
Policy Title:	RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre – Curatorial
Policy No:	205
Policy Subject:	Quality, Themes and Use – RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre Spaces
Directorate:	Community & Cultural Services
Department:	RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre
Responsible Officer:	Director of Community & Cultural Services
Authorised by:	North Burnett Regional Council
Adopted Date:	Policy & Strategy Meeting – 02/08/2011
Review Date:	02/08/2013
Authorities:	

INTRODUCTION:

The RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre stands as a testament to the character and courage of the people of the bush.

It embodies the shared vision of the North Burnett Regional Council, the Centre's Board and the RM Williams family to create a place to educate others in traditional and contemporary bush ways.

The RM Williams Centre is a lasting tribute to genuine pioneer spirit and RM William's influence on Eidsvold and the North Burnett as well as a place that:

- Paints a living picture of life in the bush
- Teaches time –honoured bush skills
- Shares our traditional bush and indigenous culture
- Preserves the stories and experiences that have woven that culture
- Commemorates local history and heritage
- Showcases the art, craft and skills of local people
- Encourages connection with this ancient land

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the Curatorial Policy are:

- To deliver a quality program of exhibitions, workshops and events that showcase the best of past and present bush skills, crafts, arts and lifestyle ;
- Create a welcoming environment of high quality, well-presented exhibitions for local and visiting audiences;
- Work alongside our local indigenous community to continue to develop the centre, its programs and land, recognising the important relationship of traditional owners with the region;
- Present a wide variety of exhibition concepts and diversity of media that relate to the RM Williams Centre vision;
- Provide opportunities for community cultural development, artists' professional development and education at all levels;
- Support for a public art program by improving opportunities for artists to create and exhibit their work to enrich our cultural environment and allow visitors and residents to reflect, explore, learn and enjoy our cultural heritage;
- Provide opportunities for all sections of the communities to participate actively in a diverse range of arts and cultural experiences that balance tradition, innovation, enterprise and heritage values; and
- Conserve, protect and promote significant bush/outback work, arts, crafts and values within the region and work alongside community groups extolling those virtues.

POLICY STATEMENTS

1. The Main Exhibition Gallery

The main exhibition gallery is a large space adjoining the fixed RM Williams tribute area. Visitors walk through the RM Williams exhibition to access the gallery space.

The exhibition gallery space is a flexible space and may be separated into two spaces depending on requirements. This venue will accommodate:

- Major exhibitions on tour from national, state and intra-state organisations that have been professionally curated;
- A variety of visual art, museum, social history and natural environment exhibitions;
- Curated and themed exhibitions which celebrate, provoke thought and educate visitors around Australian historical and contemporary life in the bush;
- A balance of diverse media and content, monitored over a three year cycle;

1. The Main Exhibition Gallery (continued)

- The presentation of up to two significant solo exhibitions per year by North Burnett professional artists, provided the same artists are not programmed to exhibit in the main exhibition space for at least three years;
- Exhibitions nominated at the discretion of the Centre Coordinator in the event of a cancellation;
- Performances and cultural functions, provided these will not interfere with a pre-existing exhibition in any physical way.

2. The Foyer Space

The Foyer is the large entry space to the RM Williams Centre, and is a space that also operates as a Visitor Information Centre for Eidsvold, in the North Burnett.

This space shall remain uncluttered and open, a welcoming space for first entry into the Centre. The openness of this space shall be protected by:

- Regular checks for removal of unnecessary clutter
- Selection of only high quality printed materials for display in the wall racks and on tables and work benches in this space.
- No sticking, blu-tacking or pinning of any unframed posters, papers or other materials on any surfaces, be that walls, benches or tables.
- Occasional objects (one or two pieces only) that are of special interest to visitors may be displayed from ceilings, free standing on the floor or on a wall, and must be approved by the Coordinator and reflect the vision of the centre for excellence and interpretation of the Australian bush culture.
- Merchandise on display shall be located only in glass display cabinets and these items will be subject to selection using the Merchandising Policy for the RM Williams Centre.
- The large wall image behind the desk must be kept free of any encumbrances or any other materials at all times, and the image must be monitored for damage, fading or other wear and replaced at least every three years to retain a fresh and quality finish.

