

 The University of British Columbia Board of Governors	Policy No.: UP11
Long Title: Deaccession of Works of Art, Cultural Materials and/or Specimens of Certain Museums and Galleries	
Short Title: <p style="text-align: center;">Deaccessioning Policy</p>	

Background & Purposes:

Museums, galleries, libraries and archives evolved as places to maintain collections over long periods of time and to engage in knowledge creation. These collections show the physical, historic, aesthetic and conceptual achievements of humankind, and document the natural world. Objects in museum and gallery collections are also part of the intellectual and cultural heritage of their originating communities. Generally, where the University has acquired, with proper evidence of provenance, an object included in a collection held within one of its museums, galleries, libraries, or their associated archives (“**GLAMs**”) there is a presumption against permanently removing an object from the University’s collections, which is referred to as deaccessioning. However, there are circumstances when deaccessioning may be appropriate.

Repatriation, rematriation, and return of Ancestors and Belongings of Indigenous Communities are an important part of the University’s reconciliation objectives under its Indigenous Strategic Plan and in recognition of this importance, the University is developing a comprehensive policy addressing this topic separate from this policy regarding deaccession.

1. General

1.1 **Objects and GLAMs.** This policy sets out the circumstances, conditions and protocol for deaccessioning and disposing of a work of art, cultural artifact, cultural material, book, or specimen (each an “**Object**”) in the following museums, galleries, libraries, and their associated archives at the University:

- 1.1.1 Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery;
- 1.1.2 UBC Okanagan Art Gallery;
- 1.1.3 University Library, only for Objects within its rare books collections, special collections and archives;
- 1.1.4 Museum of Anthropology;
- 1.1.5 Beaty Biodiversity Museum; and

- 1.1.6 Pacific Museum of Earth;
("GLAMs Units").

2. Reasons for Deaccession

2.1 **Deaccession.** A GLAMs Unit may request approval for deaccession of an Object from its collection for any one or more of the following reasons:

2.1.1 **Legal title.** The GLAMs Unit learns that the University does not hold legal title to the Object, whether discovered through the GLAMs Unit's own review or research, or upon receiving notice from an owner or family member, including but not limited to where:

- (a) the Object has been acquired in violation of Canadian law or international treaties binding upon the Government of Canada;
- (b) provenance documentation shows that the University does not hold legal title to the Object;

2.1.2 **Collection Quality.** The GLAMs Unit determines that the Object does not support the academic, research and display quality of the collection, for any one or more of the following reasons:

- (a) **Collecting focus.** The collecting focus of the collection has been refined or altered and the Object does not support the collection's focus over time;
- (b) **Duplicative within existing collection.** The Object is duplicative in pedagogical or display value of one or more Objects in that collection, such as identical impressions of a photograph or specimens that have the same chemical composition;
- (c) **Upgrade.** The Object will be deaccessioned in order to upgrade or diversify the representation of a category of Objects in a collection by deaccessioning an Object for the trade or purchase of another Object that serves a similar purpose in the collection, such as a different work of art from the same artist or a specimen with different features;
- (d) **Inferior.** The Object is of demonstrably inferior quality as compared to a similar Object in the collection, providing the academic integrity of the collection is not disrupted;
- (e) **Deteriorated.** The Object has deteriorated to the point that it cannot be used for exhibition or study;
- (f) **Forgery.** The Object is determined to be a forgery, unless that forgery is useful for research, teaching or exhibition;

