

Griffith University Art Collection Deaccession Policy

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Advisor	Angela Goddard Director, Griffith University Art Museum a.goddard@griffith.edu.au (07) 373 56102
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Description	This policy outlines the parameters for deaccessioning works from the Griffith University Art Collection.

Related documents

[Asset Disposal Application Form](#)

[Assets Policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

[Donations Received – Deductible Gift Recipient Requirements Policy](#)

[Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy](#)

[Philanthropy and Fundraising Policy](#)

[\[Purpose\]](#) [\[Definitions\]](#) [\[Scope/Coverage\]](#) [\[Policy Emphasis And Review\]](#) [\[Policy Statement\]](#) [\[Criteria for Deaccession and Disposal\]](#) [\[Authority And Process\]](#) [\[Methods of Disposal\]](#) [\[Managing Conflicts Of Interest\]](#)

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Griffith University Art Collection Deaccession Policy is to outline the parameters for deaccessioning works from the Griffith University Art Collection.

2. DEFINITIONS

Deaccession - the administrative process of de-registering or removing an object from the Griffith University Art Collection.

Acquisition - the acceptance, through gift or purchase, of an art work into the Griffith University Art Collection.

Griffith University Art Collection – the body of acquired objects acquired as exemplary visual artefacts held in title by Griffith University. This Collection is distinct from and managed differently to other works of art held elsewhere by the University.

Art Collection Management - A term encompassing all of the practices and procedures implemented by the University in acquiring, documenting, handling, accessing, exhibiting, storing, securing, lending, conserving and disposing of University Art Collection items.

Cultural Gifts Program – The Cultural Gifts Program (CGP) is an Australian Government initiative that provides an incentive to private collectors to consider donating works of art to public institutions. The University is an endorsed Deductible Gifts Recipient (DGR) for the receipt of CGP donations of works of art. Donations under the scheme **cannot** be returned to the donor under any circumstance by signed undertaking on the part of the recipient as part of the arrangement.

Museum - The Museums Australia Constitution (2013) defines a 'museum' as an institution with the following characteristics:

A museum helps people understand the world by using objects and ideas to interpret the past and present and explore the future. A museum preserves and researches collections, and makes objects and information accessible in actual and virtual environments. Museums are established in the public interest as permanent, not-for-profit organisations that contribute long-term value to communities.

3. SCOPE/COVERAGE

This policy applies to the Griffith University Art Collection. This Policy provides guidance on the items that can be considered for deaccession from the collection, details the criteria applicable in consideration of any deaccession and outlines the options and constraints pertaining to any subsequent disposals.

4. POLICY EMPHASIS AND REVIEW

Griffith University Art Collection policies are strategic planning documents and, as such, will be reviewed by the Director, Griffith Art Museum, Director, Queensland College of Art, The Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts, Education and Law) and the Vice Chancellor every four years.

5. POLICY STATEMENT

Deaccessioning works from the register of the University Art Collection and the associated asset register of the University is an administrative process focused on effective collection record control.

Assessing works for deaccession and disposal is a legitimate process in the formation and management of art collections applied to refining and improving their quality and appropriateness in keeping with organisational priorities, capacity and available resources.

The Griffith University Art Collection Deaccession Policy provides criteria against which decisions are made in respect of deaccession of cultural assets, and communicates the processes through which the Deaccession Policy is implemented.

The Policy guidelines for deaccessioning follow established industry standards, and are in accordance with the University's community responsibility to ensure that items currently in its care are disposed of in a way that their cultural value is not lost to the wider community.

The disposal of a work must only be undertaken with a full understanding of the significance of the item, its character, legal standing, and any loss of public trust that might result from such action.

No action pertaining to deaccessioning and disposal should be undertaken which would impair the integrity and good standing of the University within the profession and the community.

All proceeds gained from disposal will be used for collection development purposes.

6. CRITERIA FOR DEACCESSION AND DISPOSAL

Assessments must be applied to objects and works of art (hereafter referred to collectively as 'works') recommended for deaccessioning as for those recommended for accessioning. Works identified for deaccessioning should be assessed on the basis of the following criteria and two of the following criteria need to be met (except in the case of criteria 6.14):

- 6.1 The work is no longer regarded as falling within the Griffith University Art Collection Acquisition Policy.
- 6.2 The work would be more appropriately housed by another institution or collection (e.g. relating to the historical record function of the Griffith Archive).
- 6.3 The work is a duplicate. This may apply literally, in the case of posters, or within an edition of prints. More broadly speaking, a work may be considered a duplicate in the sense that the University Art Collection may already contain very similar works from the same period and subject in an artist's oeuvre.
- 6.4 The work is of poor quality, either intrinsically or relatively, in comparison with other works of the same type in the University Art Collection.
- 6.5 The work requires extensive conservation to enable its exhibition/display, the cost of which is disproportionate to its significance; and/or a work which is so costly to store and care for that the expense of its long-term retention is disproportionate to its significance.
- 6.6 The condition of the work is so poor that restoration is impossible or will render the work essentially inauthentic.
- 6.7 The work lacks any supporting documentation to enable its proper identification or to establish its relevance to the University Art Collection.
- 6.8 The University's possession of the work is not legitimate, i.e. the work may have been stolen or illegally exported or imported.
- 6.9 The work is subject to claim as a sacred object.
- 6.10 The authenticity or attribution of the work is determined to be false or fraudulent.
- 6.11 The work lacks sufficient aesthetic, art historical or cultural significance, institutional resonance or financial value to warrant retention.
- 6.12 An appropriate level of care is unable to be provided for the work.
- 6.13 The work poses unacceptable risk to staff or visitors or to other works.
- 6.14 The work has been unaccounted for a significant period and can be deemed missing.

