

S P E C T R U M



The UK Museum Documentation Standard



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SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard

Revised with the participation of the museum community

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ISBN 1 900642 14 X

Version 3.0 (please regularly check the MDA website for updates)

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The MDA is a registered charity, No. 273984

The work of the MDA is supported by: The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

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Foreword

Documentation, the management of information about collections, is the key to unlocking the potential of our museums. It is more than simply a means of managing an object in a collection. It is a way of turning that object into a working artefact, a vital part of the creative process which transforms recognition into inspiration for our users.

The SPECTRUM standard is synonymous with documentation. First published in 1994 and updated in 1997, it is a collection of the experience and insight of hundreds of people working in the museum community. It is for this reason that SPECTRUM is recognised both nationally and internationally as the 'industry standard' for documentation practice.

The *Museum Accreditation Scheme* includes 8 of the 21 SPECTRUM procedures as a requirement. As a standard, it has helped to shape an entire generation of management systems. It has facilitated countless loans and enabled museums to use their collections in entirely new and innovative ways.

SPECTRUM is an open standard, created by museum people, and belonging to museums. MDA holds it in trust; and as a trustee maintains it and steers its development. As this revised edition demonstrates, it is also an evolving standard, capable of growing to meet the ever changing needs of museums.

Above all, it is a practical standard. The procedures have been tested in real situations, in real museums and with real objects. It is there to help museums achieve best practice, and as such must always remain focussed on this goal.

I hope that you will enjoy using SPECTRUM, and I encourage you to contribute to its future and the future of documentation in museums.

Mike Houlihan
Chairman
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Acknowledgements

As a national standard, SPECTRUM has been developed in partnership with c100 members of the museum community in the UK. MDA gratefully acknowledges their dedication and commitment in contributing insight and expertise to establish SPECTRUM as a document of best practice in documentation.

MDA would like to acknowledge the specific contributions of a number of individuals and groups to the creation of this revised edition of SPECTRUM:

MDA staff Gordon McKenna and Effie Patsatzi have played a vital role as editors of the revised edition. Their work in project-managing the updating of the second edition and in coordinating responses from numerous sources to create a single usable document has been a tremendous achievement. Particular thanks are due also to Gordon for his work in producing SPECTRUM as an electronic document, thereby facilitating its use in a wide variety of different museum contexts.

The process of updating SPECTRUM was managed through a number of working groups, each of which had responsibility for a specific area of the standard. Their contribution will help to shape documentation practice for years to come, and MDA would particularly like to thank the chairs of these groups: Jayne Austin, Margaret Harrison, Maggie Pedley, Debbie Richards and Philippa Tinsley, for their commitment, time and energy.

Alex Dawson, Frances Bycroft and Sande Nuttall, also of MDA, have also made a significant contribution to SPECTRUM through their involvement in the various working groups and behind the scenes in the production of the revised edition.

Prior to publication, the revised edition was tested against a number of 'real world' scenarios. This process significantly enhanced the robustness and usability of the standard, and MDA would like to acknowledge the work of the testers in helping us to achieve this.

Special mention should also be made to three individuals who helped to shape the final form of the revised edition. Jeff Cowton, a long-term collaborator and contributor to the development of SPECTRUM, provided an essential overview on the specification and structure of the final document. Documentation expert Stuart Holm contributed his expertise to the final 'technical edit' of the standard prior to publication. MDA would also like to acknowledge Alison Hill, freelance editor, for proofreading the standard and providing the final 'quality control' edit of the document.

And finally, thanks to you, the user of SPECTRUM. It is only through the commitment of individuals in museums that SPECTRUM will continue to develop and shape documentation practice in the UK. The management of information about objects in collections is the vital first step in creating accessible and engaging museum services for users. We encourage you to get involved in the future development of the standard, and to contribute to its development in the years ahead.

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Introduction

SPECTRUM: *The UK Museum Documentation Standard* represents a common understanding of good practice for museum documentation, established in partnership with the museum community. It contains procedures for documenting objects and the processes they undergo, as well as identifying and describing the information which needs to be recorded to support the procedures.

Work began on SPECTRUM in 1991. It is unique in being the product of contributions from practitioners active in the field of documentation in museums throughout the United Kingdom. It draws directly on the expertise and experience of well over 100 practising museum professionals and has sought advice and comment from an even greater number, both within and beyond the world of museums.

SPECTRUM contains all those functions that are common to most museums, to a level required by most practitioners. SPECTRUM gathers together the procedures and information needs common to a number of activities and shows how they work together. It also provides an external context to help fit SPECTRUM to your organisation.

Many organisations have already, or are in the process of, implementing SPECTRUM; in so doing they have not needed to radically change direction. A dictionary definition of spectrum is '... a range of options and activities ...' and the intention of SPECTRUM: *The UK Museum Documentation Standard* is to provide such a range of organisations with a framework around which they can build their own, organisation-specific procedures and which they can use to help identify their own information needs. As a statement of current 'real-life' good practice in museum documentation, SPECTRUM allows for an awareness of a multitude of implementations while at the same time ensuring a reliable and consistent approach which can be built upon in the future.

Current users of SPECTRUM will not find it necessary to overhaul their existing museum practice when upgrading to this revision; instead they will be able to enhance it in line with developments in cultural information management. The differences between the second edition and this revision can be categorised as follows:

Introductory material

Three sections have been deleted and their content merged with the relevant procedures or transferred to the MDA website:

- ***Legal & management issues;***
- ***Documentation issues for collections management policies;***
- ***Bibliography & addresses.***

Procedures

Two procedures have been deleted and their content merged with other procedures:

- ***Reproduction*** is now part of ***Use of collections*** and ***Rights management***;
- ***Indemnity management*** is now part of ***Insurance and indemnity management***.

Three procedures have been renamed:

- ***Despatch*** is now ***Object exit***;
- ***Insurance management*** is now ***Insurance and indemnity management*** (see above);
- ***Loss*** is now ***Loss and damage***.

