National Galleries Scotland
Documentation Planning

Principles
NGS has a continuous process of improving all collection documentation, including incomplete, missing or inadequate records and digital images. We continue to expand and enhance information on our collections to ensure that the information provided for all our audiences is accurate, complete, ethical, inclusive and up to date.

NGS manages retrospective documentation as part of an ongoing audit plan.

We ensure that all the NGS Collection is catalogued and that we know the identity and location of all objects for which we are responsible, and that the quality of cataloguing and due diligence complies with established UK standards of collections management.

NGS is committed to eliminating all cataloguing backlogs within a planned and published timeframe.

NGS is committed to providing digital access to the Collection and to capturing new digital images for this purpose within a planned and published timeframe.

Definitions

Documentation Planning: An ongoing process of continual improvement in the content and quality of the Collection documentation, with defined objectives and timescales monitoring and reviews.

Retrospective documentation: The addition of new information to existing object or collection records.

Legislation and ethics

Retrospective documentation provides essential evidence required for due diligence, for audit and accountability, and for accessibility.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- Race Relations Act 1976 (as amended)
- National Heritage Act 1980: Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries, Third edition 2002
- UNESCO Code of Practice for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003
- The Racial and Religious Hatred Act 2006
- Part 6, Section 136 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcement Act 2007
Due Diligence, enacted by the following:

- 1998: NMDC Washington Conference: Statement of Principles on Spoliation of works of art during the Holocaust and World War II period
- 2003: Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act
- 2005: DCMS: ‘Combatting Illicit Trade: Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives on collecting and borrowing cultural material.’
- 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.

Control measures
When NGS acquires, accessions and catalogues new objects we aim to record at least the core details for each object, and subsequently to record promptly changes and updates such as location or extended catalogue information, in order to reduce the need for retrospective documentation.

NGS manages retrospective documentation as part of an ongoing plan to reduce and eliminate backlogs; or as a result of audits; or when we discover incomplete details, an anomaly, inconsistency or mis-match of records; or as part of a record conversion or systems upgrade.

All new information must be substantiated before we add it to the object record.
We ensure that all documentation complies with museum accreditation standards including GDPR, Freedom of Information, Data Protection and Due Diligence requirements.

We hold and regularly review all object records centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons may update object records.

**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
- 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 Environmental Management Programme 2018-2022
- NGS Partnership Framework
- NGS Public Programme Framework
- NGS Risk Management Policy
- NGS Research Policy and Framework

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