# Table of Contents

1. About this policy ........................................................................................................ 1  
2. Our vision .................................................................................................................. 2  
3. Our collections .......................................................................................................... 3  
   3.1 History of our collections ...................................................................................... 3  
   3.2 Our Core Collections .......................................................................................... 4  
   4. Visual and material culture ..................................................................................... 4  
   4.3 Printed and published rare materials ...................................................................... 4  
   4.4 Archives and manuscripts ..................................................................................... 4  
   4.5 Our Support Collections ....................................................................................... 4  
   4.6 Auxiliary material .................................................................................................. 4  
   4.7 Reserve collection .................................................................................................. 4  
   4.8 Printed and published reference collection ........................................................... 4  
   4.9 Digital reference collection .................................................................................... 5  
4. Acquisition ................................................................................................................ 6  
   4.1 Collecting principles .............................................................................................. 6  
   4.2 Actively developing our collections ....................................................................... 6  
   4.3 Responsive collecting ........................................................................................... 6  
   4.4 Material considered out of scope ........................................................................... 7  
   5. General .................................................................................................................... 7  
   5.1 Visual and material culture ..................................................................................... 7  
   5.2 Archives and manuscripts ...................................................................................... 7  
   5.3 Printed and published rare materials ...................................................................... 7  
5. How we collect .......................................................................................................... 8  
   5.1 Ethical and legal considerations ............................................................................. 8  
   5.2 Significance assessments ....................................................................................... 9  
   5.3 Responsibility for collecting .................................................................................. 9  
   5.4 Methods of collecting ............................................................................................ 9  
   6. Core Collections ..................................................................................................... 9  
   5.5 Documenting our collections ............................................................................... 10  
   5.6 Collecting policies of other organisations .............................................................. 10  
6. Collections review, appraisal and disposal ............................................................... 11  
   6.1 Reviewing our collections ...................................................................................... 11  
   6.2 Appraisal of material ............................................................................................. 11  
   6.3 Disposal principles ................................................................................................ 11  
   6.4 Disposal from our Core Collections ..................................................................... 12  
   6.5 Themes and priorities for deselection and disposal ............................................... 13
1. About this policy

This policy uses the neutral language of PAS197, the Code of Practice for Cultural Collections Management, to describe how we develop our combined museum, archive and library collections. It draws on the separate accreditation standards for Museums and Archives, guidance from The National Archives, guidance from CILIP, and Arts Council England Collections Development Policy Template. Appendix 2 provides a concordance between clauses in this policy and those in the latter.

Wellcome will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency. In accordance with Wellcome Trust’s overall charitable mission, we have a long-term purpose and hold collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to our stated objectives. The Board of Governors is committed to the principle that sound curatorial practice must underpin acquisition and disposal, and that limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and collection care arrangements will be taken into account.

In the spirit of this commitment, we recognise our responsibility to comply with appropriate, legal, ethical and sectoral standards and best-practice guidance in relation to collection care, documentation and use. This includes meeting the requirements of both museum and archive accreditation standards and following CILIP best-practice guidance. We follow SPECTRUM Primary Procedures, advice and guidance issued by The National Archives and policy statements issued by CILIP for collections management.

This policy will be reviewed and published at least once every five years, which will next be on or before March 2023. The National Archives and Arts Council England will be notified of any significant changes and the implications of any such changes for the future of our collections.
2. Our vision

Wellcome Collection’s vision is to be a place that challenges the way we think and feel about health by connecting science, medicine, life and art. We aim to be recognised as a world-leading museum and library that provides unique inspiration and rewards for our visitors and is a cultural ambassador for Wellcome.

Wellcome believes that good health makes life better, and its aim as a foundation is to improve health for everyone by helping great ideas to thrive. Four principles: “we make it count”, “we act boldly”, “we stretch ourselves” and “we pull together”, guide our work towards this aim.

To achieve our vision, our main goals are to:

- Make thought provoking content that encourages a reflection on what it means to be healthy and human.
- Create opportunities for people to think deeply about the connections between medicine, science, life and art.
- Seek out and preserve different perspectives through our collections and research.

To address these goals, we focus on three areas set out in this plan:

- Audience and Access.
- Programmes, Networks and Content.
- Collections Development, Management and Care.

