

The University of Edinburgh

Library Committee

20th April 2010

Agendum 9b.

University Collections Development Plan for 2009/10-2014/15

Brief description of the paper

The University Collections is required to produce a Development Plan for the period 2010-2015. This is to be submitted to the University Court. The Plan has already been considered and approved by the University Collections Advisory Committee and is brought to Library Committee because of the importance of this area for Library Committee. This summary paper is the overarching development plan for University Collections, describing the process, the mission statement and objectives for the University Collections.

Action requested

For information and comment

Resource implications

There are resource implications in managing the collections. One of the objectives is to ensure funding streams for managing the collections.

Risk Assessment

This is not addressed in the paper but is considered by Collections staff with regard to the University Collections

Equality and Diversity

Does the paper have equality and diversity implications? No

Freedom of Information

Can this paper be included in open business? Yes

Originator of the paper

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Director of University Collections

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**UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH MUSEUMS & GALLERIES
COLLECTIONS POLICIES DOCUMENT 2010-2015**

APPROVED BY UNIVERSITY COURT XX XXXX 2010

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UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH MUSEUMS & GALLERIES COLLECTIONS POLICIES DOCUMENT 2010-2015

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The University of Edinburgh has a 400 year history of collecting and maintaining culturally and scientifically significant objects, samples and artefacts in a number of fields. This document outlines the context for the policies governing the University's museums and galleries collections.

1.2 Museums and Galleries Collections

The University is currently home to ten distinct collections (not including University Library materials) and Talbot Rice Gallery. Fuller details on each of the collections are contained in the General Acquisitions & Disposals Policy, Appendix B.

- Anatomy Resource Centre & Collection
- Classics Collections
- Cockburn Museum of Geology
- Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments (EUCHMI)
- Natural History Collections
- School of Scottish Studies Collections
- Fine Art Collections
- Chemistry Collection
- Polish School of Medicine Historical Collection
- Museum Heritage Collection
- Talbot Rice Gallery

1.3 Director of University Collections Office, Museums Support & Development

The Director of University Collections (DUC) working with the support of the Museums Development Manager (MDM) provides strategic leadership and policy development for the University's Collections. Through the office of the DUC, museums, galleries and collections are advised on devising forward plans, while strong strategic direction aligned with the University Strategic Plan, national and international sector priorities, is shaped for University Collections in their entirety. Professional guidance is provided on policy implementation, achieving, improving and maintaining sector standards (stewardship, metadata, Accreditation-compliance) and museums development is encouraged through an annual grant. The MDM supports project development and project management such as HLF-funded initiatives and partnership working such as with other university museums (e.g. through UMiS, University Museums in Scotland) and with the museums sector (e.g. through the East of Scotland Museums Partnership). Academic liaison is centred on support for the Collections Guardians Scheme and the University Collections Advisory Committee (UCAC) and Committee of Curators of University Collections (CCUC). Teaching & Learning occurs through the MSc 'Working with Collections' course, museological and subject-specific training through internships (undergraduate and postgraduate), in-house training and facilitation of external training for

interns, volunteers and staff.. Outreach and community engagement is provided through the wide range of exhibitions, education programmes (notably TRG and EUCHMI) and involvement with the University's Widening Participation programme.

The Museums Support Team works cross-collections, providing practical support on exhibition design and installation, interpretation development, delivery of Fine Art Collection Services including the dispersal of the Fine Art Collection for the enhancement of public and private spaces in the University, management of information held on the Collections Audit and Loans Services including requests for works to be loaned to exhibitions worldwide, management of long loans to National Galleries of Scotland, National Museums of Scotland and others.

University Collections have access to the various experts, services and facilities converged in the Centre for Research Collections (Main Library) such as seminar rooms for teaching, Accreditation-compliant collections stores and conservation advice, as well as peer review and support through groups such as the CRC Projects Group, CRC Promotions Group and University Collections Exhibitions Panel.

