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ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM OF ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

COLLECTIONS POLICY

Governing body: The Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

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1 Introduction, General Statement of Museum Purpose and Scope of Collections

The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology is the oldest public museum in Britain. Founded in 1683, it holds collections of national and international importance comprising collections of the visual arts and archaeology of Europe, Asia and North Africa and world numismatics, and also including the 17th-century founding collections and the collections formerly part of the University Galleries.

The Ashmolean is a department of the University of Oxford, which owns the collections and employs the museum staff. The entire holdings are designated as being of national importance by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA, now ACE), the Museum last received full Accreditation in 2010. Extensive parts of the collections have been redisplayed in the new building by Rick Mather Associates, opened in 2009, which complements C.R. Cockerell's University Galleries building of 1845.

As a world-class museum and cultural destination the Ashmolean Museum is committed to broaden its reach, welcome everyone and offer experiences which are innovative, inspiring and relevant. The Museum will preserve, enhance and share its collections and knowledge to promote research, learning and enjoyment, to enrich lives and expand our understanding of the world and our shared humanity. The Museum operates with a strategic plan which is reviewed annually.

The Museum seeks to acquire, by bequest, gift, purchase, or exchange, objects which relate to and enhance these collections and support its mission, within the constraints imposed by considerations of long-term collections care. The Museum will ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using Spectrum primary procedures for collections management as described in section 5 of the Documentation Policy.

All acquisitions and disposals will be in accordance with University of Oxford policies, national guidelines and international conventions on the transfer of ownership of cultural property. The Board of Visitors will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency. The creation of a dedicated Digital Collections team has allowed for a boost in documentation and the publication of Collections Online onto the museum's website.

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

2 Description and Evaluation of the Collection

2.1 Department of Antiquities

The collections of the Department of Antiquities (approximately 400,000 items) cover almost the entire span of human history from the Lower Palaeolithic to the Victorian era. They incorporate the surviving parts of the Museum's earliest collections, notably the founding collections of the Tradescants, which were given to the University by Elias Ashmole in 1683.

They also include a wide-ranging and comprehensive representation of the early cultures of Europe, Egypt and the Near East, which owes much to the Museum's long association with the field of archaeology.

The majority of the Museum's founding collections and records from the original Ashmolean Museum, founded in 1683, are cared-for by the Department of Antiquities. The surviving parts of the founder's 17th-century collections are documented in A.G. MacGregor (ed.), *Tradescant's Rarities: Essays on the Foundation of the Ashmolean Museum* 1683 (Oxford, 1983). The manuscript catalogues of the early Museum were published by Dr MacGregor in 2000 and 2006.

The European Prehistory collection is one of the finest and most comprehensive in the country, particularly with reference to the antiquities of northern Europe. At its heart is the personal collection of Sir John Evans (1823-1908), one of the great pioneers of prehistoric archaeology. This material was used by him as the basis for his influential studies, *Ancient Stone Implements of Great Britain* (London, 1897) and *Ancient Bronze Implements of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1881), still regularly consulted by scholars. A small collection illustrates Italian prehistory.

The Early Medieval collections from Britain and Europe are especially significant, and the collection of European Migration Period metalwork is exceptional: [E.T. Leeds and D.B. Harden, *The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Abingdon, Berks* (Oxford, 1936); A.G. MacGregor and E. Bolick, *Ashmolean Museum: A Summary Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon Collections* (Non-Ferrous Metals) (Oxford, 1993); A.G. MacGregor, *Ashmolean Museum: A Summary Catalogue of the Continental Archaeological Collections* (Roman Iron Age, Migration Period, Early Medieval) (1997); D. Hinton*, A Catalogue of the Anglo-Saxon Ornamental Metalwork in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1974)]. The Alfred Jewel, a masterpiece of late Anglo-Saxon goldsmith's work has been described as the only Crown Jewel outside the Tower of London. The Medieval collections, especially pottery, are among the most comprehensive outside the national museums.

The British archaeological collections at the Ashmolean Museum are central to the history of antiquarianism and archaeology in Britain. Their nucleus is also of national significance, and includes material resulting from pioneering work carried out in the Thames Valley under the auspices of the Museum up to the 1960s.

The Aegean Prehistory collection is world famous and contains one of the richest collections of Cycladic Bronze Age material documented by E. S. Sherratt, *Catalogue of the Cycladic Antiquities in the Ashmolean Museum*, (Oxford, 2000), and the best collection of Minoan (Cretan) antiquities outside Greece. This is largely due to gifts made by Sir Arthur Evans, excavator of the Palace of Minos at Knossos, who virtually refounded the Ashmolean in 1894 as Keeper, and after his retirement in 1908 continued to encourage the collection with outstanding generosity, finally bequeathing a fund specially for its support. Much of the material was published in Evans' *Palace of Minos* (1921-1935), supplemented by V.E.G.

Kenna, *Cretan Seals with a Catalogue of the Minoan Gems in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1960) and J. Boardman, *The Cretan Collection in Oxford* (Oxford, 1961). A major strength of the Aegean collections is the relatively high percentage of provenanced material and the presence of the Arthur Evans Archive.

For about a century (c. 1885-1985) the University subscribed to British excavations in Egypt and the Near East, with the result that it has the finest collection in the United Kingdom of antiquities (including inscriptions) from those regions outside the British Museum. These are particularly strong in their representation of objects of everyday use illustrating thousands of years of cultural development. Such material comes from early Mesopotamian sites such as Kish [P.R.S. Moorey, *Kish Excavations, 1923-1933* (Oxford, 1978)] Ur, Nimrud [Sir Max *Mallowan's excavations: Nimrud and its Remains* (London, 1966); *The Nimrud Ivories* [London, 1978)], Nineveh and Deve Hüyük [P.R.S. Moorey, *Cemeteries of the First Millennium BC at Deve Hüyük, near Carcemish, salvaged by T.E. Lawrence and C.L. Woolley in 1913* (Oxford, 1980)], in Iraq, from Atchana and Al Mina in Syria and Turkey [Sir Leonard Woolley's excavations: Alalakh. *An Account of the Excavations at Tell Atchana* (Oxford, 1955)], and from sites in Palestine and other parts of the Levant, notably Jericho [Dame Kathleen Kenyon: *Excavations at Jericho* (London, 1960-1983)]. In addition, there are many "Luristan" bronzes [published by P.R.S. Moorey, *Catalogue of the Ancient Persian Bronzes in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1971)], cylinder and stamp seals [published by B. Buchanan and P.R.S. Moorey, *Catalogue of the Ancient Near Eastern Seals in the Ashmolean Museum I-III* (Oxford, 1966-1988)]. The Cypriot collection contains important tomb-groups.

The Egyptian collections of the Ashmolean are amongst the most extensive in Britain, and they represent every period of Egyptian civilization from prehistory to the 7th century AD. Predynastic Egypt is a notable strength. The Nubian collection is also worthy of note. Much of the Egyptian material was published by Sir Flinders Petrie in reports of the Egypt Exploration Society. The outstanding prehistoric material is published in J.C. Payne's *Catalogue of the Predynastic Egyptian Collection in the Ashmolean* (Oxford, 1993; new edition 2000). The Department also houses extensive collections of papyri, ostraca, wooden labels and writing boards, including the Bodleian Library's ostraca collections.

The Museum's collection of Classical Greek and Roman sculpture and inscriptions is the earliest in Britain, and was largely formed in the 17th century by Thomas Howard, Earl of Arundel (the "Arundel Marbles"). It is central to the study of the classical tradition in art and architecture in these islands. The collection of Greek painted pottery is important and substantial (thanks to the efforts of Percy Gardner, Sir Arthur Evans and Sir John Beazley [P. Gardner, *Catalogue of the Greek Vases in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1893) and *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Oxford 1-3* (1927-1975)], but there are significant objects of many other kinds: bronzes, terracottas, gems [J. Boardman and M.-L. Vollenweider, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems and Finger Rings 1: Greek and Etruscan* (Oxford, 1978)], and fibulae. There are important grave-groups from Thrace and the Crimea [M. Vickers, *Scythian and Thracian Antiquities in Oxford* [Oxford, 2000)]. The Arundel inscriptions were presented to the University in 1667, and Greek and Roman sculpture from the Arundel collection followed in

1755 [published by R. Chandler, *Marmora Oxoniensia* (Oxford, 1763)]. The Italic and Etruscan collection, though small, provides a representative overview of the antiquities of Iron Age Italy. The Roman collection is notable for rich type-series of gems, brooches, lamps, pottery [A.C. Brown, *Catalogue of Italian Terra Sigillata in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1968)] and glass, and for its pewter and ironwork. Excavated material comes from local sites such as the villa at Shakenoak [A.C.C. Brodribb, A.R. Hands and D.R. Walker, *Excavations at Shakenoak Farm, near Wilcote, Oxfordshire* (Oxford, 1971)], the Romano-Celtic shrine at Water Eaton and elsewhere.

The Department also holds important archival and documentary material. Most notable are the Sir John and Sir Arthur Evans Archives (European Prehistory and Aegean archaeology respectively), the Allen air photographs of British archaeological sites, the Kish (Iraq) excavation archives, and archives relevant to local archaeology for a century and a half.

2.2 Department of Western Art

The Department of Western Art (approximately 370, 000 items) holds collections of paintings, drawings, prints, sculpture, decorative arts, tapestries and musical instruments from the Middle Ages to the present day, incorporating numerous individual collections of high specialist importance.

The wide-ranging collection of European old master drawings and prints, based on the Douce Bequest of 1834 and the purchase by public subscription in 1842 of the near-incomparable collection of drawings by Raphael and Michelangelo made by Sir Thomas Lawrence, is one of the finest assemblages in the world and, among UK museums, second only to the holdings of the British Museum. [*Catalogues of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean*: K.T. Parker, *Vol. I. Netherlandish, German, French and Spanish Schools* (Oxford, 1938); K.T. Parker, *Vol. II. Italian Schools, 2 vols*. (Oxford, 1956); H. Macandrew, *Vol. III. Italian Schools: Supplement* (Oxford, 1980); D.B. Brown, Vol. IV. *17th & 18th Century English Drawings* (Oxford, 1982); C. Bailey, *Vol. V. Nineteenth Century German Drawings* (Oxford, 1987); J. Whiteley, *Vol. VI. French Ornament Drawings of the Sixteenth century* (Oxford, 1994); J Whiteley, *Vol. VII, French School*, (2001)]. Among English drawings, those by J.M.W. Turner, Samuel Palmer, John Ruskin, and the Pre- Raphaelites are of spectacular quality [L. Herrmann*, Ruskin and Turner … in the Ashmolean Museum* (London, 1968); R. Hewison, *Ruskin and Oxford: the Art of Education (*Oxford, 1996)]. A particular strength is the work of Camille Pissarro and his family (based on the Pissarro Family Gift of 1950) [R. Brettell and C. Lloyd*, Catalogue of Drawings by Camille Pissarro in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford,1980)]. Current research is focusing on Old Master drawings from the Italian and the Dutch and Flemish Schools.

The paintings comprise one of the principal collections in England outside the National Museums [*The Ashmolean Museum: Complete Illustrated Catalogue of Paintings* (Oxford, 2004)].They are particularly rich for Renaissance Italy [C. Lloyd, *A Catalogue of the Earlier Italian Paintings in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1977)], European Baroque [C. Whistler, *Baroque and Later Paintings in the Ashmolean Museum* (London, 2016)], for England in the 18th and 19th centuries, and for 17th- century Holland and Flanders [C. White, *Catalogue of the Dutch, Flemish and German Paintings in the Ashmolean Museum*, 1999], notably the Daisy Linda Ward collection of still-life paintings [F.G. Meijer, *Dutch and Flemish Still-life Pictures bequeathed by Daisy Linda Ward* (Oxford/Zwolle, 2003)]. Oxford had a key role in the formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which is reflected in some much-loved key works by the protagonists, especially from the Combe Bequest of 1894. The holdings of English art of the early 20th century are especially representative for the Camden Town School, thanks mainly to the Bevan Gift (1957) and Sands Gift (2001). The collection of Russian art of the late 19th and early 20th centuries is also important [L. Salmina-Haskell, *Russian Paintings and Drawings* (Oxford, 1990)]. A new catalogue of the French paintings is currently being compiled by Jon Whiteley. The modern paintings and drawings form (especially drawings) an active collecting area. The collection of British 20th-century printmaking in traditional black-and-white modes, particularly wood-engraving, is in some respects more comprehensive even than the collection in the British Museum and has been much enriched in recent years. A small collection of avant-garde prints from German-speaking countries has been assembled in the last decade.

