

COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Revision	Revision Date	Owner	Reference	Comment
00 - New	September 2015	Registrar	COL-POL-029-00	New policy to meet legal and ethical standards, and to respond to changes in corporate policy
01	November 2016	Registrar	COL-POL-029-00	Amendments following Collections colleagues' comments

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1. Mission and aims

In 2014 the Royal Armouries re-expressed its purpose and vision.

The **PURPOSE** of the Royal Armouries is:

To excite and educate the public about arms and armour and their impact on the people, history and cultures of Britain and the world from ancient times to the present day.

Our **VISION** is that the Royal Armouries will enjoy:

Public and professional recognition as one of the world's greatest collections of arms and armour, enjoyed and studied by increasing numbers, and as the leader in this field in research, curation, and public engagement.

Stemming from our purpose and vision are the Museum's key corporate collections management aims listed in our Corporate Plan 2014-2019:

- a. Conserve and Manage the Collection
To conserve and manage the collection and archives in an exemplary manner.
- b. Enhance the Collection
To add to and enhance the collection, archives and displays through acquisition, loans and conservation.
- c. Research and Dissemination
To extend and facilitate the understanding of the Royal Armouries' collections, of arms and armour in general, their impact on the world's peoples, history and culture, and of the history of the Tower of London and its institutions.
- d. Display and Interpret the Collection
To display, present and interpret the collection, physically and digitally, using its special strengths and nature to enthral, engage and inform the public.
- e. Status, Perception and Recognition
To strive for recognition as a major cultural institution and enhance our profile as an international leader in conservation, study and display of arms and armour.

2. Statement of Authority

The Museum is subject to numerous laws, codes of ethics and standards which we expect to meet for the purpose of retaining public respect, our reputation, meeting statutory obligations and making sure we preserve the national collection of arms and armour:

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a. The National Heritage Act 1983 (and subsequent amendments)

The National Heritage Act 1983 (as amended by the Museums & Galleries Act 1992) requires the Board of Trustees of the Royal Armouries to maintain and exhibit a national collection of arms, armour and associated objects, and to maintain a record relating to arms and armour and to the Tower of London. The Act requires the Royal Armouries to care for, preserve and add objects to the collections, as well as to exhibit them to the public, make them available for study and research, and generally promote the public's enjoyment and understanding of arms and armour.

b. Accreditation

The Museum applied and was accepted for full Accreditation via Arts Council England.

Accreditation is a minimum standards scheme and addresses a number of fundamental questions that the public and funding authorities are right and required to ask of museums. By registering in this scheme, the Museum affirms its commitment to the adoption of these agreed standards and to increasing cooperation and sharing of experience between museums. The Museum expects to participate in the further phases of the scheme.

c. Legal frameworks

- i. Firearms Act 1968 (and subsequent amendments)
- ii. Convention on the Means of prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export, and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, UNESCO 1970
- iii. Sale of Goods Act 1979 (and subsequent amendments)
- iv. Limitations Act 1980 (and subsequent amendments)
- v. Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (and subsequent amendments)
- vi. Disability Act 1995
- vii. Treasure Act 1996 (and subsequent amendments)
- viii. CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species)
- ix. Data Protection Act 1998 (and subsequent amendments)
- x. Freedom of Information Act 2000 (and subsequent amendments)
- xi. Control of Substances Hazardous to Health 2002
- xii. Iraqi Cultural Property Law 2002 (and subsequent amendments)
- xiii. Dealing in Cultural Goods Offences Act 2003 (and subsequent amendments)

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d. Ethical frameworks

- i. Combating Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on Collecting and Borrowing Cultural Material (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2005)
- ii. ICOM (International Council of Museums) Code of Ethics
- iii. MA (Museums Association) Code of Ethics
- iv. SPECTRUM: Documentation Standard
- v. Royal Armouries Ethics Policy

3. Expertise

- a. Knowledge of the collection is essential for their effective and efficient management and development.
- b. Collections staff at all levels have an unrivalled opportunity to study objects in their care and to develop knowledge not easily acquired by non-Museum staff. Staff accordingly have a duty, as part of their job, to acquire knowledge of objects in the collection, their care, conservation and management, and the whole field to which the objects relate, and to ensure that their accumulated knowledge is retained by the Museum as far as reasonably practicable.
- c. It is essential that all collections staff develop the museological skills necessary to handle, inspect, display and store the classes of object within our collection.
- d. The requirements for security and risk must be thoroughly understood, while striking the appropriate balance with the public's right of access.
- e. Staff are required to have and develop knowledge of information retrieval, documentation, collections management systems and related technologies, which are increasingly necessary for the efficient management of collections. Office skills such as the use of databases are essential.
- f. It is essential that collections staff develop expert knowledge and are able to provide advice to outside bodies:
 - i. The Museum's collections and its network of day-to-day working relationships are international in scope and an awareness of various cultures, languages and sensitivities is key.
 - ii. Designated staff are appointed as Expert Advisers to the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and are members of the Advisory Council of the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art.