Introduction

There are three new procedures:

- **Pre-entry;**
- **Rights management;**
- **Transport.**

Procedure structure

Two sections, within a procedure, have been deleted and their content moved to other relevant parts of the procedure:

- **Notes** - most content has been moved to the **Before you start** section (see below);
- **Relevant units of information** - the groups here are now shown at relevant points within the procedure (indicated by **Information requirements**);

There is a new section in each procedure:

- **Before you start** - this contains much of the material previously in **Notes** section and in the introductory material mentioned above. It has two sub-sections **Legal environment** and **Policy requirements**.

There is a new sub-procedure at the beginning of each **Procedure** section:

- **Procedure set-up and review** - emphasises the importance of the proper set-up of a procedure and its review in light of changes in circumstances both external and internal to the organisation.

Information requirements

- The number of *units of information* has been extended in order to support the procedures, especially the new ones;
- The descriptions of some *units of information* have been changed where necessary;
- The fold-out **Overview** has been replaced by an **Information groups** section;
- The **Index to units of information** section has been re-named to **List of units of information and non-preferred unit names**. (This better reflects its function);
- The **Descriptions of units of information** section has been renamed to **Units of information**;
- The material in the **Recording guidelines** section will now be found in the *SPECTRUM Terminology* section of the MDA website.

MDA is committed to SPECTRUM as a continuing project, not only to ensure its continuing adoption across the country, but also to guarantee its growth and development in response to feedback from those who use it.

If you wish to contribute to the development of SPECTRUM please contact us:

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Using SPECTRUM

How the pieces fit together

SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard is in two main parts:

1. **Procedures** describe the process of documenting objects as well as all the collections management activities in a museum.
2. **Information requirements** outline what is needed to support the procedures, including basic object description.

There is also a **Glossary** with definitions and explanations of terms used in SPECTRUM which may be unfamiliar or which have special meanings in the context of museum documentation.

When to use SPECTRUM

SPECTRUM can be used in many ways; sections can be used independently or together and you can be selective about how much depth you need in a given procedure or when describing an object. The following examples show how you might use SPECTRUM.

Checking a specific procedural point

Use SPECTRUM to confirm the information you require and incorporate it within the procedure.

Writing an in-house procedures manual

The *Minimum Standard* section within each procedure explains what you will need to achieve with your manual. The procedure itself is a useful checklist and comparison of the different stages you may need, and the order in which they happen.

Developing a cataloguing manual

Although your system may have certain restrictions or requirements, identify the information requirements you need from SPECTRUM and document the way in which your system supports them.

Writing a policy

Use the *Policy requirements* section in a procedure as a checklist for points to include in your organisation's policy. You may not need all the points listed, but it is a useful reminder of where procedures can grind to a halt if they are not supported by an agreed decision-making mechanism.

Crisis!

An object has been discovered as missing - who needs what information about it? Check the procedure for *Loss and damage* to find out.

Justification of resources

SPECTRUM is a statement of good practice by practitioners. This makes it ideal for use when you need to explain to managers or a governing body why, for example, you need the time and resources to carry out a stockcheck, or to revise and renew your location recording systems.

Establishing performance objectives

You have been asked to establish a set of performance objectives to justify funding for the coming financial year. Use SPECTRUM to ensure that the level of performance you establish is reasonable and will enable you to fulfil your documentation responsibilities.

Dealing with outside bodies

You are procuring a computer system and the supplier wants to know what you want to do with it. SPECTRUM is a good place to start when explaining how you work and what you will need from your new system.

Providing a high-quality service

Your organisation would like to demonstrate that it is providing good value for money while at the same time offering a high-quality service to users. SPECTRUM gives you a benchmark of high-quality service to aim for.

Establishing your information requirements

A curator is asked what information is required to create a basic record for objects in the collection. The current edition of SPECTRUM will provide a solid foundation for deciding what information is necessary.

Glossary

The glossary lists terms which have a particular meaning in the context of *SPECTRUM*. Words and definitions which are *italicised* are themselves defined in the alphabetical listing. Definitions for *SPECTRUM* procedures can be found at the beginning of each procedure.

<i>accession register</i>	A bound paper record of all <i>objects</i> which are, or have been, part of the organisation's <i>permanent collections</i> .
<i>authority list</i>	A list of approved terms enabling information to be recorded in a controlled manner for ease of entry and for retrieval. Often used instead of <i>term list</i> when referring to complex terms, for example, forms of personal names or names of organisations.
<i>backup</i>	A second copy of information, held on a computer or in a manual system.
<i>bailment</i>	A legal term used to refer to the act of delivering property in trust to another for a limited time and specific purpose.
<i>bequest</i>	An <i>object</i> left or given to an organisation under the terms of a will
<i>classification</i>	The systematic arrangement of <i>objects</i> or collections based on characteristics, such as type, form, origin or function.
<i>code of practice</i>	A document agreed between two or more bodies, giving general guidance on standards and/or procedures. A code of practice is normally non-statutory and has no status in law.
<i>data</i>	Information stored on a computer or <i>manual system</i> .
<i>database</i>	A <i>system</i> allowing the recording, organisation and retrieval of <i>data</i> . Although it is normally understood to be software on a computer, the term may equally be applied to <i>manual systems</i> .
<i>documentation</i>	Gathering and recording information about <i>objects</i> , their histories and associations and the processes they undergo within the organisation. The purpose of documentation is to account for, manage and use <i>objects</i> to achieve the stated aims and objectives of the holding organisation.
<i>education handling collections</i>	Collections intended for demonstration or handling, which have not been accessioned and are not part of the <i>permanent collections</i> .
<i>entry form</i>	A form used to log the entry of every <i>object</i> left in the care of a museum.
<i>exit form</i>	A form used to log any <i>object</i> from the <i>permanent collections</i> which leaves the organisation's premises.
<i>facilities report</i>	A report completed prior to the loan of an <i>object</i> providing information about the venue or borrowing organisation. The report assesses practicalities such as environmental conditions and security.
<i>field</i>	A named subdivision of a <i>record</i> containing a specifically defined piece of information within a <i>system</i> , for example 'Artist's name', 'Simple name' or 'Denomination'.
<i>Health & Safety</i>	A phrase used to refer to the laws concerning health and safety at work.
<i>index</i>	The provision of access to information on an automated or <i>manual system</i> using specially prepared lists of terms linked to the specific <i>fields</i> where each term can be found, enabling quicker retrieval.

