National Galleries Scotland
Object Exit

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 authorised 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 provide evidence for audit, insurance and Government Indemnity (GIS).

Definitions
Object exit: The management, control and documentation of objects leaving NGS premises and passing out of NGS direct care 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:

- 1980: National Heritage Act: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- 2002: Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act
- 2015: Museums Association: Code of Ethics for Museums
- 2017: ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums

Due Diligence:

- 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
- 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.

AAM Registrars’ Code of Practice for couriering museum object 1986.


**Control measures**

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

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 may 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:

01 Object Entry
03 Location and Movement Control
04 Inventory
06 Object exit
07 Loans in (borrowing objects)
08 Loans out (lending objects)
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
20 Collections Review
21 Audit

Also the following NGS documents

NGS Collection Care Framework
NGS Collections Development Framework
NGS Disaster Contingency Plan
NGS Partnership Framework
NGS Public Programme Framework
NGS Risk Management Policy

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