We will continue to govern and manage Wellcome Collection appropriately to enable us to deliver our vision. We will care for, develop and manage our collections and associated information in a way which offers inclusive access to all our collections for a growing and diverse audience. We will maintain and develop exciting and innovative programmes and content to create opportunities for audiences to engage deeply with our collections. We will strive to be a great place to work.
3. Our collections

3.1 History of our collections

Wellcome Collection is located in the Wellcome Building at 183 Euston Road, London, originally built in 1932 as a home for Sir Henry Wellcome’s non-commercial pursuits.

The sheer size of Sir Henry’s extraordinary collection of objects and books outpaced his vision of creating a museum that could display them all, in the Wellcome Building, or anywhere else. He staged exhibitions during his lifetime, but the majority of museum objects remained in storage, while books were housed in different locations across London.

On his death in 1936, Sir Henry’s will established a charity for “the advancement of medical and scientific research to improve mankind’s wellbeing”. The share capital of his pharmaceutical company, the Wellcome Foundation, objects and books, were left to this charity under the care of his Trustees, who formed the Wellcome Trust, now known simply as Wellcome.

Faced with the daunting task of maintaining an extensive and sometimes esoteric museum collection of objects, the Trustees set a thematic focus around medicine and initiated a programme to sort and document medical items and to identify material for disposal. Hundreds of thousands of objects were auctioned or given to other collections around the world, although many remained in the possession of the Trust, which continued to strengthen its holdings with new acquisitions. The library was opened to the public for the first time in 1949.

In the mid-1970s, Sir Henry’s remaining museum objects began to be transferred on loan to the Science Museum whose expertise in collections care and development would allow for greater access. The transfer continued until 1982.

In 2004, the Wellcome Trust moved from the Wellcome Building into new headquarters next door at 215 Euston Road. The older building reopened in 2007, with the library now sharing space with Wellcome Collection, a new £37million public venue billed as “a free destination for the incurably curious” which set out to explore the connections between medicine, life and art through intelligent, adult programming. The venue enjoyed a popular and critical success that exceeded all expectations. Its loyal and rapidly growing audience often overwhelmed the building and, in 2013-15, Wellcome Collection underwent a second major capital project (£17.5million) to accommodate them.

In 2005 our collections were awarded MLA (now ACE) Designated status. These included printed and published material, archives and manuscripts, and visual culture collections. Today the collections are made up of the Core Collections: visual and material culture, printed and published rare materials and archives and manuscripts; and the Support Collections: our auxiliary material, reserve collection, printed and published reference and digital reference collection.

The collections are managed by Wellcome Collection, with the exception of some long-term loans, the most significant of which is Sir Henry Wellcome’s Museum Collection of objects, still cared for by the Science Museum Group. A Management Agreement, currently being updated, supports the collaborative interpretation of this collection, including its use in exhibition spaces at Wellcome.

The global charitable foundation that bears Wellcome’s name is now a neighbour to Wellcome Collection, but its adjacency reinforces the connections and shared purpose between the Trust and its museum: to challenge how we think and feel about health and to help great ideas to thrive.
3.2 Our Core Collections

Our collections are comprised of Core and Support Collections. We are committed to the ongoing development of our Core Collections, and their long-term retention, care and access in accordance with museum, archive and library best practice.

Visual and material culture
This includes Sir Henry Wellcome's Museum Collection, a closed collection of mainly three-dimensional objects. The most significant part of this collection, comprising over 117,000 historic items relating to medical history and the history of science more generally, has been on long-term loan to the Science Museum since 1976. Other smaller elements of the collection, including a group of Egyptian stelae and a collection of classical statuary, are on long-term loan at other institutions.

It also includes an estimated 250,000 prints, paintings, drawings and photographs, and a small number of other artistic objects, dating from the 14th Century to the present day, which are directly managed by Wellcome Collection.

Printed and published rare materials
These include our significant holdings of rare and early printed books, ephemera and pamphlets. In addition to around 70,000 monographs (including over 600 pre-1501 books, and over 5,000 16th-Century books), the collection includes more than 900 pamphlets and 700 items of ephemera.

Archives and manuscripts
These include unpublished material, drafts, notes, letters and photographs in both analogue and born-digital formats, including over 3,000 moving image and sound recordings. There are over 800 collections of personal papers, organisational archives, image and audio-visual collections and around 21,000 manuscripts in over 50 different languages, dating from antiquity to the present day. In addition to material collected from outside Wellcome, we hold the corporate archives of Wellcome Trust, Wellcome Foundation Ltd., and other predecessor and related organisations and associated individuals.

3.3 Our Support Collections

Our Support Collections include items that have already been assessed as not required for long-term retention as part of our Core Collections, or which are in current use for exhibition, reference, research or other support purposes and which may be subject to future appraisal for long-term retention.

