

## Collections Development Policy

Author:	Darren Pih (Head of Collections & Exhibitions), Amy George (Senior Curator of Collections) and Collections and Exhibitions Team
Name of museum:	The Whitworth
Name of governing body:	The University of Manchester
Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:	March 2025
Policy review procedure:	Reviewed by Whitworth Executive Team and Director, approved by University of Manchester Cultural Institutes Governance Committee (CIGC)
Date at which this policy is due for review:	March 2030
Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.	

### 1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation

#### 1.1. The museum's statement of purpose:

Key Gallery Strategic Aims and Objectives:

- Provide access to art and creativity for our communities, to expand and diversify our audiences;
- Extend the range and quality of our Academic Engagement, including experiential learning and interdisciplinary research;
- Using art to tell new and less-known stories from global perspectives, that make connections with Manchester's people and history;
- Using art to contribute to an understanding of the world as the cumulative effect of transcultural intersections and exchanges.

#### 1.2. The governing Cultural Institutes Governance Committee (CIGC) will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

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- 1.3. By definition the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The CIGC therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- 1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management and documentation. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, resource, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

## 2. History of the Collections

The Whitworth has been acquiring works for the collection since it was founded in 1889 for the 'perpetual gratification of the people of Manchester'. This founding mission has remained at the heart of the growth, care, research and display of our collection throughout the gallery's history, highlighting our long-term commitment to the people of Manchester and beyond.

Prints and drawings have remained at the centre of the Whitworth's internationally renowned collection since the gallery first opened. Led by the Whitworth's founders and supporters, the Gallery's early collecting policy deliberately reacted against popular trends by favouring the history of English watercolours and prints over more fashionable oil paintings. This guiding principle has determined the development of the Gallery's collection of historic, modern and contemporary works on paper.

In addition, textiles have formed part of the Whitworth's collections since the Gallery was founded. In the 19th century, Manchester was the centre of the global textile industry, and the surrounding Lancashire towns the centre of cotton manufacturing. One of the original intentions of the Gallery's founders was to establish a museum of the industrial arts, and a collection of textiles from across the world was acquired for the Whitworth to inspire local designers and manufacturers.

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The main part of the wallpaper collection was acquired by gift in 1967 from the 'wallpaper museum' of The Wallpaper Manufacturers Ltd (WPM), which controlled some 98% of the UK wallpaper industry from 1899 to the mid-1960s. The Whitworth was a fitting home for the products of an industry whose mechanisation, like that of textiles, was pioneered in the Northwest. Since the 1970s, further donations and purchases have helped make the collection one of the most important in the country.

Until the Gallery and its collection were transferred to the University in 1958, acquisitions came mainly through gifts and bequests. After that date, as the Gallery employed qualified subject specialists and established funds for purchase, it became possible to develop a strategy for acquisition. The expansion of the art, textile and wallpaper collections from the 1960s have also been remarkable, particularly in the acquisition of work by contemporary artists and in time-based media works. Although oil painting, sculpture and installation art works have been acquired into the collection, the Whitworth is primarily a centre for the study, conservation and dissemination of research into drawings, watercolours, prints, time-based media, textiles and wallpapers.

The historical and geographical scope of the collection is outlined below, but a more detailed analysis of its history and composition may be found in the following areas:

*The Whitworth Art Gallery: The First Hundred Years* (Whitworth Art Gallery, 1989)

*The Whitworth Art Gallery* (Art Spaces series, Scala, 2011)

The Whitworth's online collection search

### 3. An overview of current collections

The Whitworth's core collections consist of historic, modern and contemporary art, textiles and wallpapers. Within the UK, our collections of textiles and wallpapers are second in importance only to those at the V&A, London. The historic collection of drawings and watercolours is outstanding and of international significance, surpassed in its range and historical importance only by those at the British Museum, the V&A, Tate and by the University collections at Oxford and Cambridge. The Gallery also possesses one of the largest and most important print collections in the country, and a modern collection of works on paper, paintings, sculpture and new media that continues to develop its reputation at national and international levels. The outstanding importance of all the Gallery's collection is recognised by the award of Designated status under the Government's Designation Scheme for registered, non-national museums and galleries holding nationally or internationally pre-eminent collections in England.