Glossary

<i>labelling</i>	Affixing numbered labels to <i>objects</i> .
<i>legal environment</i>	Legal considerations that may need to be taken into account before and during a procedure.
<i>manual system</i>	A recording system which uses pen and paper rather than computers. Catalogue cards, <i>index</i> cards and <i>accession registers</i> are examples of manual systems
<i>marking</i>	Affixing a number to an <i>object</i> in such a way as to prevent accidental removal of the mark but to allow reversibility.
<i>Museum Accreditation Scheme</i>	The scheme administered by The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) which assigns accredited status to museums meeting the standards set out in MLA's publication: <i>The Accreditation Standard</i> .
<i>numbering</i>	Assigning a unique number to an <i>object</i> and its separable parts.
<i>object</i>	An item which forms part of an organisation's collections: permanent (recorded in the <i>accession register</i>); support; temporary (e.g. a loan); or those used for educational handling.
<i>permanent collections</i>	Formally accessioned <i>objects</i> acquired by an organisation in accordance with a written acquisition policy.
<i>record</i>	A group of <i>fields</i> relating to a particular <i>object</i> or transaction.
<i>security copy</i>	A copy of information. The term is often used with reference to <i>accession registers</i> , when a copy of the register is kept in case of damage to the original.
<i>support collections</i>	Collections which have not been accessioned and are not part of the <i>permanent collections</i> . Support collections may include photographs taken for record purposes, or <i>objects</i> acquired to supplement an exhibition.
<i>system</i>	The operational means by which <i>data</i> is recorded. A system can be computerised or manual.
<i>terminology control</i>	The facility to restrict and monitor the terms or words which may be recorded in a specific <i>field</i> . See <i>term list</i> and <i>authority list</i> .
<i>termlist</i>	A list of the approved standard terms or words which may be used to record information in a specific <i>field</i> where <i>terminology control</i> is required, e.g. a list of materials used to construct objects, or a list of object names.
<i>thesaurus</i>	A structured vocabulary of terms or words for use in a specific <i>field</i> where terminology control is required. The structure of the thesaurus enables relationships to be maintained between different terms, including general and specific terms (e.g. wood-softwood-pine) as well as synonyms (e.g. pullover, jumper and sweater).
<i>transfer of title</i>	A legal term to describe the formal process of a change of ownership of an <i>object</i> from one person or organisation to another.
<i>unsolicited gift</i>	An object that has arrived as a gift, without consultation between the donor and the organisation. It may arrive by post, or may be left at the front door.

Procedure overview

Using the procedures

Each procedure in SPECTRUM contains the information only relevant to that procedure. References are made to other procedures to which the organisation may need to refer in order to complete an operation. For example, *Object entry* is linked to both *Loans in* and *Acquisition*, as an object entering an organisation may be the first step to the object either being borrowed or acquired. Procedures such as *Object condition checking and technical assessment* are referred to frequently, as it may be necessary to check the condition of an object on several different occasions, for example, prior to acquisition, whilst on loan or as part of deaccession and disposal.

The organisation can choose the procedures which are relevant to its operations. For example, if it never lends objects, it will not need to operate the procedure for *Loans out*, and the *Minimum Standard* for that procedure will not apply to the organisation.

What's in a procedure?

Definition

Explains the scope of the procedure and any ambiguous terms.

Minimum Standard

However an organisation implements the procedure, this is what it should achieve.

Before you start

This section details the information an organisation needs to consider before it implements a procedure. It contains the **Legal environment** which affects its operation, and the **Policy requirements** that an organisation must have in place.

Procedure

This is divided into *sub-procedures* which are major activities that take place in a procedure. These are further divided into numbered *procedure steps* which give instructions about what should be done.

Sources of help and advice

Publications and *organisations* which provide additional information to help with the implementation of the procedure.

(**Note:** Links to other parts of a procedure, to other procedure, or to other parts of SPECTRUM are indicated by **bold blue text**. Links to resources on the web are indicated by a [blue web address](#))

Linking between a procedure and its information requirements

The operation of a procedure will lead to the recording of various items of information. These are known, in *SPECTRUM*, as the procedure's *information requirements*.

In *SPECTRUM* *information requirements* are defined at two levels:

- **Units of information** - These are the lowest level of information-recording and **may** represent *data* in one *field* of a *system* (it is possible that a *unit of information* to be represented in other ways, e.g. the name of a *field*, or instructions on how to record *data* in a *field*);
- **Information groups** - These are sets of *units of information* brought together to enable the recording of: an *object* (both physically and with regard to events in its history); events that take place in the organisation (e.g. an *Audit*); *persons*, *organisations*, *peoples* and *places*, etc. associated with *objects* and events.

Linking from a procedure to its *information requirements* is at the level of the *procedure step* to the *information groups* needed to support it.

Where there are *information requirements* for a *procedure step* these are indicated by an '**Information requirements:**' which lists underneath the relevant *information groups*. By referring to the [Information groups](#) section of *SPECTRUM* it is then possible to see which are the relevant *units of information* for any *information group*.

Pre-entry

Definition

The management and documentation of the assessment of potential acquisitions before their arrival at the organisation.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the pre-entry requirements of objects and a related documentary archive where necessary. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting pre-entry must:

- Clarify the organisation's acquisition policy and conditions for deposition of objects and documentary records to the potential depositor;
- Ensure that the organisation is fully aware of the quantity and type of material that is on offer;
- Assess the impact on the organisation of acquiring the items, in terms of space, manpower, financial, legal and conservation issues;
- Ensure that a global organisation accession number has been assigned to the site (for fieldwork) or collection(s) (for bequests or purchases) if necessary;
- Ensure that an expected date of deposition and responsibility for the items in transit is agreed with the depositor.

Before you start

The *Pre-entry* procedure ensures that the organisation is accountable for acquisitions or notification of potential acquisitions that occur before the items enter the organisation's premises. It will therefore be relevant to all types of fieldwork, including archaeology and natural history.

Pre-entry is relevant to bequests and purchases at auction and to offers of large items, collections, etc., that require assessment and hence the accumulation of data in advance of arrival at the organisation's premises. It can also be applied to collection surveys.