Our Support Collections are more adaptable, and as a result content may change frequently. Items are not necessarily subject to the same levels of collections management, care and conservation as our Core Collections. They comprise the following:

Auxiliary material
This is acquired to enhance display within exhibitions, permanent galleries, and other public spaces, or for use in object handling sessions with the public. These items are either facsimiles, of low value, or massed produced, and are likely to be subject to wear and tear and disposed of once no longer required.

Reserve collection
This includes items of a higher value and greater historical or artistic significance than those in the auxiliary collection. These include, for example, contemporary artworks, whether commissioned or purchased for display, and objects previously used for the teaching of medical science. These items are assessed on a case-by-case basis for transfer to the Core Collections.

Printed and published reference collection
This includes approximately 15,000 journal titles, 300,000 books, pamphlets and items of ephemera and 5,000 moving image and sound recordings. It is exceptionally strong in secondary sources for the history of medicine and also covers the wider medical humanities and social sciences. Another focus
area is primary medical and scientific literature, including medical monographs and textbooks, pharmacopoeias and anatomical atlases, clinical and scientific journals, annual reports and grey literature.

**Digital reference collection**
This contains digitised content from external organisations, commissioned by us or otherwise obtained from existing open access collections, to extend and complement our own collections. The original physical items are not owned by Wellcome, but we manage the digitised content and provide access alongside our own digital material.
4. Acquisition

4.1 Collecting principles

We develop and preserve our collections to challenge the way we all think and feel about health, by exploring the connections between science, medicine, life and art. We endeavour to maximise the reach and impact of our collections amongst current and new audiences. We also want our collections to support great ideas about health, not just today, but into the future, by documenting current activity and preserving historical material.

We take a holistic view of our collections and adopt a consistent approach to making decisions about collection development and management. We value the extraordinary diversity of material under our care and recognise that this requires us to be flexible and adaptable. Our collections are, however, much more than the sum of their parts. We use common frameworks for assessing significance and prioritising activity and make individual decisions based on knowledge and understanding of the whole.

Our collections are unique and distinctive in their range and variety, and we want them to remain so. We will continue to value the varying content, context and materiality of our holdings.

4.2 Actively developing our collections

We actively seek out material which enhances the breadth and depth of our holdings, provides historical perspectives on contemporary health concerns and increases the diversity of voices represented in our collections.

We draw on Wellcome Trust's understanding of health across the funding portfolio to identify suitable themes for active collecting for our collections and we experiment with different collecting methodologies to document health related issues.

4.3 Responsive collecting

In addition to strategic collection development, we continue to make incremental additions to our existing holdings, including:

- Material of significant research potential or cultural value that builds on existing collection strengths in relation to health.
- Material closely associated by provenance with existing collections, including relevant accruals to archive collections.
- Variant editions of printed and published rare materials, significant for reasons such as important revisions of the text, commentaries, annotations, context, provenance and materiality.
- Regular additions to our printed and published reference collection, in order to ensure it is of value to our current audience.
- Material on subjects related to health (e.g. sociology, biology, botany, zoology and veterinary medicine) which are acquired selectively where they intersect with human health.
- Material on subjects which support our exhibitions and engagement with the public.
- Digital material which extends and complements our own collections.
4.4 Material considered out of scope

We will not normally collect:

**General**
- Material that poses a risk to our collections and/or our staff.
- Material for which the appropriate permissions have not been acquired and/or the approved legal and ethical standards (see section 5.1 below) have not been followed.
- Material on which donors place unreasonable restrictions, so it cannot be deployed for our core vision within what we would consider to be a reasonable time-frame (see our Access Policy).

**Visual and material culture**
- Biological or geological specimens/material.
- Archaeological artefacts.
- Objects additional to Sir Henry Wellcome's Museum Collection on loan to the Science Museum, which is a closed collection.
- Duplicate copies of prints that are not parts of larger collections.
- Visual and material culture for which we do not have the correct storage facilities or expertise to properly care for.

**Archives and manuscripts**
- The records of organisations that have sufficient infrastructure and capacity such that they might reasonably be expected to care for, and provide research access to, their own archival heritage.
- Patient records from GP practices.
- Records relating solely to a particular geographical region or area (these will generally be referred to an appropriate repository).
- Digital data sets (although we may work with individuals/organisations to identify an appropriate repository where specialist data management skills exist).
- Semi-current records still in use by the originating organisation.

