

COLLECTIONS POLICY

Preamble

In its role as a public teaching and research university, the University of Toronto is committed to the preservation of and dissemination of knowledge. As part of this commitment, the University has assembled and will continue to assemble various collections which it preserves and uses for research and teaching and, in some cases, makes available directly to the public. The University strives to treat such collections, at all times, in accordance with applicable ethical and regulatory standards, in a manner consistent with a stewardship role and in accordance with the highest academic standards, and in a manner that deploys University resources responsibly.

1. Definitions

For the purposes of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

“Accessioning” and to **“Accession”** means the decision to assemble a Collection.

“Administrator” means the head of the academic division that has or is proposed to have care and control of a Collection, or his or her delegate. In the case of a Collection held or proposed to be held by the University’s central administration, the responsible Vice-President, or his or her delegate, shall normally be the Administrator.

“Collections” means sets of objects or materials, living or non-living, and associated documentation that the University has decided to assemble, safeguard and share for scholarly purposes, but does not include any:

- items that are part of the teaching and research records of an individual faculty member, teaching staff member or librarian for which no decision to Accession has been made under this Policy;
- live animals that are within the scope of other University policies and procedures;
- print materials, digital forms of library materials, archival materials or media material within the scope of other University policies or materials that prior to this Policy have been incorporated in the collection and preservation practices of the University Library, the University Archives, or the University’s art collections; or,
- items that cannot be held lawfully by the University or any person associated therewith.

“De-Accessioning” and to **“De-Accession”** means the decision to disassemble a Collection, in whole or in part.

“Monitor” means an administrative staff member or faculty member appointed by the Administrator to oversee a Collection. In the case of a Collection held by an academic division, the Monitor shall normally be the chair of the department in which the Collection is held.

“Use” means any use of a Collection or any part thereof, including for research, teaching, display, access, and commercial purposes.

2. Principles

Before Accessioning, the University shall make reasonable efforts to satisfy itself that it has the legal authority to Accession and to Use the items that will form the Collection. It shall also satisfy itself that it has, and will continue to have in the foreseeable future, the financial, space and personnel resources to maintain the Collection and Use it in a safe, lawful and appropriate manner and, at the relevant time if appropriate, to De-Accession.

Accessioning and De-Accessioning decisions of the University shall be made by the Administrator and shall be recorded in writing.

The contents of each Collection, as it is Accessioned, shall be identified in an inventory which shall be maintained and updated as required.

Each Collection shall be maintained and Used in a manner that fulfils the requirements of the University's relevant policies and procedures, any applicable legal or contractual requirements, and any applicable requirements of donors or sponsors of research.

Each Collection shall be maintained and Used in a manner that facilitates access consistent with academic freedom, subject to such considerations as preservation, cultural sensitivity, and any of the requirements referred to in the preceding paragraph.

3. Monitoring

To ensure that, to the best of its ability, Collections are Accessioned, Used and De-Accessioned in accordance with the foregoing principles, the University shall appoint such Monitors as it sees fit, such appointment being made by the Administrator. Each Collection shall be overseen by a Monitor, who may be appointed with respect to multiple Collections.

4. Pre-Existing Collections

Items may exist that otherwise would meet the definition of a Collection but have not been the subject of a formal decision to Accession. Such items shall nonetheless be maintained and used in accordance with the University's relevant policies and procedures, any applicable legal or contractual requirements, and any applicable requirements of donors or sponsors of research. The individual who has collected the items may propose to the Administrator that they be treated as a Collection by the University. If the Administrator decides to Accession the items, the provisions of this Policy shall apply.

5. Procedures

The Vice-President and Provost and the Vice-President, Research, or their delegates, are authorized to issue procedures under this Policy to provide practical guidance with respect to Collections, and to encourage best practices and compliance with applicable regulatory frameworks. Notwithstanding anything in this Policy or any procedures issued hereunder, any guidelines or procedures established prior to the date fixed for implementation of this Policy shall remain in effect.