The Museum's holdings of other European arts are nationally pre-eminent or internationally important in several specific areas. The European sculpture has been described as the most important collection in Britain outside the V&A [N. Penny, *Catalogue of European Sculpture in the Ashmolean Museum, 1540 to the Present Day, 3 vols*. (Oxford, 1992); J. Warren, *Medieval and Renaissance Sculpture. A Catalogue of the Ashmolean Museum collection, 3 vols*, 2014]. C.D.E. Fortnum's collections of Italian Renaissance bronzes and maiolica [T. Wilson, *Italian Maiolica and Europe* (Oxford, 2018)], and of rings, are each of world importance in their fields. The English domestic silver of the 17th and 18th centuries, based on the Farrer Bequest of 1946, rivals even the great national collection at the V&A [T. Schroder, *Catalogue of British and Continental Gold and Silver in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford, 2009]. The Marshall Collection is the most comprehensive assemblage of early Worcester porcelain anywhere [R. Sword, *The Marshall Collection of Worcester Porcelain in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 2017)]. The Hill Collection is one of the most select collections in existence of European stringed instruments in near-original condition from the 16th to the 18th centuries [J. Milnes (ed.), *Musical Instruments in the Ashmolean Museum*, 2011]. Other notable specialist holdings include watches from the 16th to the 19th centuries, portrait miniatures, English Delftware [A. Ray, *English Delftware Pottery in the Robert Hall Warren Collection in the Ashmolean Museum* (London, 1968)], *English 17th-century textiles, and English 18th-century glass and pottery*. Selective collections of 20th- and 21st-century British studio pottery and silver have been developed since about 2000.

Among nationally important archive material held in the Department are the extensive holdings of correspondence of members of the Pissarro family and papers belonging to two crucial Victorian scholar-collectors of sculpture and the applied arts, C.D.E. Fortnum and J.C. Robinson.

2.3 Department of Eastern Art

The Department of Eastern Art (approximately 55,000 items including potsherds and long-term loans) holds the University's collections of the art and archaeology of the Islamic world, of the Indian subcontinent, Central Asia, the Himalayan region and Southeast Asia, and of China, Japan and Korea. More ethnographic objects from these regions are primarily housed in the Pitt Rivers Museum. The collections are of international importance and in almost all cases the most extensive and important of their kind in this country outside London, surpassed only by those of the British Museum and Victoria & Albert Museum. Since the opening of the Department in 1963 the collections have continued to expand greatly, both through purchases and the generosity of several benefactors.

The Islamic collection is especially important for its ceramics, which span the period from the 8th to the 20th century, and an area stretching from Spain in the west to Afghanistan and Uzbekistan in the east. These mostly come from two gifts, that of Gerald Reitlinger [G. Reitlinger, *Eastern Ceramics and other works of Art from the collections of Gerald Reitlinger* (Oxford, 1981)] and of Sir Alan Barlow [G. Fehervari, *Islamic Pottery: A comprehensive study based on the Barlow Collection* (London, 1973); J.W. Allan, *Medieval Middle Eastern Pottery* (Oxford, 1971)]. The collection is also notable for its seals and talismans [L. Kalus, *Catalogue of the Islamic Seals and Talismans in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1986)], and medieval Egyptian embroideries from the Newberry Collection [Marianne Ellis, *Embroideries and Samplers from Islamic Egypt* (Oxford, 2001)]. The Department also holds complementary collections of Islamic metalwork; glass, including a splendid early 14th century Egyptian mosque lamp; works on paper and illuminated codices, comprising Qur'anic material and illustrated literature; textiles, including a small selection of 18th-20th century carpets and saddle bags; and ivory, including a royal Cordovan piece dated 998-999 AD.

The Indian collection comprises representative holdings of the main phases of Indian art from the Indus Valley civilization (c.2500-1800 BC) to the period of British rule. It is particularly rich in Hindu, Buddhist and Jain sculpture in stone, bronze, terracotta and other materials [Naman Ahuja, *Art and Archaeology of Ancient India: Earliest Times to the Sixth Century* (Oxford, 2018); David Jongeward, *Buddhist Art of Gandhara in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 2019)]. Among the more famous examples are the terracotta goddess from Tamluk (c.200 BC), acquired in the 1880s and known as "the Oxford plaque", and the Pala stone image of Vishnu (11th century) given to the Ashmolean by Sir William Hedges in 1686, three years after the foundation. There is also a substantial collection of paintings and decorative arts of the Mughal period (1526-1858). A selection of objects was published in J.C. Harle and A.Topsfield, *Indian art in the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 1987). Paintings of the Mughal period are published in A. Topsfield, *Indian paintings from Oxford collections* (Oxford, 1994). The Department also has an important collection of Tibetan and Nepalese art including a number of early (pre-1400) examples [A. Heller, *Early Himalayan Art,* (2008)], and substantial collections from Central Asia and Southeast Asia. The Newberry Collection of Indian textile fragments found at Fustat in Egypt is the most important of its kind [R. Barnes, *Indian block-printed textiles in Egypt: The Newberry Collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford* (Oxford, 1997)].

The Chinese collection represents the art and archaeology of China from the neolithic period to the present day. The early bronzes, jades and ceramics were mostly donated by Sir Herbert Ingram in 1956 and form the nucleus of the Chinese holdings. The ceramic collection is particularly strong, with the greenwares of the 3rd-11th centuries comprising the largest and most important collection of these wares outside China [M. Tregear, *Catalogue of Chinese Greenware in the Ashmolean Museum Oxford* (Oxford, 1976)]. The holdings of later porcelain are extensive, including a significant collection of 17th century wares mostly bequeathed by Gerald Reitlinger, and these are complemented by collections of later metalwork and decorative arts. The highly important Barlow Collection of Chinese ceramics has also recently been transferred on long-term loan to the Museum. The collection of later Chinese painting is very strong, following a series of major donations from 1995 onwards [S. Vainker, *Modern Chinese Paintings: The Reyes Collection in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford* (Oxford, 1996)]. Now Europe's foremost collection of modern Chinese painting, it is displayed in the purpose-built Chinese Paintings Gallery named after Michael and Khoan Sullivan, whose own distinguished collection of Chinese paintings has recently been bequeathed to the Museum.

The Japanese collection includes the only serious holding of Japanese painting in Britain, other than in the British Museum [J. Katz, *Japanese Paintings in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford* (Oxford, 2003)]. There is a good collection of screens [O. Impey, *The art of the Japanese folding screen* (Oxford, 1997)], and of Edo period (1600-1868) painting in general; particularly noteworthy are the Nanga paintings [J. Hillier, in *Oriental Art, XIII, 3* (1967)] and the Shijo paintings [many of which were published in J. Hillier's *The Uninhibited Brush* (London, 1974)]. The collection of Japanese export porcelain is one of the finest in the world [O. Impey, *Japanese export porcelain: Catalogue of the collection of the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 2002)], while ceramics for the Japanese market are also well represented, including good examples of Arita, Nabeshima and Hirado porcelain, tea ceremony wares and Kyoto earthenwares. The other collections of Edo applied arts include Buddhist sculpture, sword furniture [unpublished catalogue of the A. H. Church collection of Japanese sword-guards (tsuba) by Albert James Koop is now available online], lacquerware for both export and domestic markets, netsuke [O. Impey, *Japanese netsuke in Oxford* (Oxford, 1987); J. Seaman, *Manju netsuke* (Oxford, 2013)] and woodblock prints [O. Impey, *Hiroshige's Views of Tokyo* (Oxford,1993); O. Impey, *Hiroshige's Views of Mount Fuji* (Oxford, 2001); O. Impey and M. Watanabe, *Kuniyoshi's Heroes of China and Japan* (Oxford, 2003); M. Watanabe, *Beauties of the Four Seasons* (Oxford, 2005), C. Pollard and M. Watanabe Ito, *Hiroshige - Landscape, Cityscape* (Oxford, 2014), K. Hanaoka and C. Pollard, *Plum Blossom & Green Willow: Japanese Surimono Prints from the Ashmolean Museum* (Oxford, 2019)]. The collection of Meiji period (1868-1912) painting and applied art is strong and growing [O. Impey and J. Seaman, *Japanese Decorative Arts of the Meiji Period* (Oxford, 2005); *Oriental Art, XLII, 3* (1996)]. The collection of porcelain sherd material from Arita is better than any outside Arita itself [O. Impey, *The Early Porcelain Kilns of Japan* (Oxford, 1996)].

About 11,000 objects from the collection were digitised to a high standard between 2007 and 2013 thanks to the support of a private benefactor and have since been shared with the broader public on a dedicated website, Eastern Art Online (www.jameelcentre.ashmolean.org). This, in addition to our blog (http://blogs.ashmolean.org/easternart) and the new Ashmolean Museum's main website, offer regular access to our collections and range of activities on the world wide web.

The Department also holds important archival and documentary material of various kinds (over 116,000 items), most notably the May Beattie Archive for the study of oriental carpets, and the Creswell photographic archive of Islamic architecture, both of which are also partially digitised.

2.4 Heberden Coin Room

The Heberden Coin Room contains about 400,000 items, many of which are placed on long term deposit by various colleges in the University. The holdings include Ancient, Medieval and Modern coins of all countries, medals, orders and decorations, tokens, jetons, paper money, and other forms of money ('paranumismatica'). The collection is progressively being put online through: https://hcr.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/.

Coins and many other forms of money are mass produced so that publications routinely embrace material from many sources. The Greek collection covers all areas of the Greek world, from Spain to Bactria. It is in process of publication as *Sylloge Nummorum Graecorum, vol. 5*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. Already published are: J.G. Milne, *Part I, Evans Collection. Italy*, 1951, C.M. Kraay, *Part I (A), Italy, Etruria-Lucania (Thurium)*, 1962, id., *Part II, Italy, Lucania (Thurium) - Bruttium, Sicily, Carthage*, 1969, D. Nash, *Part III, Macedonia*, 1976, C.M. Kraay, *Part IV, Paeonia-Thessaly*, 1981, S. Ireland and R. Ashton, *Part IX, Bosporus - Aeolis*, 2007.

The Roman collection is also extensive. All rarities have been included systematically in the standard catalogues, *Roman Republican Coinage*, 2 volumes, by M.H. Crawford, 1974, and *Roman Imperial Coinage*, 10 volumes, by various authors, 1923-1996. A start was made with the systematic publication of the whole collection in C.H.V. Sutherland and C.M. Kraay, *Catalogue of the Coins of the Roman Empire in the Ashmolean Museum, Part I, Augustus (c. 31BC - AD14)*, published in 1975. This project has since been partially superseded by a collaborative international scheme which incorporates the Ashmolean's coins into a catalogue of ten major collections, under the title Roman Provincial Coinage, see https://rpc.ashmus.ox.ac.uk/. There is an outstanding collection of late Byzantine coins catalogued as E. Lianta, *Late Byzantine Coins. 1204 - 1453 in the Ashmolean Museum*, 2009.

The English coin collection is extensive and of fine quality. Some of the most important parts of it have been published under the auspices of the British Academy's Sylloge of Coins of the British Isles (SCBI). The earliest Anglo-Saxon coins were published in C.H.V. Sutherland, *Anglo-Saxon Gold Coinage in the Light of the Crondall Hoard*, 1948. The so-called sceattas of the 7th and 8th centuries are all published and discussed in D.M. Metcalf, *Thrymsas and Sceattas in the Ashmolean Museum*, Oxford (3 volumes, 1993-4). For later coins, see J.D.A. Thompson, *Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Anglo-Saxon Pennies*, 1967 (=SCBI, vol. 7), and D.M. Metcalf, *Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Part II, English* Coins, *1066-1279*, 1969 (=SCBI, vol. 12). The E.J. Winstanley collection is included in D.M. Metcalf*, Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Part III, Coins of Henry VII*, 1976 (=SCBI, vol. 23). The rich series of Scottish coins, from the Hird gift, are published jointly with the Glasgow collection in J.D. Bateson and N.J. Mayhew, *Scottish Coins in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow*, 1987 (=SCBI, vol. 35).

The Ashmolean has an outstanding collection of Crusader coins, of which the catalogue is the standard work on the subject: D.M. Metcalf, *Coinage of the Crusades and the Latin East in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford* (2nd edition, 1995).

