

Guidelines for the use and management of the Schreiner Collections of human skeletal remains at the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences, University of Oslo

Approved by the University Board on 23rd June 2020

§ 1 About the collection

The Schreiner Collection is a repository for the safekeeping of human skeletal remains received or collected by the Section for Anatomy¹ at the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences at the University of Oslo since 1828. The collection also comprises an anthropological library, a collection of special prints, photographs and X-ray images, as well as an archive of letters, index cards and handwritten catalogues.

§ 2 Definitions

“Sami material” means human skeletal remains that in all probability originate from pre-Christian Sami burial sites or Sami churchyards or other Christian burial sites where the persons buried were mainly of Sami origin.

“Archaeological material” means in this connection human remains from Antiquity of the Middle Ages (up until the year 1537), cf. Act of 9th June 1978 on Cultural Heritage, § 12.

“Deposited skeletal material” means human remains stored at the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences at the University of Oslo on behalf of institutions authorised to manage the material, in accordance with the regulation of 15th February 2019 no. 127 on the assignment of authority etc. and the Cultural Heritage Act, §12.

§ 3 Management responsibility

The Institute of Basic Medical Sciences is assigned responsibility for the management of the material in the Schreiner Collections.

In the case of deposited material, the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences will manage this in compliance with deposit agreements, cf. § 10.

In the case of archaeological material for which the Cultural History Museum is responsible according to the regulation of 15th February 2019 no. 127 on the assignment of authority etc. and the Cultural Heritage Act, §12, the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences will manage this in compliance with the cooperation agreement.

¹ Formerly the Department of Anatomy.



The day-to-day management of the collection is delegated to an employee holding a permanent scientific post (academic leader) at the Section for Anatomy at the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences.

§ 4 Special rules pertaining to the management of Sami material

The Sami material is separated from other material in the collection and is managed by the Institute for Basic Medical Sciences in compliance with the agreement between the Sami Parliament and the University of Oslo.

§ 5 Organization of the collection

The collection is stored in a magazine.

As far as possible, the collection is organized such that the remains of a particular individual may easily be kept together.

Material from deceased individuals who can be identified must be anonymised for visitors and users of the collection.

A catalogue of the material must be stored in a database that is continually up-dated. This also applies to the collections of books, prints and photographs.

§ 6 Access to the collection

The collection is closed to the public.

Applications for access to the collection for students and scientific personnel for reasons of research, management assignments, exhibitions or other academic purposes should be sent to the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences. The academic leader at the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences decides who can be granted access.

§ 7 Use of the material for research

Applications for permission to use material in the collection for research are processed by the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences.

Permission to conduct research on archaeological material in the collection requires approval from the depositing institution concerned or from the Cultural History Museum.

All research on material from the collection must be conducted in compliance with the ethical guidelines governing research in Norway. The applicant and the institution responsible for the research have an independent responsibility to ensure that the research project follows current regulations and ethical guidelines for research. The applicant must be able to document relevant competence based on qualifications.

An ethical assessment must be obtained from the National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains before the academic leader at the Institute for Basic Medical Sciences can approve the use of material from the collection in a research project.

The use of material for research purposes should normally be carried out on the collection's own premises. The lending out of skeletal material may be permitted under special circumstances, subject to approval by the depositing institution or authority, if appropriate. Only temporary loans are permitted. When deposited material is lent out, a written agreement must be drawn up, in which the depositing institution, in consultation with the collection's academic leader, stipulates specific conditions for the period, security and climatic conditions, transportation, packaging and handling of the material. Conditions for the loan of other material are stipulated by the collection's academic leader. Documentation material is not normally lent out, but can be photocopied.

Research findings, x-ray images etc. and publications resulting from research work must be made accessible to the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences as soon as they are available and must be incorporated into the collection's documentation archive in accordance with documentation and licensing guidelines specified by the Institute of Basic Medical Sciences.

§ 8 Exhibitions etc.

If material from the collection is to be used in conjunction with museum activities or the like, an application must be sent to the Institute for Basic Medical Studies. An ethical assessment by the National Committee for Research Ethics on Human Remains must also be obtained before human remains can be exhibited.

Depositing institutions or the Cultural History Museum must give their permission for the loan of material before the academic leader at the Institute for Basic Medical Studies can consider approving the use of the material.

§ 9 Rules of order

A record of visitors to the collection must be maintained.

All visitors to the collection undertake to behave with the respect, care and decorum due to a collection of human remains. Any lack of respectful behaviour or breach of § 7 or of conditions pursuant to § 7 may incur exclusion from the collection for a limited period of time or permanently, depending on the decision of the collection's academic leader.

§ 10 Deposited material

When human remains are to be deposited in the collection, a written agreement must be entered into between the depositing institution and the Institute for Basic Medical Sciences which includes a termination clause and guidelines for the possible return of the deposited material.

§ 11 Right of appeal

Any parties with a legal interest in appeal have the right to appeal against any decision taken pursuant to these guidelines to the nearest superior level at the University.

§ 12 Information access requests

Requests for access to information on documentation concerning the Schreiner Collections and in accordance with the Public Administration Act must be processed according to current regulations.

All case documents either produced or received by the University of Oslo are normally public documents. Any exceptions to this rule are authorised in compliance with current legislation.

§ 13 Press enquiries

Press enquiries requesting access to and/or filming and photographing material from the Schreiner Collections must be processed in accordance with § 6 above.