2. EXTERNAL VALIDATION

2.1 Accreditation

The following University Collections hold Accredited Status with MLA, The Council for Museums, Archives & Libraries

- Fine Art Collections
- Reid Concert Hall Museum of Instruments
- St Cecilia's Hall Museum of Instruments
- Cockburn Museum of Geology
- Natural History Collections

The benefits of museum Accreditation include the access to funding from external sources such as Museums Galleries Scotland and Heritage Lottery Fund, as well as the opportunity to apply for Government Indemnity in the case of loans from other institutions. If it is deemed appropriate by the DUC, work will be undertaken towards achieving Accreditation for other identified University Collections should resources permit.

2.2 Recognised Collections of National Significance to Scotland

EUCHMI was the first university collection to be awarded Recognition in the first round of the scheme in 2007.

The Scottish Government initiated the Recognition Scheme in 2007. The Scheme's main purposes are to highlight Scottish collections of international significance and to widen access for more people to enjoy them by providing funding for improvements and enhancements.

3. MANAGEMENT & GOVERNANCE

3.1 Management Structure

The University Collections are managed thus:

Under the Director of University Collections, in the Library & Collections, Information Services structure:

- Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments (EUCHMI)
- Fine Art Collections
- Talbot Rice Gallery
- Museum Heritage Collection

Under individual School / College management, but with strategic and policy support from the office of the Director of University Collections and annual grants:

- Natural History Collections
- Geology Collections
- Anatomy Collections
- Chemistry Collections
- School of Scottish Studies Archive
- Polish School of Medicine Historical Collection
- Classics Collection

Appendix F shows the Academic and Financial Management model for the University Collections.

3.2 The Governing Body

The Court is the University's governing body and is the legal persona of the University. The UCAC reports to the Court. The Secretary, acting on behalf of the Court, has reserve powers to deal with issues relating to the collections.

3.3 University Collection Advisory Committee (UCAC)

Although the UCAC does not have executive powers, it makes recommendations relating to the collections to the University Court. The Convener of the UCAC is a Vice-Principal who attends Court meetings. An important function of central committees is to provide strategic policy guidance and an essential channel of communication for those involved in the collections area. The intention is that the Collections Committees will stimulate dynamic discussions whose objective is the overall enhancement of the collections.

3.4 Committee of Curators of University Committees (CCUC)

The University has also created the position of Director of University Collections. The Director of University Collections convenes the sub-committee of Curators of the University Collections; provides a focal point for contact with a number of external agencies (such as Museums Galleries Scotland); and is responsible for the general profile of the collections within the University and the strategic guidance and promotion of these collections.

3.5 The Talbot Rice Advisory Board (TRGAB)

The Talbot Rice Gallery Advisory Board was established in April 2004 following support from the Scottish Arts Council (a major funder of the TRG) which saw the need for the Gallery to have the support and advice of a board of experts in the sector. The form of the Board has been shaped by University Court: six members with attendees. The Board reports to the University through UCAC (University Collections Advisory Board).

3.6 Financial Management

Funding for the collections is generally provided by the relevant Planning Units. The University recognises that the funding position over recent years has had the impact of reducing the funding available for its collections. A CCUC Small Bids Fund, managed through the office of the Director of University Collections, of over £10k per annum has been agreed to support projects involving the University Collections.

3.7 Workforce Development

University Schools with collections are responsible for providing the staffing necessary for the adequate upkeep of the collections as teaching and research resources. Support Group and School support for the collections is reviewed annually as part of the University's planning and budget process.

4. POLICIES

Each of the ten collections operates within the overarching University of Edinburgh Policies on Collections;

- University Collections Strategic Development Plan 2010-2015
- General Acquisitions & Disposals Policy 2010-2015
- Access Policy 2010-2015
- Collections Management & Preservation Policy 2010-2015

Each Curator is responsible for developing, and supplementing where necessary, these policies as appropriate and for providing strategic and forward plans for each individual museum, gallery or collection. These, and the overarching policies listed above, are appended.