The museum's Islamic coins, including the former Shamma loan, are being published as the Sylloge of Islamic Coins in the Ashmolean Museum (SICA). The following volumes have been published so far: S. Album and Tony Goodwin, *Vol. 1, The Pre-Reform Coinage of the Early Islamic Period*, 2002, N.D. Nicol*, Vol. 2, Early Post-Reform Coinage*, 2009, N.D. Nicol, *Vol. 6, The Egyptian Dynasties*, 2007, S. Album, *Vol. 9, Iran after the Mongol Invasion*, 2001, and S. Album, *Vol. 10, Arabia and East Africa*, 1999.

The collection of South Asian and Far Eastern coin collection constitute a major body of evidence for subjects with international academic interest such as Gandharan Art and the History of collecting coins in China and Japan. The Indian coin collection is mainly formed through the Shortt Bequest and includes collections of important collectors of oriental coins such as Sir Aurel Stein, P Thorburn, Alfred Master and H E Stapleton. The Senior Collection of Indo-Scythian and Indo-Parthian coins is by far the most important numismatic evidence for Gandhara and has been published as a type catalogue by Senior (R C Senior, *Indo-Scythian Coinage and History, vols. I-IV*, 2001). The collections of the coinage of the Bengal Sultanate, the Mughals, and the British East India Company are also noteworthy. The far eastern coin collection has recently been rearranged. It includes significant holdings of Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Vietnamese coins.

The collection of modern coins and paper money is largely an incidental collection, formed through individual donations rather than as a result of a focussed acquisition strategy. However, it includes numismatic material of great significance to collectors of modern monies, such as coins preserved in high collectible grades, coins issued during wars or episodes of emergency and banknotes of very high denominations. Joe Cribb, the former Keeper of Coins and Medals in the British Museum, has gifted a collection of nearly 2000 modern banknotes to the department.

Many commemorative medals in the Ashmolean's large collection are listed in *Medallic Illustrations of British History* (19 parts, 1904-1911) and in more detail in L. Brown, *A Catalogue of British Historical Medals 1760-1960* (2 vols., 1980-1987).

2.5 Cast Gallery

The Cast Gallery possesses about 1,100 plaster casts of Greek and Roman sculpture, most of which were acquired before 1925. The collection was started in the late 19th-century to serve as a teaching facility for the then new subject of Classical Archaeology in the University. The casts provide a strong and exact three-dimensional representation of Greek and Roman statues and reliefs in marble and bronze, from the beginning of Greek statue-making in the sixth century BC to late Roman material of the sixth century AD.

At first the casts were displayed among original pieces in the main museum. In 1961, the collection was moved to its current purpose-built Cast Gallery. And in 2010, after the renovation of the main museum, the Cast Gallery was also renovated and connected directly to the main museum. The collection was completely re-displayed along thematic lines. At the same time, major casts were included in displays in the main museum, most notably in the central atrium.

Recent acquisitions have been concentrated on increasing the presence of Hellenistic and Roman material. Since 1995, more than 100 new pieces have been added. The collection is fully documented, photographed, and published in Rune Frederiksen and R. R. R. Smith, *Cast Gallery of the Ashmolean Museum: Catalogue of Plaster Casts of Greek and Roman Sculpture* (2013).

The Cast Gallery has one curator who is also the fulltime Lincoln Professor of Classical Archaeology and Art in the University (R.R.R. Smith) and one half-time Assistant Curator (Milena Melfi).

3 Acquisitions Policy

3.1 General

This policy outlines the principles which will be followed when objects are acquired for the collections. It is the policy of the Museum to avoid conflict or duplication with other accredited museums of the University of Oxford: Bodleian Libraries, History of Science Museum, Pitt Rivers Museum, Museum of Natural History and local museums in the city (Modern Art Oxford; Museum of Oxford; The Story Museum; The Bate Collection of Musical Instruments; Oxford Bus Museum; Oxford Castle Museum) and in the county (The Museums of Abingdon; Banbury; Chipping Norton; Dorchester abbey; Oxfordshire (Woodstock); Swinford; Thame; Tolsey; Wallingford and Witney). An accord (1974) with Oxfordshire County Museum Service covers deposition of county archaeological archives.

This policy will be brought to the attention of all curators, and where there is any uncertainty, individual curators should not acquire items without discussion with the Keeper of the Department who should, if necessary, refer the matter to the Director and the Visitors.

The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

The Museum will ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using Spectrum primary procedures for collections management as described in the Collections Documentation Policy, section 5 of this document.

The Ashmolean Museum is a universal museum of art and archaeology, reflecting human experience across cultures and across time. The Museum is committed not only to preserving and sharing, but also to enhancing its holdings. Acquisition is a core function of the Ashmolean as of any other great collection, and sensible, responsible and legal acquisition of material should be encouraged and resourced. The museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the University and public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection. This policy complies with UK legislation, international law, guidelines and codes.

Acquisitions can and should:

- Maintain the vibrancy and relevance of the Museum's collections and increase its capacity to tell more, and fuller, stories of the world's history and peoples;
- Delight and inform existing audiences and attract new ones;
- Raise the profile of the Museum, incentivize those who work there and strengthen bonds with existing and new supporters;
- Provide an impetus for research and can play a vital role in education, outreach and training;
- Provide an important stimulus and catalyst for other processes within and between institutions.

3.2 Policy

3.2.1 Areas and priorities

The Ashmolean Museum will collect in the fields of Western Art; Eastern Art; Antiquities: Casts, and Numismatic and para-Numismatic material of all countries and all periods, including modern and contemporary material and archives in the broadest sense.

Priorities for acquisitions by these departments are set out in a strategy (section 3.1 of this policy), which takes account of the published collecting policies and strategies of other museums. The strategy should define areas of specialism, avoiding unnecessary duplication and wasteful application of resources, and mitigate conflicts of collecting interest.

In making any acquisition, the Museum will act in accordance, above all, with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003* and 2005 DCMS guidance (for the complete legislation, see 3.2.2 below).

Objects will only be acquired by the Museum whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, when it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom). Having exercised due diligence, as outlined above and in the Acquisitions Policy, the Museum can decide whether objects are legally available for acquisition and whether the museum can acquire a valid title to them.

Acquisitions should have a documented legal history, which in most cases should extend back before November 14th 1970. In some circumstances objects without documented histories may be acquired, provided the Acquisition Policy is respected, and proportional due diligence is exercised:

- The objects can be considered 'minor items' as defined in the DCMS guidelines *Combating Illicit Trade*: (2005) pp. 10-11 (see 3.2.3 below);
- They were lawfully seized by HM Customs and Revenue;
- They would otherwise be at risk of destruction;
- The Museum is acting formally as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of United Kingdom and Foreign origin. In which case the Museum will document when these exceptions occur and will act in an open and transparent way;
- The Museum will do so only with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin.

Objects will not be bought for the Collection unless full funding has first been secured, including costs of acquisition, conservation, storage and display without compromising standards of care and access relating to the existing collections, and that the purchase price represents value for money. No gift will be accepted if subject to unreasonable or unduly onerous conditions around display or loan.

The opinion of Conservation will be sought before acquisition. Objects in poor condition, inherently liable to deteriorate, or difficult to stabilise by conservation treatment should not normally be acquired.

The transferor of an object acquired for the Collection will be expected to supply all records and other contextual information about it, and will be expected to supply an assignment of subsisting intellectual property rights in it or the rights holder's licence to reproduce it for the Museum's general purposes.

Arts Council England will be notified of any substantive change to the acquisitions policy, and the implications of such changes for the future of existing collections. This policy will be reviewed no later than January 2024.

3.2.2 Legislation regulating acquisitions

The legislation which the Ashmolean will comply with or follow in making any acquisition includes:

UNESCO *Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Cultural Property* (14th November 1970)

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, dated 3 March 1973 (CITES)

Treasure Act 1996

Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003

Cultural Property (Armed Conflicts) Act 2017. Incorporates ratification of the Hague Convention first (1954) and second (1999) protocols

Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice (Revised) England and Wales

Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period: Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions (NMDC 1998)

Return of Cultural Objects Regulations 1994

Combating Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on Collecting and Borrowing Cultural Material (DCMS 2005)

Code of Professional Ethics of the International Council of Museums (ICOM)

Code of Professional Ethics of the Museums Association (MA)

Code of Practice on Archives for Museums in the United Kingdom (third edition 2002)

3.2.3 Definition of 'minor items'

Many minor items appear on the market or are offered to museums with no acquisition history. This may be because they are illicit but it may equally be because none of their previous owners has ever thought it worthwhile to catalogue or record them, or to provide or keep receipts of purchase. There is also the possibility that documentary evidence of a legitimate provenance has been lost. The only satisfactory way to decide whether in individual cases it is ethically admissible to attempt to acquire such items is through the exercise of due diligence.

'Minor items' are not easy to define comprehensively, since most categories of material, from manuscripts and coins to porcelain and Greek vases, necessarily include both minor and major items. Nor is it appropriate to use financial value as the main criterion, since items which are very cheap and which may seem insignificant can have major archaeological and cultural significance.

However, they share the following characteristics:

- may be of common types, or may be items of which multiple examples were made and have survived;
- are usually made of relatively cheap or plentifully available materials;
- are often (but not always) small in physical size;
- may lack conventional beauty or other appeal and tend to be (but are not always) of relatively low monetary value.

If a museum is unsure whether an item falls into the category of 'minor items' they should consult with colleagues from other institutions. They should ensure that the decision to treat an item as minor is fully recorded.

3.3 Departmental Collecting Policies

Each of the five curatorial departments also has a specific collecting policy, all of which are periodically reviewed and revised.

3.3.1 Department of Antiquities

The Department seeks to enhance the research value of its existing collections by new acquisitions. Of particular priority would be acquisitions to maintain key parts of the collections: e.g. Near Eastern seals and bronzes; Egyptian sculpture, Greek and Roman pottery and sculpture; European Prehistory; Early Medieval metalwork; and archaeological archives. The Department has long had a policy of avoiding acquiring objects exported illegally from the country of origin or illegally acquired in the United Kingdom. There has been a written policy to this effect since the 1960s. Consequently, collections acquisition of non-British material is restricted to objects that have been legally exported in the recent past and objects from old private collections where the provenance can be clearly traced. British antiquities are acquired when the legal ownership can be clearly established. Local archaeological archives are acquired in accordance with the long-standing agreement between the Museum, Oxfordshire County Museum Service and local planning authorities [see Department of Antiquities' *Collecting Policy for Archaeological Archives* (2003)].

3.3.2 Department of Western Art

The Department builds on and develops its collections wherever items of sufficient quality, art-historical or historical interest in any area of the collections or appropriate to them become available. Old Master, British and modern drawings and prints are actively collected. The Department has hitherto been prepared to consider taking on large-scale archives or representative selections of artists' work when this material would otherwise be dispersed. Applied arts, sculpture and oil paintings are normally only bought when there is deemed to be a good prospect of being able to display them in the galleries. Among recent large-scale accessions is the Michael Wellby Bequest, consisting of some 500 items of goldsmith's work and precious objects, mainly Continental for which a special gallery was created. Although not systematically concerned with collecting material of specifically regional interest, the Department acts as a repository of art relating to the University. The appointment of a new curatorial post responsible for contemporary art and the award of a collecting grant focusing on Neo-Expressionist prints will further expand the Museum's collection in these areas.

3.3.3 Department of Eastern Art

The acquisition policy of the Department is (1) to acquire representative objects of significant artistic and aesthetic merit for permanent gallery display; (2) to fill gaps, when the opportunity arises, in major areas of the collections such as Chinese ceramics or twentieth century paintings, Japanese export porcelains, prints and decorative arts of the late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, Indian sculpture and Islamic decorative arts, as well as to consolidate relatively weaker areas including Indian paintings, Islamic works on paper and textiles, the art of Southeast Asia, and modern and contemporary art from the Middle East and India.

3.3.4 Heberden Coin Room (Numismatics)

The aim is to build a comprehensive collection of academic value. Significant acquisitions generally seek either to build on established areas of strength or to address areas of comparative weakness. Among areas where the collection has a significant opportunity to expand are Celtic Britain and Modern Money. The collection of Celtic Britain is of particular importance, as it includes the collection of Sir Arthur Evans, some of which derived from that of his father, John Evans, the founding father of Celtic Numismatics. The collection has not, however, expanded to reflect the huge increase in knowledge as a consequence metal detecting. Modern Money encompasses both coins and paper money, from circa 1700 to the present, and other numismatic material of aesthetic, artistic and cultural significance such as badges, tokens, and commemorative medals. In 2018, the Coin Room received as a gift a well-formed collection of c. 3500 religious medals and badges which was a welcome start in this direction.