It may be used in conjunction with the following procedures where collections are assessed prior to deposition in the organisation:

- *Object condition checking and technical assessment;*
- *Conservation and collections care;*
- *Acquisition;*
- *Use of collections;*
- *Inventory control;*
- *Location and movement control.*

Legal environment

Import Duty and VAT

Organisations wishing to import objects should look at HM Customs and Excise Notice 361 *Importing museum and gallery exhibits free of duty and VAT*. To receive duty relief:

- Organisations are required to be approved by the National Import Reliefs Unit (NIRU)
- Objects must be scientific, educational or cultural nature and not for sale;
- Objects must be sent directly to the approved organisation when imported;
- Objects must only be for exhibits under the control of the organisation;
- Records of the objects are kept.

For further information on VAT, see notice 702 *Imports*. In many cases the shipping agent will deal with import and export paperwork. The organisation should have detailed information about the objects in question including date, a precise description (including material), place and methods of production (e.g. hand or machine-made).

Illicit Trade

Organisations must take precautions to ensure that they only acquire, or borrow, ethically acceptable items and reject items that might have been looted or illegally exported. To ensure the organisation does this, it needs to exercise due diligence and retain all relevant documents (DCMS, forthcoming).

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for management of the pre-entry of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

A security copy should be made of field project archives. For archaeology fieldwork, a copy should be lodged with the appropriate national monuments record, before deposition at the organisation. The organisation should ensure that it has the right to make copies for security purposes of all graphic and written material in its collections.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have policies and guidelines on pre-entry stating:

- The steps to be taken to ensure checks on provenance are carried out as soon as the potential acquisition is identified;
- The steps to be taken to assess the impact on the organisation of acquiring the items, in terms of space, manpower, financial, legal and conservation issues;
- How the organisation will keep individuals intending to deposit items in the organisation informed of its current policy and changes to policy.

The depositor should arrange transport and insurance of the archive.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the pre-entry of objects to the organisation.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the pre-entry of objects to the organisation. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Carrying out pre-entry

- 3 Check that the organisation is the appropriate repository. Appropriate persons and organisations must be provided with a copy of the organisation's acquisition policy and conditions for deposition. Encourage appropriate persons to liaise with the organisation before, during and after fieldwork or by whatever means the items are coming to the organisation. For detail of the contents and issues associated with an archaeological archive deposition policy, see **Society of Museum Archaeologists**, 1995.
- 4 Assign a unique number to the item(s). This may be a field collection number for items that have not been acquired, or an accession number for items that have been acquired. In the case of archaeological items and records:
 - In England and Wales - assign an accession number before archaeological fieldwork starts
 - In Scotland and Northern Ireland - the receiving organisation can only assign accession numbers at the post-excavation stage.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#).
- 5 Issue standards for the transfer of documentary material (e.g. archaeological project archives) to the organisation. This should include recommendations on the content and presentation of the archive.
 - 6 Assess and record essential information on the size and content of the material and associated documentation for the following purposes:
 - Measuring against the organisation's acquisition policy, including preferred selection strategies;
 - Assessment of transport and handling facilities required;
 - Assessment of type and volume of storage facilities required;
 - Assessment of deposition or storage grant to be charged, if applicable;
 - Establishment of who holds legal title to the items;
 - Establishment of who holds the intellectual property rights (e.g. copyright) of the documentary material (e.g. a project archive).

Pre-entry

A proforma or checklist could be used and might include the following information, the:

- Quantity/type of small finds, bulk finds and environmental remains (in the case of large archaeological groups, it is possible to indicate the quantity by boxes and material type, e.g. '6 boxes of Neolithic flints'; '20 boxes of post-medieval pottery');
- Quantity/type of documentary archive on paper, film, magnetic, digitised and other media;
- Stability of archive, conservation work carried out and required;
- Suitability of packaging for organisation storage;
- Labelling, checklists and indexes to archive;
- Cost of items (if bid for or purchased at auction or any other off-site location).

Make a reference to this documentation.

Information requirements:

- [**Reference information.**](#)
- 7** Decide if the selection or discard of items is to take place prior to entry and acquisition, i.e. carried out on site or at assessment stage.
 - 8** Identify the date or approximate date that the items are due to arrive at the organisation. Issue recommendations to the owner for the care, storage and documentation of the items prior to acquisition.
 - 9** In case of acquisition, the organisation should not accept an item unless it can acquire a valid title to it. For items acquired as a result of fieldwork, obtain agreement in principle from the landowner for the finds to be donated to the organisation. Transfer of ownership to the organisation must be complete before or on deposition.
 - 10** Carry out a condition check prior to transportation to confirm that the items are in a stable state and suitably packed prior to deposition.
[Go to [**Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure**](#)]
[Go to [**Object entry - Procedure**](#)]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Combating Illicit Trade: Due diligence guidelines for museums, libraries and archives when acquiring cultural material. [forthcoming]

English Heritage. Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP 2). London: English Heritage, 1991.

Longworth, Christine & Wood, Barbara (eds.). Standards in Action: Working with Archaeology. Cambridge: MDA, 2000.

Museums & Galleries Commission. Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections. London: MGC, 1992.

Society of Museum Archaeologists. Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive. SMA, 1995.

Organisations

Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA)

<<http://www.socmusarch.org.uk>>

HM Customs and Excise

<<http://www.hmce.gov.uk>>

Object entry

Definition

The management and documentation of the receipt of objects and associated information which are not currently part of the collections. Any object which does not currently have an object number assigned by the receiving organisation must be dealt with within this procedure.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the receipt and deposit of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting object entry must:

- Establish the terms and conditions under which objects are being received for deposit;
- Uniquely identify the newly received object or associated group of objects;
- Ensure the organisation is able to account for all objects left in its care;
- Provide a receipt for the owner or depositor;
- Help establish the extent of the organisation's liability;
- Indicate the reason for the receipt of the object;
- Determine a finite end to, or programme for review of, the deposit;
- Enable the object to be returned to the owner or depositor as required;
- Allow for objects and associated records to be checked on entry to ensure that they correspond to any accompanying inventory and/or transfer of title documentation supplied;
- Establish who has legal title to the object in case of subsequent acquisition;
- Capture key information about the object, to be augmented in the future;
- Inform the decision making-process.

