Policies for the Administration of the Art Collection

1. Mission Statement

The purpose of the UNSW Art Collection is to develop and maintain a distinctively university art collection, to enhance the environment for students, staff and visitors and to expose this audience to an aspect of Australia’s culture with which they may not be familiar.

Five principle goals derive from this mission:

1.1 To develop and maintain the Collection as a resource of national significance;

1.2 To ensure the preservation and safe keeping of the Collection;

1.3 To broaden knowledge and appreciation of the Collection through programmes of documentation, interpretation and display;

1.4 To maximise accessibility to the Collection;

1.5 To heighten the public profile of the Collection leading to greater community awareness, involvement and support.

2. Collection Policy

The University’s reputation in science and technology teaching and research is complemented by an emphasis on the arts and humanities. Within this context of expanding cultural experiences on campus the UNSW Art Collection plays a crucial role.

The Collection consists of works of art in a variety of media: paintings, sculptures and works on paper mainly covering Australian art from 1950 to the present. It also contains: an important group of Aboriginal bark paintings; a collection of mid twentieth century international prints; a small group of nineteenth century Japanese woodblocks; an idiosyncratic collection of ceramics and a small selection of Australian textile works.

The basis of the Collection Policy is as follows:

2.1 to limit collecting to works related to the period since the University’s foundation in 1949, by Australian artists, particularly those who have a proven record of practice and development of their art form and who are represented in public collections or who have received recognition through awards and prizes;

2.2 to seek works that relate to the variety of concerns encountered in the University community: art can and should create the opportunity for bridging disparate areas of interest. The intention is not to collect illustrations of the various sciences and arts taught at The University of New South Wales, but works that constitute an artistic reflection on important domains of human knowledge and endeavour;

2.3 to acquire works to fill gaps and build upon strengths in the Collection as well as develop the representation of artists already held, in order to create a comprehensive, though specifically oriented, group of Australian works of art dating from the second half of the twentieth century. Rather than reproduce a miniature version of collections held in the National and State Galleries, the UNSW Art Collection will thus reflect the particular perspective of The University of New South Wales within the field of Australian art;
2.4 to collect works of contemporary Aboriginal Art which will complement the bark painting collection by expanding the chronological, geographic and stylistic areas of representation.

2.5 to develop the Australian ceramic collection, which has historic links within the University.

2.6 to limit active collecting to works covered by 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5;

2.7 to consider exceptions only where the works are significant and relate to the current holdings and policy;

1 The collection contains a number of valuable works by renowned Japanese artist Shoji Hamada, who was invited to UNSW in 1965 by the potter and former lecturer in the School of Architecture, Ivan McMeekin. At the time of his visit Hamada was acknowledged as one of Japan’s ‘living national treasures’ and his style and methods have influenced many leading Australian potters.

Building a comprehensive collection of Australian ceramic art is already a major activity of the Powerhouse Museum. A more pragmatic and appropriate objective for the UNSW Art Collection is to build a collection concentrating on those Australian artists who have been influenced by the Hamada, or more broadly, the Sino-Japanese tradition of the potter’s art, and follow their creative development. By setting such parameters the Collection can focus on a smaller number of artists who may have some connection, whether direct or indirect, with UNSW history.

3. Acquisitions Policy

3.1 Works will be acquired for the UNSW Art Collection as set out in the Collection Policy 2.1 to 2.7 by purchase, commission, donation, Cultural Gifts Programme or Cultural Bequests Programme presentation.

3.2 All works acquired for the UNSW Art Collection are to be approved by the Vice Chancellor who may delegate this function to the Art Curator.

3.3 Such funds as are available for purchases will be provided from a specified account within the budgetary domain of the Vice Chancellor’s Unit.

3.4 Works of art that have been acquired by a unit of the University (eg. Faculty, School, Centre etc) without the approval mentioned in 3.2 are not to be regarded as part of the UNSW Art Collection. The curatorial care, insurance, valuation, security, conservation, framing, maintenance, freight, relocation and installation of such works is not the responsibility of the Art Curator but of the individual unit/s concerned.

