National Galleries Scotland
Inventory

Principles

NGS is accountable for all the objects and groups of objects in our care at all times. We maintain inventory records about these objects in order to provide up-to-date information about them, including ownership, location, condition and history.

As part of our commitment to provide accurate information about our collections to the widest possible public we use details from the Collections Management database to provide collections information for the NGS Corporate Plan and Annual Review, for Freedom of Information enquiries, and on the NGS website.

Definitions

Inventory control: The maintenance of the NGS Collections Management's single, centralised, industry-standard database, MIMSY XG. Only authorised persons have access.

Inventory record: Accurate, relevant, up-to-date and accessible information to account for and locate all objects for which NGS has a legal responsibility and duty of care. This includes objects in our permanent collections, temporary deposits, loans, and any other objects which are or have been in the care and custody of NGS.

Legislation and ethics

Inventory Control records provide evidence for audit and accountability, for due diligence checks, and for accessibility.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- National Heritage (Scotland) Act 1985
- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries, Third Edition 2002
- Combatting Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on collecting and borrowing Cultural Material, DCMS, 2005
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
- Freedom of Information Amendment (Scotland) Act 2013
- Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2015
- General Data Protection Regulations 2016
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2017
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.

National Archives Framework of Standards 2012.

Control measures

We hold all our records centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons may maintain database records, following NGS standards and procedures to ensure consistent, accurate and efficient documentation.

We enter an inventory record when the object enters NGS care, or in advance where possible, for example when we have confirmed ownership and status of an object before accession. The inventory record includes standardised core details, for example the object’s name, number, description, attribution, status (for example acquired, deposited, on loan), location. We record other essential information as soon as available, including due diligence checks and condition, credit-line and copyright, protocols for group entries and any special terms and conditions.

We update the inventory record to reflect changes to the object, for example to its condition or location, and we aim to record all location movements within 24 hours.

All objects, whether part of the permanent collection or temporarily in NGS care, are clearly and unambiguously labelled so they can be referenced to the inventory control database record.

We are committed to carrying out regular audits of inventory control records and have an ongoing plan to manage retrospective documentation.

Website protocols ensure the details that are published on the NGS website conform to security and ethical requirements.

Related policies

The following are related NGS policies:

01 Object Entry
02 Acquisition and Accessioning
03 Location and Movement Control
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
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 Disaster Contingency Plan
  NGS Estates Management Strategy
  NGS Environmental Management Programme 2018-2022
  NGS Partnership Framework
  NGS Public Programme Framework
  NGS Research Policy and Framework
  For NGS Rights and Reproduction Policies: SEE NGS Trading Company Policies