

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Archives and Collections: Collections Care and Conservation Policy

POLICY DETAILS:

Date of approval	August 2019
Approving body	Museum and Archive Committee
Supersedes	Collections Care and Conservation Policy November 2016
Date of EIA	
Date of next review	August 2021
Author	Susannah Waters
Responsible Executive Group area	Learning Resources
Related policies and documents	Documentation Policy
Benchmarking	Museum Association Accreditation Scheme

Mission Statement:

The Glasgow School of Art (GSA) is widely recognised for being an open and accessible institution that shares its expertise, knowledge, heritage and resources with local, national and international partners and it understands that the responsible management and care of its important collections and archives is central to its reputation.

Collection Conditions Overview:

GSA will continue to pursue 'best practice' in the care of its collections and archives as outlined in the MLA's *Benchmarks in Collections Care for Museums, Libraries and Archives*.

Environmental Monitoring:

GSA will monitor and evaluate the physical environment in which its collections and archives are stored and displayed. This monitoring will be carried out in person, through regular site visits to storage areas and displays, and will be aided through data acquired from data loggers.

Preventative Conservation:

GSA recognises that preventative conservation involves the limiting of damage or deterioration of items in its collection and archive and it is therefore important to understand how the environment can impact on the well-being of objects.

- *Appropriate Building Conditions:* The School seeks to provide the best conditions for storage and display of items and these are further safeguarded by the invigilation of reading room areas; the storage of collections and archives in appropriate packaging and storage systems; security alarm systems with 24hr cover and incident response; and a fire and evacuation system.
- *Disaster Planning:* A disaster/emergency plan exists for the School's Archives and Collections and is regularly updated. The School also subscribes to Harwell's Document Restoration Service as a Priority user.

- *Surrogacy/Digitisation:* Where possible, and appropriate, surrogate or digital copies will be considered as a means of minimising wear and tear to original objects. If duplicates exist, consideration will be given to identifying objects that could form part of a recognised 'handling collection'. In instances where the original media is particularly vulnerable to deterioration due to its format, (for example VHS tape and 35mm slides), digital copies will be made and the originals will be disposed of.

Remedial Conservation:

GSA acknowledges that in addition to Preventative conservation, interventive or remedial conservation will often be required to stabilise or improve the physical condition of an object. Priority will generally be given to an object whose condition is poor and is likely to deteriorate quickly, or where the condition of an object needs to be enhanced to allow it to be used for exhibition or display. The School also recognises that:

- Only qualified conservators should be employed to undertake such remedial treatments and where possible these conservators should be ICON registered.
- All treatments should be planned and carried out in consultation with an appropriate member of GSA staff and should be recorded (and photographed) as a means of enhancing the history and understanding of an object.