3.3.5 Cast Gallery

The Cast Gallery aims to acquire new casts of high-quality or unusual items and to increase the presence of Hellenistic and Roman material in the collection. Casts are acquired by purchase, gift, or exchange against casts of which the Gallery has moulds.

3.4 Acquisitions Procedure

The curatorial proposal is discussed in Department, taking acquisitions policy/ collecting strategy into account including conservation, display and storage requirements. The decision is made in consultation with the Keeper to proceed with the acquisition, establishing funding. Due diligence guidelines are taken into account (e.g. this may involve the Art Loss Register) and associated forms are completed.

For sums under £10k the Keeper can approve, but will notify the Director. Anything above £10k must be approved by the Director before proceeding.

Acquisitions £1k - £25k: no Tender Exemption forms needed but document why comparative quotations were not sought (the appropriate competitive process at this value). A Tender Exemption form may be useful. University terms and conditions must be accepted by the Supplier (meaning the vendor, whether owner, agent, gallery, auction house etc.). Note grant-giving bodies WILL require an independent valuation of the proposed acquisition.

Acquisitions £25k - £100k: All acquisitions in this range require a Tender Exemption form, retained in the department for audit purposes. If the Supplier accepts University terms and the Director is satisfied that value for money has been achieved and documented, then the process proceeds without involving the University's Purchasing Department. If the Supplier does not accept the University's terms, or the department wishes to vary our terms by exception, this must be referred to Purchasing, which will also need to approve the tender exemption request.

Acquisitions over £100k: the University Terms and Conditions are sent to the Supplier. Whether accepted or not, a Tender Exemption process as in point 5, must be followed. Demonstration of value for money (Curator's valuation documentation) must be obtained. All tender exemptions of this value must be approved by Director and Purchasing. Value for money and terms acceptance as for points 4 and 5.

Curators consult with Conservation regarding condition or future care. Grant giving bodies will require detailed condition reports by external conservators or by the Museum.

Paper and digital files, including an Acquisitions Proposal Form are created. An Acquisition Proposal Form is compiled by obtaining the sign off from Keeper or Director. Finance may request an approval email from the Director.

If applying for grant funding e.g. Art Fund or V&A Fund curators must inform Acquisitions Co-ordinator (Paul Roberts) to avoid any scheduling clashes with grant applications. Keepers to keep Collections Committee informed about all such planned acquisitions.

Any acquisition involving funding campaigns beyond departmental/grant funding and additional Museum resources across other departments must, after discussion with Director and consultation with Development, go to EMG for approval.

Development, Press and Communications are informed of significant acquisitions in good time for press releases or website /social media announcements

Registrars are also informed of acquisition and liaised with regarding transport, customs issues and insurance as appropriate.

A receipt is filled in upon collection/delivery of acquisition.

Once the acquisition has arrived photography and conservation assessment are arranged.

On receipt of acquisition the Administrator will raise a requisition on Oracle attaching Acquisition Proposal Form; Tender Exemption Form (if required); Valuation Documentation and the Director's email approval or signature (or Keeper's if under £10k).

The new supplier is informed that they will receive a New Supplier Form which must be completed in order to receive payment.

With payment finalised, the new acquisition is registered and catalogued on MuseumPlus; each Board of Visitors meeting will also receive acquisition information.

A registration form is completed; all documentation (both paper and digital) is filed in compliance with GDPR.

3.5 Management of Archives

Archive collections are held by all of the curatorial departments and these are of international importance with significant potential to contribute to research across disciplines. The museum conducted a review of archive collections and archive provision in 2017, including a benchmarking survey for its current archive service. The survey was based on national Archive Accreditation standards. Both Archive Service and Museum Service accreditation are based on Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 197: 2009, *Code of practice for cultural collections management*. The museum aims to follow PAS 197 recommendations for the management of all collections. The imminent procurement of a new Collections Management System (and integrated Digital Assets Management System), will incorporate an Archives module compliant with ISAD(G), the General International Standard Archival Description.

4 Collections Loss, Deaccession and Disposal Policies

4.1 Loss Policy

The Museum makes every effort to ensure that damage or loss of objects in the care of the Museum does not occur, including extensive monitoring of conditions within the building, and periodic collections audits by each department. The Museum also reviews its security provision at regular intervals in order to minimise the risk of loss. Should such a loss event take place, the 'Disaster Plan' and/or security procedures are implemented. In all cases, loss events are fully documented, and the records held by the relevant curatorial department, as well as by central Administration.

4.1.1 Risk of Loss Assessment

The Department of Conservation carries out periodic risk assessments in conjunction with curatorial departments in order to identify potential risks to objects on display and in storage. The findings of these assessments are incorporated into the Museum's collections care and security policies and plans. In addition, all damage and security incidents relating to objects are reported to the Department of Conservation and the Head of Security for remedial action and assessment on an on-going basis.

4.1.2 Loss by Damage

On discovery of a loss by damage, the Museum's Disaster Plan and/or Security Procedure are implemented immediately, including the following actions:

a) The owner will be informed immediately for objects on loan to the Museum;
b) Where appropriate, other authorities may be informed depending on the scale or nature of loss, including: the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, the University of Oxford, University Safety Office;
c) Senior curatorial staff will be informed as soon as possible in order to assist in the process of documentation of the object(s);
d) The Department of Conservation will make every possible attempt to retrieve information and/or material relating to a loss by damage.

4.1.3 Loss by Theft

Full records are kept of historic losses, but on discovery of a recent loss by theft, the Museum's Disaster Plan and Security procedure will be implemented immediately, including the following actions:

a) Senior curatorial staff and communication staff will be informed as soon as possible in order to assist in the process of documentation of the object(s);
b) The communication department will also be informed in order to manage press interest;
c) The police will be provided with photographs and other descriptive material required in identifying the object, as well as details of the circumstances of the loss;

d) The owner will be informed immediately for objects on loan to the Museum;
e) Other authorities may be informed where appropriate, including: the Visitors of the Ashmolean Museum, the University of Oxford, the Thames Valley Police and ACE Security Advisor (if applicable);
f) The Press may be informed by a designated media liaison as specified in the Disaster Plan and Security policy.

The Director and the Executive Management Group (EMG) will consider all other responses to a loss by theft on an individual basis in regard to the nature of the object(s) lost.

4.2 Deaccession and Disposal Policy

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.

The Museum has a long-term purpose and possesses substantial permanent collections including study collections. The Visitors accept the principle that there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the Museum's collection, except as set out below, and that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection. The Visitors would not expect sale to be the first option in disposal and the Museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

The museum does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy.

The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures below will apply:

- All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal;
- The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account;
- When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale;
- When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will

be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort – destruction;

- The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such asdonors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Furthermore:

a) If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas (section 3.1) will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested;
b) If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate);
c) Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Any decision to dispose of a specimen or work of art, whether by exchange, gift, sale or destruction (items too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of use to the collections), will be the responsibility of the Visitors acting on the advice of the Director and professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator acting alone. Full records will be kept of all such decisions and the specimens involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the object concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

The Visitors will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly, with transparency and will, in considering disposals, take full account of the Ethical Guidelines periodically issued by the Museums Association, in particular Disposal Toolkit: Guidelines for Museums (2014). Factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought. The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal.

In those cases where the Visitors confirm that the Museum is legally free to dispose of an item, agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account. When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

Such material will be offered first, by exchange, gift or sale to Accredited museums before disposal to other interested individuals or organisations is considered. Other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

When arrangements for the exchange, gift or sale of material are not being made with an individual Accredited museum, the Ashmolean will advise the museum community at large of the intention to dispose of material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Journal and/or the website Find an Object or other specialist journals. The announcement will indicate the number and nature of objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will make a detailed announcement, as above. After a period of at least two months the Visitors will make a final decision on the exchange. The Visitors will ensure that accountability and impartiality are paramount, to avoid undue influence on its decision-making.

Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

This policy regards accessioned material. Material unaccessioned, but in the care of the Ashmolean, for example elements of a bequest that do not fit the collecting policies of the department concerned or museum, may also be disposed of by sale. Such elements will be sold openly on behalf of and for the benefit of the Ashmolean. Even though unaccessioned, they should comply with the Museum's Acquisition Policy.

The actions of the Museum are guided by the understanding that the museum does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy. No set themes and priorities for rationalisation or disposal have, therefore, been identified.

4.3 Spoliation of Works of Art Relating to the Period 1933 - 45 and Other Conflicts

Should a request for repatriation or restitution (in the case of items relevant to Nazi oppression, between 1933 and 1945) of an object in the Museum's collection be received, the Museum will consider the request quickly and with sensitivity. The Museum will use the statement of principles *Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period*, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission. Any Holocaust-related claim is referred to the Spoliation Advisory Committee.

Although the question of holocaust loot is one of the foremost in the area of spoliation in times of conflict, the Ashmolean is very aware of the many other global conflicts, some very recent, which have resulted in damage destruction and dispersal of cultural heritage. In any issue arising from these conflicts the Ashmolean, adopting the same procedures as above, will comply fully with the *Cultural Property (armed Conflicts) Act 2017*, which incorporates the UK government's ratification of the Hague Convention first (1954) and second (1999) protocols.

4.4 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The Visitors, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This means that the relevant procedures described under Deaccession and Disposal Policy above will be followed.

The disposal of human remains will follow the procedures in the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS in 2005. (See also Section 9)

4.5 The Repatriation of Colonial Material

The Director, following the university policy, together with national and international legislation, will take decisions on the repatriation of such material on a case by case basis.

5 Collections Documentation Policy

The Museum aims to maintain thorough documentation systems for all objects in its care. This includes the registered collections, teaching and handling collections, objects on loan, previously undocumented items and historic objects left for identification. All of the Museum's documentation systems adhere to the guidelines of the SPECTRUM standards and documentation guidelines are accessed through hard copies in each department as well as digital files on the museum's Sharepoint, accessible to all staff.

The Museum aims to maintain the highest standards with regard to documentation, and a dedicated Digital Collections team was created in July 2015, consisting of three full-time and permanent data posts in addition to full-time cataloguers and a project photographer to deal with backlog. This team ensures the implementation of documentation standards and the validation of database records, not only regarding previously created database records but also in regard to the backlog (see separate document). The Museum's Collections Management System, MuseumPlus, is fully compliant with SPECTRUM guidelines. Areas of focus are for instance the museum's world-famous Ancient Egyptian collections in addition to Old Master drawings and prints, and coins. In June 2018 the museum's Collections Online were launched, which at present (January 2020) contain over 103,000 records from across all four curatorial departments, which are fully compliant with SPECTRUM standards. The Digital Collections team is also currently involved in the procurement of a new Collections Management System (to replace the existing MuseumPlus CMS), a Digital Assets Management System (DAMS) and an integrated Picture Library.

5.1 Object Entry and Exit Policies

5.1.1 Object Entry Policy

The Museum's policies and procedures regarding the entry of objects apply to all items that are not currently part of the collections, including potential new acquisitions. All relevant international and national agreements regarding antiquities and works of art are adhered to in accepting any object for deposit. The University of Oxford is consulted for legal advice where appropriate.

Objects for possible future acquisition are accepted under departmental short-term holding procedures pending evaluation of suitability for acquisition. Objects for future acquisition are accepted at the Depositor's risk, although insurance cover will be taken out as appropriate. This insurance cover is administered by the Registrar's Department.

Objects loaned from other institutions or individuals for both temporary exhibitions, long-term loans, research and conservation treatment/advice are accepted as incoming loans administered by the Registrar's Department.

The Museum does not take in objects for identification purposes other than in exceptional circumstances (below 5.3.5).

Archaeological archives resulting from controlled excavations will be accepted following the guidelines published in the Department of Antiquities, *Required Procedures for the Transfer of Archaeological Archives to the Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology* (2nd Edition, 2002, revised 2004)'.

5.1.2 Object Exit Policy

Objects may leave the Museum for a variety of reasons including: returning loans in; dispatching loans out; temporary transfer to another institution for specialist conservation or analysis; returning objects left for identification; and permanent deaccessioning or disposal. The Registrar's Department is responsible for the management and documentation of all objects on inward or outward loan leaving the Museum premises or for temporary transfer. The exit of all other objects is usually managed by the curatorial departments. The Registrar's Department provides forms and advice concerning exit procedures and can keep central file copies of papers if required.

The release of any object must be authorised in writing by the Head Registrar, a senior member of the responsible curatorial department, the Head of Conservation, or another senior member of staff and must not contravene any existing contractual agreements or museum policies.

