

# Art Collection Policy

## Section 1 - Background Information

(1) Drawing on the long and rich heritage of the Catholic Church as a patron of the arts, Australian Catholic University (ACU) is committed to building upon the vast cultural history of Catholicism, and expanding its contribution to, and appreciation of, art. The University has acquired a significant number of artworks from its amalgamation with previous Catholic institutions of higher learning.

(2) The ACU Art Collection (Art Collection) has continued to expand to the present day and now comprises over 1,000 works. The Art Collection supports the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#), as well as teaching, learning, research and enterprise, and serves - in alignment with the University's Arts and Culture Strategy - as a platform for the university's promotion and engagement, while also contributing to the aesthetic enhancement of the University environment.

(3) The University's increasing maturity is reflected in its growing profile (particularly in the Catholic sphere) and impressive research achievements. As part of this development, ACU has begun to develop its arts and culture reputation through the commissioning and acquisition of a number of significant works. Since its inception in 1990, ACU has steadily developed a reputation for its commitment to arts and culture. ACU will continue to develop and strengthen its Arts and Culture profile including the acquisition of high-quality works, particularly those reflecting the Catholic mission and identity of the University and art within an environment of cultural diversity. This commitment aligns with the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#) and ACU's history, and also has great relevance beyond the Catholic community.

(4) The appointment of ACU's Curatorial Manager, ACU Art Collection highlights the importance of art and culture at ACU. The Art Collection is managed through the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President. The Curatorial Manager is responsible for the development and management of the art collection, which includes acquisition, transportation and handling, cataloguing, presentation, and conservation. (A major aspect of the Curatorial Manager's role is to examine and assess the art collection across the University's eight campuses: North Sydney, Strathfield, Blacktown, Brisbane, Melbourne, Canberra, Ballarat and Rome, whilst referring to existing catalogue registers. This includes identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Art Collection and consulting on its breadth and diversity).

(5) The University plans to implement an appropriate management software system for museum standard cataloguing of the art collection. As part of the ongoing development of the art collection, the Curatorial Manager continually seeks opportunities for future acquisitions within the scope of the Art Collection, in particular as part of the development of ACU Galleries and new infrastructure across the campuses.

## Section 2 - Policy Statement

(6) The Art Collection is an intellectual, spiritual and cultural asset for the University community that aesthetically enhances the learning environment, and the Mission, history and fabric of the individual campuses while celebrating the value of cultural diversity, in accordance with the University's Cultural Diversity Policy. The art collection promotes a vibrant and dynamic visual arts presence at ACU while engaging and encouraging innovation and creativity among students.

(7) This Policy defines the principles to be followed by the ACU community in the development, management and use

of the Art Collection, which is consistent with the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#).

## Section 3 - Policy Purpose

(8) The Art Collection will be professionally managed in line with best contemporary practice.

(9) The University will consolidate and expand the art collection by acquiring significant artworks by purchase, commission, donation, [Cultural Gifts Program](#) and bequest; with a particular focus on collecting the work of artists with a proven record of artistic excellence. The University will also support the artistic community through the acquisition of artworks by mid-career and emerging artists. ACU aims to create opportunities for contemporary artists to develop their artistic expression within the Catholic intellectual tradition that emphasises the dignity of the human person, truth, love and the common good.

(10) ACU will acquire (and should retain in its present holdings) only those items of collectable or intrinsic value that will enhance the University's Catholic identity and mission, teaching, research, service to community, or the documenting of its history. These items will enrich a successful, welcoming and active campus environment in accordance with the [Work, Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#) and the [Risk Management Policy](#).

(11) The Curatorial Manager will be responsible for an exhibition program that draws upon the art collection to celebrate diverse practices, create partnerships with the external community and provide a focus for visual arts scholarship, teaching, research, engagement and appreciation.

(12) The art collection will be promoted regionally, nationally and internationally as a significant cultural resource of the University.

## Section 4 - Application of the Art Collection Policy

(13) This Policy applies to all ACU Staff.

## Section 5 - Artwork Acquisitions

(14) The University's [Procurement Policy](#) will be adhered to with regards to acquisitions, and relevant parties will be consulted.

(15) Any person purchasing artwork on behalf of ACU must abide by the conflict of interest provisions of the [Code of Conduct for Staff](#). They must declare they have no conflict of interest or, if they have such a conflict, then it must be reported to a Member of the Executive for resolution prior to any decision being taken.

## Section 6 - Commissions

(16) For approved commissions, sourcing design concepts and quotations from artists and potential suppliers are consulted in adherence with the [Procurement Policy](#). Approval processes in accordance with the [Delegations of Authority Policy and Register](#) will be undertaken. The University's [Procurement Policy](#) guidelines are adhered to when commissioning artwork for the University.

