

## INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO DE TOMAR (IPT)

Campus Tomar  
Quinta do Contador - Estrada da Serra  
2300-313 Tomar  
Portugal

[www.ipt.pt](http://www.ipt.pt)  
(Portuguese only)



*Text based on the information provided by  
Dr. João Paulo Coroado - Head of the Conservation  
Department - and staff during our one day visit at IPT*

## SHORT HISTORY

The Department of Art, Archaeology and Restoration (DAAR) of IPT was established in 1987 and started by teaching 2-years specialisation courses - Courses of Specialised Higher Studies (CESE) - which were intended to complement a previous training. In 1989, DAAR started to teach a 3-year "Bacharelato" degree, which students could complement with the CESE to obtain a "Licenciatura" equivalence. In 1998, DAAR moved forward to implement a two-stages "Licenciatura" degree in Conservation and Restoration. More recently, the department changed its name to "Department of Art, Conservation and Restoration" (DACR) and adopted the Bologna process.

## ADMISSION

At the moment, there are 40 places for the Bachelor in Conservation and Restoration. At master level, there is a maximum of 10 places for each specialisation. The admission is centralised and is done by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education.

## INTERNAL STRUCTURE

### Coordination

João Paulo Coroado  
João da Cunha Matos

### Practical Conservation Courses

Carla Rego – Conservation of Paintings and Sculpture  
Cláudia Falcão - Conservation of Paintings and Sculpture  
Fernando Antunes – Conservation of Furniture and Woodcarving  
José Silva - Conservation of Furniture and Woodcarving  
Fernando Costa - Conservation of Stone  
Ricardo Triães – Conservation of Ceramics  
Aida Nunes – Conservation of Graphic Documents

### General Courses

João Coroado – Materials and Environmental control  
(coordinator professor)  
João da Cunha Matos – History (coordinator professor)

Fernando Salvador – Architecture and Representation Methods  
Miguel Cabral Moncada – Expertise and Cultural Assets  
Teresa Cunha Matos – Art History (professor adjunto)  
Teresa Desterro - Art History  
Fernando Larcher – History and Heritage Law  
Madalena Larcher – History  
António João Cruz – Methods of Examination and Analysis  
João Antunes – Chemistry (professor adjunto)

[Click here to see a complete list of the teaching staff](#)



*The IPT Laboratories of Conservation: Ceramic (left), Painting (centre) and Stone (right)*

## SPECIALISATIONS

The department offers several specializations in 2 cycles: bachelor (180 ECTS) and master (120 ECTS). The Bachelor (BA) offers a generalist training. The students start in the first year with conservation of stone materials and throughout the second and third years they are introduced to other areas (2 per semester): ceramics, woodcarving, furniture, sculpture, paintings and graphic documents, respectively. The Master in Conservation and Restoration (MA) has 2 different profiles: Movable Heritage and Integrated Heritage.

## LABORATORY EQUIPMENT

The department has spacious and equipped laboratories for each specialisation: conservation of stone, furniture and woodcarving, metals, sculpture, paintings,

ceramics and graphic documents. It also disposes of an x-ray room, a chemistry laboratory and a shared photographic studio with the Photography Department. The conservation laboratories have the regular conservation equipment, including an anoxia chamber. The chemistry laboratory is equipped with a Raman spectrometer and shortly, it will be able to provide X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) and micro-Fourier Transform Infrared (FTIR) Spectroscopy analysis.

## PUBLICATIONS

The department does not have any publication but all the student projects are available for consultation in the university library. The students are also encouraged to publish the results of their work so they get used to the high standards of the professional journals and other scientific publications.