In authorising the release of any object, the Head Registrar or other relevant member of staff, should specify any requirements for object care during transit: including, the standards of transport required; the need for a courier; and which party will bear the risk of the objects in transit.

A signature of acceptance from the recipient must be obtained when transferring charge of an object from the Museum to another party.

The Registrar's and/or curatorial departments will maintain records of all objects that leave the Museum premises.

5.2 Documentation of Registered Collections

As soon as an object has been legally accepted and received by the Museum, the Collections Manager or relevant curator should assign an accession number to the object(s) and make an entry in the Accessions Register of the department that will care for the object(s).

Standard formats of accession numbers are composite letter/number codes based upon the acquiring department, date of acquisition and the incremental number within that year: <Department code><4-digit year of accession>.<1st level sequence number>[.<2nd level sequence number>].E.g. AN1893.148, being the 148th item or group of items, accessioned by the Department of Antiquities in 1893; EA1966.52.158 being the 158th item as part of the 52nd item acquired in 1966 by the Department of Eastern Art. The Heberden Coin Room generates its own accession numbers, which are purely sequential, through its 'Capture' system: HCR<1-6 digit serial number>. E.g. HCR35235 being the 35235th item acquired by the Heberden Coin Room.

Accession record entries should record details about the acquisition including: accession number, date of acquisition, object name, brief description, including quantities and dimensions where relevant, provenance, type and source of the acquisition including Credit Line for donations/bequests, and major published references to the object(s). The entry should be sufficiently detailed in order to identify an object or group of objects without ambiguity as far as possible.

Accessions Registers are bound volumes of archival quality paper.

More detailed cataloguing of an object, or group of objects, will take place as appropriate to the acquisition as determined by the relevant curatorial department, and in keeping with the Museum's policy of producing catalogues and other scholarly studies related to the collections (See *Access Policy*).

A file containing all relevant known information, where it exists in documentary form, concerning an accession or accession group should be kept in the departmental records, with reference to the accession number(s).

Extensive documentary archives associated with an acquisition or acquisition group should be stored in an appropriate location (e.g. archive store, photographic negative store) with reference to the accession number(s). The main information record or file for the accession or accession group should be cross-referenced to indicate the location of such material.

A collections management record based on the accession number will be made and will be linked to its storage location. Arrangement of objects within stores and storage units is the responsibility of curatorial departments.

All additional records concerning registered museum objects are cross-referenced with accession number(s) whenever possible; e.g. photographic images, conservation records, and results of scientific analysis. The Registrar maintains an area on the collections database recording loans out history, condition reports and valuations.

Records concerning any registered objects will be updated as required with any new information.

Primary records of accessioned objects should only be updated by curatorial department staff or individuals designated to do so by the relevant curatorial department.

Published or manuscript catalogues (e.g. *Fortnum catalogue*) can serve as supplementary accession registers if they are designated as such by the relevant curatorial department(s), usually at the time of acquisition of the objects. If so used, all items should be individually numbered within the catalogue, and the entries should meet the requirements for accession registers in all other respects.

In the case of large archaeological excavation archives, an accession number is assigned to the entire archive, and small finds numbers assigned during the excavation project are used to uniquely identify individual items. If individual items are subsequently registered, they will receive a sub-number of the accession number given to the complete archive.

Coins are placed in the Systematic Collection of the Heberden Coin Room in accordance with international standards of best practice for numismatic collections. The location providing additional information concerning the geographical and chronological designation of an object, and the object ticket recording accession number and other primary information as appropriate.

5.3 Documentation of Unregistered Objects

5.3.1 Objects on Loan

Loans to all departments are centralised and the Registrar's Department is responsible for maintaining the documentation of all objects on loan to the Museum.

5.3.2 Teaching and Support Collection

The curatorial departments and the Learning Department may maintain separate and distinct collections of objects for educational and instructive purposes, including teaching, demonstrating and handling. The Department of Conservation may request the opportunity to use material in these collections for testing and/or research purposes. The use of these collections for such purposes is intended to reduce the demand for handling and use of items in the permanent collections. The curatorial departments and the Learning Department keep accurate records of the material in their teaching and support collections, including any details of eventual loss, disposal or transfer. The acquisition and disposal of items in these collections is the responsibility of the Keeper of the relevant curatorial department or the Head of Learning as appropriate. Material will be acquired only after the exercise of due diligence and with regard to the guidelines in the Museum's Acquisition Policy.

5.3.3 Items without Apparent Previous Documentation

Occasionally departmental collections audits reveal objects that have become separated from their accession number and associated documentation; either through damage, excessive handling or other poor collections care procedures in the past. Should this occur, the following procedures are instituted:

a) Each object that is apparently without an accession number is assigned a temporary catalogue number by the relevant curatorial department;
b) All information that can be obtained concerning that object is collected and placed into a file associated with that temporary number;
c) The most appropriate curatorial or documentation staff member institutes (as resources permit) an archival search in order to identify the original accession record for the object;
d) When the correct accession number is discovered, the object is relabelled, and the temporary catalogue file is amalgamated with the official object file. All sources relating to the object are amended;
e) Should the object prove not to be from the Museum's permanent collection (e.g. object left for identification and abandoned; part of a research loan), every attempt will be made to contact the legal owner in order to arrange for its future disposition. If contact cannot be secured within a reasonable number of attempts, the Museum will look to the deaccessioning procedure for guidance;
f) If it has been discovered that an object has been assigned more than one accession number in the past owing to a former policy of re-registering objects 'found unnumbered in the collection', the earliest of the accession numbers will be considered

to be the correct one. Both references will be noted on all data sources for that object, if possible, but on the Collections Database as a minimum. The object should be relabelled if necessary, and the redundant object files amalgamated with the correct one.

5.3.4 Documentation Plan (Backlog Plan)

All curatorial departments have a Documentation Plan (Backlog Plan, see Appendix I) for cataloguing and resolving items from the above categories. Historic loans, in particular those predating the Ashmolean's redevelopment in 2007, are being processed in alignment with the Documentation Plan.

5.3.5 Objects Left for Identification and/or Research

Curatorial departments are responsible for maintaining the object documentation records in the exceptional circumstance that objects that have been left in their care for identification and/or research. Any acceptance of material for these purposes must be for as short a period as possible. The material on loan deposit must maintain a very clear distinction between it and material properly accessioned for the collections. The Museum expects all curators who intend to take material on deposit for research to exercise the necessary due diligence to ensure that, as far as can be reasonably known, the material does not contravene the Museum's Acquisitions Policy.

5.3.6 Treasure

Following the *Treasure Act* (1996) and the DCMS' *The Treasure Act 1996 Code of Practice (2nd Revision) for England & Wales*, when potential treasure finds are delivered to the Ashmolean Museum as instructed by the coroner, the Department of Antiquities and the Heberden Coin Room maintain separate records. When such objects are delivered, documentation from the coroner will be copied and sent to the relevant national museum, and a receipt will be given to the finder.

In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

5.4 Digital Archiving of Essential Records

5.4.1 Accessions Registers

The maintenance of the Accessions Registers is the responsibility of the curatorial departments. The Museum recommends that departments should have digital surrogates made of Accessions Registers for reasons of security and to reduce handling of the original volumes.

Departments should have digital surrogates made of completed Accession Register volumes.

Where they exist, microfilm images of Accession Registers should be transferred to digital format rather than reimaging older volumes.

The National Archives (TNA) guidance on digitisation will be followed in creating digital surrogates of Accession Registers.

Digital surrogates of Accession Registers will be stored in accordance with the museum's Digital Asset Management policy. The maintenance of the Accessions Registers is the responsibility of the curatorial departments. The Museum recommends that departments should have microfilm and/or digital copies of the Accessions Registers for reasons of security.

5.4.2 Collections Documentation Databases and Files

Copies of all collections information in word-processed, database or digital image form should be stored on the Museum's servers. The database is hosted by a Microsoft SQL Server 2017. The server, known as the University's "VIPR" platform, is a virtualised system running Vsphere. It is physically located at two sites: The Banbury Road Datacentre and the Shared Datacentre, on Parks Road. The system is a metro-stretched vmware cluster, and as such, both sites can be considered primary (either can be the working database, depending on VIPR load characteristics). Full, backups are taken weekly, with incremental backups being made daily, and transaction logs backed up every 30 minutes, 24 hours a day. These are then backed up to tape on a nightly basis. Further to this, the host system is backed up every night, via snapshotting techniques, utilising the university's central HFS TSM4VE service. The server and backups are supported by the Microsoft Platform Services Team, which is part of Oxford University IT Services.

5.5 Documentation and ITC

An integrated museum-wide collections database system (currently MuseumPlus) is supported by the ITC GLAM IT department. The Digital Collections team is currently involved in the procurement of a new Collections Management System in addition to a Digital Assets Management System (DAMS) and an integrated Picture Library.

5.6 Object Labelling Policy

All objects, storage containers and racking are labelled in the most appropriate manner with museum accession numbers and codes in order to facilitate best collections management practice, and to ensure future public access to the collections. Wherever possible, all objects, except those made of sensitive materials or of a very small size, are marked directly with their unique museum accession number or catalogue code. The Department of Conservation provides training and guidelines for the marking of objects. Curatorial departments have access to designated individuals who are trained in object marking. Where direct marking is impractical or would damage an object, another method of physically associating the object with its number is agreed in consultation with the Department of Conservation.

5.7 Collections Audits

Collections audits are the responsibility of the curatorial departments. All curatorial departments have long held specific auditing strategies for their collections, and regular audits form part of their departmental collections management plans. All auditing strategies are based upon the physical presence and condition of the objects being audited, and are usually conducted by curatorial staff or conservators. Collections management and documentation records are updated with information resulting from an audit. Departments also often use audits as an opportunity to check and improve the storage and packing conditions for a collection. Remedial action is taken whenever an audit reveals a problem with an object: e.g. poor storage conditions (storage conditions and materials are upgraded), deteriorating condition (object referred to the Department of Conservation), missing accession numbers (object referred to curator or documentation staff for checking and re-labelling).

In addition to internal departmental audits, the Registrars' Department conducts an annual formal audit across all collections departments. Each year the Registrars' department will draw up a list of 6 items, selected at random from the department's collections and will ask for them to be presented in an agreed period of time.

5.8 Access to Museum Documentation

The Museum is committed to the enhancement and encouragement of public access to its collections. Collections Online contains over 103,000 records available on the museum's website. All documentation concerning objects held by the Museum can be consulted on-site, either on demand in Print and Study rooms during working hours (for the vast majority of Western Art and Eastern Art collections) or by appointment with the relevant curatorial department, except under the following circumstances:

a) At the request of planning authorities and/or landowners, access to location information from aerial photographs and maps may be restricted in order to protect sensitive archaeological sites;
b) At the request of donors or vendors, details of an acquisition may be treated as confidential information;
c) For archives that are in a poor state of conservation, access to the handling of documents may be restricted until such time as they can be properly conserved and

indexed, or a digital archive can be created.

Visitors consulting documentary archives may be asked where appropriate to sign a form acknowledging that the Museum retains copyright of the material, and agreeing to request the written permission of the relevant curatorial department if it is wished to cite or quote anything from the archive in a publication.

6 Health and Safety Policy

The Museum has a published *Statement of Health and Safety Organisation* which is revised annually, under the terms of the *University of Oxford Health and Safety Policy*. The document sets out all responsibilities for safety within the Museum including that which relates to: fire; electrical equipment; workshops; laboratories; radiation protection; manual handling; first aid provision; and individual safety responsibility. The Director bears responsibility for the health and safety of museum staff and visitors. He is assisted by Departmental Safety Officers and other designated senior members of the Museum staff.

The University Safety Office provides guidance and policy statements on a wide variety of topics.

7 Security

Security is the responsibility of the Museum's Operations Director and Head of Security, who work with the National Security Advisor (ACE), Oxford University Security Service and Thames Valley Police. Security policy and provision is kept under constant review.

8 Reserve Collections and Study Rooms

The Museum is committed to enhancing and encouraging access to its collections, and, subject to security, to making works not on display available to the public. Our various departmental study and print rooms, publicised both across the museum and on our website, offer regular access to our objects for study and other forms of engagement. Information about opening times, accessibility, and material available can be found at www.ashmolean.org/studyrooms.

Each of the curatorial departments issues regulations regarding the operation of their Study Rooms, and required working practices for visitors who wish to consult the collections. A copy of these regulations will be provided to visitors when they arrive at the Museum, if not in advance of the visit. Failure to agree to these regulations will result in access to the collections being denied.