A significant advantage of the Whitworth's collection lies in the relationships between the parts - the topical throughline of genres such as landscape across prints and watercolours of different eras, for example, or the relationship between printing techniques on paper, textile and wallpaper. The Gallery aims to develop these relationships further through acquisition, and to treat the Whitworth's holdings as a universal source of dialogue between media and histories.

## 3.1. Textiles: Collection Summary

This is a large and heterogeneous collection which aims to be comprehensive in its coverage of world textiles, whilst acknowledging that not every area can be covered in a specialist way. In its present form, the collection represents several attempts at rationalising Manchester's textile holdings in one institution. It includes on long-loan important holdings from the Manchester Museum, UMIST and Manchester Metropolitan University. English dress is not actively collected (given the specialisms of other museums in the region, notably the Manchester City Galleries) but items of costume in the collection have been acquired to exemplify particular textile techniques and styles.

Several parts of the collection are internationally significant:

- a large group of post-Pharaonic textiles from Egypt, which includes outstanding examples of whole or partial items of dress and of all the main textile techniques in use between 300 and 1000 AD
- European textiles and vestments dating from the 15th-18th centuries
- Mediterranean and Islamic embroideries dating from the 17th-19th centuries
- The work of William Morris and other Arts and Crafts designers
- 20th-century British furnishing textiles, the latter the only one of its kind in the UK, aside from the V&A.

Reflecting this broad remit, the collection simultaneously provides examples of textile techniques and a picture of the social function of textiles within many different societies and across the globe, as well as a record of both stylistic and innovation within craft techniques and the textile industries.

A significant recent acquisition to the textiles collection is the archive of the ABC Wax printing company. The ABC Wax collection is the last surviving industrial design archive of a Manchester textile printing company. It is an incredibly valuable resource, showing the rich history of British textiles made for export to African (and some Middle Eastern or Asian) markets. The archive is extensive and consists of around 2000 new objects including pattern books, fabric samples, slides, sample cards, printing blocks and large paper designs.

## 3.2. Wallpapers: Collection Summary

There are few wallpaper collections in the UK. In this context, the Whitworth's is substantial, in size, range and significance. It spans the period from the 17th century to the present day, with most individual items and sample books dating from the 1850s to the 1960s. Although the emphasis is on UK production, it includes important French examples as well as a number from other European countries and the United States. There are also some 18th century European flocked canvas wall-hangings and a small collection of 18th and 19th century embossed leather wallcoverings.

The bulk of the collection, containing examples from the 17th to early 20th centuries, was donated by The Wallpaper Manufacturers Ltd in 1967. Owing to the firm's previous gifts, to the V&A and to Manchester Art Gallery, of a large proportion of its archive of machine-produced examples, the gift to the Whitworth concentrated largely on products manufactured for various

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specific markets, notably those at the top end. Subsequent gifts and purchases have supplemented this, in particular our broad range of wallpapers from the 20th century, which demonstrate the skill of craftspeople, the inventiveness of early post-war design and the design exuberance of the 1960s and 1970s.

Since 2000, the Whitworth has developed a specialism in wallpaper designed by modern and contemporary artists, including works by Robert Gober, General Idea, Niki de Saint Phalle, Damien Hirst, Sarah Lucas, Sonya Boyce and Barbara Walker. The Whitworth's collection is now regarded as a major repository and centre for the study of wallpaper.

### **3.3. Historic Art pre-1880 [Prints, Drawings and Watercolours, Oils and Sculpture]: Collection Summary**

The most significant part of this collection comprises drawings and watercolours made before around 1880. The strength of its British watercolour collection dates predominantly from the 18th and 19th centuries with landscape being the principal subject. The collection includes significant works by J.M.W. Turner, Thomas Girtin, Thomas Gainsborough, Alexander and John Robert Cozens, Thomas Hearne and David Cox. There are some important Pre-Raphaelite watercolours, including examples of the work of J.E. Millais, D.G. Rossetti, William Holman Hunt and Edward Burne-Jones. The Whitworth holds an extensive collection of designs, watercolours, drawings and other works on paper by Walter Crane. Numerically, the English watercolour collection is much the strongest, but there is also a significant collection of European Old Master drawings.