- (g) **Relevance.** The Object is no longer perceived as valuable or of historic, aesthetic, cultural or academic relevance to the collection;
- 2.1.3 **Collection Practicalities.** The GLAMs Unit determines that there are practical matters relating to storage, costs and administration of the collection or Objects within the collection that make it advisable to deaccession an Object or group of Objects from the collection for any one or more of the following reasons:
- (a) **Storage.** Inability to store the Object, or other storage constraint considerations;
 - (b) **Cost.** The cost of conservation of the Object outweighs, or is disproportionate to, the value of the Object to the collection;
 - (c) **Health and Safety.** The Object is, or creates, a health hazard or safety hazard for staff or visitors;
- 2.1.4 **Archive.** In the case of archival records, the records were donated by a donor and that donor has the ability to manage the records;
- 2.1.5 **Terms.** Adhering to the terms of acquisition for that Object is impossible, impracticable, or detrimental to the University; or
- 2.1.6 **Best practices.** There are reasons for deaccessioning an Object that are consistent with best practices for deaccessioning published by the Canadian Museums Association or other relevant institution that provides leadership in collections management for the type of collection managed by the applicable GLAMs Unit considering deaccessioning.
- 2.2 **Gift Agreements.** Notwithstanding Sections 2.1, deaccessioning will not occur where the Object was a gift or bequest and the deaccession would:
- 2.2.1 violate the terms of an agreement between the University and the donor; or
 - 2.2.2 have adverse tax consequences for the donor or the University.
- 2.3 **Sampling.** Routine sampling of Objects for research or teaching is not deaccessioning under this Policy, unless such sampling renders the Object unsuitable for further use in display or research by the GLAMs Unit.

3. Methods of Disposal

- 3.1 **Disposal.** A deaccessioned Object may be disposed of by any of the following methods:
- 3.1.1 **Return to legal owner.** In the case of deaccessioning pursuant to Section 2.1.1, returning the Object to its legal owner;
 - 3.1.2 **Internal transfer.** Transferring the Object to another unit at the University;

- 3.1.3 **External transfer.** Transferring ownership of the Object to a public collection held by a charitable institution as a gift, trade or sale;
- 3.1.4 **Exchange.** Exchanging the Object for more appropriate examples in the same category;
- 3.1.5 **Archival.** In the case of archival records, deaccessioned under Section 2.1.4:
 - (a) if no tax receipt was issued for the value of the donation, returning the records to the donor; or
 - (b) if a tax receipt was issued, a sale of the records to the donor for fair market value;
- 3.1.6 **Fair Market Value Disposition to Donor.** Selling the Object, at fair market value, to the donor who originally donated the Object to the collection;
- 3.1.7 **Public sale.** Selling the Object at public auction; or
- 3.1.8 **Destruction.** Destroying the Object.
- 3.2 **Proceeds.** Proceeds from the sale of a deaccessioned Object can only be used for development and care of the collection(s) of the GLAMs Unit that disposed of the Object, and will normally be used for acquiring Objects, and shall not be used for operational or administrative purposes.
- 3.3 **Conflict.** No staff member employed in connection with the GLAMs Unit disposing of an Object or immediate family member of them may receive, purchase or otherwise knowingly acquire a deaccessioned Object, unless that staff member or immediate family member donated that Object and that person acquires the Object for fair market value under Section 3.1.6.

4. Disposal of Objects other than by GLAMs Units

- 4.1 **Other Disposal.** Nothing in this Policy limits the disposal of Objects by units of the University other than the GLAMs Units. However, if a unit within the University is considering disposing of one or more Objects that is, or might be considered to be, of the kind and quality collected by one or more of the GLAMs Units, that unit is encouraged to contact the applicable GLAMs Unit(s) to query whether such Object(s) may be appropriate for inclusion into any of their collections in accordance with their respective acquisition policies. A unit other than a GLAMs Unit disposing of one or more Objects are encouraged to consider the methods of disposal listed in Section 3 as a guide for decision making regarding the disposal of Objects that are not subject to this Policy.



PROCEDURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE DEACCESSIONING POLICY

Pursuant to the Regulatory Framework Policy, the President may approve Procedures or the amendment or repeal of Procedures. Such approvals must be reported at the next meeting of the UBC Board of Governors or as soon thereafter as practicable.

Capitalized terms used in these Procedures that are not otherwise defined herein shall have the meanings given to such terms in the accompanying Policy, being the Naming Policy.