The curatorial departments may restrict access to certain parts of the collection under the following conditions:

a) Where the object presents a potential biological, chemical or physical hazard to visitors;
b) Where the object could be deemed to have racist, obscene or otherwise disturbing content;
c) Where unrestricted access could cause offence or distress to actual or cultural descendants of the makers or owners of an object;
d) Where the object is unusually sensitive, or in a poor state of preservation;
e) Where the object is unusually rare and fragile;
f) Where human remains are concerned.

Enquirers will be advised if any of the material that they wish to see falls into these categories. People wishing to examine restricted material should apply in writing to the Keeper of the relevant department, providing a research design and references for the proposed work. Researchers may be asked to sign a disclaimer should permission be granted for objects covered by category (a).

Access to works on long-term inward loan is managed in accordance with any additional stipulations required by the lender and the terms of government indemnity where applicable.

Access to those wishing to see works on long-term outward loan to Oxford University colleges and offices or other institutions and not on public display are subject to the conditions of such loans. The borrowers must provide reasonable access to lent works on request.

9 Human Remains Policy

Following publication in 2004 of the report of a Working Group on Human Remains set up by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the subsequent publication by DCMS in 2005 of its *Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums*, a working group of Council's Committee for the Museums and Scientific Collections has drafted a policy for the University's museums.

The subsequent *Policy on Human Remains* held by the University of Oxford's Museums was published in the Gazette and is now available at https://www.glam.ox.ac.uk/human-remains-policy.

10 Reproduction and Photography Policies

Reproduction and photography are the responsibility of the Picture Library. A variety of policy and procedure documents exist that cover the subject of reproduction and photography of museum objects, including:

a) Regulations for the Publication of Photographs.
b) Conditions for Filming/Photography in the Museum.
c) Multimedia Electronic Rights.

The scale of charges for photography are available by request from the Picture Library and are also available on the Museum's website.

The Museum permits non-professional photography by members of the public inside the Museum. The use of tripods, flash photography and video are not permitted. Objects on loan to the Museum and temporary exhibitions may not be photographed, except with permission of the lender, and are labelled as 'no-photography' items.

Photography of museum objects for private research purposes requires a signed disclaimer form and approval of the appropriate curatorial and conservation staff. (See departmental regulations).

11 Enquiry Management

Departmental curatorial or documentation/collection management staff answer all written enquiries about the collections, as appropriate. The Museum aims to acknowledge all enquiries immediately and answer within two weeks of receipt whenever possible. If an enquiry cannot be answered due to the absence of staff with specialist knowledge of the collection, a letter or email will be sent to the enquirer specifying an expected date of return for that staff member, or an alternative contact at another institution. The museum aims to respond as efficiently as possible to telephone enquiries.

12 Identification Service

A free drop-in identification service for coins and archaeological objects runs in the Museum in the Exploring the Past gallery on the first Wednesday of every month from 12pm-3pm. Staff from the Western Art Department are available every Wednesday to look at objects or at other times by appointment with individual curators. Staff can be contacted from each relevant department for identifications by appointment. The Museum does not provide valuations.

13 Registrarial Policies and Procedures

The Ashmolean Museum regularly lends objects to exhibitions held in other institutions throughout the World. The Museum's criterion for lending is that the purpose for the loan should be a worthwhile scholarly exhibition preferably making a contribution to knowledge and accompanied by a well-informed catalogue, held in a secure building with correct climate control, with proper organisation of transport and insurance.

The Museum also has a programme of temporary exhibitions consisting of a mix of Ashmolean collections and inward loans, as well as a number of long term loans to enhance the permanent collections. The Museum also originates touring exhibitions.

All aspects regarding loans are the responsibility of the Registrar's Department, under the supervision of the Head Registrar. The Museum follows all professional guidelines regarding the administration of loans, with special reference to the *Ashmolean Museum's Due Diligence Guidelines*, the Museum's Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums* (2008)', and the recommendations of the UK Registrars Group (UKRG).

13.1 Loans In Policy

13.1.1 General

This policy outlines the principles which will be followed when objects are brought into the collection on loan. The Ashmolean will seek to secure long term inward loans to the collection either to enhance the permanent collection or for research. Items brought into the collection on long term loan will normally be those that fall within the Museum's collecting remit (see section 3.1) or which relate to the theme of a specific display or exhibition. Objects are also brought in to the Museum for the purposes of temporary exhibition. The Registrars' Department manages and administers loans for all purposes.

The Museum holds several collections termed 'permanent' loans which consist of material placed on deposit at the Museum from other institutions within the University of Oxford: e.g. Bodleian Library; Queen's College. In most cases, these arrangements are historic (some dating back to the founding of the Museum in the late 17th century) and were designed to provide best care and access to material held within the University. For example, in 1907 New College deposited its numismatic collection with the Ashmolean. The Heberden Coin Room was founded in 1922 with the intention of combining the numismatic holdings of the collegiate university into an integrated collection to support teaching and research, and the other colleges subsequently deposited their collections too.

The curatorial departments administer these 'loans'/deposits, with advice from the Registrars' Department as required.

More recent loans between other institutions within the University and the Museum are in the form of long-term renewable loans, administered by the Registrars' Department. The Museum does not accept 'permanent' loans from any other source.

The following conditions are applicable to all long-term inward loans:

a) Except as provided above permanent or indefinite loans are not permitted. All inward

loans will be for a fixed period with the possibility of renewal. The maximum fixed period will be 5 years. In the case of loans to temporary exhibition, the loan period will be the period of the exhibition plus whatever time is reasonably required for transport, preparation, installation, de-installation, packing and return transport;
b) the Museum will not borrow objects which are not fit to travel, nor will it borrow objects which are not fit to be displayed unless it has made prior arrangements with the Lender to conserve an object(s) to display standards following its arrival in the Museum;
c) loan objects are accorded the same care and security as objects in the Museum's permanent collections, unless the Lender specifies special conditions. Lender's conditions will not be accepted where they place unacceptable requirements on the Museum;
d) the Museum makes every effort to avoid borrowing finds that have been illegally removed from archaeological sites and all loans are made in accordance with the same policies as those for Acquisitions. The Ashmolean Museum is an approved museum under Part 6 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007 and can offer immunity from seizure for cultural objects which are loaned from overseas to temporary public exhibitions;
e) except in the case of proven negligence on its part or the part of its staff, the Museum does not accept liability for loss of or damage to or deterioration of the object(s) lent.

13.1.2 Loan In Requests

Curatorial departments usually make initial loan in enquiries; they or the Director make formal loan in requests with assistance from the Registrars' Department. During the initial stage of negotiation of the loan, with the Lender or Lenders' agent a loan in proposal form must be completed with as much information as can be provided and circulated to both the Registrars and Conservation departments should be notified a minimum of 4 to 6 months before a new loan in is required. If Government Indemnity cover will be required, a minimum of 9 months' notice will be needed.

Loan in enquiries can also be received from potential lenders; the Director and/or the curatorial department, as appropriate, will deal with these requests with assistance from the Registrar's Department.

As soon as an initial loan request is made or received, the Registrars' Department opens a file for all correspondence and additional information about the loan, and will reflect the status of the loan throughout the process.

Official loan requests to institutions are made in writing by the Director of the Ashmolean Museum, or in certain cases, by a relevant departmental Keeper. They should include: the purpose and dates of the loan; a list of requested objects; information about the venue facilities and proposed display where needed; a statement of insurance or indemnity arrangements; and contact names and details for the people responsible for the proposed loan for the Ashmolean.

13.1.3 Loan In Agreements

When the lender has agreed to the loan, further details are obtained for each of the objects requested: i.e. details of legal ownership and provenance; any copyright restrictions; valuation; condition; exact dimensions; special handling, display or security requirements and any other descriptive and historical information as required.

After a loan is confirmed, both the lender and the Registrar as a delegated officer of the museum sign a written agreement which refers to all conditions for the loan, and should include:

a) standards of care, display, handling, security and environmental arrangements, condition reporting and monitoring;
b) insurance and indemnity requirements;
c) costs and responsibilities including: conservation, transport, staff time and unforeseen costs;
d) terms of reproduction and intellectual rights;
e) packing, transport, courier and other shipping requirements;
f) the method of acknowledgement for labels;
g) the owner's rights to their object during the loan period;
h) loan period and renewal application dates for long-term loans, if the loan is to be renewed;
i) instructions in relation to Immunity from Seizure status.

Should a transfer of a loan from the Ashmolean to a third borrowing institution be required, the lender should make special provision with the Registrar's Department, who ensures the Lender's agreement to the loan and manages the loan in accordance with the standard procedures and agreements used for outward loans of the Ashmolean Museum own collection.

Compliance with the conditions of the Ashmolean's *Acquisition Policy* (3.2 above) is essential to any loan. Only then can the Registrars' Department provide the lender with documentary evidence of insurance or indemnity or Immunity from Seizure status as requested by the lender.

Loans to temporary exhibitions are managed by the Registrars and Exhibitions departments in accordance with standard procedures.

13.1.4 Arrival of a Loan In

Curatorial departments identify a location for objects prior to arrival of long-term loans.

The Registrars' Department schedules transport, packing and receipt of the objects, including briefing all necessary staff and arranging for the implementation of any requirements specified by the lender.

The Registrars' Department with Conservation staff should unpack and make an initial condition report for all objects before moving them to their specified location.

The Registrars' Department will prepare and send a receipt to the lender to confirm the arrival of the objects. The lender is advised of any problems discovered on receipt.

All new inward loans will be reported to the Visitors by the Registrar in the loans report.

13.1.5 During the Course of a Loan In

The Registrars' Department with the assistance of conservators and curators will monitor the loan, and will report any changed circumstances in the Museum to the lender.

The Conservation Department will monitor the condition and environment for the loaned objects.

13.1.6 End of the Loan In

The Registrars' Department will arrange for the return of the loan, and will arrange for the packing and transport arrangements, advising the lender as appropriate and co-coordinating any courier arrangements.

The Conservation Department will complete a final condition report on the object, including taking digital photographs as required.

The Registrars' Department will oversee the safe dispatch of the loan and provide receipts for return by the lender as confirmation of safe receipt.

13.2 Loans Out Policy

The Ashmolean Museum approves loans out of objects for the purposes of exhibition and/or research. The Registrar's Department manages loans for exhibition and research following their approval by the Visitors. The curatorial departments are responsible for proposed loans out prior to approval by the Visitors, and administer fully loans out for research alone. The Registrars' Department can provide advice to curatorial departments concerning proposed loans out prior to approval by the Visitors. The Head Registrar is kept informed of all key information concerning proposed loans out prior to approval by the Visitors by the curatorial departments or the Director's PA as appropriate. All loans out are for a fixed period, although agreements may include an option for renewal.

13.2.1 Loan Out Requests

Initial loan out requests are received by the relevant Department or by the Director and sent to on the Registrars' Department who will copy and forward as necessary. The Registrars' Department will input the loan request onto the Collections Management database and send an acknowledgment letter advising when the requestor can expect a decision about their request.

As soon as an initial loan out request is received, the Registrars' Department will open and maintain a file that will contain all correspondence and additional information about the loan out, and will reflect the status of the loan out throughout the loan out process. The Departmental Loans Officer for relevant curatorial department(s) will also open and maintain similar files, as they require.

Before any loan out request can be assessed, the following information must be provided by the borrower to the relevant curatorial department(s):

a) purpose and dates of the requested loan; including a statement of the relevance of Ashmolean Museum works to the exhibition or long term loan;
b) a list of the requested objects giving sufficient information for identification, including accession numbers wherever possible;
c) a completed facilities report for the venue;
d) a statement of insurance or indemnity arrangements;
e) contact names and details.

All proposed loans out are assessed by the relevant curatorial department(s) and the Department of Conservation in the first instance. All loan requests must be received with a minimum of 9 months' notice for UK loans and 12 months' notice for international loans. The departments will specify any special requirements for the handling, display, or storage of the objects – especially with regard to any required special environmental or security arrangements.

The Director, who may impose additional requirements, must then assess a proposed loan out with the Keeper(s) of the relevant curatorial department(s). These meetings are held with a representative of the Conservation Department and the Head Registrar to discuss all loan requests prior to the Visitors meeting.

Following the Loans meeting, the Head Registrar will then compile a report for the Director to present to the Visitors for their official approval.

Following approval of a loan out by the Visitors, all relevant paperwork held by curators, conservators or departmental loans officers should be transferred to the Registrars' Department.