(17) The commissioning process includes:

- a. consulting with relevant parties regarding the design, scale, cost, Unit area budget, timeline of the project, and relevance to the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#) and the art collection;

- b. consulting with relevant parties regarding artworks to be incorporated in any new building project during the pre-design stage. This includes agreement on the budget to be applied for the procurement of the artwork and all associated handling, storage and installation costs;
- c. managing the consultation process between the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President and the Vice President and Director, Identity & Mission, Campus Deans, Properties and Facilities and the artist/s to determine the scope of the project and relevance to the [ACU Mission, Identity and Values](#) and the art collection;
- d. project management procedures, including; establishing project cost, and confirming budget and cost centre for the realisation of the project;
- e. sourcing design concepts and quotations from artists and suppliers in line with the [Procurement Policy](#);
- f. engaging with the local Archbishop or Bishop may be required, depending on the scale of the commission. This will be undertaken by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President;
- g. overseeing the production and installation of artwork in consultation with relevant parties, and in accordance with the [Risk Management Policy](#); and
- h. documenting the artwork using the [Art Collection Cataloguing Worksheet](#) and a dedicated collections management software program, and recording the artwork on the University's art register, and the University asset register in accordance with the Asset Management Form and Template.

## Section 7 - Funding of Artwork Acquisitions and Commissioned Projects

(18) Funding for artwork acquisitions and commissions is generally sourced from the ACU New Building Levy/Capital Building expenditure and individual unit area budgets.

(19) Full details of the acquisition or commission will be provided to Finance and Planning, supported by documentation confirming the source and value, for inclusion in the University's asset register.

(20) Acquisitions and commissions will be routinely accessioned, checked and catalogued on a cataloguing worksheet, the Art Collection Ledger, and recorded on the University's cataloguing management system.

(21) All art acquisitions will be documented as outlined in Section 8.

## Section 8 - Artwork Acquisition and Commission Criteria

### Relevance

(22) The University will only collect works of art that relate to the University's purpose and key collecting areas as identified in Section 3.

### Significance

(23) Priority is given to works that are significant for their religious, sacred, historic, aesthetic, research, social and spiritual value.

### Provenance and Documentation

(24) Priority is given to works where the history of the work is known and associated documentation and supporting material can be provided. Priority is given to commissioned and acquired works of art that will be presented in identified settings that include appropriate lighting and seating.

## Teaching potential

(25) Artworks deemed to have particular value in the University's teaching programs will be prioritised.

(26) Educational resources and community engagement tools to support teaching and learning may be developed for artworks deemed to have particular value in the University's teaching program, student internships and Artists-in-Residence opportunities. Designed resources can include information worksheets, study guides that refer to an individual or series of works within the art collection, artist interviews, and art curatorial workshops that may support the [Third Party and Educational Partnerships Policy](#).

## Legal Requirements

(27) The University will only accept artworks where the donor/vendor has legal title to the work. With regard to Indigenous cultural property, the University will adhere to the local State and Commonwealth legislation covering ownership/sale/return of skeletal remains and artefacts and objects having religious or cultural significance.

(28) Where the validity of ownership is in question, the University shall not accept the item until ownership is resolved. The ACU will only acquire items that have been collected, sold or otherwise transferred ethically and lawfully and in compliance with national and international regulations.

(29) The University will also adhere to the Museums Australia policy document [Continuous Cultures, Ongoing Responsibilities: Principles and Guidelines for Australian Museums working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Heritage](#) (February 2005).

## Management and Resource Implications

(30) Consideration will be given to the management and resource implications of all acquisitions, and the financial and legal implications of accepting all loans or gifts of art.

## Collection Management

(31) The University will observe the [National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries](#) for the documentation and preservation of the Art Collection.

## Documentation

(32) An effective documentation system is maintained for the Art Collection by:

- a. assigning a unique accession number to each new work;
- b. creating a cataloguing worksheet that includes information about the work, its maker, provenance and value and details of agreed credit lines, where works have been donated;
- c. photographing all works; and
- d. recording acquisition information on dedicated collections management software.

## Conservation and Storage

(33) Spaces specifically for storage of art will be established on each campus.

(34) The University aims to achieve high standards of collection care and storage.

(35) Storage areas must remain clean, secure and sealed against the weather.

(36) Temperature and relative humidity should be kept as stable as possible.

(37) Access to storage areas is to be controlled.

