Museums and Collections Policy

1. Preamble

1.1 Purpose
The policy provides for the establishment, management and maintenance of the University’s museums and collections. It aims to ensure the safe-keeping and preservation of UNSW’s heritage: its scientific, historical and cultural assets; promotion of UNSW to the broader community and compliance with relevant statutory authorities.

1.2 Background
The 1998 University Museums and Collections Policy was drafted as a response to recommendations of the AVCC-sponsored report, Cinderella Collections: University Museums and Collections in Australia (January, 1996) ISBN 1 86408 046 9. This report highlighted a range of concerns about the management of university collections which, together, constitute a significant part of Australia’s natural and cultural heritage. It recommended each university adopt an overall policy for the establishment, management and maintenance of its museums and collections.

The 1998 Policy was developed by Professor A. J. Wicken, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, in consultation with curators of existing UNSW Museums and Collections and the Vice-Chancellor’s Advisory Committee.

2. Scope
This policy applies to Museums and Collections of the University of New South Wales. It does not apply to material held in libraries or University records covered by the State Records Act (1998). It does not apply to disposable class materials (e.g. biological) that are intended to be kept temporarily.

3. Definitions

3.1 Acquisition
Taking legal possession and ownership of an item or group of items through purchase, bequest, donation, commission, transfer, creation, exchange, or collection* (*see 3.2ii).
3.2 Collection
i) A coherent group of items that have historic, aesthetic, scientific, research or social significance to the University or its teaching program, where ownership is clearly vested in the University and where approval for continuance has been granted by the University.

Or

ii) The gathering of naturally occurring or cultivated specimens.

3.3 Collection Manager
The officer responsible for an individual Collection held within a Faculty, School or Administrative area.

3.4 Cultural Gifts Program (CGP)
The Australian Government’s program of tax incentives for culturally significant gifts to Australia’s public collections (formerly known as “Taxation Incentives for the Arts Scheme”). Eligibility is restricted to institutions registered as DGRs – see 3.6.

3.5 De-accessioning
The permanent removal of an item from a collection inventory by following a detailed process as defined in the relevant Procedure of each Museum and Collection.

3.6 Deductible Gift Recipient (DGR)
Funds, Authorities or Institutions endorsed by the Australian Taxation Office. Collections at UNSW recognized as DGRs are eligible for inclusion in the Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program. See file 2006/0900.

3.7 Disposal
The physical removal of an item from a collection, after it has been formally de-accessioned following specified steps as defined in the relevant Procedure of each Museum and Collection. This definition does not apply to archives.

3.8 Distributed National Collection
Encompasses all public collections of significant moveable cultural heritage.

3.9 Documentation
Information about items in a collection used to identify them and track their movement and use.

3.10 Loan
The temporary physical transfer of an item for a specified period, from one institution to another, between units within the University, or from individuals to the University, where there is no transfer of ownership.

3.11 Loan Agreement
A formal legal agreement between the University and institutions to record details pertaining to the lending of University items for temporary purposes, such as exhibition or research; or between the University and individuals, where the University borrows items for temporary purposes.
3.12  Museum  
That part of the University which:

- acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits items for the purposes of study, education and enjoyment;
- displays some or all of its collection in a purpose-specific space open to the public at regular times; and
- may exhibit material from other sources from time to time.

3.13  Procedures
Formulated for each Museum or Collection to govern the focus, content and management processes specific to each Museum and Collection. Procedures must be consistent with the Museums and Collections Policy.

3.14  Special Conditions
Provisos, restrictions and/or in-kind considerations attached to acquisitions.

4.  Policy Statement
Museums and Collections of the University exist as a significant component of the University's heritage and of the Distributed National Collection. They are maintained with the long-term objectives of:

i) providing an education resource for the University and the greater community;
ii) stimulating and fostering excellence, creativity and innovation amongst staff and students of the University;
iii) enriching the visual and scholarly environment of the University;
iv) preserving heritage items for future members of the University and the community it serves; and
v) documenting the University's history.

