

## CULMS009A Unit Descriptor

## Implement preventive conservation activities

This unit describes the skills and knowledge to provide general preventive care for cultural material. As such, the unit focuses only on environmental monitoring, condition assessment and the overall implementation of disaster preparedness measures. Basic treatments and limited 'hands-on' work with collection items is found in the unit CULMS010A Contribute to the preservation of cultural material.

### Unit Sector

No sector assigned

### ELEMENT

### PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. Monitor the environment                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Monitor environmental conditions at regular intervals in accordance with needs of the collection and identify agents of deterioration affecting the collection</li> <li>1.2 Respond appropriately to changes in the environment to protect cultural material</li> <li>1.3 Adjust /control environmental conditions within scope of own responsibility or report to relevant colleagues</li> </ul>   |
| 2. Assess condition of cultural material        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 Examine and assess the condition of items in the appropriate location using techniques within the scope of own expertise that meet conservation guidelines</li> <li>2.2 Create or review documentation and accurately record current condition of item, including evidence of change, damage or degradation</li> <li>2.3 Apply a general knowledge of deterioration patterns to collection monitoring</li> <li>2.4 Identify the need for and obtain appropriate expert advice where necessary</li> <li>2.5 Discuss condition of material and conservation needs with experts in a manner which reflects sound general knowledge of issues to be considered</li> </ul> |
| 3. Implement preventive conservation activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 Undertake preventive conservation activities in accordance with organisation's policies and procedures</li> <li>3.2 Use best practice guidelines, cultural protocols and relevant specialist conservation advice to guide all activities</li> <li>3.3 Follow health, safety and environmental requirements at all times</li> <li>3.4 Identify the need for assistance and consult with a specialist conservator in relation to issues which arise in collection care</li> <li>3.5 Accurately document details of preventive conservation activities undertaken in accordance with organisational procedures</li> </ul>  |

## KEY COMPETENCIES

The seven Key Competencies represent generic skills considered for effective work participation. The bracketed numbering against each of the Key Competencies indicates the performance level required in this unit.

Level (1) represents the competence to undertake tasks effectively

Level (2) represents the competence to manage tasks

Level (3) represents the competence to use concepts for evaluating and reshaping tasks.

Key Competency	Example of Application	Performance Level
Communicating ideas and information	Discussing information about condition of cultural material with conservator	2
Collecting analysing and organising information	Reviewing documentation and assessing cultural material	2
Planning and organising activities	Organising maintenance schedules	2
Working with others and in teams	Consulting with the conservator	2
Using mathematical ideas and techniques	Analysing results of environmental monitoring	1
Solving problems	Adapting a storage area to improve the environment, within resource limitations	2
Using technology	Using tools and equipment	1

## RANGE STATEMENT

The Range Statement relates to the Unit of Competency as a whole. It allows for different work environments and situations that will affect performance.

The following variables may be present with training and assessment depending on the work situation, needs of the trainee, accessibility of the item, and local industry and regional contexts. If bold italicised text is shown in Performance Criteria, details of the text are provided in the Range Statement.

Preventive conservation is defined as 'Action taken to retard or prevent deterioration of, or damage to, cultural material by control of its environment'.

Cultural material is defined as 'objects, collections, artworks, specimens, structures or sites'.  
Examples include:

- archaeological material
- books and manuscripts
- cultural sites/buildings
- ethnographic material
- flora and fauna
- film/audiovisual material
- furniture
- photographs
- technological/industry items
- textiles
- works on paper/canvas

Preventive conservation activities are those related to overall care of the collection and do not include any hands-on treatments. Activities may include:

- monitoring and documentation/recording
- relocation
- protective storage/boxing
- implementation of the disaster preparedness plan
- re-formatting (creation of surrogates to reduce use of original)
- integrated pest management
- framing and un-framing
- non-interventive actions to combat agents of deterioration

Appropriate location may be:

- in display area
- workshop
- laboratory
- studio
- darkroom
- in situ, eg outdoors
- storage room
- during transport

