

COLLECTIONS POLICY FRAMEWORK

Revision	Revision Date	Author	Reference	Comment
00 - New	September 2015	Registrar	COL-POL-029-00	New policy to meet legal and ethical standards, and to respond to changes in corporate policy
01	November 2016	Registrar	COL-POL-029-00	Amendments following Collections colleagues' comments
02	June 2019	Director of Collections and Head of Collections Services	COL-POL-029-00	Rewrite to reflect collections department structure & up to date standards

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1. Introduction

The **PURPOSE** of the Royal Armouries is:

To use and develop our expertise to preserve, study, present and interpret the national collection of arms and armour, ensuring its continued relevance and positive contribution to public life in perpetuity.

The **VISION** of the Royal Armouries (the Museum) is to:

As history's expert witness, we shall inspire people to discover and understand how many of the most compelling narratives of human endeavour and experience have been, and continue to be, shaped by arms and armour.

Stemming from the Museums' Purpose and Vision are the key corporate collections management aims listed in the Museum's Corporate Plan 2019-2024:

Aim 2. The study, management and conservation of arms and armour

The Museum will become the pre-eminent international authority on arms and armour, its historical and cultural significance, management, conservation, presentation and interpretation.

Objective 2.1: Carry out a condition assessment of the collection and implement a preventative and remedial conservation programme;

Objective 2.2: Make appropriate investment in storage, conservation, library, archive and research facilities at all sites, taking in to account the development and outcomes of The Master's Plan;

Objective 2.3: Publish and implement the Royal Armouries' Research Strategy, identifying the main themes of investigation in the plan period and how it will support the development of the public offer;

Objective 2.4: Promote the development of an international Research Framework for arms and armour research;

Objective 2.5: Seek Independent Research Organisation (IRO) status and use to maximum advantage;

Objective 2.6: Enhance the Royal Armouries' collection through acquisitions and loans in line with the Collections Development Policy and responding to the needs of the Royal Armouries' Interpretation Strategy;

Objective 2.7: Develop international arms and armour and collections management related training, consultancy and knowledge exchange programme;

Objective 2.8: Identify an agreed minimum standard for Royal Armouries' catalogue entries and develop and implement an accelerated programme of updating entries by 2020;

Objective 2.9: Develop a loans strategy and programme to increase their effectiveness in fulfilling the purpose of the Royal Armouries and realising its vision;

Objective 2.10: Develop the Royal Armouries' archive and library services for the benefit of staff and the public;

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Objective 2.11: Develop a programme for the dissemination of the Royal Armouries' research output.

2. Legal Framework

The Museum is subject to, and takes seriously international and national laws and statutes, codes of ethics and standards in the course of preserving the national collection of arms and armour, retaining public respect and reputation. The key Act governing the Museum's activities is the National Heritage Act 1983 (as amended by the Museums & Galleries Act 1992), which requires the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries to maintain and exhibit a national collection of arms, armour and associated objects, and to maintain a record relating to arms and armour and to the Tower of London. The Act requires the Royal Armouries to care for, preserve and add objects to the collections, as well as to exhibit them to the public, make them available for study and research, and generally promote the public's enjoyment and understanding of arms and armour.

Other Acts include, but not exclusively:

- Firearms Act 1968 (and subsequent amendments)
- Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, UNESCO 1970
- Sale of Goods Act 1979 (and subsequent amendments)
- Limitations Act 1980 (and subsequent amendments)
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (and subsequent amendments)
- Disability Act 1995
- Treasure Act 1996 (and subsequent amendments) including Coroners and Justice Act
- CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Freedom of Information Act 2000 (and subsequent amendments)
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
- Iraqi Cultural Property Law 2002 (and subsequent amendments)
- Dealing in Cultural Goods Offences Act 2003 (and subsequent amendments)

3. Ethical standards and guidance

The Museum is committed to carrying out all its activities ethically and morally (see the Royal Armouries' *Ethics Policy*), adhering to the International Council of Museums (ICOM) Code of Ethics, the Museums Association (MA) Code of Ethics and including, but not exclusively the following standards, guidelines and best practice:

- i. Combating Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on Collecting and Borrowing Cultural Material (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2005)
- ii. PAS 197: 2009 Code of Practice Cultural Collections Management
- iii. Place of Deposit for Archives

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- iv. Museum Accreditation Standards, Arts Council England
- v. Archive Accreditation Standards
- vi. SPECTRUM 5.0 the UK Museum Collections Management Standard
- vii. CILIP (Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) guidelines

