National Galleries Scotland
Cataloguing

Principles
NGS maintains detailed information for all objects or groups of objects in our care. These objects are usually part of the NGS collection but we may also maintain catalogue records for other objects such as long-term loans, short-term loans for NGS exhibitions where we are preparing catalogue entries, or non-NGS objects on our premises for which we are providing special curatorial expertise.

We keep this information securely and in a structured way that still enables easy and reliable access.

The information includes provenance information and details of acquisition, reproduction rights, conservation, exhibition and loan history, location history and bibliographical references.

Definitions
Cataloguing: The compilation and maintenance of key information that formally and uniquely identifies and describes an object or group of objects.

Core details: The essential key details that NGS must record for all objects, in a formalised way, including measurements, artist, provenance, reproduction rights, special conditions, brief description.

Extended details: Additional information, such as a longer description that is prepared for a published catalogue, research findings, bibliographical references.

The NGS Collection: This is defined by the NGS Collection Development Framework, and includes archives, drawings, ceramics, historic furniture, installation, libraries, paintings, performance, photography, prints, sculpture, textiles, time based media.

Ethics and legislation
Cataloguing provides essential evidence required for due diligence, for audit and accountability, and for accessibility.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- Public Records (Scotland Act 1937 & Subsequent)
- Copyright Act 1911 and, 1956
- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- Freedom of Information (Scotland Act 2002)
- Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
- Treasure Trove in Scotland and Code of Practice 2008
▪ Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums 2015
▪ General Data Protection Regulation 2016
▪ ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2017 (Including ICOM “Red List”)

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:

▪ Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives 2005
▪ National Archives framework of standards 2012
▪ BSISO15489/1 Information Documentation: Records Management 1 General (2001)
▪ PD150/TR15489:2 Information and Documentation Records Management 2: Guidelines
▪ BS7671 requirements for electrical installations: IEE Wiring Regulations 2008
▪ Art & Architecture Thesaurus J Pal Getty Trust
▪ UNESCO Thesaurus 1995
▪ UK Museum Documentation Standard Collections Trust 2007
▪ BSISO2709 Information and Documentation format for information interexchange
▪ Code of Ethics – International Federation of film archives

Control measures

We hold all cataloguing information centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons may maintain cataloguing records.

Only suitably qualified persons with subject knowledge or expertise may research and create the catalogue information, and the details must be substantiated. Relevant information may also be contributed by other individuals with specialist knowledge and/or expertise.

Each object and object-part has a unique identifier and location, and a clear and substantiated provenance with evidence of due diligence. The level of description is sufficient to identify an object or object-part and to distinguish it from other, similar objects. We update the record on an ongoing basis, for example to record its condition history or location history, or as part of the digitisation project.

We add extended details to the central record to collect related information about the object, when new information becomes available, when further narrative is needed, or when a published catalogue is prepared. We also keep associated information on file for future reference or research, or references to sources for this information.
For accessions we aim to complete the core details of the catalogue record within 4 months, or within 6 months if the object needs conservation work or if there are unresolved legal, ethical or financial issues.

**Related policies**

The following are related NGS policies:

- 02 Acquisition and Accessioning
- 04 Inventory
- 09 Documentation Planning
- 12 Valuation
- 16 De-accessioning and Disposal
- 17 Rights Management
- 18 Reproduction
- 21 Audit

Also the following NGS documents

- NGS Audience Development Framework
- NGS Collection Care Framework
- NGS Collections Development Framework
- NGS Disaster Contingency Plan
- NGS Gaelic Language Plan
- NGS Partnership Framework
- NGS Public Programme Framework
- NGS Research Policy and Framework

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