The gallery's historic print collection broadly covers the history of printmaking in Europe from its beginnings in the 15th century to the present day; in addition, there are Japanese woodblock prints from the 18th century to the present day, and a small number of American prints. However, the coverage is not even across all geographical areas and periods. About half of the collection consists of British prints from the 17th century to the present; the holding of prints by and after William Hogarth is especially comprehensive. There is a good collection of Italian and Northern Renaissance prints, but the holding of European prints from the 19th and 20th centuries is less extensive. There is a specialist collection of British wood-engravings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a small collection of British artists' books, some illustrated books, mostly comprising topographical and travel books related to the watercolour collection.

### **3.4. Modern And Contemporary Art post-1880 [Prints, Drawings, Watercolours, Oils, Sculpture, Time-Based Media and Installation Art]: Collection Summary**

Our collection gives an excellent overview of the main threads that have run through art from the modern art revolution of late 19th-century France through to the art of our own time. Expressed chronologically, it begins with a group of works by Degas, Van Gogh, Pissarro, Gauguin and other

Impressionists and Post-impressionists. Later major names of European Modernism can be added to this list - Picasso, Maholy-Nagy and Paul Klee - alongside British artists of the early and mid-20th century, notably Sickert, Epstein, Wadsworth, Piper, Ben Nicholson, Winifred Nicholson, Hepworth and Moore.

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We hold major works by Bacon, Freud and Auerbach, artists who shaped new kinds of painting in 1950s London, and the gallery was also at the forefront of collecting British art in the 1960s and 1970s – when some of David Hockney and Bridget Riley's earliest purchases by a public institution were made. From the 1980s and 90s, the Whitworth holds work by British artists including Tracey Emin, Michael Landy, Gillian Wearing and Sarah Lucas. The art and significance of untrained artists is also represented magnificently through the Musgrave Kinley Collection of Outsider Art.

The Whitworth continues to actively collect art, seeking to identify those new artists who will become significant and influential shapers of contemporary visual culture. We prioritise the acquisition of works that offer context to our world today – in all of its complexity and diversity. Recent acquisitions include work by Mounira al Solh, Lisa Bryce, Barbara Walker and Lynette Yiadom-Boakye. We have a reputation for showing time-based media and have been steadily adding it to the collection with works by Isaac Julien, Steve McQueen, Elizabeth Price, Suzanne Lacy, The Otolith Group, Forensic Architecture and other prominent artists in the field.

## **The period and/or geographical area to which collecting relates is as follows:**

- Historic drawings, watercolours, oils and sculpture: mainly before 1880 and British
- Prints: Europe, the United States and Japan, 15th century to the present day.
- Modern and Contemporary Art: works of art, mainly British with some Continental European, from 1880 to the present day, but increasingly international for contemporary works.
- Textiles: late Roman period to present day; geographical range covers five continents with an emphasis on Western Europe.
- Wallpapers: from 17th century to the present day; emphasis on Europe and particularly the UK.

## **4. Themes and priorities for future collecting including the subjects or themes, periods of time and/or geographic areas and any collections which will not be subject to further acquisition.**

Over the next ten years, the gallery intends to acquire works that consolidate and deepen the core strengths and significance of the Whitworth's collection of historic, modern and contemporary art, and our textile and wallpaper holdings.

We will prioritise acquisitions that enable our collection to present more complete and nuanced narratives to our audiences, working to actively rebalance the diversity of representation within our

holdings in relation to gender, sexuality, race, and class. We will acquire works that address transnational narratives and themes especially where these relate to existing works within the collection.

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Our acquisitions will recognise the research specialisms across the University of Manchester, as well as other universities across the world. We will seek acquisitions which have the potential to generate new artistic knowledge with audiences and scholars, extending research impact as well as the depth of our collection.

We will continue to acquire works that reflect the key issues and debates within contemporary and art history, based on the recognition that acquisitions have the potential to transform and illuminate the narratives that can be told using our collection. We will consider special acquisitions such as archives where these are relevant to the Whitworth collection and offer potential for research and display, and furthering audience engagement.

## **Textiles**

As appropriate opportunities arise, the Gallery will continue to collect passively across the whole range of the textile collection. Active collecting will take place in areas of existing strength, with particular emphasis placed on:

- British work since 1900. This may be more precisely defined as industrially produced furnishing textiles, where the main criterion for collection is innovation in either design or technique
- Contemporary art textiles, a developing area of activity which has the advantage of forging links with the Gallery's art collections, as well as providing continuity with and providing new perspectives on our historic textile holdings and addressing historic imbalances within the collection

## **Wallpapers**

As appropriate opportunities arise the Gallery will continue to collect passively across the whole range of the wallpapers collection. During the next five years we intend to:

- Augment the 17th-, 18th- and 19th-century holdings
- Contemporary art wallpapers, a developing area of activity which has the advantage of forging links with the Gallery's art collections as well as providing continuity with and providing new perspectives on our historic wallpaper holdings and addressing historic imbalances within the collection.

