

**QMN POLICY: Deaccessioning Policy
(Cultures & Histories and Biodiversity &
Geosciences Programs and CRRC)**

1.0 POLICY STATEMENT

The *QM78 QMN Collection Policy* outlines policy information in *section 5.15 Deaccessioning (State Collection)* relating to the deaccessioning function. This policy acts as a link between that document and the procedures and forms utilised as part of the actual deaccessioning process.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

A **Collection Item** is an Object or Specimen and associated data that has been formally acquired by QM.

Deaccessioning is the formal process of permanently removing an accessioned Item from the State Collection, for sale, repatriation or other form of Disposal. Deaccessioning requires the prior approval of the Board.

Disposal is the process of removing an unaccessioned Item from the care and custody of QM.

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*.

A **Donation** is an item given to QM without encumbrance. Donations are to be recorded on the appropriate forms and reported to the Board.

An **Item** is an interchangeable term used for an Object, Record, Specimen or Specimen lot.

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).

An **Object** is a human-made item, often manufactured or created from naturally-occurring materials and made for use in a cultural context. This term differentiates human-made collection items from those acquired in nature (Specimens).

QM means the Queensland Museum

State Collection is the official collection of Items registered by QM through acquisition or transfer. It is the sum total of all Accessioned Items of scientific or historical significance vested in the Board of QM.

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

3.0 SCOPE

This policy is designed to assist staff in the Cultures & Histories, Biodiversity & Geosciences Programs and the Collections and Research Resource Centre (CRRC) to understand the processes involved in the deaccessioning of material from their respective collections.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

The QM Collection Policy outlines legislation and general requirements relevant to the application and interpretation of this policy.

5.0 ELEMENTS

5.1 Criteria for Deaccessioning

The decision to remove a Collection Item by exchange, sale, donation or destruction is the responsibility of the QM Board (if the item(s) are valued at \$250,000 or more), or the QM CEO (if the item(s) are valued at less than \$250,000) acting on the advice of QM staff with relevant professional expertise, based on one or more of the following grounds, where it is deemed that the collection item:

- must be repatriated; or returned to the original owner;
- must be exchanged;
- is a duplicate;
- is destroyed or damaged beyond reasonable repair;
- cannot be stored in appropriate storage conditions;
- poses an unacceptable danger or health risk;
- does not fall within QM's collection development priorities or objectives;
- cannot have its full provenance established;
- is proven to be a fake, or if its provenance, context or history is disproved;
- would be more valuable for increasing knowledge in a particular area through destructive analysis; or
- would be more useful as part of the Reserve Collections, such as public display or education loans.

Deaccessioning proposals must be completed in accordance with the *QM56 Procedure for Deaccessioning*. All processes associated with deaccessioning and disposal must be fully documented in accordance with *QM318 Collection and Research Record Keeping Policy*. All information 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.*)

5.2 Methods of disposal

Employees, honorary staff, volunteers of QM or members of their families, members of campus Advisory Committees and their families and the Board of QM or members of their families shall not be permitted to acquire deaccessioned objects nor benefit financially from deaccessioning in any way.

The steps involved in removal of deaccessioned objects from QM's Collection are listed in priority order:

- return to donor or immediate family of donor (The donor or family of the donor must be contacted at least one month prior to any form of disposal occurring. If contact details are not available, the proposed disposal must be advertised in the daily newspaper in accordance with the requirements of the *Queensland Museum Act 1970*)
- transfer to the Reserve Collection
- gift to another appropriate institution or organisation
- sell to an appropriate dealer or by public auction where appropriate (ensuring search has been conducted of Personal Properties Securities Register prior to sale)
- destroy or recycle

6.0 DOCUMENT HISTORY

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENT
1.0	12 October 2007	Original content taken from Collection Development Policy 2007 draft v0.4
1.1	17 October 2007	Draft Guidelines for comment
1.2	21 November 2007	Draft including comments from CM Forum
1.3	15 June 2009	Final draft after updated changes due to sign-off of final Collection Policy
1.4	29 th March 2011	Reviewed and updated
1.5	13 th February 2013	Updated to incorporate changes to brand, terminology and / or staffing structure
1.6	17 th April 2014	Updated to take into account new process of deaccessioning via Vernon.
1.7	Dec 2014	Biannual review and update
1.8	March 2016	Updated to take into account requirements highlighted by recent QM audit of Disposal Procedure and inclusion of CRRC.

7.0 MORE INFORMATION

Policy owner/creator:	Head, Collection Services
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8.0 AUTHORISATION

Approved by:	Prof. Suzanne Miller
Title:	CEO, QMN
Signature:	
Approval date:	29 th March 2016

9.0 REVIEW PROCESS

This Policy will be formally reviewed by QM every two years. Amendments may be required at other times and must be approved by the Board of QM.