*The DCR-UNL Laboratories of Conservation: Graphic Documents (left), Painting (centre) and Furniture (right)*





*IPT Furniture laboratory (left), Chemistry laboratory (centre) and the Library's reading room (right)*

## Talking to Students

Ana Félix is attending the third year of the bachelor. She was happy to share with us her personal experience at IPT: "I think conservation is a very interesting field and as I'm from Tomar, for me it was a natural choice to study here at IPT. I also considered studying in other schools but none interest me as much as this one because I wanted something more focused towards the practical side of this profession. I want to continue my education with a master because the bachelor is simply not enough. After this, I would like very much to work in a museum. During my training, I liked very much conservation of paintings but now, on my final

project, I am going to focus on the conservation of furniture." Concerning the implementation of the Bologna Process, Ana says "I think I preferred the system we had before because there were 5 years of "Licenciatura" plus other 2 to continue with the master; now we only have a total of 5 years, including the master."

Rute Marques is a student in the second year of the Bachelor. At the time of our visit at IPT, she was spending extracurricular time on the conservation laboratory. She also believes students need a great deal of practice to become good conservators and that 4 hours of classes per week, per specialisation are not sufficient to become a good specialist: "pre-Bologna system was better because it offered the opportunity to acquire more practice before starting to work in conservation."



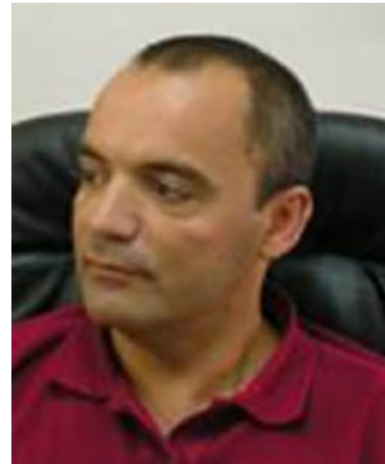
Pedro Fernando is a student in the fifth year - his last year of study, him being part of the last generation to attend the pre-Bologna "Licenciatura". He is specialising in conservation of sculpture. After the graduation, he wants to acquire some work experience and later to make a PhD in collection care or management of cultural heritage, probably abroad. (in Portugal it is possible to move forward to PhD in case you have a pre-Bologna Licenciatura in certain conditions, such as having an average grade of more than 16 - in 20).



About the Bologna Process, he believes that "in theory it can be a very good thing but practically it may not work for conservation, just as it doesn't work for other areas such as medicine or architecture. I think they are taking away 2 years that are very important to consolidate the concepts that we are being taught. In my time we were already complaining there were too few practical hours but now they have even less. We had about 6 hours per week while they have only 4" (per specialisation).

Asked if he would prefer to practice conservation abroad rather than in Portugal, Pedro replied: "in my opinion, we have plenty of work to do here in Portugal - each conservator has at least two lifetimes of work - but unfortunately we don't have the necessary funding for it."

## Interview with Dr. João Paulo Coroado



*Dr. João Paulo Coroado is the Head of the Department of Art, Conservation and Restoration of the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar since 2003. By profession, he is a Geoscientist, receiving his Master Degree in Geochemistry and his PhD in Geosciences at the Aveiro University. He is now preparing his aggregation title, studying degradation mechanisms, conservation strategies and raw materials provenance of ancient inorganic non-metallic materials, with special focus in ceramics, glass and mortars (mural painting). To our interview initiative, Dr. Coroado responded with an invitation to visit the Department and he kindly replied all our questions during our one day visit in Tomar.*

**I think it can be said that IPT is the oldest Conservation course still running. How do you describe its evolution since 1989?**

The evolution of the studies in Conservation and Restoration on the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar started on the academic year 1987/88 with the Higher Specialised Study Courses (CESE), in "Art, Archaeology and Restoration". The Ministry of Education authorization to teach the "Bacharelato" was given in 1989 allowing the course of Technology in Conservation and Restoration to start in the same year. In 1998, the Polytechnic system implemented the second cycle that granted the "Licenciatura" degree and the course was designated in two cycles in Conservation and Restoration. Since then, the course had four

reformulations. The last one was authorized by the Ministry of Education, by the decree n°. 875/2005 (2 series), maintaining the two cycles of 3 plus 2 years respectively. In 2006, the "Licenciatura" was adjusted to the Bologna requirements. The Master in Conservation and Restoration, already authorized by the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education, is going to start on the next academic year allowing a more consistent and suitable training of the conservator-restorer.