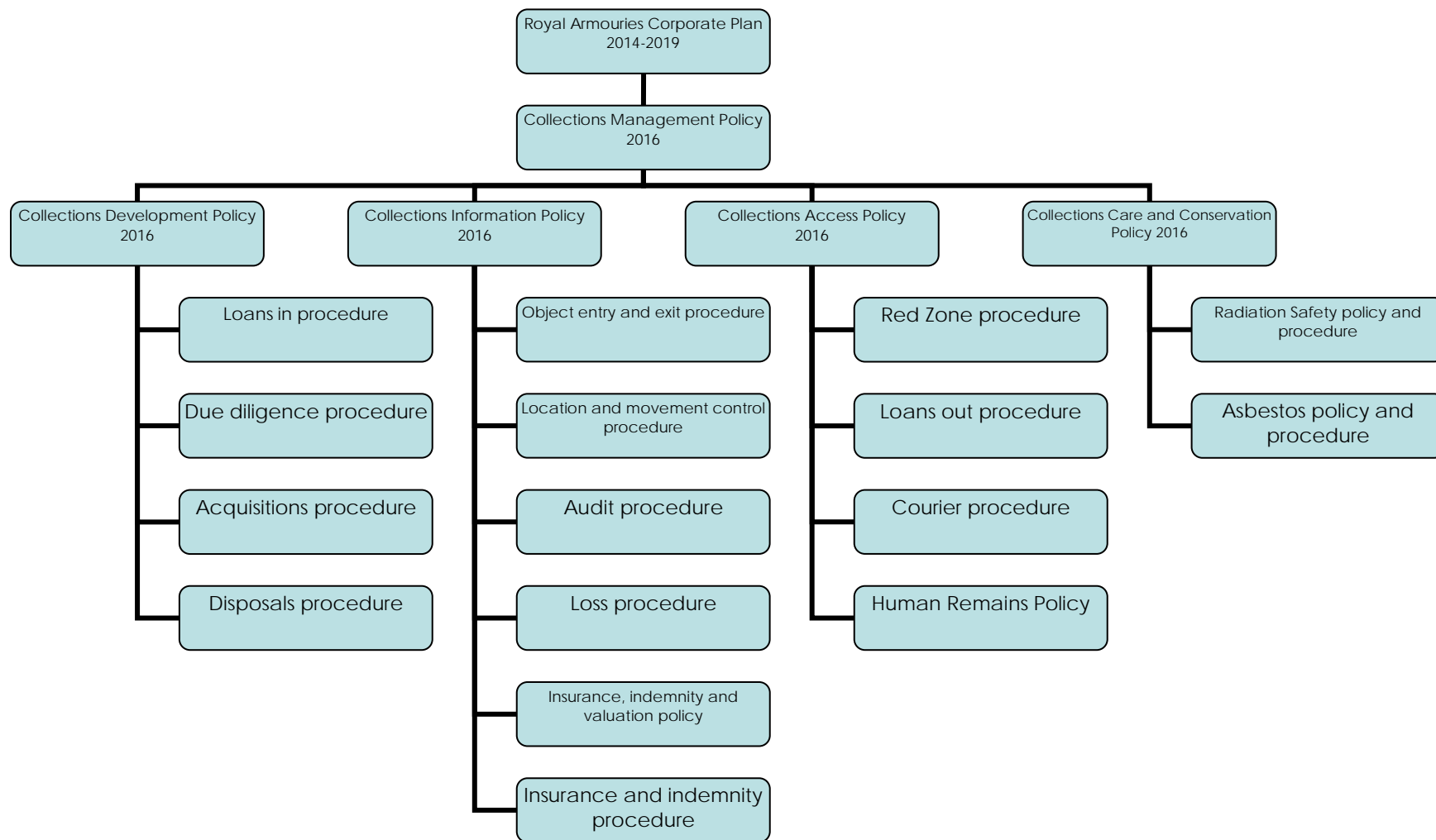
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- iii. Collections staff are required to provide an information service to the public and professionals throughout the country.

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4. Holistic and Integrated Policy Framework

In order to meet our corporate aims, statutory obligations and relevant sector standards, the Royal Armouries has built the following policies and procedures into collections work:



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5. Audit and Review

This document will be reviewed annually and updates in corporate policy, plan, legislation and international conventions will be amended or added where relevant.

This document will be reviewed by the Registrar and approved by the Head of Collections and the Director-General and Master of the Armouries.

6. Risk Management

The associated risk of non-compliance with this policy is:

Impact of non-compliance: High
Likelihood of non-compliance: Low

7. Effective date

This policy is effective from the date of signing.

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Director General & Master of the Armouries

Date.....

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