- (38) Ultraviolet light should be excluded from storage areas.
- (39) Archival quality storage materials should be used for all significant materials.
- (40) Storage areas must be regularly checked for pests and other problems.
- (41) Objects are not to be stored on the floor.
- (42) Untrained personnel should never attempt to clean, treat or restore objects within the Art Collection.

## Section 9 - Valuation

- (43) The Art Collection will be professionally valued every three years.
- (44) The Chief Financial Officer will be provided with an image of artworks valued over AUD\$3,000.
- (45) A valuation report of the Art Collection will be provided on an annual basis to Finance and Planning as required by the University's [Asset Management Policy](#).

## Section 10 - De-accessioning and Disposal

### De-accession

(46) The Art Collection will be subject to periodic review by the Curatorial Manager in order to assess the ongoing relevance of individual artworks. Artworks will be considered for de-accessioning on a case-by-case basis according to the following criteria:

- a. relevance to the University's Catholic Identity, Mission and strategy;
- b. relevance to the Art Collection;
- c. artistic merit;
- d. duplication;
- e. theft or loss, damage or serious deterioration in condition, if the cost of maintenance outweighs its value;
- f. absence of clear legal title;
- g. repatriation of cultural material;
- h. the possibility of upgrading by exchange;
- i. the work lacks sufficient documentation to support its authenticity and provenance;
- j. an item that is on loan to the University is recalled by its owner; and
- k. de-accession items may be considered for retention and display as purely decorative items.

(47) Strict guidelines for de-accessioning will be in line with industry standards.

### Disposal

(48) Any person disposing of unwanted artwork is required to take whatever steps are necessary to maximise the value received by ACU from the sale of the artwork. In relation to the sale of the artwork, they must declare they have no conflict of interest or, if they have such a conflict, then it must be reported to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President for resolution prior to any decision being taken to accept an offer.

(49) Disposal will be carried out in accordance with the [Asset Management Policy](#).

(50) All items for disposal will require final approval from the Vice-Chancellor and President or their nominee.

(51) The University will ensure all legal and cultural issues are observed.

(52) Works will be disposed of in a manner beneficial to the Art Collection and may include return, sale, exchange, gift, placement in non-public University spaces, or destruction.

(53) De-accessioned artworks will be removed from the Assets Register (Finance and Planning) and the Art Collection Art Register. Finance and Planning will be notified regarding the removal from the Asset Register. A copy of documentation pertaining to the de-accessioned artworks will be retained in the Art Collection archives. Proceeds from any sale arising from de-accession will normally be used for purposes of collection development.

(54) Every effort will be made to notify and consult with the artist and/or donor of a proposed de-accession, and ACU will accommodate their request to have the artwork returned to them.

(55) Prior to any decision to dispose of unwanted artwork, it must be ascertained whether or not the artwork was gifted to ACU. If the artwork was gifted, then the original owner must be given the opportunity to take back the artwork at no price.

(56) De-accessioned artworks must not be transferred to, purchased by or given to a University staff member or any member of their immediate family unless that person is the artist of the work.

## **Section 11 - Display**

(57) Artworks are displayed in the University's public spaces. The number of artworks in storage are kept to a minimum.

(58) Artworks are circulated and displayed across the University's eight campuses.

(59) Heads of organisational areas may request artwork from the collection for offices and other spaces within the organisational area.

(60) Requests to display artworks will be evaluated and determined on the basis of adequate security, appropriate lighting and suitable climatic conditions in the proposed display area.

(61) Heads of organisational areas authorised to display artworks must agree to the following conditions of use. Artworks on display may be recalled if:

- a. the conditions under which the artwork was lent, change;
- b. the work is required for exhibition, loan or conservation treatment; and
- c. any of the conditions outlined are breached.

(62) To facilitate the display of the Art Collection transport and installation of artworks will be arranged via Properties and Facilities. Artworks must not be moved or lent to a third party without prior approval, and heads of organisational areas must ensure that artworks are preserved in the condition in which they were received and will not attempt to repair or clean the artworks.

(63) Organisational areas will be responsible for all costs associated with the damage or loss of artworks that fall under the insurance excess. Heads of organisational areas must report in advance any factors that may affect the physical condition of artworks.

## Section 12 - Loans

(64) The University will lend and borrow works of art and other material on a short-term basis as deemed appropriate. It is a requirement that relevant parties place requests in advance to process and facilitate the arrangement. All loans will be documented and bound by way of a [Loan Agreement - Inward](#) or [Loan Agreement - Outward](#) as appropriate.

### Inward Loans

(65) Inward loans will normally only be accepted for specific exhibitions or research and for fixed periods of time.

