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Policy Approver: Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Global Culture & 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 \(Cth\)](#)
- b) [Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Regulations 2018 \(Cth\)](#);
- c) [Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#), [and standards issued in accordance with the Act](#);
- d) [Public Records Regulations 2023 \(Vic\)](#), [and standards issued in accordance with the Act](#);
- e) [Copyright Act 1968 \(Cth\)](#);
- f) [Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014 \(Vic\)](#);
- g) [Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 \(Cth\)](#)
- h) [Heritage Act 2017 \(Vic\)](#)

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 \(2015\)](#);
- h) [Universal Declaration on Archives \(ICA, 2019\)](#);
- i) [Care Principles for Indigenous Data Governance \(Australian Research Data Commons\)](#)
- j) [World Intellectual Property Organisation – Traditional Cultural Expressions resources](#)
- k) [Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections](#)

l) [Victorian Government Asset Management Accountability framework](#)

3.3. This policy is informed by and supports compliance 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](#));
- d) Records Management Policy ([MPF1106](#)); and
- e) [Intellectual Property Policy \(MPF1320\)](#) .

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 for the Management of Cultural 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;
- c) relevant legislative and regulatory obligations in relation to the Collection or collection object(s); and
- d) 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 records of permanent value (State Archives), as well as records of temporary value, in accordance with the *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic).

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

<i>Role/Decision/Action</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Conditions and Limitations</i>	<i>Relevant Governing Body</i>
<p>Collection custodian accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management and development of collections in the University held by Academic Division or University departments other than Scholarly Services and Museums & Collections - defining enduring value of collections in the University held by Academic Divisions or University departments other than Scholarly Services and Museums & Collections 	<p>Head of Academic Division (Dean) or Director of Department or similar</p>	<p>Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.</p>	<p>Museums and Collections Steering Committee</p>

<p>Collection custodian accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management and development of collections held by Scholarly Services - defining enduring value of collections held by Scholarly Services 	<p>Director, Scholarly Services and University Librarian</p>	<p>Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.</p>	<p>Library and Scholarly Services Advisory Group</p>
<p>Collection custodian accountable for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - management and development of collections managed by Museums and Collections - defining enduring value of collections managed by Museums and Collections 	<p>Director, Museums and Collections</p>	<p>Custodian may nominate a collection manager to be responsible for operational management of the collection.</p>	<p>Museums and Collections Steering Committee</p>
<p>Publish and frequently update the official list of all Collections held by the University</p>	<p>Director, Museums and Collections</p>		<p>Museums and Collections Steering Committee</p>

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.

Class A Place of Deposit is appointed by the responsible Minister under section 14 of the *Public Records Act 1973* (Vic) to hold records of permanent value (State Archives), as well as records of temporary value, as defined in the Public Records Office Victoria storage specification PROS 20/02 S2.

POLICY APPROVER

Deputy Vice Chancellor, Global, Culture and Engagement; and Chief Operating Officer

POLICY STEWARD

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

REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 1 November 2027.

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	<p>Amended to reflect establishment of Museums and Collections Department.</p> <p>Changed Policy Steward and Policy Approver to reflect Museums and Collections Department.</p> <p>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.</p>
5	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement)	6 June 2023	7 June 2023	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global, Culture and Engagement) made Policy Approver.

6	Deputy Vice Chancellor, Global, Culture and Engagement; and Chief Operating Officer	22 December 2024	23 December 2024	Minor amendments to clarify s3 Authority. Amendment title & inclusion of link to Minimum Standards for the Management of Cultural Collections. Expansion of definitions. Change of Policy Approver: Deputy Vice Chancellor, Global, Culture and Engagement; and Chief Operating Officer
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