:

The Museum of Classical Archaeology is part of the University of Cambridge. The purpose of the Museum is to promote Classical Archaeology by:

- maintaining, conserving, enhancing, displaying and documenting its collections of antiquities and of casts and replicas of antiquities for the benefit of students, researchers, and the general public;
- supporting research of all kinds in Classical Archaeology with grants and other resources;
- enabling the dissemination of research in Classical Archaeology at every level;
- demonstrating to the widest possible audience the continuing importance and relevance of Classical Archaeology to the contemporary world.

1.2. The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3. 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.

1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.5. 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.

1.6. 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.

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

2. History of the collection

The plaster casts of classical sculpture, which form the core of the Museum's collection, were originally part of the Fitzwilliam Museum's collection. The earliest

casts in the collection were donations to the Fitzwilliam from private collections, which means their earlier history (including details about age and origins) are unknown. The first director of the Fitzwilliam, Sir Sidney Colvin, continued to purchase casts, in particular to disseminate new discoveries found during contemporary excavations to public audiences.

By 1884, space constraints and concerns about the role of replicas in the museum caused the Fitzwilliam Syndicate to found the Museum of Classical and General Archaeology to house both the casts and the collection which now forms the basis of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. In 1911, the cast collection formally separated from the Fitzwilliam and the casts were also separated from the archaeological and anthropological collections with which they shared space, and both the MAA and the Museum of Classical Archaeology were formed as distinct institutions with their own governing bodies.

The Museum moved into its current building in 1882, when the casts were installed in a purpose-built gallery on Sidgwick Avenue. By this point, the Museum's collections had expanded to include archaeological artefacts, squeezes, sherds and photographic holdings – all of which were amassed, alongside the casts, to further the teaching of classical archaeology within the Classical Tripos at the University of Cambridge. This purpose is reflected in both the terms of the Museum's foundation and its statement of purpose today.

3. An overview of current collections

The collections of the Museum of Classical Archaeology fall into four main parts: plaster casts of sculpture from the ancient world; a collection of sherds; a collection of ancient artefacts plus small scale replicas; and a collection of epigraphic squeezes. The unifying themes of the collection are the art and archaeology of the Greek and Roman world, from prehistorical times to the end of the Roman empire and broadly defined geographically.

Core Collection: Plaster Casts

The c.650 plaster casts of classical sculpture form the core of the Museum's collection and are on display to the public in the purpose-built Cast Gallery. The cast collection covers a period of over 1000 years, as a collection of replicas of originals which date from c.650 BCE to c.500 BCE. The geographical range of the casts is focused on the Graeco-Roman Mediterranean (most especially Greece and Rome), but spreads to the extent of the Roman empire, from Roman Britain to modern-day Iran. Moreover, the casts are also historical objects in their own right and the ancient sculptures upon which they are based are today housed in collections ranging throughout Europe and North America.

Other Collections

The collection of c.10,000 sherds, primarily ceramic but also including some worked stone and glassware, cover a range of 190 sites in northern Europe and the Mediterranean. The small collection of Greek and Roman artefacts, primarily from

the ancient Mediterranean, is housed in a separate room available to faculty members. The collection comprises primarily ancient pottery, but also includes metalwork, stonework and glass. The Museum also holds c.220 small replicas, which represent a range of metal, ivory and other originals. Finally, the Museum has c.3000 squeezes (impressions of inscriptions), which are kept in the Faculty's Archive Room in the Classical Faculty Library. The majority are paper, with some latex examples.

Archival and Photographic Holdings

In addition to the artefact collections, the Museum has a small archival collection. These include the Bean Archive (a photographic collection of Turkish sites which have been digitised), the Toynbee collection of lantern slides and the Mitford Archive (personal and research papers relating to the study of Cyprus, including squeezes). The Museum also holds several collections of teaching photographs, including those purchased at the turn of the 19th century. Most of the archival holdings are uncatalogued (please see the Documentation Plan 2016 and Documentation Backlog Plan 2016).

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The Cast Collection

From its foundation, the Museum of Classical Archaeology has been defined through the primary aim of collecting casts for teaching purposes within the University. The cast collection remains an educational collection and education interest continues to be the main criterion for acquisition.

Other Collections

The main use of these collections is for education and scholarly research, and research value remains the main criterion for acquisition.

Acquisition Priorities

- To strengthen the areas in which the collection is already strong, primarily the classical cultures of ancient Greece and Rome
- To collect casts and original objects relating to the pre-classical Mediterranean world to the end of the Roman empire, c.3000 BCE to c.500 CE. Objects outside this geographical area and time period would not be considered for acquisition.
- To acquire casts and original objects which fill gaps in the current collection, supplementing or expanding the range of sculpture and archaeology represented to add to the coherence and context of material already in the collection.
- To acquire an object only if it has potential for display, handling, interpretation, learning, research or outreach.
- To acquire an object only if there is adequate space for display or storage, and if there are sufficient funds for purchase and conservation given the Museum's modest resources.

All collections are currently open to further acquisition. The Committee considers donations on a case-by-case basis, under the advisement of the Director and Curator.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

5.1 The museum does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy.

The Museum holds its collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives and there is a continuing presumption against disposal. Sound curatorial reasons would need to be established before the Museum Committee would consider the disposal of any items in the Museum's collection. It is not anticipated that the question of disposal is likely to arise in the next five years.

While disposal is not a priority for this current period, the Committee will consider disposal in circumstances only for legal, safety, or care and conservation reasons.

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

6.1 The museum 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

7.1 The museum 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 specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s): Specific reference may be made to other museums, libraries and galleries, where appropriate, including in particular: within the Faculty of Classics, the Faculty Archive and the Classical Faculty Library; within the University of Cambridge, the Fitzwilliam Museum and the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology; outside Cambridge, the Ashmolean Museum, in particular in relation to their Cast Collection.

7.3 Where appropriate, the Museum of Classical Archaeology is willing to seek opportunities for joint acquisitions with other museums, galleries or libraries.

8 Archival holdings

As the Museum holds and collects archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its Committee will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

Potential acquisitions are recommended to the Committee by the Curator and/or the Director, as outlined in the Documentation Procedural Manual. All purchases and donations must be authorised in advance by the Committee; in urgent cases, permission may be sought via email. When considering any potential acquisition, its current and projected needs in terms of conservation and storage will be taken into account, along with curatorial capacity.

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, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, 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

10.1 The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

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

13.1 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

14.1 The museum 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 The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, 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. The museum 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 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'.

16 Disposal Procedures

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.