1. Authorization for Deaccessioning

- 1.1 Deaccessioning of Objects may only be authorized as follows:
 - 1.1.1 in the case of Objects in the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, the Director of the Belkin Art Gallery may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the Director may seek advice from the University Art Committee;
 - 1.1.2 in the case of Objects in the Okanagan Art Gallery, the Director of the Okanagan Art Gallery may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the Director may seek advice from the Public Art Acquisitions Committee;
 - 1.1.3 in the case of Objects in the University Library's rare books, special collections and archives, the University Librarian, or delegate, may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the University Librarian may seek advice from the applicable Senate Library Committee;
 - 1.1.4 in the case of Objects in the Museum of Anthropology, the Director of the Museum of Anthropology after ensuring that the proposed deaccessioning is in accordance with the Museum of Anthropology Professional Guidelines, may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the Director may seek advice from the relevant internal committee of the Museum of Anthropology;
 - 1.1.5 in the case of Objects in the Beaty Biodiversity Museum, the Director of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a

recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the Director may seek advice from the relevant internal committee of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum;

1.1.6 in the case of Objects in the Pacific Museum of Earth, Director of the Pacific Museum of Earth may recommend deaccessioning to the Responsible Executive, for approval by the Responsible Executive. Prior to making a recommendation to the Responsible Executive, the Director may seek advice from the relevant internal committee of the Pacific Museum of Earth.

1.2 Any recommendation that is sent to the Responsible Executive in favour of deaccessioning an Object must:

1.2.1 describe the rationale for deaccessioning, including setting out the relevant section(s) of the Policy under which the deaccession is being recommended;

1.2.2 indicate whether the recommendation is sensitive or precedent setting;

1.2.3 confirm that there has been careful consideration, in view of the University's purpose and values, of the interests of following groups:

(a) the public;

(b) the scholarly community (especially the communities within the University that carry on research and education in areas which the Object to be deaccessioned is relevant); and

(c) the cultural community (including the needs of that community in the region(s) where the collection of the GLAMs Unit is located);

1.2.4 if the Object was donated to the University, confirm that any terms associated with the gift have been addressed;

1.2.5 indicate that all reasonable alternatives to deaccessioning have been carefully considered; and

1.2.6 indicate whether there is, at the time of the request for deaccession approval, an intended method of disposition. (Information about the method of disposition is not required to make a recommendation for approval of a deaccession.)

2. Authorization of Method of Disposition

2.1 Following authorization for deaccession of an Object as set out in Section 1 of these Procedures, the method for that disposition may be approved as follows:

2.1.1 in the case of an Object deaccessioned from the collection of the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery, the Director of the Belkin Art Gallery or delegate;

- 2.1.2 in the case of an Object deaccessioned from the collection of the Library, the University Librarian or delegate;
 - 2.1.3 in the case of an Object deaccessioned from the collection of the Museum of Anthropology, the Director of the Museum of Anthropology or delegate;
 - 2.1.4 in the case of an Object deaccessioned from the collection of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum, the Director of the Beaty Biodiversity Museum or delegate; and
 - 2.1.5 in the case of an Object deaccessioned from the collection of the Pacific Museum of Earth, the Director of the Pacific Museum of Earth or delegate.
- 2.2 Prior to approving a method of disposition, a decision-maker listed above may seek advice from the relevant committees listed in section 1.

3. Documentation

- 3.1 Documentation of deaccessioned Objects will be kept current, standardized, and systematized. The process of deaccession and subsequent disposition shall be documented, and an electronic record retained. Personal and other confidential information will be protected in accordance with the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the following documentation is encouraged to be retained, where available, regarding a deaccessioned Object:
- 3.1.1 a copy of the deaccession recommendation report and associated approval;
 - 3.1.2 a copy of the records relating to the disposition;
 - 3.1.3 photographs;
 - 3.1.4 if there is known research or analysis that has been carried out in connection with that Object, information about that research or analysis or citations of where to locate a copy; and
 - 3.1.5 information relating to provenance, the period the Object was maintained in the collection, and any other notable details about the Object.

4. Repatriation

- 4.1 The University is working to develop a policy and procedure regarding the Respectful Return of Ancestors and Belongings to Indigenous communities. Pending development of that policy, contact the Responsible Executive[insert] for information regarding its status.