

National Galleries Scotland Object Exit and Despatch Policy

Version/Date

Senior Management Team: Collections approved this policy: 12th February 2014

Principles

NGS aims to make the objects in its care accessible to the widest possible public, including by way of exhibitions, the international touring programme, and loans in and out, both long-term and short-term.

The management of object exit and despatch enables us to ensure we can trace the custody of objects, make these objects available to other institutions, exercise control over the temporary or permanent departure of objects, including return to owners, and to provide evidence for audit, insurance and Government Indemnity (GIS).

Definitions

Object exit: The management and documentation of objects leaving NGS premises, usually for loan, but also for transfers, returns, and disposal.

Despatch record: The details associated with the object that is leaving.

Legislation and ethics

Object exit and despatch records form an essential component of evidence required for audit and accountability, for due diligence, and for accessibility.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2008
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2013

Standards

This policy is part of the Collections Management set of policies that form a requirement of PAS197 and Spectrum as part of the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme.

Control measures

All object exits must be authorised before they are despatched, and we ensure there is an image of the object.

The despatch documentation includes receipts, export and customs documentation where applicable, insurance or GIS documents, and special instructions where required. This

documentation accompanies the object through to its destination, and we then require evidence of the object's safe arrival.

The object exit record must indicate whether the object has left NGS on a temporary basis, for example as a loan out; or permanently, for example the return to owner of an object that was being evaluated, transfer to another institution, or disposal.

The despatch record includes details such as authorisation, valuation if required, reason, and date of despatch and delivery, and evidence of the safe arrival of the object at its destination. It also includes references to other documents where applicable, such as contracts, loan agreements, CSC (Air Cargo) documentation.

We hold all object exit and despatch information centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons can update exit and despatch information.

We are committed to carrying out regular audits of object exit details, alongside reviews on GIS and insurance for loans out, and site visits.

Related policies

The following are related NGS policies:

- Object Entry and Pre-Entry Policy
- Loans In and Loans Out Policy
- Inventory Control Policy
- Location and Movement Control Policy
- Art Transport Policy
- Conservation and Care Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Damage and Loss Policy
- De-accession and Disposal Policy