



ART COLLECTION POLICY



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Introduction

DCU has been acquiring artwork since the early 1980's. Over time the art collection has been acquired by individuals, voluntary committees and various units by purchase, gift and long-term loans, rather than as part of a focused collecting programme.

In 2017, the University Strategic Plan, *'Talent, Discovery and Transformation'*, identified nurturing creativity and culture as a priority goal. In response to this goal, a working group was established to undertake a review of the University's Arts and Culture offering. The review identified a significant gap in visual arts provision across the University. In 2018, a Visual Arts Development Officer (part-time) was appointed for two years (2018-2020) and the DCU Visual Arts Committee¹ was established. In December 2020, the University appointed its first Cultural Arts Officer.

The DCU Art Collection Policy has been developed and drafted in consultation with the DCU Visual Arts Committee.

Purpose

The purpose of the DCU Art Collection Policy is to:

- a) Define the process by which the University seeks to develop, care for and make accessible its art collection.
- &
- b) Provide a cohesive approach to developing the DCU Art Collection, in line with the University's vision, mission and values.

Scope

This Policy relates to all works of art acquired by the University and applies to all Faculties, Centres and Units of DCU, hereinafter collectively referred to as the 'University'.

Definitions

Visual Arts

Artforms, or art works, that can be appreciated by sight, such as painting, drawing, printmaking, sculpture, ceramics, photography, video, filmmaking, digital arts etc. The term

¹ https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/2021-07/visual-arts-committee_termsofreference.docx.pdf



Visual Arts does not cover branding or installations, such as vinyl or acrylic signage or posterage.

DCU Art Collection

This is an accumulation of visual art works acquired by the University in line with this Policy.

DCU Art Collection and Insurance Register

This is the formal inventory for managing and tracking DCU Art Collection. It is maintained by the Cultural Arts Officer.

Policy Statement

The DCU Art Collection Policy is formulated to ensure that the University is able to collect art in a professional, responsible and cohesive manner in line with DCU's vision, mission and values.

The DCU Art Collection aims to:

- a) Make the visual arts accessible throughout the University.
- b) Develop knowledge and appreciation for the visual arts among staff, students and the wider DCU community.
- c) Reflect the diverse and progressive nature of the University.
- d) Enhance the University environment.

The Guiding Principles for acquisition of visual arts by the University are:

- Aesthetic knowledge
- Skilled curatorship
- Synergies with university contexts and environments
- Thought provocation
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion
- Accessibility and Engagement
- Transformation
- Safety

Acquisition

a) Responsibility

The University is committed to acquiring new artworks for the University Art Collection, on an annual basis where possible. The process for acquiring artwork is overseen by the DCU Visual Arts Committee via the Cultural Arts Officer.



b) DCU Visual Arts Committee²

This Committee was established to provide an oversight and advisory role in the development of Policy and Procedures for Visual Arts at DCU.

The Committee membership comprises of:

- President (Chairperson)
- Cultural Arts Officer
- DCU Educational Trust Representative
- External Visual Arts Representative
- DCU Estates Representative
- DCU Library Representative
- DCU Glasnevin Campus Representative
- DCU St Patrick's Campus Representative
- DCU All Hallows Campus Representative
- DCU Student Representative

c) Process

Artwork can be acquired by the University for its Art Collection in the following ways:

- Acquisition by Purchase
- Acquisition by Gift
- Acquisition by Bequest
- Acquisition by Commission
- Long Term Loan Agreements

Budget

The Cultural Arts Officer will be responsible for managing the Visual Arts budget allocation which shall be used for the maintenance and upkeep of art works in the DCU Art Collection or which may, in consultation with the Visual Arts Committee and in line with this Policy, be used towards the acquisition of new art works for the University.

Special purchases may be funded through the DCU Educational Trust or through relevant grant opportunities, in accordance with the DCU Art Collection Criteria and Procedures.³

² https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/2021-07/visual-arts-committee_termsofreference.docx.pdf

³ <https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/2021-07/dcuartcollectioncriteriaandprocedures.pdf>



All artworks donated or purchased for DCU Art Collection must be registered on the DCU Art Collection and Insurance Register via the Cultural Arts Officer.

Ethical Considerations

The University will curate the DCU Art Collection in a manner that responds to the highest ethical and professional standards. Ethical reflection is an essential part of acquisitioning artwork.

The University agrees to:

- Conduct due diligence to verify the ownership of any item prior to purchase or loan, and that the current holder is legitimately able to transfer title or to lend (applying the same strict criteria to gifts and bequests).
- Consider cultural sensitivities when acquiring artwork.
- Seek permission for appropriate uses, if copyright is retained by the artist or donor.
- Consider potential conflicts of interest

Deaccession and Disposal

a) Deaccession

The University may choose to re-evaluate works in the DCU Art Collection and recommend deaccessioning, which means the permanent removal of artwork from the DCU Art Collection.

The criteria for recommending a work for deaccession are:

- artwork no longer fits the University's mission and objectives for the art collection;
- artwork is extensively damaged or has irreversibly deteriorated, and conservation is not feasible;
- artwork has been provided by a donor with unreasonable conditions;
- artwork presents a health and safety hazard, either to staff or to other works of art;
- collection has accidentally acquired multiple copies of a work;
- artwork is found to have been illegally or unethically acquired; or
- artwork is found to have been fraudulently created.

Artwork may only be approved for deaccessioning once the University has clearly established that:

- the University has a clear legal title to the work;
- there is a valid reason for deaccessioning; &



- all relevant interested parties, such as the original donors, have been consulted where possible.

All deaccessions must be clearly recorded in the DCU Art Collection and Insurance Register, and associated documentation retained on file.

b) Disposal

Disposal in this Policy, refers to the transfer of the ownership of an artwork in the DCU Art Collection from the University. Legal or other barriers must be identified before disposal takes place. Disposal must be undertaken in a way that is transparent and which seeks to maximise the financial return to the University. Where income is generated from the sale of artwork, arising from disposal, it shall be used for the purposes of developing the DCU Art Collection, either for further acquisitions of artwork, or for its maintenance and management.

Artworks may be disposed of in the following ways, listed in order of preference:

- returned to the original donor, or the donor's family;
- gifted or exchanged with another appropriate institution;
- offered for public sale; or
- destroyed (for works in an extensively damaged or deteriorated condition).

Artworks that have been acquired by donation are owned by the University and may not be disposed of by public sale, without consultation with the donor.

Artworks being disposed of may not be gifted to, or exchanged with, any person connected to the University, including staff members, board members, trustees or their families or agents.

Where Artworks for disposal have been approved for sale to the general public, DCU staff members, board members, trustees, or their families, or agents are not excluded from the opportunity to purchase the artwork by virtue of their connection with the University.

All disposals must be clearly recorded in the DCU Art Collection and Insurance Register, and documentation retained in a Deaccessions file.



Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the DCU Visual Arts Committee Terms of Reference and DCU’s Art Collection Criteria and Procedure⁴.

Responsibilities

The Cultural Arts Officer, based in the President’s Office, has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the DCU Art Collection Policy, with oversight and advice from the Visual Arts Committee.


Contact

Marcella Bannon - Cultural Arts Officer, President's Office, DCU.

Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed every three years by the Cultural Arts Officer and the University’s Visual Arts Committee. Any substantial change to the Policy will be brought to the DCU Executive for approval.

Version Control

Document Name	Art Collection Policy	
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Approved by	DCU Executive	
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⁴ https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/2021-07/visual-arts-committee_termsofreference.docx.pdf