

# THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

## Archives and Collections: Collections Care and Conservation Policy

### POLICY DETAILS:

Date of approval	November 2016
Approving body	Museum and Archive Committee
Supersedes	Collections Care and Conservation Policy September 2013
Date of EIA	
Date of next review	November 2019
Author	Susannah Waters and Peter Trowles
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*. Building on the self assessment check-list, initially completed in 2006 as part of the School's *Mackintosh Conservation and Access Project*, GSA continues to ensure that on-going improvements are made to the condition of all its historic collections and archives.

### ***Environmental Monitoring:***

GSA will continually 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 via its Hanwell monitoring programme.

### ***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 provision of 24hr security cover, intruder alarms, and a fire and evacuation system. Archive and Collection stores are also fitted with flood detection monitors although regular visual inspections are also undertaken.
- *Disaster Planning:* A disaster/emergency plan exists for the School's Mackintosh Building and is regularly updated. The School also subscribes to Harwell's Document Restoration Service as a Priority user.
- *Housekeeping:* In line with the MLA's Benchmark guidelines, the School continues to monitor its housekeeping programmes and will make improvements to operational practices where necessary and where advised, and particularly in areas such as cleaning and the handling and movement of large objects. A pest monitoring system is also in place throughout the Mackintosh building.

- 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'.

### ***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.