



# ARTWORK AND CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL COLLECTIONS DEACCESSION POLICY

D4-03

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**Policy Owner:** Director Community, Planning & Environment

**Category:** Operational

**Direction:** 4. Our Social Vitality

## 1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 To maintain a relevant collection that reflects the values of North Sydney Council's *Artworks Acquisition Policy*, *Public Art Policy* and *Historical Services Collection Management Policy*.
- 1.2 To provide adequate storage space for collection items within allocated budget.
- 1.3 To frequently review and consolidate Council collections.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY

An artwork or object in the collections may be considered for deaccession if it meets one or more of the following eligibility criteria:

- 2.1 Irrelevance to Collection - if an item does not meet the criteria specified in Council's *Artworks Acquisition Policy*, *Public Art Policy* and *Historical Services Collection Management Policy*. This includes cases where the *Historical Services Collection Management Policy* has been refined or altered and an item is subsequently considered to be irrelevant to the collection.
- 2.2 Provenance - if there is no clear documentation indicating the ownership or use of an item, the research and display potential of that item may be negligible rendering the object irrelevant to the collection.
- 2.3 Contested Ownership - in instances where there is no documentation transferring ownership to Council, the original owner may hold legal title and reclaim the object.
- 2.4 Maintenance and Conservation - if an item requires maintenance that is costly comparative to the monetary, aesthetic, or historic value it provides. This may include the poor and/or deteriorating condition of an item, or the inability of Council to store an item appropriately to ensure its future preservation.

- 2.5 Health and Safety - if an item presents a physical threat to the public's health and safety.
- 2.6 Duplication - if an artwork duplicates another work or is considered to have inferior production, display or research values to a similar work in the collection.
- 2.7 Rightful Owners - if the item should be returned to the group from which it came from, inclusive of Aboriginal, Torres Strait or other Community Groups.

### **3. DEFINITIONS**

- 3.1 Deaccession - the formal process of removal of a current item from the collection register, catalogue or database.
- 3.2 Disposal - the physical removal of an item from the organisation after it has been deaccessioned.

### **4. PROVISIONS**

#### **4.1 Deaccession Process**

- a) identify item/s for deaccession - a significance assessment of the item is completed, to report on the cultural and historic significance, and the condition and conservation requirements, of the item. The *Deaccession Form* is filled out.
- b) identify conditions of original acquisition - method of original acquisition should be verified for each item. If an item was bequeathed or donated, its legal restrictions should be observed. If there are no legal restrictions, then all effort should be made to contact the donor or representative/s to notify of deaccession proposal. If the donor is unknown, the intention of Council to deaccession the item should be made public, to allow the donor or donor's relatives to come forward. This is at minimal by public notice on Council's website and where applicable, a relevant national-reach publication.
- c) deaccession form approved - the *Deaccession Form* is presented to Historical Services Team, Arts and Culture Team and the Council for approval.
- d) cooling off period - the approval must be noted in a Council Report and presented at the immediately following Council Meeting.
- e) disposal - item is disposed after four weeks of the Council Meeting date, at which deaccession was presented, provided that no further information has come to light during the cooling off period which may affect the decision, particularly regarding legal title or historical significance.

- f) update collections database and enter item onto the *Deaccession Register* to be performed by Historical Services Team.

#### 4.2 Methods of Disposal

- 4.2.1 **Return to Donor** - if the original acquisition agreement requests item be returned to donor or representative, this must be followed.

- 4.2.2 **Transfer** - permitted only to a non-profit organisation.

- 4.2.3 **Exchange** - with an organisation, registered collector or tax registered artist. Organisations include museums, galleries, or other local and state bodies. Exchange details must be noted on the *Deaccession Form*.

- 4.2.4 **Outright Sale** - permitted in the form of public auction. Auction details must be noted in the *Deaccession Form*. Council staff and volunteers are not permitted to participate in the auction of deaccessioned items. All funds are subsequently transferred into the acquisition or conservation budget for Council collections.

- 4.2.5 **Destruction** - if the item presents health or safety threat, the item may be destroyed through approved disposal and waste professionals.

#### 4.3 Special Conditions

- 4.3.1 Items which have conditions attached must be returned to rightful owner or remain in Council's collection for the agreed minimum period.

- 4.3.2 Items that require special heritage conservation or are affected by legislation must not be removed from collection, unless requested by legislative body.

### 5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

Deaccession must be approved by a minimum of three representatives from the following sections and/or an external representative as relevant.

- 5.3 Arts and Culture Team - responsible for review and consolidation of artwork collection in line with Council's Artwork Acquisition Policy. Signatories include the Team Leader Arts and Culture, Arts and Culture Coordinator and/or Arts and Culture Officer. Once approved by Arts and Culture Team, the Deaccession Form is presented to the Historical Services Team for approval.

- 5.4 Historical Services Team - responsible for review and consolidation of historical collection items in line with Council's Local Studies Collection Development

Policy. Signatories include Council’s Historian, Historical Services Curator and/or Historical Services Librarian. Once approved by Historical Services Team, the *Deaccession Form* is presented to the Director Community and Library Services for approval.

5.5 Director Community, Planning & Environment - approval prior to report to Council.

5.6 Aboriginal Heritage Office (where relevant) - items of indigenous cultural heritage are referred to the Aboriginal Heritage Office for recommended method of disposal.

## **6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION**

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council policies and documents:

- Artworks Acquisition Policy
- Deaccession Register
- Historical Services Collection Management Policy
- Public Art Policy

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Approved by</b>	<b>Resolution No.</b>	<b>Review Date</b>
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