4.1  Management

4.1.1 Each Museum and Collection will develop Procedures, consistent with this Policy, to govern collecting focus and content, and to direct the specific administrative requirements of each Museum or Collection.

4.1.2 Where applicable to each Museum or Collection, Procedures will include, processes directing the following: acquisitions; documentation and recording; location and movement control; care and maintenance; deaccession and disposal; copyright; storage and display; access and use; loans and research.

4.1.3 Where applicable to each Museum or Collection, Procedures will include, processes directing the following: acquisitions; documentation and recording; location and movement control; care and maintenance; deaccession and disposal; copyright; storage and display; access and use; loans and research.

4.1.4 New Museums or Collections as defined at 3.2i, which are proposed for Faculties or Schools, must have the approval of the relevant Dean and the Executive Director, University Services. This does not apply to new
groups of items or sub-sets which may be termed “collections” and are
the responsibility of an existing collecting body.

4.1.5 Museums and Collections within Faculties and Schools are administered
by the budget unit in which they are located and should be allocated
resources by the budget unit for operating purposes.

4.1.6 Faculties and Schools are responsible for allocating space from within
their allotment, for Museums and Collections they control and maintain.

4.1.7 In allocating space for Museums and Collections careful consideration
should be given, where applicable, to accommodation for:
   i) storage of items
   ii) display of items
   iii) curatorial staff
   iv) visiting researchers/scholars, students and volunteers
   v) teaching
   vi) preparation areas (eg exhibition, conservation, un/packing)

4.1.8 Each Museum and Collection shall be provided with adequate security.

4.2 Reporting
Procedures will include annual reporting in accordance with each Museum's and
Collection’s management structure. Where applicable reporting should include, but not be
restricted to, a list of significant new acquisitions, use of the collection, state of
conservation and documentation of the collection.

4.3 Acquisitions

4.3.1 The University shall acquire (and should retain in its present holdings)
only those items of collectable or intrinsic value that will enhance the
University’s teaching, research, service to community, public image, or
the documentation of its history.

4.3.2 Items required for specific Museums and Collections are acquired on
behalf of the University and the University is the owner of the item.

4.3.3 Donations in kind as well as cash to Museums and Collections must be
approved by the CEO, University Foundation, who will thank the donors
in writing. This would not apply to donations of botanical specimens
received by the John T. Waterhouse Herbarium obtained through the
course of scientific exchange, nor to archival material deposited in the
Archives.

4.3.4 Where donations have special conditions such approval is subject to
advice from the University’s Legal Office as the University may be bound
by such special conditions in perpetuity, except in the case of time-bound
access restrictions to archival material.

4.3.5 With the exception of 4.3.3 and 4.3.4, proposed acquisitions with special
conditions must be approved by the Executive Director, University
Services and such approval is subject to advice from the University’s
Legal Office as the University may be bound by such special conditions
in perpetuity, except in the case of time-bound access restrictions to
archival material.
4.3.6 Where the validity of ownership is in question, the University shall not accept the item until ownership is resolved.

4.3.7 The University will only acquire items that have been collected, sold or otherwise transferred ethically and lawfully and in compliance with national and international regulations.

4.4 Documentation

4.4.1 All items, or groups of items contained in Museums and Collections must be accurately and systematically documented. Records should be legible and accessible. Where applicable, electronic back-up copies shall be regularly updated and kept secure.

4.4.2 The Assets Unit must be notified of individual items valued at $5000 and over, for their inclusion in the University’s Assets Register. All works of art acquired for the UNSW Art Collection must be registered with the Assets Unit as University assets.

4.5 Research

All Museums and Collections shall make their material available, when feasible, for research by members of this and other universities, and for members of the general public who have genuine interest in the collection/s. Special permission may need to be granted for restricted collections. For further information on access for research, see the relevant Procedure of each Museum and Collection.