Should a loan from the Ashmolean be requested for an exhibition which will travel to more than one venue, the organising venue should make special provision with the Registrars' Department and facilities reports and separate loan agreements will be required for each institution which wishes to borrow the objects.

The curatorial departments will not usually provide label or catalogue text about objects for borrowers. Should this be required, special arrangements will have to be made with the relevant department. A charge may be incurred for this service. Curator(s) should send the Registrars' Department a copy of any text that they are willing for a borrower to use for labels, a catalogue or for any other purpose.

13.2.2 Loan Out Agreements

When the Visitors have agreed to the loan, the Head Registrar writes to the borrower and sends a loan agreement, which refers to all conditions for the loan, for signature by the borrower and the Registrar as the delegated officer for the Ashmolean Museum. The agreement includes:

a) basic catalogue (label) details of the loans;
b) standards of care, display, handling, security and environmental arrangements, condition reporting and monitoring;
c) value of objects and insurance and indemnity requirements;
d) costs and responsibilities including: conservation, transport, staff time and unforeseen costs;
e) terms of reproduction and intellectual rights (included in standard documents prepared by the Publications Department);
f) packing, transport, courier and other shipping requirement;
g) the method of acknowledgement for labels and catalogues, including details of any additional credit lines for works which were donated or bequeathed to the collection;
h) the Museum's rights to their object during the loan period.

The Registrars' Department advises of estimated charges that will be incurred by the borrower: e.g. cost of required conservation work; framing; record photography; packing; catalogue text; etc.

The borrower should send the Registrars' Department documentary evidence of insurance or indemnity as soon as possible after the loan has been agreed in cases where the museum's insurance is not to be used.

For British museums, the Registrars' Department should ensure that a satisfactory report has been received from the National Museums Security Adviser or other designated individual and that the borrower has met all required security conditions.

The borrower should report any change in circumstances to the Museum as soon as possible.

13.2.3 Dispatch of a Loan Out

The Head Registrar, in consultation with the curatorial departments and the Conservation Department, will assign a briefed courier for both the outgoing and incoming loan journeys as appropriate.

Loans are prepared by the Conservation Department.

Works on public display are removed by the Registrars' Department, conservators, technicians or the relevant curators and replaced by temporary removed labels, prepared by the Registrars' Department. Key works are replaced by other items and/or a label giving details of the loans. The Registrars' Department also advises the Learning Department, Events team and the VEA Team Leaders of the removal of such key items and exhibition period.

The Registrars' Department will manage all arrangements for packing and transport with the designated shipping agent regarding the loan trips.

Conservation staff should make a detailed condition report for all loan objects, including digital images as needed.

Professional agents will pack loans under the supervision of the Registrars' Department. Some loans may be packed by the Registrars' Department, conservators, or in-house technicians. Packing instructions form part of the Condition Report sent with the courier or to the Lender with non-couriered loans.

The Registrars' Department will schedule the dispatch of the objects, including courier arrangements and briefing the courier(s) and shippers concerning the implementation of any specific requirements specified for the objects, including customs declarations.

Courier(s) returning from loan trips should provide the Registrars' Department with a short written report.

Receipts and conditions reports are sent with non-couriered loans. The borrower should provide the Registrars' Department with a receipt to confirm the safe arrival of the objects.

The Registrars' Department should arrange for the invoicing of the borrower for the costs incurred during the preparation for loan according to the terms of the loan agreement.

13.2.4 During the Course of a Loan Out

The Registrars' Department will monitor the loan, and should be contacted if there are any changes of circumstances at the venue.

The borrower should provide the Registrars' Department with copies of any publicity concerning the purpose of the loan, two copies of the catalogue for transfer to the curatorial departments, and visitor figures for purpose of the loan.

The Registrars' Department completes annual checks of all long term outward loans, alternating between sending renewal letters confirming the unchanged condition and location of works and physical checks of the works.

13.2.5 End of the Loan Out

The Registrars' Department will liaise with the borrower and the shipping agent regarding the return of the loan, and will confirm/make packing, transport, courier and receipt arrangements with the borrower and agent.

Courier(s) returning from loan trips provide the Registrar's Department with a short written report.

The Registrars' Department will supervise professional agents in the unpacking of the returned loans. The Registrars' or Conservation departments will on occasion unpack the loans with the help of in-house technicians as necessary.

The Conservation Department completes final condition reports for objects, including taking digital photographs as required. Any problems are reported to the Head Registrar, as are details of any necessary remedial action.

The objects are returned to the relevant curatorial department(s) to be put back on display or in reserve storage as appropriate.

The Registrars' Department will acknowledge safe receipt of the object to the borrower and that all the final conditions of the loan have been met (e.g. payment of costs, receipt of catalogues).

13.3 Insurance and Indemnity Management

The Registrars' Department is responsible for the insurance of works on inward loan in accordance with particular agreements negotiated with the lender. Objects in the collection are not specifically insured.

The Head Registrar and Collections Registrar are responsible for documenting and managing indemnity of loaned objects under the Government Indemnity Scheme and liaising with the Departments of Conservation and Security over relevant requirements.

13.4 Immunity from Seizure

The Registrars' Department is responsible for the administration of the Immunity from Seizure status and for ensuring that all regulations are adhered to in order to ensure that the status is upheld.

13.5 Import / Export Licenses

The Registrars' Department is responsible for obtaining or confirming the holding of any required Customs documents and import or export licenses for objects that will be loaned into or out of the Museum.

Appendix I

BACKLOG PLAN

Documentation Improvement Strategy

We endeavour to improve the quality, consistency and fullness of our database and paper documentation. Wherever possible each collection item has a digital record and a corresponding file where all available associated paperwork is stored. All related paperwork and image files are recorded under the Museum's official accession or registration number.

A Collection Managers Group exists which consists of representatives from across the Museum. Its members have a dedicated mailing list to report and resolve technical and user issues within the collections management system (MuseumPlus [M+]). They discuss recommendations for improvements to data consistently by setting restricted pick-lists (based on a set of agreed standards), providing user manuals and arranging regular data-entry training and support for all users. They endeavour to keep up-to-date with developments in specialist terminologies, to improve efficiency and apply good practice.

The Museum has a long-standing departmental structure which derives from its historical development. We are working towards a consistent approach to documentation, however there are still some differences between departments, and each backlog is unique.

Department of Antiquities

The Department of Antiquities has multiple database records relating to individual objects. We endeavour to consolidate these and remove duplicate and erroneous records on a daily basis. With such a large collection, the strategy for tackling this work is as follows:

1. Whenever there is a request for information, or to view an item or groups of items from the collection, the data and paper records for that entire group and any associated objects (same site, same donor, same type of material etc.) are consolidated by documentation staff. In addition, any amendments to registration numbers are updated in all files and with the object itself;
2. Documentation staff focus on consolidating records in manageable groups - for example, all items in a particular catalogue, or on display, or for University teaching sessions;
3. Documentation staff also have longer-term consolidation tasks where they work through groups of records by year;
4. The Department is also compiling a set of instructions for data-entry which are collection- and even object type-specific, to allow short-term volunteers to make a valuable contribution to the database without needing expert knowledge of the system;
5. Records with incorrect registration numbers, missing images, multiple or sample images are tagged for further investigation on the CMS using the 'Inventory note' field.

Cataloguing / Inventory (Stage 2)

Everything in the collection is recorded either digitally or in written form (such as hand-lists). Much of the collection was captured on databases when decanted for major building and store renovations between 2004 and 2011. We are working to catalogue items which were not included in that process and to incorporate them in the collections management system.

Auditing

Our collections are in high demand and are moved between locations on a regular basis. Our location management procedure and facility is in place to track all object movements. Auditing is undertaken in the lulls between academic terms, on a store-by-store basis. Any misplaced items are recorded on the CMS for urgent resolution.

Scope of Backlog – Items with Ownership
Items on Collections Management System

The Department of Antiquities was decanted on a large scale in 2004 as the Museum underwent a major building redevelopment. Much of the collection was photographed and added to a database. This database was imported to the existing collections database, and we are now working to merge duplicate entries and resolve anomalies.

In 2010, all items within the Egyptian galleries and stores were also decanted in the same manner, and a separate database created, which in this case also holds images of related index cards. This database is yet to be imported into the Museum's CMS, as it needs some large-scale restructuring and Egypt-specific terminology.

Collections housed in the older part of the building which was unaffected by these projects were not included in these decant exercises. (All these items are present in our registers and catalogue-registers). Items not on the Museum's CMS therefore also have location management issues, however, in many cases, they are contained in type-specific cabinets and can be effectively located.

These include:

Task	Size estimate	Update January 2020	Timescale	Issues
Add to CMS:				We are a University Museum and support a great deal of teaching and research. Time for internal documentation is limited to a few months every year.
Clay tablets	4,515	4,569 complete		

Roman gems	4,620	complete		
Ostraca	6,748	ongoing	New target: December 2020	
Scarabs	1,805	Spreadsheet complete	Migrate to collections database Autumn 2020	
Papyrus	199	Spreadsheet complete	Migrate to collections database Autumn 2020	

As staff were focussed on the redevelopment activities of 2004-2010, new acquisitions were not directly marked with their numbers, but instead paper labels were attached or associated with them, and photographs taken.

Task	Size estimate	Update January 2020	Issues
Object marking			
2004-2010	1,672	Complete	

Since June 2013 the Antiquities Department has also:

1) Deleted 16,560 duplicate or erroneous records;
2) Edited 96,638 records to improve standardisation or make them fit for Collections Online;
3) Added an additional 1202 records which were not previously recorded on the collections database.

Digitization of Registers

Our registers run from 1683 to the present. Some are in the form of published catalogues. All registers in the former format have been digitized, some are still to have their image files renamed with their accession range. This work is tracked on a spreadsheet. Copies of the files are stored on the University server and on a memory stick away from the primary source.

Task	Size estimate	Update January 2020	Timescale	Issues
File renaming	3,635 files	867 remaining	Autumn 2020	

Database Embellishment

Objects without an image are photographed by the Study Room whenever they are retrieved for viewing or display. Professional images are also taken by the Museum's Photographic Department for objects that go on loan, are included in catalogues or on the website, or when external orders are requested. These images are uploaded to MuseumPlus by Study Room staff.

A digital list of objects requiring photography is also kept by the Study Room. In time we endeavour to add this information to the 'Inventory note' field in MuseumPlus.

Task	Size estimate	Update January 2020	Timescale
Adding images to CMS	25,850 records	16,070 added or improved	December 2020

Discrepancy Checking (Stage 3)

Records from the 2004-2011 decants are kept in a separate collection and merged with existing records when checked with the register. Records once checked against the register and found to be incorrect are added to the 'Advanced checking' collection on our database for further investigation.

There is still a substantial backlog here, and may not be possible to resolve it until every item is entered onto the database.

Task	Size estimate	Update January 2020	Timescale	Issues
Advanced checking	1,715 records	1,165 complete	December 2022	Cannot be completed until end of data-entry process.
Decant records	36,101 records	12,521 complete	December 2022	

The approach here is to:

- Merge all records where correct matches can be found;
- Resolve / delete duplicate records;
- 'Promote' decant records to main collection records where no match exists, and they are correct according to registration documentation;
- Add missing records in each year sequence until everything in the registers is represented;
- Look for matches to these new records, in the decant, temp numbers and advanced checking collections, to provide images and locations;
- Resolve / remove historical storage locations, replace with 'not found' where necessary;
- Audit collections to resolve missing items where above process have proved fruitless.

Department of Eastern Art

Cataloguing /Inventory (Stage 2)

The Eastern Art collection was captured on a single database when it was decanted for the major building renovation occurred between 2004 and 2009. All items that arrive at the museum are recorded in a digital pre-entry spreadsheet managed by the departmental Collections Managers. The digital list includes item description, location, and collection area. The curators regularly accession these objects in the departmental Register. After this, the Collections Managers create a record in the CMS, MuseumPlus, using the Accession Number assigned by the curator, and in time the object is photographed, measured, labelled with a barcode, and marked with said Accession Number. This accessioning process is tracked in the digital spreadsheet mentioned above.

