

1.5 Collection Policy (Interim)

1.5 ■ Please submit a copy of the museum's Collection Policy.

■ This is a Minimum Standard for Interim Accreditation.

Please enclose formally approved documents along with your Application Form.

■ Requirements

- (i) Applicants must submit a Collection Policy for the museum.
- (ii) Applicants must submit evidence to show that the governing body has formally approved the Collection Policy. A signed and dated minute from the governing body will fulfil this requirement. It should clearly indicate the formal adoption of the Collection Policy by the governing body.
- (iii) The Collection Policy must be discussed annually by the governing body, with a detailed review of the Policy conducted every five years.

■ Guidelines

Collection Policies vary for individual museums. It is recommended that applicants follow the proposed structure below, including all mandatory sections. The considerations listed as 'Optional' are variable factors and should be included in the policy where relevant to the museum in question.

The Collection Policy must include Sections A - E:

A. Museum background, history and current Collection Policy and practice

- (a) Document the current situation, identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the existing Collection Policy.
- (b) If there is no written Collection Policy, document the museum's collecting history.

B. Statement of type and quantity of collections

- (a) Document the nature of the present collections, including any substantial loans.
- (b) Quantify the collections within defined categories. State whether the collections are of local, national and/or international importance as a whole or on an individual/category basis as necessary.
- (c) State the ownership status of the collections and the proportion of objects on loan.

C. Statement of Acquisition Brief

State the museum's Acquisition Brief. Include all the mandatory elements below.

Mandatory:

- (a) State the essential nature of material to be collected (modern art, transport, etc)
- (b) State the museum's current collecting priorities
- (c) Document the geographical extent of the collecting area. State relationship with other collecting institutions and any agreements, actual or proposed, in relation to Acquisition Briefs and the avoidance of competition or conflict.
- (d) State whether the Acquisition Brief is active or static, giving reasons for this. If passive or inactive, limitations of resources will generally need to be stated and explained in detail. State any other reasons if applicable.
- (e) State policy on the acquisition and upkeep of archival and supporting documentation.
- (f) Provide details of any agreed modifications to the acquisition brief and the envisaged timescales for their introduction and implementation.
- (g) Policy in relation to objects reported or offered but not acquired.
- (h) If the Acquisition Brief is selective, define the criteria, (scientific, qualitative, specialised or

geographic grounds, etc). Provide details of any spare parts, contemporary or otherwise, that it may be necessary to collect in order to maintain particular elements of the collection (engine parts, clockwork parts, etc).

- (i) State whether a purchase or specimens grant is available, or whether there is any possibility of obtaining such a grant. Elaborate and state priorities for its usage.
- (j) State who is responsible for the collections policy and Acquisition Brief within the museum's management structure, (e.g. curator only, management board and curator, management committee). State the mechanism for decision-making (monthly management meetings, signed documents, etc).
- (k) State whether objects are normally accepted on loan or accepted only in limited or particular circumstances. Provide details.

D. Limitations - the factors that limit or confine the nature of Collection Policy and Acquisition Brief.

Document the factors that limit the museum's Collection Policy. Include all the mandatory elements and the relevant optional areas.

Mandatory:

- (a) Legal constraints, both national and international.
- (b) Date limitations on collection where applicable.
- (c) Avoidance of duplication with other museums in the same geographical collecting area.
- (d) Space and storage limitations.
- (e) The collecting areas and types of materials that are excluded from the museum's Collection Policy.

Optional:

- (a) Specialised character of Acquisition Brief and status in museum constitution.
- (b) Defined geographical collecting area agreed by the governing body.
- (c) Available resources to deal with the demands of the collections.
- (d) Staff numbers and their expertise (or lack of).
- (e) Competition from other museums and or the commercial market place.
- (f) The need for resources to be employed in non-collection related areas.
- (g) Lack of information regarding available material or lack of availability of specific objects within museum's collection scope (none may be available or the whereabouts unknown).

E. Obligations - commitments and responsibilities in respect of collections

A range of support facilities to ensure the proper care of the collection is as important as the act of collecting. There is a need to operate an ethical approach to acquisition and collection management. Include all the mandatory elements.

Mandatory:

Consider the needs of the collections under the following headings:

- (a) Documentation and archiving.
- (b) Conservation.
- (c) Security - risk management and disaster planning.
- (d) Access to public and researchers.
- (e) Interpretation and display.
- (f) Research and publication.