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Policy Approver: Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture And Engagement)

Policy Steward: Director, Museums And Collections; And University Librarian And Director Scholarly Services

Collections Policy (MPF1309)

1. Objective

1.1. The objective of this policy is to articulate a framework for developing and managing Collections.

2. Scope

2.1. This policy applies to Collections owned and managed by the University.

2.2. This policy does not apply to items or groups of items on loan to the University, entered into by agreement at the discretion of the University.

3. Authority

3.1. This policy is made under the [University of Melbourne Act 2009 \(Vic\)](#) and the [Vice-Chancellor Regulations](#) and supports compliance with the:

- a) [Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act 1986 \(Cth\)](#) ; and
- b) [Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#)

3.2. This policy is informed by the:

- a) [Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#) (CITES Agreement) ;
- b) [Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity](#) (Nagoya Protocol);
- c) [UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property](#) ;
- d) [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) (UNDRIP);
- e) [UNESCO Charter for the Preservation of Digital Heritage](#) ;
- f) [International Council of Museums \(ICOM\) Code of Ethics \(2017\)](#) ;
- g) [Australian Best Practice Guide to Collecting Cultural Material \(2015\)](#) ; and
- h) [Universal Declaration on Archives \(ICA, 2019\)](#) .

3.3. This policy is informed by and accords with the following University of Melbourne policies:

- a) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage Policy ([MPF1289](#)) ;
- b) Gifts Policy ([MPF1348](#)) ;
- c) Human Remains and Burial Artefacts Policy ([MPF1226](#)) ; and
- d) Records Management Policy ([MPF1106](#)) .

4. Policy

- 4.1. The University develops and manages Collections in order to benefit society through the transformative impact of education and research.
- 4.2. The University will sustainably develop and manage Collections in accordance with legislative and regulatory obligations, and professional and ethical codes and standards.
- 4.3. Unless access is otherwise restricted for cultural, ethical, or legal reasons, authorised users are able to discover and use the Collections in accordance with the University's objectives.
- 4.4. Collections are established and managed in accordance with Procedural Principles and an accountable custodian will be appointed to manage each Collection to support University strategies.

5. Procedural Principles

- 5.1. The Collection Custodian will develop and maintain local guidelines and protocols in order to develop, manage and govern the Collections according to ethical and professional standards, informed by relevant University policy and guidelines, including but not limited to the *Minimum Standards and Guidelines for the Management of Collections*.

Collections

- 5.2. Collections will be established, disestablished or deaccessioned following the approval of the relevant Collection Custodian, and the endorsement of the relevant governing body.
- 5.3. In establishing or disestablishing a Collection, the University will consider:
 - a) the significance, purpose and scope of the Collection;
 - b) its relevance in accordance with University policy and legislation and relevant policy and strategies of the Faculty or Department; and
 - c) the sustainable long-term management and use of the Collection.
- 5.4. Collections acquired by the University become University property, and as a general principle, the University will not acquire a Collection or items for a Collection through any means or methods unless it can acquire valid legal title.
- 5.5. In developing and maintaining guidelines and local policy and protocols, Collection Custodians and nominated collection managers will comply with established protocols.

University Archives

- 5.6. The Archives is a Class A Place of Deposit for the Public Record Office Victoria, authorised to hold permanent value public records.
- 5.7. The Archives selects and preserves records of enduring value as evidence of University business. Once acquired by the Archives, these business records are considered part of the Archival collection but remain public records and subject to requirements of the Records Management Policy ([MPF1106](#)) and *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic).
- 5.8. The Archives do not collect all records. It assesses all material offered against the Archives collection management plan and relevant records disposal schedule.
- 5.9. The Archives selects, acquires and preserves records of individuals and organisations with a connection with the University or records that support research or teaching in a relevant field.
- 5.10. Archives transferred to the University become University property, except for loans entered into by agreement at the discretion of the University.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role/Decision/Action	Responsibility	Conditions and Limitations	Relevant Governing Body

Collection custodian accountable for: - management and development of collections in the University held by Academic Division or University departments other than the Library - defining enduring value of collections in the University held by Academic Divisions or University departments other than the Library	Head of Academic Division (Dean)	Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.	Museums and Collections Steering Committee
Collection custodian accountable for: - management and development of collections held by the University Library - defining enduring value of collections held by the University Library	Director, Scholarly Services and University Librarian	Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.	Relevant University Executive University Archives and Special Collections: Museums and Collections Steering Committee
Collection custodian accountable for: - management and development of collections managed by the Museums and Collections Department - defining enduring value of collections managed by the Museums and Collections Department	Director, Museums and Collections	Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.	Museums and Collections Steering Committee
Publish and frequently update the official list of all Collections held by the University	Director, Museums and Collections		Museums and Collections Steering Committee

7. Definitions

Authorised Users means those users determined by the Collection Custodian

Collections means library collections, scholarly and research outputs and other collections including objects, artwork, archival collections, and museum collections. Collections may include items of all forms including tangible and intangible material, and are not limited to particular material or format types.

POLICY APPROVER

Deputy Vice-Chancellor Global, Culture and Engagement

POLICY STEWARD

Director, Museums and Collections; and University Librarian and Director Scholarly Services

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 1 November 2024.

VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Vice-Chancellor	17 February 2016	21 July 2016	New policy arising from the Policy Consolidation Project (incorporates former University Archives Policy MPF1112).
2	Vice-Chancellor	7 March 2019	30 April 2019	Changed Policy Approver to Vice-President (Administration & Finance) and Chief Operating Officer (previously Vice-Chancellor).
3	Vice-President (Administration & Finance) and Chief Operating Officer	18 March 2019	30 April 2019	Amended Policy Steward title. Editorial amendments to correct minor errors or align with the University's policy style guide.
4	Vice-President (Administration & Finance) and Chief Operating Officer	5 October 2021	1 November 2021	Amended to reflect establishment of Museums and Collections Department. Changed Policy Steward and Policy Approver to reflect Museums and Collections Department. Expanded Procedural Principles specific to Collection areas, and clarified the purpose and status of the 'Minimum Standards and Guidelines for the Management of Collections' as protocols.
5	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement)	6 June 2023	7 June 2023	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement) made Policy Approver.