**Printed and published rare materials**
- Published or printed items which are available and easily accessible in other libraries, unless they fill obvious gaps in our coverage.
- Duplicates or variant editions which do not contain any significant annotations or have relevant provenance.
5. How we collect

5.1 Ethical and legal considerations

We ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

We undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift or bequest, any item or collection unless the Collections Development Manager is satisfied that Wellcome Collection can acquire a valid title to the item or collection in question.

We follow *Combating Illicit Trade: Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives on collecting and borrowing cultural material*, DCMS, 2005 (https://www.museumsassociation.org/download?id=17156) as part of our acquisition procedures.

We do not acquire any item, specimen or collection unless we are satisfied that it 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).

We do not accept any item or collection which has been illicitly traded, in accordance 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, which the UK ratified with effect from 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act, 2003.

We use the statement of principles *Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period*, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

We obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act, 2004, and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force, as we hold or intend to acquire human remains under 100 years old.


We will not acquire, by any direct or indirect means, any biological specimen or geological material that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

We recognise our responsibility to work within the parameters of relevant professional codes of ethics when considering the acquisition and disposal of material, specifically:

We recognise our responsibility, when acquiring additions to our Core Collections, to ensure that care of collections, collections information arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the relevant accreditation standard (for either museums or archives), SPECTRUM Primary Procedures, advice and guidance issued by The National Archives and policy statements issued by CILIP.

5.2 Significance assessments

We assess all material that is under consideration for acquisition to our Core Collections and keep a record of these assessments in our collection files. More detailed assessments of significance are carried out before the acquisition of large collections or the purchase of expensive items.

5.3 Responsibility for collecting

We recognise our responsibility, when acquiring additions to our Core Collections, to ensure that care of collections, collections information arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the relevant accreditation standard (for either museums or archives) and CILIP best-practice guidance.

Overall responsibility for acquisition and disposal is held by Wellcome Trust’s Board of Governors. Responsibility for approving policies has been delegated to the Wellcome Collection Leadership Team, through the Executive Leadership Team, Funding and Direct Activities committee. In accordance with Wellcome’s formal scheme of delegation, responsibility for agreeing acquisitions and disposals for our Core Collections is delegated to the Collections Development Manager who oversees the work of the Collections Development Team.

Material is acquired for our Core Collections by the Collections Development Team who use their judgement on the suitability of material (see Section 4). We consider the storage, conservation and processing needs of items and collections before the point of acquiring them in consultation with colleagues, particularly the Conservation and Collections Care Team and the Collections Information Team. We also consult people with relevant expertise when necessary to ensure that the implications of each acquisition have been properly considered.

The Collections Development Team has discretion to acquire material up to the limit (as set from time-to-time by the Collections Development Manager) from the departmental acquisitions budget. When a purchase involves money from the Special Purchase Fund authorisation from the Head of Operations, Culture & Society Directorate is required.

We acquire material to help support Wellcome Trust in achieving its charitable objectives. This includes using standard transfer agreements for gifts and seeking the transfer of copyright where possible or obtaining a broad copyright licence.

Where a gift or bequest is offered subject to conditions outside of our standard terms it is referred to the Head of Collections & Research. This only applies to material that contributes to our vision (see Section 2.1).

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

5.4 Methods of collecting

We acquire material for our collections through a range of methods:

Core Collections
- Targeted, proactive collecting approaches to organisations and individuals identified as priorities (see Section 4.2).
• Responding to offers of donated material.
• Monitoring material available for purchase from specialist dealers and at auction.
• Bequest.
• Internal transfers of material directly from departments within Wellcome Trust through the Records Management service or through electronic systems.
• Transfer from the Support Collections using defined criteria.

Support Collections
• Purchase from booksellers and other reputable sellers.
• Donated material.
• Bequest.
• Internal transfers of material directly from departments within Wellcome.
• Collection from events.
• Commissioning.
• Digitisation.
• Subscription.

5.5 Documenting our collections

We maintain a hybrid system of order records, accession records and collections files for our Core Collections, as a tamper-proof record of all accessioned items or collections as per our procedures (see Collections Information Policy).

We attempt to maintain contact with all regular donors and depositors of material to our Core Collections. We maintain a register of donors and depositors to assist with this. This register is managed in accordance with data protection legislation.

5.6 Collecting policies of other organisations

We take account of the collecting policies of other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. We will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following organisations:

• London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.
• The Medical Royal Colleges.
• Medical Research Council.
• The members of Research Libraries UK.
• British Film Institute.
• British Library.
• Science Museum.