(66) Works of art offered on a long-term basis will only be accepted where there is clear intent to donate the work to the University at a future date as specified in the [Loan Agreement - Inward](#).

(67) Inward Loans will be recorded in a separate Loans Register.

## Section 13 - Donations

(68) In accordance with the [Acceptance and Treatment of Donations Policy](#) and the ACU Code of Practice for Philanthropy, gifts of art will be accepted provided they meet acquisition and commission criteria as per Section 9. The University retains the right to accept or refuse such offers as they occur in accordance to the [Acceptance and Treatment of Donations Policy](#).

(69) All donations will be documented and bound by way of the [Art Collection Donation Agreement](#).

(70) Gifts that conform to this Policy will be accepted under the provisions of the [Cultural Gifts Program](#) in strict accordance with the program guidelines.

(71) The University reserves the right not to accept donations made with conditions.

(72) Donations in kind to the Art Collection must receive the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and President (or nominee). The Vice-Chancellor and President will acknowledge the donors in writing.

(73) Gifts of art to the University will be formally acknowledged by the Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President in accordance with the University's [Acceptance and Treatment of Donations Policy](#).

(74) Donations of gifts under the [Cultural Gifts Program](#) must comply with all national and international legislative requirements. Finance and Planning will be notified when a donated artwork has been formally accepted in the Art Collection, providing the donor's details and estimated value of the gift.

## Section 14 - Exhibition

(75) The Art Collection will be given prominence through exhibitions, publications and public programs.

## Section 15 - Reproductions

(76) Any reproduction of images of artwork from the Art Collection must be properly acknowledged and made in accordance with Copyright Law.

(77) All Copyright arrangements will be documented and bound by way of the [Art Collection Copyright Agreement](#).

(78) Staff members who wish to reproduce or communicate online an image from the Art Collection must obtain the

approval of the head of their organisational area and also forward an email request to the Curatorial Manager for approval. A request must be submitted at least four weeks before the intended use of the image and include:

- a. the name and contact details of the requesting party;
- b. proposed form of reproduction; and
- c. details of the proposed publication in which the artwork is to be reproduced or communicated.

(79) Where requests are approved, the user must agree to the following conditions of use:

- a. the organisational area will be required to pay for the cost of a high resolution reproduction of the image;
- b. the Curatorial Manager will arrange for the photography of the selected artwork;
- c. permission to reproduce the work will be declined if copyright approval cannot be obtained;
- d. an authorised user is responsible for an image's appropriate reproduction or online communication;
- e. authorised users must make every effort to preserve the integrity of the image and must not attempt to alter it in any way;
- f. the Curatorial Manager will only give final approval for an image's use on receipt of a final, pre-publication proof of the print or on-line publication/material provided by the authorised user; and
- g. the Curatorial Manager must be notified prior to publication or communication of any proposed changes in the design, promotional intent or distribution of the publication/material that may change the agreed use of the image.

(80) The following acknowledgement must accompany the reproduced artwork:

- a. reproduced with permission from the artist and assistance from the Curatorial Manager, ACU Art Collection, Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President, Australian Catholic University; and
- b. the authorised user must lodge two copies of the print publication/material with the Curatorial Manager's office.

(81) Any images found in breach of these conditions may be recalled.

## Section 16 - Review

(82) This Policy will be regularly reviewed by the Responsible Officer and amended as required in accordance with the [Policy Development and Review Policy](#).

(83) Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.

## Section 17 - Contacts

### Responsible Officers:

- a. Curatorial Manager, ACU Art Collection
- b. Chief of Staff, Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President

## Section 18 - Definitions of Terms

Term	Definition
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Term	Definition
Accession	The process by which an acquired artwork becomes the legal property of the University and records are established to note the artwork's provenance, condition and other relevant information.
De-accession	The process of removing artworks from the Art Collection through sensitive consultation with the local community, donors and benefactors.
Cultural Gifts Program	A program that provides tax incentives to encourage gifts of culturally significant items from private collections to public art galleries, museums, libraries and archives.
Conservation	The act of professionally stabilising the condition of an artwork that may include light repair or restoration. Conservation activities that require chemical treatment and re-framing are to be undertaken externally due to ACU Health and Safety risks.

## Section 19 - Associated Information

(84) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources please refer to the Associated Information tab.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	25th January 2024
<b>Review Date</b>	30th April 2024
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor and President
<b>Approval Date</b>	25th January 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Responsible Executive</b>	Margriet Wooldridge Chief of Staff, Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President
<b>Responsible Manager</b>	Matthew Charet National Manager, Governance
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Matthew Charet National Manager, Governance <hr/> Office of the Vice-Chancellor and President