### How did your department managed the implementation of the Bologna process?

The Bologna process transition has already started and the students are already on the third year of the Bachelor. The Master in Conservation and Restoration will start next year. This master has two different profiles: Movable Heritage and Integrated Heritage. The main difference between these profiles is that Movable Heritage has disciplines such as Collection Management, Collection Preservation and Art Expertise while Integrated Heritage has other disciplines like Architectonic Heritage, Integrated Heritage and Alteration and Alterability. All the other disciplines are common. The students are also given the possibility to choose as optional disciplines the ones from the other Master profile which is an advantage for him/her. The second year of the master is dedicated to an internship and dissertation.

Considering that by international standards, the minimum training to become conservator-restorer requires 5 years, what is your opinion of this 2 cycle training?

In fact, students can leave school after the Bachelor to integrate the labour market.



*Dr. João Paulo Coroado and our editor, Teodora Poiata in the Ceramics Conservation Classroom*

The Bologna process allows them. However, we tell students that only the Bachelor is not enough to become conservator-restorer and we show them the need, the necessity to pursue the master degree. A bachelor in conservation and restoration will be prepared to deal with collections and practice preventive conservation; he/she will only be able to operate in works of art under supervision.

I remember that when the Bologna system was being under discussion here at IPT, it was proposed to maintain the 5 years "Licenciatura" in Conservation but the proposal was not considered. Conservation is a field still far from having the necessary strength like other fields, architecture or medicine for example...

The Department is running a pre-Bologna Master in "Chemistry Applied to Cultural Heritage" in partnership with the Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry of the Faculty of Science, University of Lisbon. How has been this experience and which is its future, now with the implementation of the Bologna process?

It is going extremely well. This master has been already prepared for the Bologna system and it is designed for chemists and other people with a scientific background that are

interested in Cultural Heritage to specialise, so they can apply science to conservation. It is not intended for conservators because it does not give a degree in conservation, although conservators can attend it. This master is coordinated by Dr. António João Cruz, a conservator-scientist specialised in chemistry applied to cultural heritage, and it is taught in both Lisbon and Tomar, approximately half of the classes in each city.

**You are the Head of the Conservation Department. Can you tell us how did you achieve it?**

In fact, I started to collaborate with the department since 1990. In 1998 I became Professor and 3 years later a Full Professor. After that I was elected, naturally, by the Department Council, first in 2003 and once again in 2006.

**What are the requirements to become teacher at the Conservation Department?**

Our department is made of specialists with different backgrounds, in domains such as Humanities and Sciences and, of course, Conservation and Restoration. We want the best specialists and, when we don't find them in our own institution, trained by ourselves, we look for the best in the in the field.

**Apart teaching at the IPT, what other activities do you develop in your professional life?**

Besides IPT, I'm also working as a materials researcher at the University of Aveiro and at the Technologic Centre of Ceramics and Glass (CTCV).

**The students work on real works of art during**

**their training. What is their acceptance criteria and their origins?**

Indeed they do work with real works of art since their first year. We wish our students to gain as much practice as possible. Most of the pieces we work with come from private collectors, churches, museums and from the local administration.

**Does the Department charge for the conservation interventions performed?**

No, we don't charge for the work we perform, once the owners of the respective works of art accept the fact that we don't know when the intervention will be finished. We only charge for the costs of the materials and for the consumables.

**Is the Department a member of ENCoRE?**

No, not at this time, but we are very interested in becoming member of ENCoRE. We are going to apply for the membership very soon.

**After the students' graduation, does the Department keep up with their further accomplishments in their professional lives?**

Yes, many of them return often to make analyses for works of art using the facilities of the department. We are happy to be able to help them after they graduate. Plus, as I already said, we are interested in keeping in the core of the department the best of the students that graduate at IPT. Many of them are undertaking PhDs in Conservation and Conservation Related fields right now. Personally, I think the enthusiasm and strength of the young professionals is a big advantage.