

## **QMN PROCEDURE: Procedure for Inward Research Loans (Biodiversity, Geosciences and Cultures & Histories Programs)**

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### **1.0 PURPOSE**

These procedures ensure that all QMN staff are aware of the processes they must follow when receiving loans from external sources (inward loan); for identification, for destructive analysis or other comparative research, including type material. This procedure must be used in conjunction with the *QM64 Loans Policy*.

### **2.0 SCOPE**

These procedures apply specifically to the Curatorial and Collection Management staff of the Biodiversity, Geosciences and Cultures & Histories Programs.

(For the purposes of this document the term **Program staff member** will be used to denote either a Collection Manager or a Curator as the specific responsibilities of these positions varies depending on the Program).

This document also has implications for staff who may be confronted with handling packages containing specimens.

### **3.0 DEFINITIONS**

**Authorised Officer** for the receipt of packages and handling of biological material is the qualified Collection Manager or Curator who has the specific knowledge of the nature and risks of handling particular biological material (to protect both the person and the biological material).

The **Biodiversity & Geosciences Collection** comprise:

- State Collection material (items of State significance);
- Research Collection material;
- Reserve Collection material;
- Specimen image collections, and
- Restricted Collection material

**Biological Material** includes any living or dead specimens, biologically-derived material such as tissue samples, skeletal elements or parts of specimens, or material which contain biological agents including bacteria, viruses, micro-organisms, genetically modified

organisms / micro-organisms which might pose a risk to health and safety of individuals or the environment.

**Collection Checklist** is a list specific to each collection area based on the expert knowledge of the related Curator, which highlights any high risk issues relating to the objects or specimens being considered for loan or acquisition – such as the country of origin, the specific lending institution, or the type of item. (As outlined in *QM306: Due Diligence Procedure*.)

A **Collection Item** is an object or specimen and associated data that has been formally acquired by the QM.

**Collection Management** is the responsibility and functions that foster the preservation, accessibility and utility of the collections and associated data.

**Collection Management Systems (CMS)** is the term used to describe all QM recognised data systems that manage and report on the Collections. It includes both electronic (Vernon CMS) and hard copy Records.

**Cultural material** is physical and documentary material that represents the intangible and tangible elements of individual cultures. Such material may be, may refer to, may represent or may be a component of specific practices or knowledge systems. It includes but is not limited to artistic works including visual, performing and literary works, moveable cultural property, Ancestral Remains and other sensitive materials, photographic, film, and sound recordings and all forms of documentation which include any elements of culture - past, present and future.

**Curation** is the process whereby Specimens are identified and organised according to discipline-specific recommendations using the most recently available scholarly literature and expertise. A primary objective of this process is to verify or add to the existing Documentation for these Objects/Specimens, and to add to knowledge.

A **Curator, Biodiversity Program** is a scientist with responsibility for use of and access to discipline-specific collections.

**Documentation** is supporting evidence, recorded in a permanent manner using a variety of media (paper, photographic, electronic etc.) of the identification, condition, history, or significance of an Object, Specimen or collection. This encompasses information that is inherent to the individual Object / Specimen and its associations in its environment as well as that which reflects processes and transactions affecting the Object / Specimen (e.g. Accessioning, documenting, loaning, analysis, treatment etc.). Documentation is an integral aspect of use, management and preservation of an Object, Specimen or collection. All digital and paper based documentation must be collected, maintained and stored in accordance with *QM318: Collection and Research Record Keeping Policy*.

**Due diligence** all the required endeavours to establish the facts of a case before deciding a course of action, particularly in identifying the source and history of an item offered for acquisition, use before acquiring it, or for inward and outward loans.

**Educational Loans** are loan of items assembled specifically for the purpose of lending to schools and other educational institutions, and managed by the QM Loans Service.

**Exhibition Loans** are temporary transfers of Collection Items to and from QMN (Loans in, and Loans out, respectively), for the purposes of display. They can consist of items borrowed from individuals, community groups or other institutions and can come from intrastate, interstate or international locations. They can be an individual item or a group of items designated to be included in a QMN internally generated exhibition or display or to supplement an external '**pre-packaged**' exhibition.

**Inward Loans** are items not owned by QMN which are for the purposes of temporary display, research, identification and assessment; and can be from intrastate, interstate or from overseas.

**Lot** is the term used to define a group of Specimens or Objects recovered from the same location at the same time, which are registered, accessioned, stored and documented together for efficiency reasons based on manageable quantities of Objects (e.g. multiple specimens of insects, fishes, small crustaceans).