We aim to collaborate rather than compete with other collecting organisations to ensure that material relating to health is located in the most appropriate repository. Wellcome Trust, through the Research Resources funding scheme, supports a wide range of health collections elsewhere.
6. Collections review, appraisal and disposal

6.1 Reviewing our collections

We operate a rolling programme of collections review, across all of our Core and Support Collections regardless of format.

We undertake collection reviews with varying scopes and extents. We use collection reviews to ensure that our collections support our vision, that we are making the best use of our storage space, that we can effectively assess the conservation needs of our collection and that we have proper records relating to our collections.

We operate a formal review process that clearly identifies the scope of each review. The outcome of review, which may lead to rationalisation and disposal, will not reduce the quality or significance of our collections and will result in a more useable, well-managed collection.

We take account of changes in the external landscape, such as the digitisation of resources and collaborative print initiatives, during any collections review process.

We run a rolling programme of review focusing on different parts of the collection which is linked to our work on acquisitions and disposal to ensure the development of a strong and relevant collection.

6.2 Appraisal of material

We may identify and remove unwanted items from a larger body of material as part of the acquisition or cataloguing process. This is often to remove duplicate material, but may also involve removing material that is outside the scope of our collecting or which is not suitable for long-term preservation.

Our appraisal statement is made clear when accepting donations and is included in our collection principles as part of the donations paperwork.

Records in any format created by Wellcome Trust are subject to retention schedules. These identify which records should be transferred to the corporate archives for appraisal and when. Appraisal of records created is done in consultation with originating departments when possible.

6.3 Disposal principles

Our disposal statement is made clear when accepting donations and is included in our collection principles as part of the donations paperwork.

The cost of the disposal process is taken into account and offset against any expected benefits, financial or space.

Material may be removed from our collections for a number of reasons. The main ones are:

- It does not meet our collecting criteria.
- It could find a better audience if it was housed elsewhere.
- The wider landscape has changed since acquisition.
- It poses a risk to our collections and/or staff.
- It is damaged and its rarity does not merit repair.
We consult widely on the material under consideration for disposal with key stakeholders, including the library and academic communities, with particular reference to the users of the material itself.

Any disposal is done in consultation with Wellcome Collection’s communications team and a designated member of staff deals with all enquiries relating to the disposal. A written communications statement about the disposal will be available.

We ensure that we have the authority to dispose by establishing that we have a full legal title to any property proposed for disposal and that we have authority to dispose under the terms of any donations, benefactions or grants concerning funded material. If items were acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation then the original grant will be repaid along with a proportion of any proceeds from the sale.

We keep appropriate records of all disposals from our collections. Deaccessioned published and printed items are marked as such, so that the fact of their legitimate sale and their provenance are clearly recorded in the item itself.

6.4 Disposal from our Core Collections

We follow disposal procedures for our Core Collections with reference to the SPECTRUM Procedure for deaccessioning and disposal, guidance from The National Archives on deaccessioning and disposal and CILIP’s Disposals Policy for Rare Books and Manuscripts. The process is documented, open and transparent.

Material from the Core Collections may be disposed of by gift, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety).

We only take the decision to dispose of material from our Core Collections after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Factors including public benefit, the implications for our collections and collections held by other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by Wellcome Collection will also be sought.

A decision to dispose of items or collections from the Core Collections, by whatever means, is the responsibility of Wellcome Collection Leadership Team acting on the advice of professional staff and not of a single member of staff acting alone.

If the decision to dispose of material from the Core Collections is taken, priority will be given to retaining the items or collections within the public domain. Material will, therefore, be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other accredited museums or accredited archives likely to be interested in its acquisition.

We do not undertake disposal motivated primarily by financial reasons or the lack of physical space. Material will not be disposed of from the Core Collections for the sole purpose of raising funds. Any monies received by Wellcome’s Board of Governors from the disposal of material from the Core Collections will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the Core 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 Arts Council England.

We may, with the approval of Wellcome’s Board of Governors, decide to return human remains, or other collection items to a country or people of origin. We will take such decisions on a case-by-case
basis, taking into account all available legal, ethical and best-practice guidance. This includes “Guidance for the care of human remains in museums” issued by DCMS in 2005.

6.5 Themes and priorities for deselection and disposal

There are items in our collections which would not normally be considered for disposal. These include those in our foundation collections (purchased by Sir Henry Wellcome which were not disposed of during previous reviews of the collection).