## **Historic Art**

In line with the collection's core strengths, as opportunities arise the Gallery will collect passively across the whole range of the Historic Art collection. Active collecting will prioritise existing gaps with the following areas being prioritised:

- 19th century British landscape drawings and prints that broaden the depth and diversity of the gallery's existing holdings
- Alongside its landscape drawings, the gallery will consider prints that present new ways of understanding landscape, the city and the diversity of culture that is played out within these arenas
- Works by artists who have historically been marginalised due to gender, race, sexual orientation, or class

- Works that create opportunities to explore transhistorical and transnational themes related to politics, social hierarchy, gender, sexuality and race, as well as themes of migration, movement and displacement

## **Modern and Contemporary Art**

As appropriate opportunities arise the Gallery will continue to collect passively across the whole range of the Modern collection. Specifically, over the next five years we will actively prioritise art, both British and transnational, that interrogates place, politics and identity. Generally, a connection with the other sections of the collection, especially wallpaper and textiles, is encouraged. Within this focus, we will seek to acquire:

- Work representing innovations in modern and contemporary British and transnational artistic practices
- Work that presents new ways of understanding the global late industrial and post-industrial landscape and the city through the cultural diversity that is played out within these arenas.
- Work that contributes to the content and discourse around the Musgrave Kinley Outsider Art collection.
- Significant time-based media works
- Work that positively expands the diversity of artist identities held in the collection, including ethnicity, gender and sexuality.

## **5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

- 5.1** The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well-managed and coherent collection.
- 5.2** The procedures used will adhere to professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.
- 5.3** Where necessary, the following parts of the collection are actively considered for rationalisation and disposal:
  - 5.3.1** Furniture
  - 5.3.2** Ceramics
  - 5.3.3** Jewellery
  - 5.3.4** Textile items where multiple examples are present
  - 5.3.5** Wallpaper items where multiple examples are present



## 6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 6.1** The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

## 7. Collecting policies of other museums

The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):

- Manchester Art Gallery (including dress collection formerly housed at Gallery of Costume, Platt Hall).
- Science and Industry Museum in Manchester, with reference to Textile collections, especially the ABC Wax Archive.
- John Rylands University Library of Manchester; Manchester Metropolitan University Library; Manchester Art Gallery; and The People's History Museum, Manchester, with reference to Walter Crane.
- John Rylands University Library of Manchester; and Manchester Metropolitan University Library, with reference to illustrated books.
- Other Galleries and Museums in the Northwest Hub: Manchester Museum; Touchstones Rochdale; National Museums Liverpool; University of Salford Art Collection; Bolton Museum, Art Gallery and Aquarium; Harris Museum and Art Gallery, Preston; People's History Museum; Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle.

## 8. Archival holdings

The Whitworth holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera. It will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002).

## 9. Acquisition

- 9.1** Acquisitions to the Whitworth may be made by purchase, gift or commission. All works proposed are researched by the Curatorial team and discussed internally and externally as appropriate. Recommendations are then taken forward to the acquisitions meetings and assessed according to the Collection Development Policy.
- 9.2** The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the

governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

- 9.3** The policy for agreeing acquisitions is that the museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- 9.4** In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

## **10. Human Remains**

- 10.2** The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

## **11. Biological and geological material**

- 11.1** So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

## **12. Archaeological material**

- 12.1** The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

## **13. Exceptions**

- 13.1** Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:
- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
  - acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

## **14. Spoliation**

- 14.1** The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

## **15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects**

- 15.1** The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the Museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance and consultation. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

## **16. Disposal procedures**

- 16.1** All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2** The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3** When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4** When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5** The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as

donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

- 16.6** A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety) will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7** Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8** If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the Museum Association's 'Find an Object' web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9** The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10** Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.
- 16.11** The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

- 16.12** Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

## Disposal by exchange

- 16.13** The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1** In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2** If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- 16.13.3** If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4** Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

## Disposal by destruction

- 16.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

- 16.15** It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16** Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17** Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18** The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

## **17. Acquisitions not covered by the policy**

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.