**Outward Loans** mean the temporary transfer of Collection items from QMN to another institution or body located intrastate, interstate or internationally; for research, education, display or cultural purposes.

**'Pre-packaged' exhibition** is an exhibition or display (touring or non-touring, local, national or international) developed by an external organising body such as a museum, gallery, commercial entity, community group or artist; governed by a specific contract.

**Program Head** is the Head, Biodiversity & Geosciences or Cultures & Histories Program, responsible for the Collections and Research at the QMN.

**Provenance** an objects or specimens full history from the time of its discovery or creation to the present day, through which authenticity and ownership are determined.

**QMN** means the Queensland Museum Network

**Record** is all corresponding data related to a Collection Item.

**Registration** is the process of fixing to an Item a unique number which refers to a register where data associated with the Item are entered against the matching Registration number during the Accessioning process.

**Research Collection** consists of Objects or Specimens for research or loan generally intended to be kept indefinitely, but not individually registered or had a significance assessment undertaken (see Lot). Specimens retained for destructive analysis are managed as part of the Research Collection.

**Research Loans** are temporary transfers of Collection Items to and from QMN (Loans in, and Loans out, respectively), for the purposes of authorised research. They can be from intrastate, interstate or international locations.

**Senior Decision Maker** this will depend on which process is being undertaken (acquisition, incoming loan, international exhibition etc.) and at what level approval is being sought. It

could be the relevant Program Head, Director or CEO, and may differ depending on the specific circumstances of the situation (for example, an issue may be elevated to a higher decision making level if necessary). In some cases this role is replaced by a **Project Board** (The Project Board provides overall direction and management to a project, such as a major exhibition, and is accountable for the success of the project. The Project Board is comprised of a Project Executive (often the CEO), Senior User/s, and Senior Supplier/s. The Project Executive is the ultimate decision maker and is supported in the decision making process by the Senior User and Senior Supplier.)

**Sensitive Material** is anything which requires special protection from disclosure or specific treatment. It is material which can potentially cause offense, distress, embarrassment or threat to members of a community. It can be political, medical, religious, social, cultural or sexual in nature and can be in the form of information, images, the spoken word, objects or activities.

**Specimen** means any animal or plant, or any part, product, egg, seed, or root of any animal or plant or geological sample.

**Specimen image collection** refers to photographs (in all forms) that are specifically associated with particular specimens from the Natural Environments collection, having identical registrations (and generally differentiated from and not necessarily included in the QMN Image Library)

**State Collection** is the official collection of specimens registered by QMN through acquisition or transfer. It is the sum total of all Accessioned specimens of scientific or historical significance vested in the Board of the QM. In practical terms the State Collection refers to specimens that have been registered and are recorded in the Collection Management System.

**Type Specimen** is a zoological, paleontological or mineral Item that serves as the basis for the name of the taxon (i.e. for identification of unnamed material through comparison with the type). Primary Types (holotype, neotype, lectotype etc) and secondary Types (paratype, paralectotypes etc) underpin the concept of the species and its variability in nature. QMN Type Specimens are irreplaceable Items of vital national and international significance for scientific research and identification verification.

**Voucher Specimen** is an Item lodged at QMN to represent (or vouch for) a larger number of putatively identical Items collected for various non-taxonomic purposes, such as published ecological surveys, or 'biodiscovery' entities, or a Specimen that is material evidence of the occurrence of a species in a particular locality or belongs to particularly important taxonomic group.

## 4.0 ACTIONS

### 4.1 Inward Loans

Part of the core business of the Queensland Museum is to receive material from other institutions as temporary loan for the purpose of research. In the Biodiversity and

Geosciences Program this may range from glass microscope slides, frozen tissues, DNA extracts, bones and bone fragments, skins, feather and fur samples, pinned insects, ethanol-preserved or dried whole animals, microfossils, meteorites, fossils, rock samples and mineralogical specimens. In the Cultures & Histories Program this may include a range of artefacts from archaeological specimens to anthropological objects.

The QMN Collection Policy states that all items loaned to QMN for research purposes, identification or comparative study will be afforded the same care and precautions for their protection whilst they are in QMN's custody as do items from the State Collection.

In addition, staff must undertake an appropriate degree of **due diligence** to assess all incoming research loans; exercising the highest levels of ethical and professional practice in order to ensure that material has not been acquired illegally, or exported from the country of origin in violation of that country's laws.

