

Unit AE4 Develop conservation plans for items

Elements

AE4.1 Explore conservation options for items

AE4.2 Specify conservation options for items

Unit Commentary

This unit is for archaeological conservators, people who are required to have knowledge of a range of items or specific groups of items as well as having expert knowledge the potential conservation problems that may be encountered with such items, whether individually or in groups and collections.

Once an item has been assessed, it is necessary to identify a suitable conservation plan for the item to ensure that it is properly conserved. There are likely to be a number of conservation options for the item, and it is important that each of these is considered, and that the option that is selected is the most suitable. This unit covers identifying conservation options that potentially have the capability of conserving the item and selecting the most appropriate conservation option in agreement with others.

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AE4.1 Explore conservation options for items

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) Reviewing and collating the available information on the key aspects of and risks to the **items**
- b) Exploring a range of potential **conservation options** and assessing any new approaches for their effectiveness
- c) Taking into account present and future environmental conditions affecting the items
- d) Identifying solutions to conservation problems
- e) Taking into account the items' integrity, the expected role and use, and the resources of the owner
- f) Identifying and assessing the limitations, risks and effects of all conservation options
- g) Identifying clearly the **resource implications** of the conservation options
- h) Testing the materials and treatment methods correctly to ensure their suitability
- i) Adapting conservation procedures where necessary and collecting information on their use

Occupational Context

1 Items

- Unstable/stable items
- Moderately/seriously degraded items
- Incomplete/complete
- Undamaged/damaged

2 Conservation options

- Remedial or preventive
- In situ/ off-site
- Stabilisation / environmental conditioning or not
- Maintaining open access or with specific security

3 Resource implications

- Cost and finances
- materials/ equipment
- time
- research/ administrative/ technical support
- internal/ external professional expertise
- accommodation/space

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know and understand how to:

- Record information on the application of new approaches, and why it is important to disseminate it

You need to know about:

Conservation Options:

- The appropriate amount of information and level of detail required to identify conservation options
- The environmental conditions likely to affect the item
- The most valuable sources of information on new conservation options
- Why the particular options have been examined
- How ethics affect the choice of option

Strategic planning:

- The costs and resource implications of different conservation options, and how they can be assessed for a specific item
- The health and safety implications of different conservation options
- The likely effects of the present and future use of the item

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AE4.1 Explore conservation options for items

Required Skills

You should demonstrate:

- Risk assessment
- Consultation skills

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can explore conservation options for items

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore how they

- explore conservation options for items and collections that are moderately or seriously degraded and for at least one unstable item.

Evidence Rules

The candidate should have developed plans for a range of items typical of their work area.

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AE4.2 Specify conservation options for items

Performance Required

This will involve:

- a) Ensuring the **conservation options** meet the requirements of the items and the owner
- b) Ensuring that **relevant parties** understand the outcome, risks and resource implications of the selected options
- c) Ensuring the conservation options can be implemented within the specified **resource constraints**
- d) Identifying clearly the advantages, disadvantages and limitations of each option
- e) Recommending and agreeing preferred options with all relevant parties
- f) Recording clearly the selected options and disseminate them to the appropriate people
- g) Planning the use of resources and the timescale for implementing the selected options
- h) Developing a suitable conservation plan and record it in an appropriate format

Occupational Context

1 Conservation options

- Remedial or preventive
- In situ/ off-site
- Stabilisation / environmental conditioning or not
- Maintaining open access or with specific security

2 Relevant parties

- Funding, legislative and statutory bodies
- Management and supervision
- Expert professional advisors
- Contractors
- owner/ occupiers
- record-keepers/ database managers
- maintenance staff
- curators
- education officers

3 Resource constraints

- Cost and finances
- materials/ equipment
- time
- research/ administrative/ technical support
- internal/ external professional expertise
- accommodation/space

Knowledge Requirements

You need to know and understand how to:

- Draw up a conservation plan for other people to follow
- Record a conservation plan, and the appropriate formats

You need to know about:

Conservation Options

- The factors that are taken into account when selecting conservation options
- How the conservation options would differ if the item was used in different ways, or kept in different conditions
- Why the specific conservation options were chosen

Conservation Planning

- The specified resource constraints for the item
- Who are the relevant people that need to be consulted on the selection decision
- Who should be aware of the conservation plan, and the level of detail that they need

AE4 Develop conservation plans for items

AE4.2 Specify conservation options for items

Required Skills

N/A

Evidence Required

You should provide evidence that you can specify conservation options for items

The candidate should be questioned, based upon the documentation provided, to explore how they

- specify conservation options for items that are moderately or seriously degraded and for at least one unstable item.

Evidence Rules

The candidate should have developed plans for a range of items typical of their work area.