We regularly deselect items of which there are multiple copies in our printed and published reference collection. We do, however, pay particular attention to alleged duplicates in our early and rare book collection where a closer inspection may reveal differences between copies, or where provenance and association with a collection are significant. We will not normally dispose of rare printed items with copy specific annotations, significant known provenance associations, bindings or illustrations of particular interest.

We constantly monitor our digital reference collection to ensure that it supports our vision and do not renew subscriptions which do not support that vision, are not well used or do not offer value for money.

Our current priority for disposal from our Core Collections are items or collections which do not support our vision and which we would not normally accept if we were offered them today, such as patient records from GP practices or records solely connected to a particular geographic area.

7. Related Wellcome documents

- Access Policy
- Collections Information Policy
- Conservation and Collections Care Policy
Appendix 1: Disposal procedures for visual and material culture

Appendix 1.1  All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Procedure for deaccessioning and disposal and the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures.

Appendix 1.2  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.

Appendix 1.3  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.

Appendix 1.4  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.

Appendix 1.5  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 as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Appendix 1.6  A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

Appendix 1.7  Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other accredited museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

Appendix 1.8  If the material is not acquired by any accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the Museums Association’s Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

Appendix 1.9  The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or 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.
Appendix 1.10 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 Arts Council England.

Appendix 1.11 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.

Appendix 1.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccessioning and disposal.

Disposal by exchange
Appendix 1.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Disposal by destruction
Appendix 1.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

Appendix 1.15 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.

Appendix 1.16 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.

Appendix 1.17 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.

Appendix 1.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible (e.g. the destruction of controlled substances) a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant collections file.
# Appendix 2: Concordance between clauses in this policy and those in Arts Council England Collections Development Policy Template (2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACE Template para. no.</th>
<th>Template clause</th>
<th>Wellcome Collection Section and para. no.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>The museum’s statement of purpose</td>
<td>2.1–2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.</td>
<td>1 para. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the 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.</td>
<td>1 para. 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.</td>
<td>5.3 para. 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to 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. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.</td>
<td>1 para. 3 and 5.3 para 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.</td>
<td>5.1 para 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Text</td>
<td>Reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons</td>
<td>6.4 para 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>History of the collections</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Overview of current collections</td>
<td>3.2–3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Themes and priorities for future collecting</td>
<td>4.1–4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.</td>
<td>6.1 para 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.</td>
<td>6.4 para 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.</td>
<td>5.1 para 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Collecting policies of other museums</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s)</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Archival holdings (include when relevant)</td>
<td>The policy as a whole covers the development of our combined museum, archive and library collections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Acquisition</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>The policy for agreeing acquisitions</td>
<td>5.3 para 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless 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</td>
<td>5.1 para 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>In accordance 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, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1, 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.</td>
<td>5.1 para 3 and 5.1 para 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Human remains</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.</td>
<td>5.1 para 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’ issued by DCMS in 2005.</td>
<td>5.1 para 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Biological and geological material</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.</td>
<td>5.1 para 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Archaeological material</td>
<td>Out of scope – see 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.</td>
<td>Out of scope – see 4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Exceptions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1</td>
<td>Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because the museum is:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1.1</td>
<td>acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1.2</td>
<td>acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1.3</td>
<td>In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the</td>
<td>5.3 para 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Spoliation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>The museum will use the statement of principles “Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period”, issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.</td>
<td>5.1 para 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15.</th>
<th>The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>The museum’s governing body, acting on the advice of the museum’s professional staff, if any, 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 will mean that the procedures described in 16.1–5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 15.2 | The disposal of human remains from museums in England, Northern Ireland and Wales will follow the procedures in the ‘Guidance for the care of human remains in museums’. | 5.1 para 8 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>16.</th>
<th>Disposal procedures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.6</td>
<td>A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other accredited museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>If the material is not acquired by any accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or 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.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.10</td>
<td>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 Arts Council England/CyMAL: Museums Archives and Libraries Wales/Museums Galleries Scotland/Northern Ireland Museums Council (delete as appropriate).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.11</td>
<td>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</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Appendix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.12</td>
<td>Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.14</td>
<td>If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.15</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.16</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.17</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.18</td>
<td>The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.</td>
<td>Appendix 1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approved by</strong></td>
<td>Wellcome Collection Leadership Team</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approval date</strong></td>
<td>21 March 2018</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Written by** | Jenny Shaw  
Collections Development Manager |
| **Policy owner** | Jenny Haynes  
Head of Collections & Research |
| **Distribution** | Policy documents page  
(Trustnet/SharePoint) |
| **Review Date** | on or before March 2023 |