Before you start

Object entry is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

Object entry is the key to ensuring that all objects that enter the organisation are accounted for. It applies to all objects entering the organisation's care, including loans and acquisitions to permanent or support collections. Organisations are expected to take the same care of objects not belonging to their collections as they would of their own objects. Organisations might be held liable for loss of, or damage to, objects whether solicited or not.

Use the procedure in conjunction with any other procedure where an object arrives which does not already have an identifying number assigned by the organisation in order to be able to keep track of the object and its information.

Objects and documentary archives from fieldwork projects may have an accession number assigned before deposition in the organisation and may not need to undergo the full *Object entry* procedure if the *Pre-entry* procedure has been fully applied. When objects arrive at the organisation, use the *Acquisition* procedure.

Legal environment

It is important that the owner of the deposited object be identified in case of subsequent acquisition of the object. If the depositor is not the owner of the object, and especially if it is being offered as a gift or for sale, the depositor should sign to confirm that they have the authority to offer the object. The preferred method of doing this would be to have a signed statement from the owner, confirming that the depositor is acting on his or her behalf.

Always consult the organisation's normal source of legal advice when establishing terms and conditions of deposit, or if there is any doubt as to the ownership or legal status of an object.

The deposit of certain natural science specimens and objects, e.g. ivory, may be restricted as a result of:

The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981

It is an offence to damage the habitat or to injure or take from the wild certain species of plants, animals and birds. A licensing system covers exceptions.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

CITES controls trade in wildlife and wildlife products to prevent endangered species of plants and animals from becoming extinct. It is a UN convention which is strictly implemented by the UK and other EU states to provide extra legal protection for many species.

(See [Sources of help and advice](#) below for further information.)

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them, e.g. copyright. Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation, e.g. *Data Protection*. The procedure for the management of object entry needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

Organisations must have a policy governing the entry of objects into the organisation including acquisitions, loans, enquiries and other deposits. It is good practice to state:

- The circumstances in which deposits will be accepted, including an indication of the persons who are authorised to do this;
- The conditions which the organisation will apply to the return of deposits;
- How long, and in what form, enquiry information is held;
- How the organisation should deal with objects that have not been collected or returned to depositors.

Terms and conditions for deposited objects are especially important. They should include the following:

- A statement of the care and responsibility that will be taken by the organisation;
- A disclaimer of liability;
- A declaration of the right to dispose of objects not collected by the depositor by an agreed date;
- A disclaimer concerning opinions on objects;
- A refusal to give valuations;
- For a proposed acquisition, a statement about the ownership status of the object(s);
- For a loan in, the steps that the organisation will take to return the object(s);
- In all cases, a timescale for any action;
- Establishment of which party is liable to costs incurred by the deposit e.g. transport costs.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** policy that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** documentation procedural manual that refers to the acquisition of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the entry of objects into the organisation. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the legal environment;
 - Changes to the policy of the organisation.

Creating a receipt and entry record

- 3 When the organisation has advanced notice, prepare for the arrival of an object by:
 - Clarifying any specific terms and conditions (if they are different from the standard);
 - Briefing the relevant person(s);
 - Having a storage location available;
 - Checking that the object is in a fit state to be left in the custody of the organisation. (It is recommended that new objects are kept isolated from other collections until a satisfactory condition check is completed.).
 - Confirming, for objects covered by the *Government Indemnity Scheme*, that a condition check has carried out before transportation.
- 4 Make a record of the object as soon as it arrives. Wherever possible, obtain as much information about a deposit before arrival. If the depositor provides an inventory of the objects being deposited, check this for possible discrepancies and agree on what is being deposited. In cases where deposits were expected, refer as appropriate to documentation already prepared. The record should include the:
 - Entry number;
 - Name, address and telephone number of the current owner (and depositor if different). Ensure the rights associated with this information are respected;
 - Entry date;
 - Brief statement of condition and completeness (identify the composite parts of objects which might appear as one thing);
 - Brief description of the object(s), including any accompanying information concerning production, usage, etc;
 - Entry reason;
 - Entry method;
 - Number of objects deposited, where possible (see *Note* below);
 - Requirements of the owner (or depositor) including return details and confidentiality of information provided to the organisation;
 - Agreed return date;
 - Signature of the owner (or depositor if different);
 - Name and signature of the organisation's official who receives the object;
 - Insurance details (including a previously agreed valuation);
 - Note of packing materials if necessary (they may be an integral part of the object);
 - Field collection information where relevant (method, context, co-ordinates, landowner, finder);
 - Additional information about the object where relevant, including: a hazards note (e.g. chemical, radioactive); any legal/licence requirements (e.g. a firearms licence); any associated rights (e.g. copyright); the owner's asking price if it is being offered for sale.

Object entry

Information requirements:

- [Object entry information](#);
- [Object identification information](#);
- [Valuation information](#);
- [Insurance information](#);
- [Object collection information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [People information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Note: Large groups of items

If it is not possible to count the number of objects deposited, e.g. in the case of a large number of potsherds, indicate the size of the deposit in an appropriately practical way, e.g. '2 boxes'. In this instance, it will be appropriate to assign numbers to groups of objects rather than individual items. Thought should also be given to the different levels of recording appropriate e.g. a summary list, rather than an itemised list of specimens, may be all that is immediately required, or indeed feasible.

- 5** It is particularly important to check the condition of the object at the time of deposit. This will establish the original condition of the object in the case of any claims against the organisation by the owner, as well as protecting the existing collections against infestation in the case of deposited objects carrying invasive organisms, e.g. moulds, woodworm.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

The condition report should be appropriate to the circumstances. Make a brief note of the condition as required, e.g. 'Small crack on base', 'Stain on back'. Obtain an image of the object wherever practicable. In some cases, a more comprehensive condition report may be necessary. If appropriate, a risk assessment should also be carried out. This should assess risks to people and risks to other objects.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Condition and technical assessment information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Objects should only be accepted unexamined if they require unpacking by specialists. In such cases the receipt should state that the objects were received unexamined.

- 6** Give a copy of the recorded information to the depositor as a receipt for the object(s). Inform them of the organisation's terms and conditions for accepting deposits according to the reason for the deposit, including their rights in the personal information that the organisation now holds.
- 7** If the depositor is not present, but known, when the material is received (e.g. if items arrive through the post), send them a copy of the entry documentation as a receipt and ask for a copy to be signed and returned.

