

National Galleries Scotland Object Entry

Principles

NGS is accountable and liable for all objects or groups of objects in our care.

We have a responsibility to make a realistic and open assessment of any object before it reaches us, to indicate its condition, and to fulfil our obligations to ensure that a vendor, donor or lender holds valid and legal title and has the rights of ownership of the object before we can accept it.

Creating an accurate, consistent, transparent and accessible record for each object on its entry at NGS enables us to provide evidence for audit, accountability, location tracking and access.

Definitions

Object Entry: The efficient, responsible and legal management of all objects or groups of objects arriving at NGS, including accurate and accessible documentation. Object entry applies to objects in the permanent collection, acquisitions, temporary deposits, loans, or re-entry of objects from external locations.

Arrival: Whenever an object enters NGS, including the arrival or return of accessions, temporary or long-term loans, items on approval, purchased objects, temporary deposits for opinion, study or examination, artworks in transit or short-term storage, gifts and bequests, and any unsolicited objects.

Legislation and ethics

Object entry is an essential component of evidence required for due diligence, for audit and accountability, 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)
- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries, Third edition 2002
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
- Scottish Government Treasure Trove in Scotland & Code of Practice 2008
- Freedom of Information (Amendment) (Scotland) Act 2013
- Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2015
- The General Data Protection Regulation 2016
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2017
- HMRC Customs Notice 361: Import Duty and VAT 2014 (updated 2019)
- HMRC Customs Notice 702: 2014 (updated 2019)

Due Diligence:

- 1970: UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and preventing the illicit import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property
- 1998: NMDC Washington Conference: Statement of Principles on Spoliation of works of art during the Holocaust and World War II period
- 2005: DCMS: 'Combating Illicit Trade'. Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives on collecting and borrowing cultural material.'
- 2003: Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act
- 2007: Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007. Part 6: Immunity from Seizure
- 2009: Holocaust (Stolen Art) Restitution Act
- 2017: UN Security Council Resolution 2347 Article 17 (g) called on governments to engage with the museum sector and art trade on 'differentiated due diligence' and other measures 'to prevent the trade of stolen or illegally traded cultural property.'
- 2019: The Holocaust (Return of Cultural Objects) (Amendment) Act 2019

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.

Including: National Archives Framework Standards 2012.

Control measures

NGS, following the NGS Acquisition Procedure 2014, carries out an initial assessment to ensure the object can realistically be accepted for entry at NGS, to demonstrate why we are assuming responsibility for the object, and to provide a condition report. We aim to carry this out before the object arrives whenever possible.

The assessment identifies:

- Terms and conditions under which the object is to be deposited and received and returned if applicable. This includes rights to the use of the object and identifies any information that is to be safeguarded as confidential or sensitive.
- Legal ownership and title to the object.
- Period of the loan, deposit or research, including estimated return date.
- Current valuation for insurance and Government Indemnity (GIS).
- Current condition of the object, both prior to transit and on arrival.

If an object arrives for which we have not yet carried out a formal pre-entry assessment, for example an unsolicited arrival, we must have formal evidence of legal title to the object before we may accept it, and the assessment will be carried out as soon as possible after Entry.

When an object or group of objects arrives at NGS, we issue a formal receipt, and assign it a unique identifier or identify it as the re-entry of an identifiable object from the NGS collection.

We hold all information about objects centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). This forms part of our requirements for identification, location and audit. It is the responsibility of all staff actively to contribute to the care of these objects, and in addition, to

provide access to them. There are control protocols for entering data, and only authorised persons may amend and update locations.

Only suitably qualified persons may carry out a formal condition assessment, which will form part of the provenance and entry record. This assessment ensures that only objects suitable to NGS collections are accepted for entry, taking also into consideration any potential hazards posed by the objects, any financial implications, and the requirements of the Government Indemnity Scheme.

We are committed to carrying out regular collections audits.

Related policies

The following are related NGS policies:

- 01 Object Entry
- 02 Acquisition and Accessioning
- 03 Location and Movement Control
- 04 Inventory
- 05 Cataloguing
- 06 Object exit
- 07 Loans in (borrowing objects)
- 08 Loans out (lending objects)
- 09 Documentation Planning
- 10 Condition Checking and Technical Assessment
- 11 Collections Care and Conservation
- 12 Valuation
- 13 Insurance and indemnity
- 14 Emergency Planning for Collections
- 15 Damage and Loss
- 16 De-accessioning and Disposal
- 17 Rights Management
- 18 Reproduction
- 19 Use of Collections
- 20 Collections Review
- 21 Audit

Also the following NGS documents

- NGS Collection Care Framework
- NGS Collections Development Framework
- NGS Estates Management Strategy
- NGS Environmental Management Programme 2018-2022
- NGS Risk Management Policy
- NGS Research Policy and Framework

For NGS Rights and Reproduction Policies: SEE NGS Trading Company Policies