Environmental conditions (and changes) may relate to:

- temperature
- relative humidity
- lighting
- pollution
- pests

Condition of cultural material may be assessed by:

- observation
- measurement and comparison of known areas of deterioration, eg cracks, areas of loss
- instrumental examination, eg microscope, magnifying glass, UV/IR light, raking light
- comparison with existing condition report, including photographic images

Deterioration patterns may be linked to:

- light, temperature, relative humidity, climate, pollution
- materials used for storage and display
- pests
- nature and location of the building or site
- influence of human activities
- security considerations
- transport and packing
- inherent vice (items are made of incompatible materials)
- deterioration of item prior to arrival, eg archeological collections

Cultural protocols may relate to:

- who can handle the cultural material
- where an item may be handled
- when an item may be handled
- consultation on potential treatments
- storage requirements
- appearance of the item
- relationship between item and other material in the collection
- methods and approaches to display

Health, safety and environmental requirements may relate to:

- use of chemicals or other toxic substances
- storage of chemicals
- provision and use of safety equipment
- safe manual handling
- safe use of tools and equipment
- reporting of OH&S issues, including events and near misses
- impact on other parts of the collection
- toxic and hazardous materials in a collection
- condition/stability of item (dirt, mould, dust and pesticides)

## EVIDENCE GUIDE

The Evidence Guide describes the underpinning knowledge and skills that must be demonstrated to prove competence. It is essential for assessment and must be read in conjunction with the Performance Criteria, the Range Statement and the assessment guidelines of the relevant Training Package.

**Critical aspects of evidence required to demonstrate competency in this unit**

The following evidence is critical to the judgement of competence in this unit:

- general knowledge of the scope and nature of routine preventive conservation activities relevant to the collection/industry sector
- correct and safe implementation of activities
- knowledge of agents of deterioration and their impact on collections

**Context of assessment and consistency of performance**

The assessment context must provide for:

- project or work activities that allow the candidate to monitor an actual collection and undertake basic preventive conservation activities
- use of industry-current methods and equipment

**Relationships to other units**

This unit has linkages to other units in this and other Training Packages, eg. Visual Arts Craft and Design, and combined assessment and/or training with those units may be appropriate, eg:

- CULMS003A Move/store cultural material
- CULMS011A Develop a disaster preparedness plan

**Method of assessment**

Assessment may incorporate a range of methods to assess performance and the application of essential underpinning knowledge, and might include:

- direct observation of the candidate engaged in preventive conservation activities
- review of condition reports prepared or updated by the candidate
- inspection of an area or storage system which the candidate has adapted to improve environment
- oral or written questioning to assess knowledge of procedures, safety and environmental issues, agents of deterioration
- review of portfolios of evidence and third party workplace reports of on-the-job performance by the candidate

Assessment methods should closely reflect workplace demands and the needs of particular groups [eg people with disabilities, and people who may have literacy or numeracy difficulties such as speakers of languages other than English, remote communities and those with interrupted schooling].

**Essential skills and knowledge**

Assessment must include evidence of the following knowledge and skills:

- roles and responsibilities for care of cultural material, including limitations on roles of unqualified personnel
- sources of expert assistance on collection care
- industry code of practice/ethics and terminology used
- the role of preventive conservation and distinctions between preservation, conservation and restoration
- general knowledge of factors contributing to deterioration (relevant to the collection/industry sector)
- cultural considerations and protocols for the handling, storage and display of cultural material
- methods of protecting cultural material from damage and/or potential hazards (relevant to the collection/industry sector)
- current best practice guidelines for collection care in the relevant work context
- techniques for handling and examination of cultural material
- basic principles and methods of using equipment, tools and materials for routine collection care
- requirements for safe work and manual handling
- literacy skills sufficient to interpret conservation guidelines and to document condition of collection and any preventive conservation actions taken

**Specific resource requirements**

Assessment of this unit requires access to:

- relevant policies and procedures manuals
- cultural material in an appropriate environment so that both material and environment may be assessed
- equipment, tools and materials for preventive conservation activities