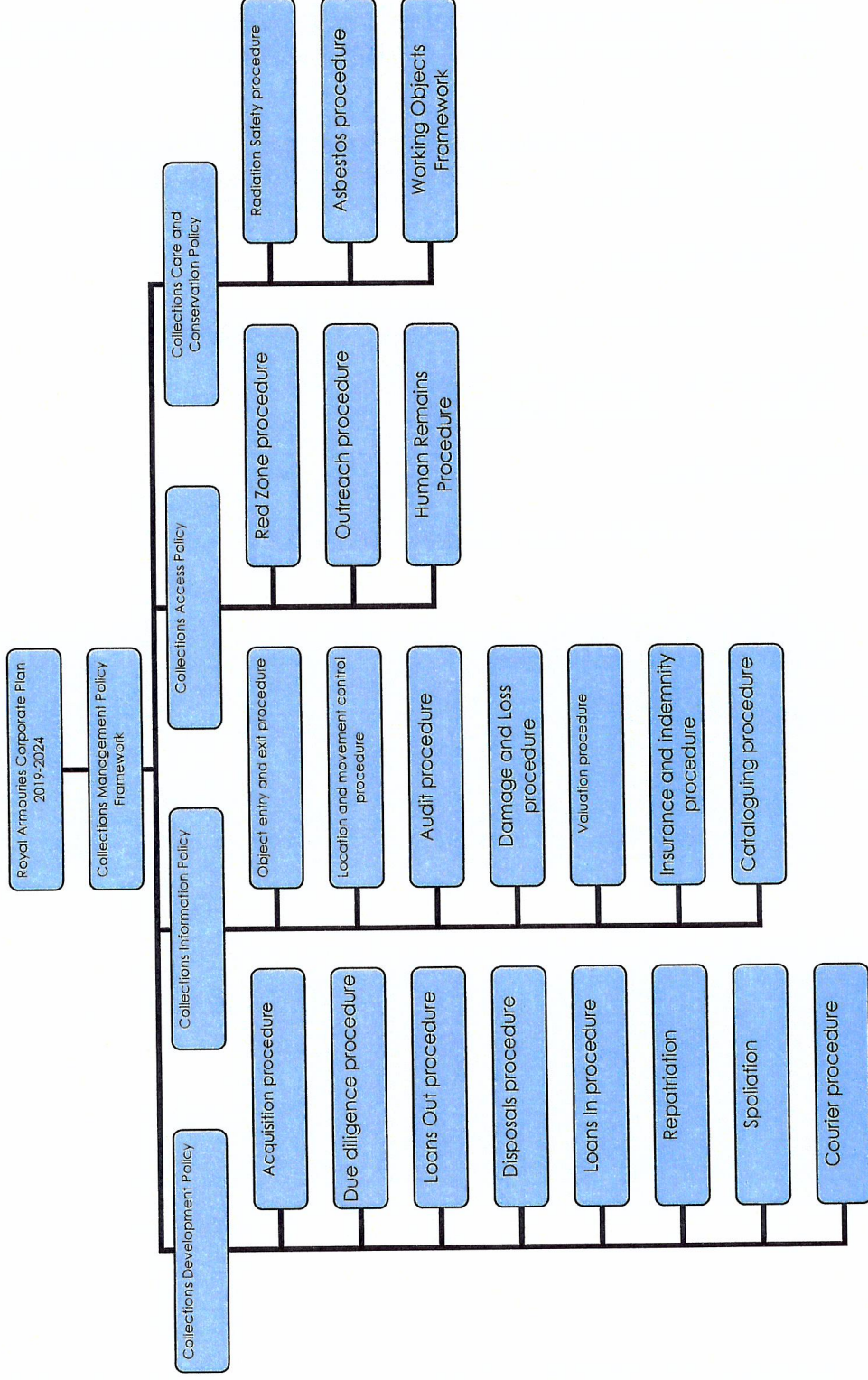
4. Knowledge

- 4.1 Knowledge of the collection is essential for its effective and efficient management and development.
- 4.2 Collections staff at all levels have an unrivalled opportunity to study objects in their care and to develop knowledge not easily acquired by non-Museum staff. Staff accordingly have a duty, as part of their job, to acquire knowledge of objects in the collection, their care, conservation and management, and the whole field to which the objects relate, and to ensure that their accumulated knowledge is retained by the Museum as far as reasonably practicable.
- 4.3 It is essential that all collections staff develop the museological skills necessary to handle, inspect, display and store the classes of object within our collection.
- 4.4 The requirements for security and risk must be thoroughly understood, while striking the appropriate balance with the public's right of access.
- 4.5 Staff are required to have and develop knowledge in information retrieval, documentation, collections management systems and related technologies, which are increasingly necessary for the efficient management of collections. Office skills such as the use of databases are essential.
- 4.6 It is essential that collections staff develop expert knowledge and are able to provide advice to outside bodies:
 - 4.6.1 The Museum's collection and its network of day-to-day working relationships are international in scope and an awareness of various cultures, languages and sensitivities is key.
 - 4.6.2 Designated staff are appointed as Expert Advisers to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and are members of the Advisory Council of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art.
 - 4.6.3 Collections staff are required to provide an information service to the public and professionals worldwide.
 - 4.6.4 The Museum will endeavour to capture and continue expert knowledge through succession planning.

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5 Collections Management Policy Framework

In order to care for the collection to the highest standards, to meet and deliver the corporate aims, statutory obligations and relevant sector standards, the Royal Armouries has adopted the following policies and procedural framework. All policies are agreed and approved by the Board of Trustees, with all procedures being agreed by the Senior Collections team.



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6 Audit and Review

This document will be reviewed from time to time, but at least every five years, and specifically following updates in corporate policy and plan, legislation and international conventions.

This document will be reviewed by a panel of collections staff and agreed by the Director of Collections, before submission to Executive Board and the Board of Trustees for approval.

7 Risk Management

The associated risk of non-compliance with this policy is:

Impact of non-compliance: High
Likelihood of non-compliance: Low

8 Effective date

This policy is effective from the date of signing.


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Chair of the Board of Trustees

Date.....24/7/19.....

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