3. The Learning Room

The Learning Room is a large space with high ceilings, carpeted and natural light. It is furnished with tables and seats and other equipment that provides a comfortable space for up to 40 people seated at tables in lecture style.

It is a flexible space for training, education, workshops, meetings, conferences, functions and events. This space will therefore be available for a wide range of uses, however priority will be given to activities and events that engage the users in the teaching and development of Australian Bush skills, crafts, work, art and performance, aligned to the philosophy of the RM Williams Centre.

This space will provide a venue for the Bush skills programs that the RM Williams Centre will offer throughout the year including those courses that may require practical outdoor, offsite components as well as indoor education components.

3. The Learning Room (continued)

The RM Williams Centre will work with both government and the private sector to deliver a range of such courses from the centre.

The space may also be utilised as a secondary exhibition space, but only under the following conditions:

- Regular checks for removal of unnecessary clutter
- Selection of only high quality printed materials for display in the wall racks and on tables and work benches in this space.
- No sticking, blu-tacking or pinning of any unframed posters, papers or other materials on any surfaces, be that walls, benches or tables.
- Occasional objects that are of special interest to visitors may be displayed from ceilings, free standing on the floor or on a wall, but these must be approved by the Coordinator and reflect the vision of the centre for excellence and interpretation of the Australian bush culture.
- The space must remain uncluttered to allow its primary purpose as an educational space to be achieved.
- On special occasions, for short periods of time (up to three days), the whole space may be utilised for an exhibition, but only in the time between education, activity and workshop programs.

4. The RM Williams Grounds

The RM Williams Centre is established on a 75ha property less than 1km from the heart of Eidsvold and immediately adjacent to the Eidsvold Show Grounds.

The grounds of the centre will be available for hire and use for events, activities and programs that embrace the vision and themes of the RM Williams Centre and are in accordance with the spaces assignment described in the RM Williams Centre Master Plan. Where possible, the RM Williams Centre will partner or cooperate with the Show Society to deliver events that are of mutual interest and benefit.

Events that may significantly damage or render the outdoor grounds of the RM Williams Centre unsafe or unusable for more than a week after an event has been held, may be considered unsuitable, in some designated areas of the grounds.

5. Exhibition Agreements

Except where touring exhibitions provide their own agreements, all exhibitions will use the *RM Williams Centre Exhibition Agreement* (# xxxxxx). Details of the exhibition and the list of works should be clearly stated. Where artists or organizations are in breach of this agreement, the Coordinator will have the right to review the future involvement of the exhibitor/s and/or to cancel the exhibition.

6. Travelling Exhibitions (to be reviewed in respect to budget and staffing)

The RM Williams Centre will aim to tour a major exhibition to other venues in Queensland once every three years. The Centre will promote Australian Bush culture, art and craft from the North Burnett as well as other regions of Australia that perpetuate these themes and values, but always with a special emphasis upon the unique Australian bush culture and values.

7. Space & Grounds Bookings

A calendar of events, programs and exhibitions will be maintained at all times by Centre staff and priority placed on the development of a rich and diverse series of activities and events that reflect the Centre's purpose.

Bookings of the spaces and grounds will require that users complete the relevant Venue Hire forms, which will be an integral part of the agreement with the Centre for the use of the space. The main conditions and expectations of hire will be clearly established in the Venue Hire forms. Fees and charges will be in accordance with the Schedule of Fees and Charges approved by the North Burnett Regional Council.

