

The Glucksman, University College Cork

April 2020 Collection Policy

This policy was reviewed on Thursday 2 April 2020.

The current policy was approved by the Board of Directors of the Glucksman at the meeting of 9 April 2020



Fiona Kearney
Director, the Glucksman

The policy is reviewed every 5 years or as deemed necessary by the Glucksman.

1. Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, University College Cork has actively developed a significant collection of modern and contemporary Irish art through a considered acquisitions policy and the generous donations of individual patrons. The University Art Collection was originally developed to provide an attractive visual environment for staff, students and visitors to the college. It has now grown into a substantial and valuable asset to the college in both artistic and financial terms.

The Glucksman provides professional care and development of the University College Cork Art Collection in accordance with the Museum Standards Programme Ireland. The Collection is an integral part of the visitor experience to the Glucksman and the wider UCC campus and, through the initiatives of the curatorial team, has been developed into a significant teaching and learning resource.

2. Collection

The University Art Collection is owned by University College Cork. The Glucksman manages the University Art Collection on behalf of University College Cork.

The University Art Collection is currently displayed on a rotating basis throughout the campus. Works of art are sited in most university buildings and a number of external sculptures have become attractive features of the college grounds. Whereas with many public collections, works must be stored for long periods of time when they are not on show, this collection requires the majority of its holdings to be on permanent display in the public domain.

The University Art Collection comprises circa 500 works in sculpture, painting, print and photography. A number of acquisitions made by the University have significantly increased in value. This requires regular evaluation of how increasingly valuable works may be sited in the public domain.

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3. Acquisitions Policy

The Glucksman curatorial team (Director, Senior Curator Exhibitions + Collections, and Senior Curator Education + Community) work with the Estates, Heritage and Environment Committee to acquire and site works for the University Art Collection.

There is currently no annual funding for the collection assigned to the Glucksman for the acquisition of work. As such, acquisitions are currently enabled by philanthropic support and occasional UCC investment. The strategic objectives outlined below still guide decisions on the acceptance of donations and the acquisition of work to the collection.

3.1. The University Art Collection has a solid representation in print and this area should continue to be fostered as it generally less expensive than other fine art media, as well as being particularly well developed in the Cork region. Photography archives are also being actively collected by Special Collections in the Boole Library and the University Art Collection could balance this with contemporary acquisition.

3.2. Acquisitions should actively seek work to suit specific spaces in the college grounds. In certain cases it may be worth commissioning work from a respected artist for a particular site. Acquisitions and locations should also be evaluated to reflect departmental or research affinities with the proposed artwork.

3.3. Acquisitions may be commissioned through several different avenues including: the commissioning of works for the UCC Art Collection through educational and community projects; through open commissions in partnership with UCC departments; through the Glucksman Projects strand of off-site exhibitions and events; and through specific partnerships with UCC departments for the Glucksman temporary exhibitions programme.

3.4. The government percent for art scheme should be sought for all eligible college building projects. A separate policy document has been developed with Buildings + Estates on this matter.

3.5. The collection focuses on modern and contemporary Irish art. In exceptional circumstances, non-Irish works will be accepted to the collection that have a relationship to University College Cork and for which there is clear provenance and history.

4. Collection Management

4.1. Documentation and archiving: The collection is documented in a digital database managed by the Senior Curator Exhibitions + Collections. The Glucksman curatorial team are responsible for all aspects of documenting and interpreting the collection. Conservation processes and damage to artworks are documented to ensure professional standards of upkeep. Related materials on acquisition, provenance and history are maintained by the Senior Curator Exhibitions + Collections.

4.2. Conservation: The collection is regularly checked and assessed for damages or deterioration. A rolling survey of works is undertaken in order to maintain professional standards of upkeep. All works are issued with a dated condition report which evaluates and rates damages to artworks. Wherever necessary, the Senior Curator Exhibitions + Collections will liaise with conservators and / or artists in repairing damaged artworks.

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4. Collection Management

4.3. Security: The University Art Collection is situated across the University campus and security conditions are considered in relation to these placements. Works are evaluated and displayed based on such criteria, with valuable and / or historically significant artworks placed in secure and / or private locations. Locations where artworks would be susceptible to damage, theft or deterioration are noted and prohibited for display purposes.

4.4. Access: The University Art Collection is, whenever possible, displayed in public locations across the University campus. Works are situated in secured university locations only in cases where they would be especially susceptible to damage, theft or deterioration.

4.5. Interpretation and Display: The collection is intended to be exhibited across the University campus. All works are accompanied by a consistent system of labelling. Further interpretative material including audio description, artist interviews and texts are available through the Glucksman website. Collection tours are offered to the public through the Glucksman.

4.6. Research and publications: The collection is intended to serve the University public as a valuable artistic resource. There is a live archive of printed material relating to works and artists in the UCC Art Collection held in the Glucksman's curatorial research lab. The curatorial research lab also facilitates collections-based research by UCC staff and students and visiting scholars.

4.7. Online and digital: The collection is shared and mediated through a programme of online resources, including audio guides, films, texts, and educational resources, available through the Glucksman website and dedicated social media platforms.