If the depositor is not known (e.g. items arrive unexpectedly, anonymously, through the post with no details of ownership), record as much detail as possible, including photographs (if legally possible). Include an explanatory note indicating that the depositor was not available to verify details. See [Step 12](#) below for how to process them.

Object entry

- 8 Tag the object with a temporary label marked with the *Entry number*. If the object is in pieces, or cannot easily be tagged, place it in a container and tag the container.
- 9 Record the location of the object. Keep this information up to date as the object is moved and/or returned.
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Object location information](#);
- [Location information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Address information](#);

Processing the object

- 10 If an object is being offered for acquisition, record the:
 - Proposed object purchase price if appropriate;
 - Reference to related information and correspondence about the potential acquisition;
 - Rights of ownership;
 - Any other rights associated with the object (e.g. copyright);
[Go to [Rights management - Procedure](#)]
 - Object valuation (for insurance or indemnity purposes if required).
[Go to [Valuation control - Procedure](#)]
and then
[Go to [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Acquisition information](#);
- [Reproduction information](#);
- [Valuation information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Then [Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]

- 11 If an object is being offered on loan or for research, record the:
 - Reference to a loan or other information file;
 - Object valuation (for insurance or indemnity purposes only)
 - Any other rights associated with the object (e.g. copyright);
[Go to [Rights management - Procedure](#)]
 - Object valuation (for insurance or indemnity purposes only)

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#);
- [Valuation information](#);
- [Reproduction information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Then [Go to [Loans in - Procedure](#)]

- 12** Where unsolicited objects are deposited anonymously, deal with them in line with the organisation's policy:

- If for acquisition, then [Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]
- If for disposal, then [Go to [Deaccession and disposal - Procedure](#)]

- 13** If the object is returned to the owner use the *Object exit* procedure.
[Go to [Object exit - Procedure](#)]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Holm, Stuart. *Facts and Artefacts. How to document a museum collection. (Second edition).* (Chapter 6, 'Entry documentation', pp 10-12) Cambridge: MDA, 1998.

MDA. *Developing a documentation procedural manual.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/procman.htm>>

MDA. *Documentation - why bother?.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/bother.htm>>

MDA. *Documenting photographs.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/docphoto.htm>>

MDA. *Entry records.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/entry.htm>>

MDA. *How to write a documentation plan.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

MDA. *MDA Codes.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/mdacodes.htm>>

MDA. *Numbering.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/number.htm>>

MDA. *Protecting your records.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/protect.htm>>

MDA. *SPECTRUM Terminology.* [webpages].
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/spectrum-terminology/>>

Object entry

MDA. *Terminology control*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). *The Accreditation Standard*. London: MLA, 2004.
<http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/accreditation_standard.pdf>

Organisations

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)
<<http://www.cites.org>>

MDA
<<http://www.mda.org.uk>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Wildlife Licensing and Registration Service [Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs]
<<http://www.ukcites.gov.uk>>

Loans in

Definition

Managing and documenting the borrowing of objects for which the organisation is responsible for a specific period of time and for a specified purpose, normally exhibition/display, but including research, conservation, education or photography/publication.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the borrowing of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting loans in must:

- Establish the purpose of the loan;
- Enable at least the same care of the borrowed object as if it were part of the permanent collections;
- Include written agreements signed by both borrower and lender before the loan commences, as appropriate to the collection;
- Ensure that the terms and conditions of loan are adhered to;
- Ensure that all loans are for fixed periods;
- Ensure a written record of the loan is retained;
- Enable effective control of the loan process;
- Enable the provision of information about the borrower and the loan as requested by the lender;
- Provide insurance or indemnity cover for the loan period;
- Ensure that up-to-date information about the location of borrowed objects is maintained;
- Ensure that up-to-date information about the security of borrowed objects is maintained;
- Ensure that up-to-date information about the physical well-being of borrowed objects is maintained, including the environment and condition of the objects.

Before you start

Loans in is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

Loans can be initiated either by the receiving organisation or by the lender. Reasons for loan include:

- Exhibition/display;
- Photography or publication;
- Conservation;
- Research.

Loans should not normally be accepted unless it is in the interest of widening public benefit.

Scientific research loans

It is recognised that within scientific collections, loans are usually more frequent and less formal. Loans are usually organised under an international tradition, often discipline specific. For example, organisations may already have established loan agreements with other organisations, or the loan itself may carry an agreement with it for return with the acknowledgement of receipt.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the borrowing of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on loans made to it. It is good practice to state:

- The reasons why objects may be borrowed;
- The conditions it will observe;
- The minimum and maximum length of a loan period;
- The way in which loans are authorised;
- How the organisation will establish the lender's title to objects (e.g. to avoid exhibiting finds known to have been illegally taken from archaeological sites);
- Steps for dealing with loaned objects for which the original lender cannot be contacted.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written policy** that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written documentation procedural manual** that refers to the acquisition of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the borrowing of objects by the organisation. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the legal environment;
 - Changes to the policy of the organisation.

Initiation and research

- 3 Loans can be initiated either by the receiving organisation or by the lender. Maintain an up-to-date record of the status of the loan throughout the loan process. All correspondence and additional information about the loan should be maintained on a related file, accessible at least by lender name and loan number. Record references to these documents.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

- 4 Record and maintain preliminary information about objects which may be borrowed throughout the research process.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

Requests

- 5 Loan requests must be in writing and should be submitted as far in advance of the loan as possible. This must be in compliance with the period of notice required by the lender. It should take into account the time needed to meet *Government Indemnity Scheme* guidelines, Customs, or any other needed preparations, if relevant.

Requests should include the following at least:

- Date(s) of proposed loan;
- Venue(s) for proposed loan;
- Context and purpose of proposed loan (including the argument for object inclusion within scope of exhibition if appropriate);
- Lender's name and address;
- Contact name and details;
- Object number(s) of requested object(s);
- Brief descriptions of requested object(s);
- A statement of insurance or indemnity arrangements which would be made.

Information requirements:

- *Loan in information*;
- *Object identification information*;
- *Insurance information*;
- *Indemnity information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

The borrower may wish to compile an information sheet for lenders. This should include a description of the venue(s) and specify the responsibilities of the borrower during the loan period, and can be sent out with the loan request. This does not supersede any terms set by the lender, it merely demonstrates the borrower's duty in safeguarding the loan.