8. Permanent Collection

The Board of Management and/or the Centre Coordinator (the 'Curator') may choose from time to time to commission or acquire additional RM Williams memorabilia, photographs and other items. The acquisition of all permanent items into the RM Williams Centre collection will be undertaken after careful consideration of the following:

- Capacity of Centre to house and protect the item/s eg: temperature controlled and correct storage environments
- Cost of maintenance of the items and the impact on the Centre annual operating budget
- Relevance of item to RM Williams collection at the Centre

At times the Board of management and/or the Curator may commission individual works that interpret and represent the RM Williams history and themes eg: an on-site stone fire place or stone wall

Historic exhibits from Queensland Museum and Gallery may also be loaned from time to time, subject to exhibition space programming.

9. Acquisitions

From time to time the Centre will be 'offered' or 'donated' certain items from external parties. The Board of management in discussion with the Curator, must be consulted first and retain the right to consider accepting any items offered within the terms of this Curatorial policy. Careful consideration must be given to ensuring that the quality and relevance as well as the capacity of the Centre to appropriately conserve items at the Centre is given, before any items are registered onto the collection.

9. Acquisitions (continued)

In the first 5 years of operation, the Centre has very limited capacity for the proper storage and conservation of items. Consideration will be given to 'accepting' certain items that are considered important to the collection and that can't be safely stored at the site, where provision can be made for the safe storage and conservation of those items at alternative locations, at no cost to the Centre.

A complete record will be maintained by the Centre of all objects and items in the RM Williams Centre collection, the location and storage conditions of each item and a full description of the item and the relevance to the collection. An annual letter will be provided to external parties holding the items seeking commitment to ongoing care of items, until such time as the Centre is able to take possession of the items.

10. De-accessioning

From time to time the Board of Management and/or the Curator may determine to de-accession certain items and works from the collection. Any items that are to be considered for de-accessioning will be subject to a report to the Board of Management by the Curator, outlining the reasons for de-accessioning. Upon agreement of the majority of the Board of Management, an item may be de-accessioned from the collection and either sold or otherwise disposed of with the permission of the Board of Management.

11. Indigenous Collection

During the planning phases for the Centre, the Indigenous communities of the region have expressed a strong desire to have the history of the region's Indigenous communities recorded and presented from the RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre.

The Board of Management will continue to work with Centre staff to develop and promote programs and content that is respectful and delivers quality presentations based on the agreed input from community members. Individual Aboriginal people as well as family groups or community groups that represent the three main Aboriginal groups of the Eidsvold area and surrounding districts, may choose to contribute materials and stories, deliver courses or information sessions at the Centre.

In all circumstances, the programs and content of the displays and any acquired collection items will always be discussed with and referred to the Indigenous community for comment and approval to proceed, display or purchase items.

A thorough and complete record of all items that are acquired will be kept with each item. In some cases, the Indigenous community or individuals may choose to ask that certain aspects of their stories or items be kept confidential. In such cases, records must be classified 'confidential' and the individual who can speak about the item, or their proxy, recorded so that materials can only be released with permission from the 'owner' of the information or their nominated representative.

11. Indigenous Collection

The Centre will aim to develop a permanent display that recognises the role of the Indigenous community in this region, and their pre and post European history, particularly as it relates to the RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre themes of outback Australia, bush ingenuity and knowledge.

OTHER RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Documents related to this policy	
Related policies	General Policy 204 – RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre – Merchandise
Forms or other organizational documents	Heads of Agreement between North Burnett Regional Council and RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre Ltd (RMWABLC Ltd)

REVIEW PROCESS

Policy review frequency: Every two years	Responsibility for review: RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre Coordinator in consultation with the RMWABLC Ltd
Review Process: The Coordinator will review the policies on regular basis. All staff and volunteers will also be given opportunities for feedback during these reviews.	
Documentation and communication: Decisions that require significant amendments (modified policy or new) will be reported in a specific Policy Review Report. This report will be forwarded to the RM Williams Australian Bush Learning Centre Management Committee for consideration and ratification. The policy will then require the approval of the NBRC, at a Council meeting.	