

GUIDELINES FOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN THE CONSERVATION OF MONUMENTS, ENSEMBLES AND SITES

The General Assembly of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, ICOMOS, meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, at its tenth session from July 30 to August 7, 1993;

Considering the breadth of the heritage encompassed within the concept of monuments, ensembles and sites;

Considering the great variety of actions and treatments required for the conservation of these heritage resources, and the necessity of a common discipline for their guidance;

Recognizing that many different professions need to collaborate within the common discipline of conservation in the process and require proper education and training in order to guarantee good communication and coordinated action in conservation;

Noting the Venice Charter and related ICOMOS doctrine, and the need to provide a reference for the institutions and bodies involved in developing training programmes, and to assist in defining and building up appropriate standards and criteria suitable to meet the specific cultural and technical requirements in each community or region;

Adopts the following guidelines, and Recommends that they be diffused for the information of appropriate institutions, organizations and authorities.

AIM OF THE GUIDELINES

1. The aim of this document is to promote the establishment of standards and guidelines for education and training in the conservation of monuments, groups of buildings ("ensembles") and sites defined as cultural heritage by the World Heritage Convention of 1972. They include historic buildings, historic areas and towns, archaeological sites, and the contents therein, as well as historic and cultural landscapes. Their conservation is now, and will continue to be a matter of urgency.

CONSERVATION

2. Conservation of cultural heritage is now recognized as resting within the general field of environmental and cultural development. Sustainable management strategies for change which respect cultural heritage require the integration of conservation attitudes with contemporary economic and social goals including tourism.

3. The object of conservation is to prolong the life of cultural heritage and, if possible, to clarify the artistic and historical messages therein without the loss of authenticity and meaning. Conservation is a cultural, artistic, technical and craft activity based on humanistic and scientific studies and systematic research. Conservation must respect the cultural context.

EDUCATIONAL AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND COURSES

4. There is a need to develop a holistic approach to our heritage on the basis of cultural pluralism and diversity, respected by professionals, craftspersons and administrators. Conservation requires the ability to observe, analyze and synthesize. The conservationist should have a flexible yet pragmatic approach based on cultural consciousness which should penetrate all practical work, proper education and training, sound judgement and a sense of proportion with an understanding of the community's needs. Many professional and craft skills are involved in this interdisciplinary activity.

5. Conservation works should only be entrusted to persons competent in these specialist activities. Education and training for conservation should produce from a range of professionals, conservationists who are able to:

- read a monument, ensemble or site and identify its emotional, cultural and use significance;
- understand the history and technology of monuments, ensembles or sites in order to define their identity, plan for their conservation, and interpret the results of this research;
- understand the setting of a monument, ensemble or site, their contents and surroundings, in relation to other buildings, gardens or landscapes;
- find and absorb all available sources of information relevant to the monument, ensemble or site being studied;
- understand and analyze the behaviour of monuments, ensembles and sites as complex systems;
- diagnose intrinsic and extrinsic causes of decay as a basis for appropriate action;
- inspect and make reports intelligible to non-specialist readers of monuments, ensembles or sites, illustrated by graphic means such as sketches and photographs;
- know, understand and apply Unesco conventions and recommendations, and ICOMOS and other recognized Charters, regulations and guidelines;
- make balanced judgements based on shared ethical principles, and accept responsibility for the long-term welfare of cultural heritage;
- recognize when advice must be sought and define the areas of need of study by different specialists, e.g. wall paintings, sculpture and objects of artistic and historical value, and/or studies of materials and systems;
- give expert advice on maintenance strategies, management policies and the policy framework for environmental protection and preservation of monuments and their contents, and sites;
- document works executed and make same accessible;
- work in multi-disciplinary groups using sound methods;
- be able to work with inhabitants, administrators and planners to resolve conflicts and to develop conservation strategies appropriate to local needs, abilities and resources;

AIMS OF COURSES

6. There is a need to impart knowledge of conservation attitudes and approaches to all those who may have a direct or indirect impact on cultural property.

7. The practice of conservation is interdisciplinary; it therefore follows that courses should also be multidisciplinary. Professionals, including academics and specialized craftsmen, who have already received their normal qualification will need further training in order to become conservationists; equally those who seek to act competently in historic environment.

8. Conservationists should ensure that all artisans and staff working on a monument, ensemble or site respect its significance.

9. Training in disaster preparedness and in methods of mitigating damage to cultural property, by strengthening and improving fire prevention and other security measures, should be included in courses.

10. Traditional crafts are a valuable cultural resource. Craftsmen, already with high level manual skills, should be further trained for conservation work with instruction in the history of their craft, historic details and practices, and the theory of conservation with the need for documentation. Many historic skills will have to be recorded and revived.

ORGANIZATION OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

11. Many satisfactory methods of achieving the required education and training are possible. Variations will depend on traditions and legislation, as well as on administrative and economic context of each cultural region. The active exchange of ideas and opinions on new approaches to education and training between national institutes and at international levels should be encouraged. Collaborative network of individuals and institutions is essential to the success of this exchange.

12. Education and sensitization for conservation should begin in schools and continue in universities and beyond. These institutions have an important role in raising visual and cultural awareness - improving ability to read and understand the elements of our cultural heritage - and giving the cultural preparation needed by candidates for specialist education and training. Practical hands-on training in craft work should be encouraged.

13. Courses for continuing professional development can enlarge on the initial education and training of professionals. Long-term, part-time courses are a valuable method for advanced teaching, and useful in major population centres. Short courses can enlarge attitudes, but cannot teach skills or impart profound understanding of conservation. They can help introduce concepts and techniques of conservation in the management of the built and natural environment and the objects within it.

14. Participants in specialist courses should be of a high calibre normally having had appropriate education and training and practical working experience. Specialist courses should be multidisciplinary with core subjects for all participants, and optional subjects to extend capacities and/or to fill the gaps in previous education and training. To complete the education and training of a conservationist an internship is recommended to give practical experience.

15. Every country or regional group should be encouraged to develop at least one comprehensively organized institute giving education and training and specialist courses. It may take decades to establish a fully competent conservation service. Special short-term measures may therefore be required, including the grafting of new initiatives onto existing programmes in order to lead to fully developed new programmes. National, regional and international exchange of teachers, experts and students should be encouraged. Regular evaluation of conservation training programmes by peers is a necessity.

RESOURCES

16. Resources needed for specialist courses may include e.g.: an adequate number of participants of required level ideally in the range of 15 to 25; a full-time co-ordinator with sufficient administrative support; instructors with sound theoretical knowledge and practical experience in conservation and teaching ability; fully equipped facilities including lecture space with audio-visual equipment, video, etc. studios, laboratories, workshops, seminar rooms, and staff offices; library and documentation centre providing reference collections, facilities for coordinating research, and access to computerized information networks; a range of monuments, ensembles and sites within a reasonable radius.

17. Conservation depends upon documentation adequate for understanding of monuments, ensembles or sites and their respective settings. Each country should have an institute for research and archive for recording its cultural heritage and all conservation works related thereto. The course should work within the archive responsibilities identified at the national level.

18. Funding for teaching fees and subsistence may need special arrangements for mid-career participants as they may already have personal responsibilities.