Specifically staff must adhere to all obligations outlined in the following legislation and conventions: *ICOM Code of Ethics for Natural History Museums, 2013; Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999; UN Convention on Biological Diversity, 1992; CITES Convention, 1975 and the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization, 2010, ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2004; the Protection of Movable Cultural Heritage Act, 1986 and the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, 1970.*

This process must be conducted in accordance with *QM305 Due Diligence Policy* and *QM306 Due Diligence Procedure*; it must be fully documented and staff are required to use their professional judgement to assess any potential risks. All documentation must be scanned and attached to the relevant record in Vernon (where one exists) and hard copies must be kept in the appropriate file located in the Collections and Research Records area (whether that is the designated CRRC located in the QM&S Library or a campus / Collection specific repository) in accordance with *QM319: Collections and Research Record Keeping Procedure.*)

#### **4.1.1 Biological material**

The number one principal to be acknowledged by all QMN staff is that packages that declare in writing that they contain any form of biological material (specimens, types, samples for destructive analysis etc) must be **automatically considered to contain potential biological hazards**, and therefore must be opened and treated only by authorized Biodiversity Program staff qualified to handle such material and in accordance with *QM101 Policy for Handling Hazards in the Collection* and *QM102 Procedure for Handling Hazards in the Collection.*

All elements of unpacking, handling and storage of biological material must be undertaken within the Physical Containment PC1 areas on Level 6, the Conservation Laboratory on Level 5, the Biological Laboratories at MTQ, or the freezers on L1 at QM&S and at Hendra.

## 4.2 Loan Proposal

It is the relevant Program staff member's responsibility to discuss directly with the lender the specimens or objects they wish to borrow; allowing for sufficient lead-time to obtain, collate and review all relevant and necessary documentation in relation to requirements associated with **due diligence**, for example evidence of required permits etc. (as outlined in section 4.1 above); as well as the time required to pack, and transport the items.

## 4.3 Loan Approval Process

Once a Program staff member has determined the items they wish to borrow they must seek written approval (which can be in email format) from the **Senior Decision Maker** (in most cases the relevant Program Head) prior to proceeding with the loan.

This process requires the staff member to complete a *QM320 Collection Checklist* specific to the type of material being borrowed, identifying any and all potential risks associated with the origin of the material (e.g. assessing the country, institution, lender etc.). This document along with all collated **due diligence** documentation must be forwarded to the **Senior Decision Maker** for assessment. It is then their responsibility to assess the documentation and weigh up the potential risks identified by the Program staff member in order to determine whether to proceed with the loan. They must document this decision and any risk mitigation requirements and return all documentation to the Program staff member for processing. Ultimately the final decision will rest with the **Senior Decision Maker**.

If the material proposed for inward loan contains material of a specific cultural or sensitive nature, then staff must also complete a *QM322 Cultural and Sensitive Material Checklist*; which has been developed to guide staff through the process of identifying whether or not material may pose additional risks for the Museum. When doing so staff must adhere to the protocols outlined in *QM321 Protocols for Community Consultation*; this process will ensure that the Museum has consulted with relevant stakeholders in the community to whom the cultural material proposed for inward loan relates.

If after all considerations are made, doubt or concerns still exists about the legal or ethical status, cultural or sensitive nature of the item, the Museum may decide not to proceed with the loan. However, the Museum acknowledges that some specimens or objects for which provenance information is incomplete or unobtainable may still deserve to be researched and published because of their rarity (such as Type specimens), significance (cultural or scientific) or historical interest.

## 4.4 Loan Processing

Some organisations may have their own Loan Agreement and conditions of loan which they will require QMN to comply with. It is the requesting staff member's responsibility to ensure this documentation is completed prior to arranging transport of the loan. Any conditions set out by the lending institution must be agreed to in writing prior to accepting a loan.



If the lending organisation does not have a formal Loan Agreement, it is the requesting staff member's responsibility to ensure that the loan is approved by the lender in writing or by email (verbal or other informal arrangements are not sufficient), prior to arranging transport of the loan. This can be done using the *QM203 Inward Loan Agreement - Research*. All documentation (including emails) must be scanned and attached to the relevant Vernon record and/or hard copies placed in the designated CRRC located in the QM&S Library or a campus / Collection specific repository.