Location Management

Our collections are in high demand and are moved between locations on a regular basis; these location changes are updated in MuseumPlus. During the quieter times between teaching terms, Collections Managers also audit the collection, working through each store rack by rack. Any misplaced items are recorded on M+ for urgent resolution.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Location resolution			
Search for objects that are listed in MuseumPlus with a location of 'not found' or empty	NOT FOUND = 306 (6 are Decant records to be potentially merged with curatorial records) EMPTY = 304, all Decant records	As time allows	

Scope of Backlog - Items with Ownership
Accessioning

As of January 2020, there are 107 objects waiting to be formally accessioned. Information about these (including description and location) is kept in the pre-entry spreadsheet managed by the Collections Managers.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Object registration			
Register objects	107	Ongoing, as new objects are acquired on a regular basis	Curators and Study Room staff operate a busy teaching and research schedule and have limited time available for documentation
Create database records for Registered objects, including measurement and photograph	7 new acquisitions, in addition to c. 130 historic records which appear in the registers, but not in M+	2020	
Curator: responsible for	c. 198	2021	

filling in any sparse Register pages; Collection Managers: responsible for inputting data to MuseumPlus			

Object Marking

All objects are stored with a barcode label that includes their unique Accession Number, the main exception being flat works stored in solander boxes (the boxes are barcoded) If an object is found without a label, this is immediately rectified by Collections Managers.

As mentioned above, the Department of Eastern Art was decanted in 2004 as the Museum underwent a major building redevelopment. As a result, many objects acquired during the redevelopment and in the busy period since then have not been physically numbered with their Accession Number.

The MuseumPlus 'Inventory note' field is used to record historic objects that require physical numbering. A digital file kept by the Collections Managers tracks the process of numbering acquisitions registered within the last year.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Object marking			
Physically number objects with their accession number: 2004-2019	Update to January 2020: 55	2020	Limited time available for documentation and space availability in the Conservation Labs; a new system that can used outside a lab is currently been devised by the Conservation department, but this, while it will ultimately help, has been slowing the process down

Discrepancy Checking (Stage 3)

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Resolve temp nos	2 "Loan in EA" TNs	ongoing	These have been referred to the Registrar department for resolution if possible. The provenance of one is unknown.

Digitization of Registers

The accession registers for the Eastern Art department run from 1955 to the present, although the Department of Eastern Art as it currently stands was created in 1962. Objects that were transferred to Eastern Art from other Ashmolean departments or University institutions (e.g. the Indian Institute, Bodleian Library) were registered in separate registers under 'X' numbers. The Department also has a NA register for Support collections.

With the exception of the most recent Register (2006.180 onwards) all Registers, including the EAX folders, have been digitized with the image files named according to their accession range. The digitised versions of the EAX numbers are arranged in sequential order so it is easier to find the appropriate entry.

Copies of the digital files are stored on the University server and on a CD away from the primary source.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Digitization of Registers	All EA registers have been digitised and copies are on EA server until most recent acquisitions; NA register still to be digitised.		

Duplicate database records

Much of the Eastern Art collection was photographed during this decant process, and these photos, alongside object locations, were included in a 'Decant' database. This database was imported to the existing collections database (MuseumPlus), where the Decant and Curatorial records get merged into one. The bulk of the merging has been completed; Collections Managers are now working to resolve any problematic entries, including duplicate records, e.g. more than one curatorial record with the same accession number.

Whenever an item is found to have two records, the discrepancy is noted in a spreadsheet managed by the Collections Managers and a note is made in the 'Inventory note' field in MuseumPlus. Records found to be incorrect when checked against the Register are also added to the 'Decant Advanced checking' collection on our database for further investigation.

When possible, records are immediately consolidated in MuseumPlus and paper files. If an immediate solution is not possible, then Collections Managers focus on the consolidation of duplicate records during quiet periods in the year (i.e. in between term times).

Database records with numbers reflecting their 'unknown' status are our prime focus, in particular TN refs, 'wrong number'/'duplicate number' refs, and EAZ refs as the latter often also have a duplicate EAX and/or EA number in the system.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
'EA Decant Advanced checking' records (including duplicate numbers)	82	ongoing	Limited time available for documentation; information not always available
'EA Decant' records	1,158 records (excluding acc nos: EAP, AN, EASTN)	ongoing	Limited time available for documentation; information not always available
(see above)			

The Heberden Coin Room

The task of digitizing 300,000 numismatic objects is a substantial one. The process has been designed to be as efficient and inexpensive as possible.

Smart data capture

We use a world-leading smart data-Capture system for coins. The system not only produces high quality images, but also automatically captures weight, diameter, die-axis, and images of the tickets. All this is fed directly into an Access database. All these data are then exported directly into a customized web application (see below). Images are automatically processed on export.

We use teams of volunteers registered with the University Volunteer Service for data capture. There is a pool of up to 60 coin volunteers at any one time. There are three capture set-ups so three volunteers can capture at a time. Each curator supervises volunteers one day per week.

Progress (to January 2020): to date some 106,000 objects have been captured. This includes about half a million images: coins have two sides and, on average, more than one ticket each.

Coin Collection web application (https://hcr.ashmus.ox.ac.uk)

This online numismatic platform was developed through the University IT Services. The web app is crucial both for adding numismatic and collections data and for presenting the numismatic collection in the best possible way to users via the web.

Accession numbers are allocated to objects when they are imported into the web app. The web app also creates unique URIs for each object which are the ones used as identifiers for Oxford coins internationally for the purposes of Linked Open Data (LOD).

The web app facilitates an innovative form of password-protected crowdsourcing for adding data. Anyone with adequate knowledge to whom we have given a password can add data to records from anywhere. The web app is currently used by curators, volunteers, paid specialists and others to document the collection. Up to three volunteers work on the website at a time, alongside the three capture volunteers. Private donations have been secured to digitize our Bactrian and Indo-Greek, Islamic, Chinese and Early Modern Europe collections via the web app using paid specialists, some of them elsewhere (Canada, France). As a final step in the process, all records are validated by curators to ensure that they are accurate and complete.

Ontologies are mapped to international standards established for the subject under Nomisma (http://nomisma.org/) for the purposes of Linked Open Data. LOD is more developed for Numismatics than for any other area of Archaeology. For example, the web app includes the capacity to store URIs for online classifications such as Online Coins of the Roman Empire and for the Zenon online bibliography, thus providing internationally agreed unique identifiers for individual classifications and items of bibliography. This engagement with cutting-edge Linked Open Data is crucial and has enabled the Ashmolean to raise money for the digitization of its numismatic collection from national and international funding agencies (AHRC, ERC).

The web app is designed to be the most effective presentation of numismatic data for users worldwide. It allows scholars and members of the public nationally and internationally to access freely the Ashmolean's coin collection through the best-possible interface.

Progress: 45,000 coins have been uploaded to the web app of which 10,500 have been validated as being fully described.

Bridge to Collections Management System

Once items in the web app have been validated by curators, data from selected fields in the web app and finalized images are transferred to the Collections Management System (M+) using a 'bridge' or 'pipeline'. Data is transferred for museum logistical purposes (management of loans, conservation, central photography, picture library etc.) and for cross-collection searching.

Auditing

Auditing is undertaken for each part of the collection to make sure that everything is ready and in good order before the start of the process described above.

Scope of Backlog

Coins not integrated into the main collection are kept in a special coin cabinet. Before the process described above, each curator integrates the coins under his responsibility into the main collection.

'Objects Left' are most likely hail from an early time in the Museum's history when members of the public were encouraged to temporarily deposit items for identification advice. They are kept aside in a designated location with all associated paperwork, so they can be easily found when required.

Department of Western Art

Our CMS contains 148,046 records and is not yet complete. Our print collection remains the section still to enter. Index cards exist for the majority of the collection of prints but requires skilled identification and research to complete a record and number the mount or work itself. The Western Art Department continues with the cataloguing of Douce and Hope Portrait Collection of prints via 2 dedicated positions (Digital). Interns are also working on print collections and completing missing photography records.

We rely heavily on our Digital team to complete batch updates to match data standards so records can be consistently searched on the database and online. WA had a dozen or so databases that were merged into one that is our current system. The data is constantly being scrutinised and corrected.

Photography also remains incomplete for 80,862 records not having a standard picture.

Discrepancy checking – WA.OA items continuing to be logged – currently 2,289. We may never be able to reconcile donors due to lack of paperwork and incomplete registration entries.

Up to date with registering and accession numbering to within month or two of acquisition. Continuing retrospective numbering when appropriate.

Very few records have no location - under 20. We have 152 described as 'not found' which could mean they are duplicated by the WA.OA register and will eventually be identified and given true WA year registration numbers.

WA has a small amount of support collection (NA.) items that are worthy of management but kept for the benefit of the working of the museum. These are currently 58 items in this category.

Digitization of Registers

The digitization of the registers is ongoing and an off-site store has been confirmed for digital files.

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Digitization of Registers	WA registers pre-1997 have been on microfiched and later ones photocopied. Copies kept off-site. Recent years to be digitised.	2020	Resources – 1 Collections manager with 1 part time assistant

	OA register still to be digitised.		

Task	Size estimate	Timescale	Issues
Registration Continuation and completion of 1908 registration of objects transferred from the Bodleian Library or the Department of Antiquities.	c.5 items.	By April 2020	Resources for all tasks – 1 Collections Manager; unclear historic documentation process.
Discrepancy-Checking Systematic checking of acquisitions registers with database entries to see if they tally.	Progress on January 2020: 2264 LOGGED.	End of 2022	Resources lacking to match missing or confused entries with WA.OA recorded works. WA may never be able to match conclusively.
Items with unclear Ownership 'OA' Register for items from the collection with no accurate accession year, paperwork or register entry. Two volumes with running number, now on database and Excel spreadsheet for pre 2005 entries.	2,289 items. Receipts archive and 3 files of early 20th century correspondence to be examined.	End of 2022	Without additional staffing cataloguing of works on paper (mainly prints) will take years to allocate registration number and enter on database in basic form.
Objects without any sort of registration number to catalogue.	Less than 20 objects. Less than 100 drawings.	By April 2020	

The Cast Gallery

All acquisitions until 2012 have been included in a published catalogue and entered into MuseumPlus. Subsequent acquisitions have been documented, researched, photographed and filed in a register while waiting to be included in the database. There is no backlog.

Every object is given an accession number and its movements (exhibitions, loans etc.) are recorded in MuseumPlus.

ALL DEPARTMENTS: Scope of Backlog - Items with Unclear Ownership

Items which have been found in the collection without clear ownership are included in our inventory in a number of ways. We have a series of reference terms which allow us to care for the items whilst making endeavors to resolve their status.

'OL' refs stand for 'Object Left' and most likely hail from an early time in the Museum's history when members of the public were encouraged to temporarily deposit items for identification advice. Some of these were never collected by their owners. Where possible we have made attempts to contact these people and return their property. [STATS – At Feb 2014 –ANOL=44 (January 2020 update: 66 remaining), EAOL= 27 (January 2020 update: 27].

'TN' refs stand for 'Temporary Number' and were applied to items with no obvious marked numbers during a full-scale refurbishment exercise between 2004-2009. We are working to resolve these records, and when an accession number is found, the record is amended. [STATS – At Feb 2014 – ANTN = 6,754 (January 2020 update: 2,481 remaining), EATN 1,217 (January 2020 update: 1,204)]. These records are in the CMS and get amended with the correct number or merged with the relevant curatorial record when resolved.

The following sub-types of TN are specific to the **Eastern Art department** and are included in the above figure:

'**EAOTN'** [Eastern Art Organic Temporary Number] (445)
'**EATNIS'** [Eastern Art Temporary Number Inorganic Store] (337)
'**EASTN'** [Eastern Art Sherd Temporary Number] (244)
'**EATN'** [Eastern Art Temporary Number] (171)

'EN' refs stand for Pre-'Entry Numbers' and are given to items which are housed at the Museum for which full legal ownership has not yet been received. Once this is in place, all files and records are updated with an official registration / accession number. [STATS – At Feb 2014 - ANEN = 497 [January 2020 update – 3 remaining]. EA currently stores EAENs outside the CMS.

'NA' refs stand for 'Not Accessioned' and are given to items belonging to the 'Support Collections', which are not of traditional academic or intrinsic value, but are being used for handling, educational purposes or to support displays. [STATS – At Feb 2014 – ANNA = 63 (January 2020 update: 3 remaining), EANA January 2020 update: 135].

'**EAX'** refs are used for objects that belonged to the Ashmolean Museum or the Indian Institute, Bodleian Library, prior to 1956, which is when the proto-Eastern Art department implemented accession numbers incorporating running dates. For EAX items, the date of accession and provenance is not always clear, although the department is constantly engaged in provenance research.

'**EAZ'** refs are used for textiles that belonged to the Ashmolean Museum or the Indian Institute prior to 1956 (see above). For EAZ items, the date of accession and provenance is not always clear.

The Museum applies Spectrum standards to post-resolution accessioning and disposal.
END