3.5 Works of art which have been acquired as outlined in clause 3.4 but which fit within the guidelines of the Collection Policy, clauses 2.1 to 2.8, may be accepted into the UNSW Art Collection via clause 3.2. Responsibility for all or part of the curatorial care, insurance, valuation, security, framing, conservation, maintenance, freight, relocation and installation of such works may be accepted, if agreed to in writing under conditions agreed to between the University and the individual unit/s concerned.

3.6 The University of New South Wales acknowledges the College of Fine Arts Collection and its distinct collecting policy however clauses 3.4 and 3.5 also apply to this Collection.

3.7 Only works in good condition that do not require extensive conservation will be accepted into the Collection. However, acceptance may be considered if funding for any necessary treatment is also forthcoming from the donor/vendor. A conservation report must accompany any works that have undergone conservation treatment.

3.8 Donations of works can only be accepted as unconditional gifts. A deed of gift and/or acknowledgment of donation form will provide proof of ownership and protect The University of New South Wales from any future claims.

4. Management Policy

4.1 The Curator of the UNSW Art Collection is responsible for all curatorial and registration aspects of the Collection as follows:

Curatorial

Within the resources available and in accordance with priorities from time to time indicated by the Vice Chancellor, as his delegate, to develop the Collection by acquisition (following the guidelines as set out in the Acquisitions Policy), research, publication and exhibition; to care for the Collection by following maintenance and conservation programmes as set out in the Conservation Policy; to increase the Collection’s profile by...
developing and maintaining liaisons with the UNSW community, artists, art dealers, arts organisations, curators and galleries, past and prospective donors, UNSW Alumni and other university museums and collections.

Registration

Develop and utilise a manual of registration procedures in keeping with the University's asset management guidelines, where applicable. These procedures shall control cataloguing, stocktaking, photography, copyright, lending, labelling, display and installation, valuation and insurance, security and housekeeping and shall be regarded as the guidelines that control the day-to-day activities of the curatorial office.

4.2 Plans for commissioning public art for placement within the University environs must include consultation with the Art Curator. Endorsement by the Art Curator may assist with additional funding from arts organisations or other funding bodies.

4.3 If works of art are planned for new buildings, priority at the planning stage in consultation with the Art Curator is desirable so that all curatorial, artistic, design, financial and logistical concerns and any other specific requirements can be duly considered.

4.4 Heads of budget units have the right to request works of art from the UNSW Art Collection provided certain criteria are met concerning the conditions under which the work is displayed (see also clause 4.5). The Art Curator will assist with the selection, display and installation once the designated area is assessed.

4.5 Priority is given to the main campus at Kensington for the display of works from the Art Collection. Distribution of the Collection to the various hospitals, centres and off-campus locations associated with the University is not possible for the practical reasons of security, insurance, conservation and regular monitoring.

4.6 Works from the UNSW Art Collection may be lent to exhibitions outside the University at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor after recommendation from the Art Curator. All loans are governed by the guidelines in the Lending Policy.

5. Lending Policy

Works from the UNSW Art Collection may be lent to exhibitions outside the University at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor after recommendation from the Art Curator.

5.1 All requests for loans from the UNSW Art Collection must be in writing, addressed to the Art Curator. An official lending agreement will be forwarded to successful applicants for their completion and signature before any work will be released.

5.2 Works from the UNSW Art Collection will only be lent to professionally run galleries and exhibition spaces with controlled environments and museum standard practices.

5.3 All freight costs are to be covered by the borrower. All additional costs such as crating, packing and reinstallation on return, where applicable, are to be met by the borrower.

5.4 Only recognised art carriers are to be used for carrying any work from the UNSW Art Collection. The University, with recommendations from the Art Curator, reserves the right to nominate the carrier.

5.5 Evidence of insurance cover must be provided before any work can be released for loan. The University of New South Wales may choose to maintain its own blanket cover in some instances.

5.6 All works of art in the UNSW Art Collection are covered by copyright legislation. Permission to reproduce any work must be granted in writing by the copyright holder and the Art Curator prior to publication in any form. Copies of the publication are to be forwarded to the Art Curator for archival purposes.

5.7 All loans must be acknowledged as being the property of The University of New South Wales in all publicity material, publications, display labels etc. The University's name must appear in full and no abbreviated forms, excepting UNSW, are acceptable.