The requesting staff member must sign and return the relevant copy of the lenders Loan Agreement to the lending institution acknowledging safe receipt of the material, within 28 days of receiving the specimens or objects. If the organisation did not issue a formal Loan Agreement, it is the responsibility of the requesting staff member to issue confirmation in writing or by email (verbal or other informal arrangements are not sufficient), that the specimens or objects have been received. They must also retain a copy of the lenders Loan Agreement (or written approval) ensuring it remains attached to, or can be readily associated with the particular borrowed specimens.

The lender may wish to organise transport and packing themselves or may request QM staff to make arrangements. All transport arrangements must be made in accordance with *QM52 Guidelines for Collection Packing and Transport (Cultures & Histories Collection material)* and *QM200 Guidelines for Collection Packing and Transport (Biodiversity & Geosciences Collection material)*.

#### **4.5 Incoming loans via mail**

Staff of QMN Central Records, the Loading Dock Officer or any other QMN staff member who receive inward research loans in the mail must forward to the appropriate Program staff member as indicated on the packaging. This is particularly important in relation to Biodiversity specimens, where rapid processing of samples subject to degradation is essential.

Under no circumstances must packaging be opened or documentation detached from the specimen within the package unless it is undertaken by an authorised officer. If it is unclear who the package must be directed to, the Program Head is the default receiver.

The requesting staff member, in consultation with Conservation Staff if necessary, will determine if fumigation is required before placing borrowed specimens or objects in proximity to the QMN Collection.

Specimens or objects sent as loans must be unpacked only by the authorised staff member who initiated the loan request. The specimens or objects must not be incorporated into the QMN collection but retained in a safe place, clearly marked with details of the loan and the borrower.

#### 4.6 Return of loans

Once the period of loan has expired and the specimens or objects are due to be returned to the lender, it is the responsibility of the original requesting staff member to contact the lender to arrange transport and delivery, in accordance with any specific requirements the lender may have stipulated in their Loan Agreement and in accordance with *QM52 Guidelines for Collection Packing and Transport (Cultures & Histories Collection material)* and *QM200 Guidelines for Collection Packing and Transport (Biodiversity & Geosciences Collection material)*.

If the Program staff member, who originally made the request, wishes to keep the specimens or objects beyond the original loan period, they must contact the lender directly and negotiate an extension. The staff member is then responsible either for completing a new Loan Agreement issued by the lending institution, or by confirming the new loan arrangements in writing or by email (verbal or other informal arrangements are not sufficient).

Once specimens or objects have been despatched, the staff member must send the lender an Outgoing Receipt if one was supplied by the lender, or inform the lender in writing or by email (verbal or other informal arrangements are not sufficient), recording the information on the original *QM203 Inward Loan Agreement*.

#### 4.7 Responsibilities

The Code of Conduct prescribes standards for the ethical behaviour of QMN staff and volunteers. In all activities relating to the Collections an employee must not be in conflict of interest with the purposes of QMN. If a conflict develops, the interests of QMN will take precedence.

Responsible officers:

- Collection Managers / Curators – are responsible for implementation of the QMN Inward Loans Procedure in accordance with **due diligence**, and in regard to international loans for ensuring adherence to PCOL regulations.
- Program Head – is responsible for assessing potential risks and providing that information to the overall **Senior Decision Maker** who will ultimately decide whether a loan goes ahead.

#### 5.0 POLICY BASE

These procedures have been developed in accordance with the principles of the *QM78 QMN Collection Policy*.

#### 6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENT
1.1	26/10/2010	Draft for review – assembled by Program Head



1.2	23/03/2011	Revised draft to bring in line with Loans Policy – Head, Collection Services
1.3	30 <sup>th</sup> March 2011	Incorporated Biodiversity and Geosciences into one document
1.4	16 <sup>th</sup> August 2013	Updated with new branding information
1.5	February 2015	Biannual review completed
1.6	September 2015	Updated to include Due Diligence requirements
1.7	March 2016	Updated to include comments supplied by the Ministry for the Arts

## 7.0 AUTHORISATION

<b>Approved by:</b>	Prof. Suzanne Miller
<b>Title:</b>	CEO, QMN
<b>Approval date:</b>	December 2016
<b>Signature:</b>	

## 8.0 FURTHER INFORMATION

<b>Procedure owner/creator:</b>	Head, Collection Services
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## 9.0 REVIEW PROCESS

This document will be reviewed every 2 years and at other times if any significant new information or legislative or organisational change warrants a change to this document.

*Once printed this document is no longer a controlled document.*