7. AUTHORITY AND PROCESS

- 7.1 Authority for the deaccession and subsequent treatment of works of art from the University Art Collection derives from the University via the Vice Chancellor through the AEL Group Executive Committee on advice initiated by the Director, Griffith University Art Museum.
- 7.2 The Director, Griffith University Art Museum, shall exercise care to assure that the recommendations are informed by authoritative expertise and external reference if required.

- 7.3 Griffith University will observe all legal, cultural or related issues in relation to disposal. It will be incumbent upon the University to identify any conditions attached to donated items. The University is obliged to honour such conditions of donation, or to seek variation with donors.
- 7.4 The process of deaccessioning and disposal is initiated by a report outlining the context and rationale for the removal of the work from the University Art Collection against the criteria outlined in Section 6. A condition report, photography and a current valuation of the work will also be provided. The Director, Griffith University Art Museum will, after appropriate review of facts and circumstances, present the request to the Director, QCA, for appropriate consideration of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts, Education and Law). Following ratification, the University Art Museum will work with the Chief Financial Officer through the disposal process. The Director, Griffith University Art Museum is responsible for completing an Asset Disposal Application Form.
- 7.5 The subsequent disposal of an object can include transfer gift, exchange, return to original donor, artist or estate, sale, and destruction.
- 7.6 Only the artist (or estate/family), public or non-profit institutions or, in the case of a donation (**but not an Australian Government Cultural Gifts Program Donation**), the donor, may receive the gift of a deaccessioned work.
- 7.7 In terms of due process:
- 7.7.1 Deaccessioning and disposal must comply with all applicable local, state and federal laws, and must observe any terms and obligations which pertained to the acquisition of the work of art by the University.
- 7.7.2 All items for deaccession will be considered and approved as per 7.4 above. Deaccessioning will require the final approval of the Pro Vice Chancellor (Arts, Education and Law), on the recommendation of the Director, Griffith University Art Museum.
- 7.7.3 Items being considered for transfer to the Griffith Archive should be advised to the Griffith Archive for consideration in terms of the implications of transfer in relation to ongoing display, storage, conservation management and care.
- 7.7.4 Once an object has been identified for deaccession, removal /disposal of works will be approached with extreme caution, and there will be a minimum delay and review period of twelve months (taken from the date of QCA Director's written approval) as part of the procedures for disposal. This period allows time for different members of the AEL Group Executive Committee to continually assess and discuss an object's potential value, in relation to factors such as its relevance to the institution's history or other local cultural significance and for allowance that an object identified for deaccession may be recalled and reaffirmed into the University Art Collection.
- 7.7.5 Griffith University Art Museum may seek University approval to accelerate the disposal of a work in certain cases: if the work presents an immediate physical threat to the University Art Collection, or if it requires urgent attention such that it unreasonably drains resources needed for the care of the rest of the University Art Collection.
- 7.7.6 In the case of gifts and bequests every reasonable effort must be made to locate the donor, surviving family of the donor or the appropriate trustee or executors of estates, whichever is applicable, with a view to notification of the deaccession process. Where possible and relevant, the name of the donor from whom (or the fund from which) the work of art was originally acquired will be credited with new acquisitions or funds acquired via deaccessioning.
- 7.7.7 Consideration must be given to the implications of selling a work given to the University under any pecuniary benefit scheme, tax law or potential conflict of interest.
- 7.7.8 Works of art donated under the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program can be transferred to other University elements, gifted to another institution, sold or destroyed, but under no circumstance returned to the original donor of the work under the Government's scheme.

- 7.7.9 A deaccessioned work must not be sold or otherwise transferred to staff (or their relatives or friends), or those in association such as interns, volunteers, contractors etc., who may gain an advantage in the subsequent disposal of a work, and the same shall not be permitted to acquire directly or indirectly a work deaccessioned by the University, or otherwise benefit from its sale or trade, unless as approved in individual cases by the Vice President (Corporate Services).
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8. METHODS OF DISPOSAL

- 8.1 The following may be taken into account in selecting a method of disposal. Preferred methods of disposal are in order of preference:
- 8.1.1 Gift or transfer, to only the artist (or estate/family), other Griffith University entities, public or non-profit institutions or, in the case of a donation (excluding donations Under the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program), the donor may receive the gift of a deaccessioned work.
 - 8.1.2 Sale through publicly advertised auction; private treaty sale to, or exchange with another public institution; or sale through a reputable, established dealer. Every effort should be taken to identify and evaluate the various advantages and yields available through different means of disposal.
 - 8.1.3 Destruction of a work will be considered only if the work is dangerous, has deteriorated beyond repair, or has not been disposed of within a period of 12 months following reasonable attempts at sale, transfer or otherwise.
 - 8.1.4 Donors of objects presented to the University as official gifts, and subsequently accessioned into the University Art Collection, will not necessarily be notified of proposed deaccessioning. Such objects will not be disposed of via sale.
 - 8.1.5 Full records should be kept of all decisions regarding deaccessioning from the University Art Collection and the objects involved, and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the object concerned, including photographic records.
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9. MANAGING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Where there is a conflict of interest, perceived or declared, in the offering and acceptance of a gift, the issue shall be referred to the AEL Group Executive Committee for final consideration. For further information regarding conflicts of interest see the Griffith University Conflict of Interest Policy.
