

MUSEUM OF CLASSICAL ARCHAEOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Museum of  
Classical  
Archaeology

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

Tel. +44 (0)1223 335153

Fax. +44 (0)1223 335409

Email: [museum@classics.cam.ac.uk](mailto:museum@classics.cam.ac.uk)

Website: [www.classics.cam.ac.uk/museum](http://www.classics.cam.ac.uk/museum)

**CARE AND CONSERVATION POLICY**

**2016**

<b>CREATION DATE</b>	May 2016
<b>CREATED BY</b>	Dr. Susanne Turner (Curator)

<b>APPROVED BY THE MUSEUM COMMITTEE</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	17 <sup>th</sup> May 2016

<b>DATE FOR REVIEW</b>	May 2021
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## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this Care and Conservation Policy is to guide the Museum of Classical Archaeology's conservation and collections care activities, in line with the resources available.

Care of the collections is a fundamental duty for the Museum of Classical Archaeology. Collections care and conservation plays a central role in the delivery of the Museum's Statement of Purpose:

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.

This Care and Conservation Policy should be read alongside the associated Care and Conservation Plan as well as the Documentation Backlog Plan. It sits together with the Museum's Collections Development Policy, Documentation Policy Statement and Emergency Plan. The ongoing need for collections care and conservation is reflected in the Museum's Forward Plan 2016-2021, and the associated Action Plan and Budget.

This policy aims to strike a balance between the needs for access to the collection (as outlined in the Access Policy Statement) and the long-term preservation of objects in the Museum's care. This Policy will be made available to all staff, volunteers, Museum Committee members and, where appropriate, members of the Faculty of Classics through the Museum's induction processes and via the website.

## 2. Definitions

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions have been adopted:

### Collections care (preventive conservation)

The measures necessary to avoid, slow down or minimize deterioration or loss of museum objects and specimens and structures.

### Remedial conservation

An action applied directly to an item or a group of items aimed at arresting deterioration processes and stabilizing structure in order to preserve cultural and scientific value. It may include restoration, where appropriate.

#### 4. Ethics and Legislation

The Museum of Classical Archaeology's approach to Collections Care and Conservation is guided by:

- Museum Association Code of Ethics
- Code of Ethics for Museums, ICOM, 2006
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations, 2004
- COSHH Regulations 2002
- University of Cambridge Statutes and Ordinances, 2015

#### 4. Standards

This Policy Statement has been informed by the following standards and frameworks:

- PAS 197:2009 'Code of practice for cultural collections management'
- PAS 198: 2012 'Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections'
- BS5454/PD5454 'Recommendations for storage and exhibition of archival documents'
- SPECTRUM: UK Museum Collections Management Standard V.04, 2011
- Benchmarks in Collections Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries, 2007
- Institute of Conservation (Icon) Conservation Register, 2013
- 'Bizot' Group Agreement: Achieving sustainability for galleries and museums, 2013, which has been formally adopted by members of the UK University Museum Group
- University of Cambridge Environmental Policy, 2011

#### 5. Principles for Care and Conservation of the Collections

The Museum of Classical Archaeology is committed to care for its collections according to the sector guidance set out in *Spectrum: UK Museum Collections and Management Standard* and *Benchmarks in Collections Care* and other approved standards, within the limits of its resources.

##### 6.1. Conditions for the Collections

The Museum will continue to assess and monitor the physical condition of its collections, thereby quantifying needs and providing the basis for strategic preservation and conservation planning. Resources at MOCA are limited, however, so the allocation of these will take into account the significance of individual items or collections.

##### 6.2 Risk Management

Priorities for remedial conservation are based on a risk management approach to collections care. The Museum aims regularly to assess and review all risks to the collection and to manage and mitigate these to a level that is acceptable, balanced against the need to ensure access to and interpretation of the collection.

The strategy for mitigating risks will be incorporated into the Collections Care and Conservation Plan. Strategies for safeguarding and recovery of the collection in the event of an emergency are included in the Museum's Emergency Plan.

### **6.3 Environmental Monitoring and Pest Control**

The Museum has limited control over its conditions, but monitors temperature and humidity in its primary collection areas in order to inform and facilitate decision-making about collections care. Collections are also regularly monitored so that prompt action can be taken should remedial conservation become necessary.

The Museum is committed to working with the Faculty of Classics, in which it sits, to maintain and, where possible, improve housekeeping standards in order to manage pest control and dust. Collection areas are monitored regularly for pests.

### **6.4 Environmental Controls**

The Museum of Classical Archaeology is committed to work with the Faculty of Classics and the University of Cambridge to improve environmental conditions where possible and to preserve the physical conditions of objects.

The Museum's practice in this area is guided by the University of Cambridge's Environmental Policy which states that 'In achieving excellence in teaching and research, the University of Cambridge aims to manage its activities, buildings and estates to promote environmental sustainability, to conserve and enhance natural resources and to prevent environmental pollution to bring about a continual improvement in its environmental performance'.<sup>1</sup>

### **6.5 Responsibility, support and advice**

Collections care is a primary responsibility of the Curator, but the Museum of Classical Archaeology believes that care of the collections is a responsibility of everyone who works with or makes use of the collections. The Museum is committed to training all staff, interns, volunteers and members of the Classics Faculty who handle collections in the course of their work. Researchers and other visitors working with the collections will be briefed on how to handle objects and will be supervised at all times.

The Museum of Classical Archaeology does not employ a technician or conservator, but the Museum has access to the expertise of conservators in the other University of Cambridge Museums and Museum staff will also seek out other sources of appropriately qualified and experienced advice as necessary. Remedial conservation work will always be carried out under the supervision of a professional conservator. Whenever possible, if conservation advice or services are needed the Museum will seek to employ a professionally accredited (ACR) conservator or conservation practice that is included on the Conservation Register operated by the Institute of Conservation (ICON).<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Full details can be found at <http://www.environment.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

<sup>2</sup> Available at: <http://www.conservationregister.com>

**7. REVIEW**

The Museum of Classical Archaeology will be mindful of new developments in collections care and the Museum Committee will review this Policy at least once every five years. The next review will be due in May 2021.