4.6 Loans

All loans to a Museum or Collection shall be made to the University as a whole, and not to any person, Department, School or Faculty, using a formal loan agreement. The Legal Office should view all loan agreements involving loans to, or from, a Museum or Collection. This does not apply to loans to, or from, the John T. Waterhouse Herbarium, which operates its loans according to the requirements of governmental bodies and within Federal legislative restrictions.

4.7 Deaccession

4.7.1 Deaccessioning and disposal should occur following routine review of collections and only with clear reference to each Museum’s or Collection’s Procedure.

4.7.2 It is recommended de-accessioning of items acquired through donation shall require, where possible and practicable, the consultation of all parties who contributed to or controlled the bequest or donation.

4.7.3 Any monies received by the University from disposal of items de-accessioned from its Museums or Collections, shall be used to fund new acquisitions for the benefit of the particular Museum or Collection from which the items were sold.
4.8 Copyright

4.8.1 Reproduction and/or publication of items held in some Museums or Collections, including a recognisable portion of an item, may be subject to copyright. Where applicable, permission for reproduction must be sought from the copyright owner, in accordance with Australian copyright law.

4.9 Ethics

The University and its employees responsible for Museums or Collections shall be guided by the code of ethics published by bodies relevant to each Museum or Collection, such as, but not restricted to, Museums Australia Inc., the International Council of Museums, the Australian Society of Archivists and the International Council on Archives.

4.10 Public Access

4.10.1 The University supports access to its Museums and Collections by students, staff and the general public.

4.10.2 Provided no entry fee is charged, visits by invitation to a Museum or Collection, for educational purposes, by identified outside groups, do not constitute public access. However a fee may be charged to cover the cost of any educational materials supplied during such visits.

4.10.3 If a Museum or Collection is to be made accessible to the general public, even on a restricted hours basis, steps will be taken to ensure the Museum or Collection complies with statutory requirements governing public spaces, prior to its opening to the public.

4.11 Responsibilities

4.11.1 The University shall appoint a Collection Manager designated as responsible for each Museum or Collection who will report to the Executive Director, University Services with the exception of 4.11.2.

4.11.2 In the case of Museums and Collections controlled and maintained by Faculties and Schools, the Collection Manager shall be responsible to the Dean or Head of School respectively, with the required duties in writing and agreed to by both parties.

5. Legal & Policy Framework

This policy operates within the context of State and Federal cultural heritage protection legislation, copyright and taxation legislation, environmental conservation legislation; international heritage and endangered species protection conventions and within the context of University policies.

i) Heritage Act 1977
ii) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984
v) Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999
6. Implementation

6.1 Roles & Responsibilities
The Collection Manager will be responsible for implementing this Policy in their Museum or Collection.

6.2 Support & Advice
Support and advice in relation to this policy is available from the UNSW Art Curator, and the following organisations, or their publications:

- National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries
- Museums Australia - Code of Ethics
- Copyright Council of Australia

6.3 Procedures and Forms
Individual Museums and Collections Procedures will be developed under this Policy.

7. Review
Date: June, 2015
Responsible Officer: Executive Director, University Services.

8. Acknowledgements
In accordance with the University’s obligations under the Moral Rights Act 2002 (Cth) the following sources are acknowledged:

- University Museums Review Committee of the AV-CC: Cinderella Collections, University Museums and Collections in Australia, Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, Canberra, ACT, 1996
- Code of Ethics for Art, History & Science Museums. (1999). Museums Australia Inc. Civic Square, ACT. SBN 0 9589539 0 2

Appendix A: History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Authorised by</th>
<th>Approval Date</th>
<th>Effective Date</th>
<th>Sections modified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>2 April 1998</td>
<td>2 April 1998</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>Vice-Chancellor</td>
<td>28 June 2010</td>
<td>1 July 2010 to 6 March 2013</td>
<td>Full review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

vi) Trade and Conservation, Exchange of Scientific Specimens
vii) Copyright Act 1968
viii) Australian Government’s Cultural Gifts Program
ix) Register of Delegations
x) Accounting Manual Policy and Procedures: Section 18: Asset Management System
xi) Code of Conduct – Conflict of Interest
xii) UNSW OH&S