



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

## THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION'S PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

These professional standards are embedded within all of Icon's professional development functions and should be read in conjunction with the Institute of Conservation's Code of Conduct. This version V of the Professional Standards was approved by Icon's Board of Trustees 25th June 2014.

### **Standard 1: Assessment of cultural heritage**

A conservator has the ability to assess cultural heritage that presents complex conservation problems. A conservator -

- 1a. Understands the significance and context of the heritage to be assessed, along with any implications for potential conservation measures.
- 1b. Assesses the physical nature and condition of the heritage.
- 1c. Assesses the impact of the environment and potential changes on the heritage.
- 1d. Assesses the implications of taking no further action.
- 1e. Records or reports the findings of the assessment.

### **Standard 2: Conservation options and strategies**

A conservator is able to evaluate options and negotiate actions in contexts that present complex conservation problems. A conservator -

- 2a. Identifies and evaluates conservation options.
- 2b. Develops advice, recommendations or policies relating to the different options available.
- 2c. Develops or negotiates a considered course of action for implementation.

### **Standard 3: Conservation measures**

A conservator, regardless of role, can work effectively with situations and aspects of heritage that present complex conservation problems, and can deal effectively with any unanticipated problems or findings. A conservator -

- 3a. Communicates appropriate practice in the care, protection and treatment of cultural heritage.
- 3b. Implements treatment-based, preventive or conservation management measures.
- 3c. Ensures that measures meet recognised conservation standards.
- 3d. Monitors and evaluates the effect of conservation measures.
- 3e. Maintains records of conservation measures.
- 3f. Recommends appropriate sources of further analysis, treatment or preventive care where these lie outside their remit or area of expertise.

#### **Standard 4: Organisation and management**

A conservator, regardless of position, can manage conservation work that presents complex conservation problems. A conservator -

- 4a. Organises and manages work to ensure that it is completed appropriately.
- 4b. Ensures that their work practices and any they promote comply with applicable legal and contractual requirements.
- 4c. Ensures that their work practices and the areas of responsibility for which they are responsible comply with relevant Health & Safety regulations and guidelines, minimising risk to themselves and others.
- 4d. Takes responsibility for the care of cultural heritage within their influence.
- 4e. Adheres to good business or internal practice in dealing with clients, colleagues and other stakeholders.
- 4f. Ensures that adequate and accessible records are maintained.
- 4g. Communicates recommendations and advice effectively.

#### **Standard 5: Continuing professional development (CPD)**

A conservator can demonstrate through continuing professional development (CPD) active maintenance and improvement of professional knowledge and skills. A conservator -

- 5a. Keeps themselves informed on changes in the profession as well as broader developments relevant to their work context.
- 5b. Ensures that their practice, knowledge, skills and techniques are up-to-date, both at a general level and in relation to individual projects and tasks undertaken.
- 5c. Demonstrates the ability to be a reflective practitioner.
- 5d. Continues to acquire knowledge in their relevant conservation specialism(s) and areas of work, and disseminates it through informal or formal means.
- 5e. Promotes conservation and the care of cultural heritage to lay and expert audiences, including other professionals involved in cultural heritage or the built environment.

## Professional judgement and ethics

Professional judgement and ethics are a core component of the professional standards.

A conservator -

- i. Understands the principles of conservation and demonstrates an in-depth understanding of the specific area(s) of their practice.
- ii. Is conversant with national and international principles, philosophies and guidelines relevant to their practice.
- iii. Understands the wider contexts in which conservation is carried out, the implications of context for practice, and the implications of treatments and methods within the context.
- iv. Uses an adequate level of critical thinking, analysis and synthesis in approaching conservation problems and developing appropriate solutions.
- v. Appreciates and is prepared to consider alternative, valid methods and approaches that are relevant to their practice.
- vi. Understands the ethical basis of the profession and the responsibilities of the conservation professional to cultural heritage and to wider society.
- vii. Understands and observes the Icon Code of Conduct.
- viii. Observes legal requirements and obligations, including those relating to health and safety, employment and contract law, and international agreements.
- ix. Takes responsibility for the care of cultural heritage within their influence.
- x. Acts responsibly and ethically in dealings with the public, employers, clients and colleagues.
- xi. Acts with awareness of and respect for the cultural, historic and spiritual context of objects and structures.
- xii. Is able to handle value-conflicts and ethical dilemmas in a manner which maintains the interests of cultural heritage.
- xiii. Understands the limits of their own understanding and abilities, and practises within them.

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