

UML/JRL - Collection Care Policy

1. Mission Statement

Our mission is to fully realise the potential of all collections of the University of Manchester Library's (UML) as a world leading research resource.

All references in this policy relate to the holdings of the UML, including those held in The John Rylands Library (JRL).

2. Core Purpose

The core purpose of the UML Collection Care department, part of the Content, Collections and Discovery (CCD) division is to enable access while prolonging the life of Library Collections and minimising the risk of damage.

3. Collection Care – Policy and Principles

This policy deals with collections held in store, in use by researchers, in exhibitions and events and on loan from the Library and encompasses the systems designed to care for them. We will aim to ensure the highest standards of Collection Care at all times.

Through Preservation practices we will:

- take measures to slow deterioration and prevent damage.
- monitor and manage the environment.
- take pragmatic measures to improve storage, display and use of the collections
- provide handling training as necessary for all collections users
- implement Integrated Pest Management (IPM) programmes as necessary

Through Conservation practices - we will:

- conserve collections through best practice
- provide and maintain documentation of all treatments
- raise awareness of Conservation and provide advice and support to colleagues, customers and other institutions
- support researchers and learning using the collections
- undertake research and publish on collection care and conservation practice

3.1 Teaching and Learning

The Collection Care team will contribute to teaching students at The University of Manchester (UoM) in collection care and conservation matters. The team will also offer training to other Heritage sector colleagues in the region.

The team will provide in-house training to Library colleagues and John Rylands Research Institute (JRRI) researchers as appropriate and will undertake educational activities for public audiences as part of the UML's Visitor Engagement programmes.

4. Collection Care Activities and Priorities

4.1 Collections Access

The Collection Care team will work with curatorial colleagues to ensure the Library collections are, and remain, accessible to all who may reasonably wish to use them. The Collection Care team will contribute to innovative collections access as part of the UML's academic and public engagement strategies and programmes.

4.2 Setting Standards

To conserve and care for our objects and collections, the Collection Care Team will demonstrate their judgement gained through training, education and experience in deciding what is reasonable and acceptable and will comply with standards of best practice within the profession. The team will also encourage best practice in the handling and use of the collections across the Library.

4.3 Staff Training and CPD

All our conservators have received specialist training and we encourage participation in the ICON accreditation scheme. Individual CPD and team training needs are reviewed annually through PDRs.

4.4 Advice and Support

Collection Care will provide advice on conservation, preservation and collection care matters to the general public. We will also provide advice and support to professional colleagues and institutions as required.

5. Preventative Conservation

Collections are safeguarded in the Libraries through the specification and management of the following systems:

5.1. Physical systems

5.1.1 Building Maintenance

As part of the University of Manchester, the long-term maintenance of The John Rylands Library, Main Library and all site Libraries is the responsibility of The UoM Directorate of Estates and Facilities.

At JRL the buildings manager is responsible for the day-to-day management, and together with the JRL facilities team oversees a programme of routine building inspection, cleaning, assessment, monitoring and maintenance.

5.1.2 Physical Security

JRL: Security procedures are in place, including motion sensors linked to Campus Security. Facilities team control access to the building, swipe card systems, keys and locking-up procedures. Access to stores and objects on display is restricted to relevant personnel. Physical security at main and site libraries and stores is managed by Campus security

5.1.3 Mechanical and electrical maintenance

Mechanical and electrical systems are maintained by the UoM Directorate of Estates and Facilities department and through service contracts.

5.1.4 Storage and display furniture, packaging and supports.

The Collection Care team works with curatorial and Visitor Engagement team colleagues in the design and construction of book cradles, supports and display housings. Exhibition furniture, cases and vitrines at JRL are managed by the Visitor Engagement team.

5.1.5 Box-making & Enclosures

The Collection Care team will construct tailor-made boxes and enclosures as required for individual collections items.

5.2 Electronic Systems

5.2.1 Environmental Systems

Heating and air-handling systems to control temperature and relative humidity are in place in the JRL in the new building stores, Reading room and conservation studio only. Maintenance of environmental control equipment is managed through University Estates, the buildings manager at the JRL and through annual service contracts.

5.2.2 Building Management Systems (BMS)

The JRL's BMS controls and monitors the JRL 2007 extension mechanical and electrical systems including heating, ventilation and RH levels. Responsibility for access and usage of the BMS lies solely with the University Estates team. The Collection Care team also monitor temperature and RH via a stand-alone Hanwell environmental monitoring system which covers both historic and modern buildings within the JRL.

5.2.3 Lighting

Exhibition cases are lit by a combination of adjustable fibre optic and LED case lighting. Galleries are lit by LED room lighting. Collection Care are responsible for setting light levels which fall on display items.

5.2.4 Fire and evacuation systems

Suitable fire and evacuation systems are in place to ensure the safekeeping of Library personnel and collections. The Special Collections Facilities team, in consultation with the University Fire Officer conducts regular reviews of the systems and procedures at the JRL.

5.2.5 Collection Management Software.

Collection Care and conservation documentation is recorded on KE-Emu, the library's Collection Management system. These include condition reports, treatments proposals, exhibition records, images and external loans.

5.3 Human systems

5.3.1 Integrated Pest Management (IPM)

Collection Care has an established programme of IPM within the JRL.

5.3.2 Housekeeping

The JRL facilities team are responsible for cleaning and housekeeping within the stores, exhibition galleries and general building both in front and back-of-house in the JRL. Additional cleaning can be arranged for all public activities, especially those involving catering and events.

The JRL and Main Library buildings have individual Food and Drink policies which stipulate designated areas where these may be consumed within the respective buildings.

5.3.3 Monitoring in Galleries and Stores

The Collection Care team are responsible for monitoring and maintaining suitable environmental conditions for collections items in storage, on display, undergoing conservation treatments and in use by researchers. The Collection Care studio is able to monitor temperature, RH and light via the Hanwell radio telemetry system.

5.3.4 Collections Maintenance

Collection Care manages a rolling programme of collection cleaning, maintenance and repairs for modern lending collections.

5.3.5 Emergency Response Plan

The UML Collections Disaster Plan is reviewed and updated annually and forms part of the wider UML Business Continuity Plan.

6. Remedial Conservation

6.1 Conservation Treatments

The Conservation of Library holdings is carried out and overseen by appropriately qualified and experienced professional staff. The Library will safeguard, as far as possible, the material integrity and significance of each collection item and will intervene to change an item by:

- 6.1.1 Ensuring the long term stability of an item via minimum intervention procedures.
- 6.1.2 Aiding interpretation of an item by partial, or full reconstruction, or by constructing a facsimile as appropriate
- 6.1.3 Enabling study or research

6.2 Documentation and Treatment Recommendations

All treatments will be justified and recorded via KE-Emu (Library Collection Management system), or by other means if appropriate and will include photographic records where necessary. Record keeping may also include storage, display, handling and environmental recommendations.

7. Operational Plan

7.1 Annual Work Programmes:

Collection Care produce an annual Operational Plan based upon strategic, divisional, and curatorial priorities, whilst being mindful of ensuring continuity to "Operational Services".

7.2 Resources:

The Collection Care department will allocate internal resources to the Operational Plan and will also seek external resources when necessary. The department will also work closely with our cultural institutional partners at Whitworth Art Gallery (WAG), Manchester Museum and Manchester Art Gallery (MAG) where possible.

8. Policy Review

This policy will be subject to ongoing review.

Jim Duff

24/08/2017