A loan must be for a finite period and must not be 'permanent', although there may be an option for renewal at the end of a loan period. If permanent loans are already part of an organisation's system, every effort should be made to trace the owners and convert the agreement into a fixed term-loan or gift.

- 6 The non-availability of requested objects may require requests to be changed and object information updated.

Negotiation and exchange of key information

- 7 If the lender agrees to consider the loan, provide further information on the venue(s) as required. Completion of a formal *facilities report* may be requested.

Loans from private sources may require separate or additional guidance for individuals who have not loaned to the organisation before, stating responsibilities of both parties, and asking the lender to confirm title and provenance of loaned object if necessary.

Record references to correspondence and documents.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information*.
- 8 When the lender has agreed in principle to the loan, and as the list of objects to be borrowed stabilises, request further details of the objects and record them on the related file. The record for each object should include:
- The lender's object number and description;
 - The name and address of owner;
 - Its valuation;
 - Its condition;
 - Its display recommendations;
 - Its environmental recommendations;
 - Its handling recommendations;
 - Its dimensions;
 - Photographs of it, for research;
 - Any additional descriptive and historical information as required;
 - Exhibition number (if applicable).

Information requirements:

- *Loan in information*;
- *Object identification information*;
- *Valuation information*;
- *Condition and technical assessment information*;
- *Object requirement information*;
- *Object description information*;
- *Object collection information*;
- *Object history and association information*;
- *Object production information*;
- *Use of collections information*;
- *References information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

It may be necessary to repeat **Steps 7-8** depending on conditions such as the availability of objects, security and environmental conditions, etc.

Agreeing the loan

9 Finalise the conditions of loan and record all decisions on the related file. Include the following:

- **Object related information**, including: standards of care, display, handling, usage (e.g. working exhibits, machinery, etc.), security and environmental arrangements, condition reporting and monitoring, agreement over the nature and extent of any investigative, intrusive or remedial conservation that needs to be carried out, the borrower's right to take action (e.g. where a loaned object is found to be infested);
- **Insurance and indemnity requirements**;
- **Costs and responsibilities**, including: conservation, transport, staff time and unforeseen costs;
- **Terms of reproduction and intellectual rights**;
- **Packing, transport, courier and other shipping requirements**;
- **Arrangements for scientific research loans**, including for purposes of destructive analysis or technical preparation. These should include a condition about the extent of destruction or preparation, and a statement of ownership of the products of this research;
- **Additional terms and conditions as agreed with the lender**, including the method of acknowledgement for labels, the owner's rights to their object during the loan period, the borrowing organisation's non-acceptance of responsibility to trace the owner should circumstances change during the period of loan;
- **Renewal application date**, if the loan is to be renewed;
- **Contact details**, emphasising the responsibility of the lender to keep the borrower informed of any changes.

It is not advisable to assume responsibility for the transfer of loans between the lender and a third party. As current borrower, object movement to a third party may need to be facilitated at the end of the loan period. Such agreements should remain directly between the lender and third party, unless acting as the organiser of a touring exhibition with multiple venues.

Loans in

Record references to correspondence and documents.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

- 10 When the loan is confirmed, appropriate agreement(s) must be signed by lender and borrower. The agreement should refer to all conditions for the loan.

When borrowing from another organisation, the situation is likely to arise where the lender has a standard agreement for *Loans out* and the borrower has one for *Loans in*. The use of more than one loan agreement is not recommended, the onus is on the borrower to accept that of the lender as owner of the object, providing all necessary points are covered. If necessary draft a one-off agreement that covers all relevant points to the satisfaction of both parties.

Scheduling and receipt

- 11 Prepare for and schedule receipt of the object(s), including the briefing of all necessary persons and the implementation of any requirements specified by the lender. Identify a location for the object on its arrival.
- 12 Provide the lender with documentary evidence of insurance or indemnity and Customs clearance once the exact period of loan has been agreed, including transit. Also obtain the appropriate licences, e.g. for working objects.

Receipt of the loan

- 13 Complete entry documentation on arrival.
[Go to [Object entry - Procedure](#)]
- 14 Unpack object and make a condition report. Include a photograph where possible (practically and legally).
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Take any remedial action as required, obtaining the owner's agreement as required by the loan agreement.

[Go to [Conservation and collections care - Procedure](#)]

- 15 If a separate loan number is allocated, record this on the entry form. Otherwise assign a unique number, normally the *Entry number*, to each object or associated group of objects. Record this number assigned in the loan documentation. It is recommended that a removable tag carrying the unique number is attached to the object to assist tracking and identification.
[Go to [Object entry - Procedure](#)]
- 16 Record the location of all objects and maintain that information. A gallery plan may be useful in identifying and locating objects.
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]
- 17 Send a receipt to the lender to confirm safe arrival of the object and retain a copy.

Monitoring the loan

- 18 Monitor the loan and its condition and environment, providing access to the lender or their agent when requested to do so.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Provide condition reports as required. Report any changed circumstances even if objects on loan are not directly affected (e.g. attempted theft of other loaned objects). If the object has been damaged the lender must be informed immediately and provided with a full report carried out by the borrowing organisation.

Extending the loan

- 19** In the case of a loan which is to be renewed, apply as required for an extension of the loan period. Revise the insurance or indemnity cover and status of the loan as required under the terms of the loan agreement and the terms of insurance or indemnity.
[Go to [Valuation control - Procedure](#)]
[Go to - [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]

Return and closure

- 20** Arrange for the return of the loan, and confirm packing, transport and receipt arrangements as agreed at [Steps 9-10](#) and above. If the loan dates are being changed, consult the lender as soon as possible before an early return of the loan.
- 21** Complete a final condition report on the object, taking photographs if required (and legally possible),
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]
- 22** Return the object to the lenders.
[Go to [Object exit - Procedure](#)]

Obtain and retain notification from shippers that the object has been returned. Record a reference to this.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information.](#)
- 23** Obtain and retain written confirmation from lenders that the object has been received in a satisfactory state. Follow up any action that may be required, e.g. insurance or indemnity claims.
[Go to - [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]
- 24** Confirm that all charges have been paid.
- 25** Maintain the documentation as a permanent record and audit trail of the loan.
- 26** If the owner has died since the object was received, contact the executor if known. If current legal ownership of the object is in any doubt, and/or authorised signatures are not obtainable, seek professional legal advice.