5.8 All works must be returned in the condition in which they were despatched. Works on loan must not undergo any conservation treatment, reframing, hanging alterations or other changes without consultation with the Art Curator and/or unless agreed to in writing by the University.
6. Conservation Policy

6.1 A Conservation Survey of the UNSW Art Collection should be undertaken by a qualified conservator/s to identify works in need of immediate care and to develop an overall Maintenance Programme. Funding for this activity will be made available from the Art Collection's conservation budget.

6.2 A Maintenance Programme will be designed to help avoid expensive, one-off treatments wherever possible and assist with annual budgeting for conservation. It should be a form of preventative housekeeping rather than a corrective service and be reviewed every five years.

6.3 Conservation of works will be undertaken at the discretion of the Art Curator in consultation with relevant conservators (eg. paper, textile, paintings, sculpture or ethnographic specialists) following the Maintenance Programme. Conservation treatment of any work from the UNSW Art Collection shall only be undertaken by qualified conservators, with references.

6.4 Funds may be made available from the Vice Chancellor for treatments in the event of emergencies.

6.5 Owing to the widely dispersed display of the UNSW Art Collection a single Disaster Preparedness Plan would be ineffectual and unmanageable. The works of art must be considered in the various plans developed for each building. The Art Curator shall liaise with the Facilities Department and consult with specialist conservators.

7. Deaccessioning Policy

Deaccessioning is a process used to refine a Collection. There are many reasons for its practise: to remove items of little relevance or those in poor condition, to rid a Collection of inferior material, clerical errors, space problems, the cost of maintenance and storage, irretrievable loss or irreparable damage or, as in the case of ethnographic artefacts, to return items to their original owners. It should not be used to remove works because of changes in fashion, social mores or the taste of administrators. It is best avoided in the first place by attending to the accepted Acquisition Policy.

7.1 Deaccessioning of works from the UNSW Art Collection is at the discretion of the Vice Chancellor after recommendations from the Art Curator. Reasons may include:

i) Lack of relevance to the Collection
ii) No evidence of clear legal title
iii) Theft or loss
iv) Damage or serious deterioration in condition
v) Inferior workmanship
vi) Erroneous inclusion in the collection
vii) Repatriation of cultural property
viii) New information leading to reappraisal of relevance

7.2 All applications for deaccessioning are to be in writing on the official Application for Deaccessioning form indicating the reason for the work's removal from the Collection and the recommended method of disposal. Procedures for deaccessioning appear in the University Museums and Collections Policy.

7.3 Works to be disposed of may be offered as a donation to another unit within The University of New South Wales or to a relevant public institution first. If the offer is not accepted then works may be sent to auction.

7.4 Proceeds from auction sales will be directed to the UNSW Art Collection Acquisition Account for the purchase of more relevant works.

7.5 Works to be deaccessioned will be removed from the Assets Register following the correct procedures for "writing off" as set out in The University of New South Wales Financial Services Accounting Manual and removed from the UNSW Art Collection Accession Records. A copy of documentation pertaining to the work should be retained in the Collection Archives.

7.6 Works which have been donated under the Cultural Gifts Programme or the Cultural Bequests Programme are eligible for deaccessioning and disposal if these works no longer fit within the guidelines of the Acquisition Policy. However the Programme Committees prefer that such items be transferred to another public collection rather than sold.
8. Research Policy

8.1 The UNSW Art Collection catalogue is available for perusal by scholars and interested parties on-line at http://www.artcollection.unsw.edu.au/
Copyright restrictions apply to all images and text.

8.2 The UNSW Art Collection is available as a research resource for members of UNSW and other Universities, and for members of the general public with a genuine scholarly interest in the Collection.

8.3 Applications for an appointment to view the Collection shall be in writing to the Art Curator indicating areas of interest and purpose of visit.

8.4 Access to the Collection shall be at the discretion of the University with recommendations from the Art Curator and while every effort shall be made to accommodate demands, access may be dependent upon staff resources at the time.

8.5 A condition of use of the Collection for research purposes is that a copy of any publications, papers, articles etc which include references to and/or photographs of works in the UNSW Art Collection shall be deposited with the Curatorial Office.

8.6 The University of New South Wales will be acknowledged, where appropriate, in all material resulting from research using the UNSW Art Collection.
## Appendix A: History

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