It may be necessary to take advice from the organisation's normal source of legal advice as to the steps which should be taken if the original owner of a deposited or loaned item cannot be contacted, with a view to either:

- Acquiring the object;
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]
- or
- Disposing of the object within the organisation's disposal policy if the object is not desired by the organisation.
[Go to [Deaccession and disposal - Procedure](#)]

However, any further action should only be undertaken after a period of due diligence, where reasonable efforts to trace the original owner have failed. Legal advice should be sought with regards to the *Torts (interference with Goods) Act 1977* and the *Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982* before proceeding on either course of action.

- 27** If a loaned object is subsequently acquired by the borrowing organisation, process it as an acquisition.
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Association of Independent Museums. *AIM Guidelines 14, 'Museum Collecting Policies and Loan Agreements', revised.* London: Association of Independent Museums, 1988.

British Museum. *A Guide to the Storage, Exhibition and Handling of Antiquities, Ethnographia and Pictorial Art.* London: British Museum Publications, 1990.

Case, Mary (ed.). *Registrars on Record: Essays on Museum Collections Management.* ('Code of practice for couriers of museum objects', pp 239-246). Washington: American Association of Museums, 1988.

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<http://www.culture.gov.uk/cultural_property/government_indemnity.htm>

Holm, Stuart. *Facts and Artefacts. How to document a museum collection. (Second edition).* Cambridge: MDA, 1998.

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/procman.htm>>

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

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MDA. *Protecting your records.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/protect.htm>>

MDA. *SPECTRUM Terminology.* [webpages].
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/spectrum-terminology/>>

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Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums.* London: Museums Association, 2002.
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Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards for Touring Exhibitions.* London: MGC, 1995.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). *The Accreditation Standard.* London: MLA, 2004.
<http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/accreditation_standard.pdf>

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects.* London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1994.

Loans in

Richard, Mervin & Mecklenburg, Marion F. & Merrill, Ross M. *Art in Transit: Handbook for Packing and Transporting Paintings*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1991.

Sandsmith H.S. and Stainton S. *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping*. Viking, 1991.

Stolow, Nathan. *Conservation and Exhibitions: Packing, transport, storage and environment*. London: Butterworths, 1987.

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/StandardFacilitiesReport.doc>>

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report Display Case Supplement*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/DisplayCaseSupplement.doc>>

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report Security Supplement*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/SecuritySupplement.doc>>

Ware, Michael E. *Museum collecting policies and loan agreements*. Association of Independent Museums, 1988.

Wilkinson, David. *First Aid for Finds*. Rescue and United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section, 1987.

Organisations

MDA

<<http://www.mda.org.uk>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (Security Adviser)

<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Regional Agencies [links webpage]

<<http://www.mda.org.uk/linkamc.htm>>

Registrars' Committee of the American Association of Museums

<<http://www.rcaam.org>>

UK Registrars' Group

<<http://www.ukrg.org>>

Acquisition

Definition

Documenting and managing the addition of objects and associated information to the collections of the organisation and their possible accession to the permanent collections.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the acquisition of objects, which should include a collecting policy. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting acquisitions must:

- Ensure that written evidence is obtained of the original title to an object and the transfer of the title to the acquiring organisation;
- Enable the reconciling of acquisition records with objects as part of retrospective documentation, audit and inventory activity;
- Ensure that a unique number is assigned to, and physically associated with, all objects;
- Ensure that accession registers are maintained, describing all acquisitions and listing them by number;
- Ensure that information about the acquisition process is retained;
- Ensure that donors are made aware of the terms on which their gift or bequest is accepted by the organisation;
- Ensure that collecting complies with the organisation's collecting policy, and does not contravene any local, national or international law, treaty or recognised code of practice;
- Ensure a copy of the information in the accession register is made and kept up to date.

Before you start

Acquisition is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

Acquisition includes separate activities such as:

- Deciding whether to acquire the object for the: permanent collections; handling collections; auxiliary collections; research collections, etc;
- Establishing legal transfer;
- Allocation of a unique number and labelling and/or (where possible) physically marking the object with it;
- Entry in accession register (if an addition to the permanent collections);
- Entry in any other appropriate register or listing (if not part of the permanent collections).

It also formalises the records of objects found during the *Retrospective documentation*, *Audit* or *Inventory control* procedures.

Types and status of collections

Not all objects owned by the organisation are formally added to the accession register. An object may be purchased for exhibition purposes, but not necessarily with a view to adding it to the permanent collections at the close of the exhibition. Similarly, photographs considered as 'objects' with historical, scientific or aesthetic significance may be added to the permanent collections, whereas photographs made as working copies used for documentation or display may not. In such cases, alternative management systems will be required to cover objects not part of the permanent collections.

"An object may change its status (may be recognised, for example, as unique), or may be able to be operated carefully for a limited time without suffering. We therefore suggest a more sophisticated approach, based on regular assessment of each object's importance. What matters is that each museum should adopt and stick to a clear policy.

It should therefore be clear from the outset why an object has been acquired, and whether it is to be preserved for as long as humanly possible, or whether it is to be operated for public education and enjoyment, or indeed for research."

From **Museums & Galleries Commission** *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects: Social and Industrial History Collections*. 1994.

Where an object is moved from the permanent collections to another collection use the *Deaccession and disposal* procedure.

Acceptance and selection of offers

Do not acquire objects if there is any doubt about the vendor's or donor's rights of ownership. Organisations are not obliged to accept offers or bequests, and the terms on which collections are accepted must be clearly understood by the donor. When organisations are offered collections, it is important that before these are accepted, the donor is asked to permit the organisation to take out those items not wanted for the permanent collection. A note about the group in its entirety should be recorded (e.g. on the entry form) before any weeding takes place. Where, however, an organisation is offered a collection which is an archive, or where the significance lies in the collection itself (rather than its individual objects) - then the collection should not be broken up or weeded without the most careful consideration.

In certain circumstances concerning archaeological archives deposited in an organisation without meeting the organisation's criteria for deposit and acquisition, an organisation may have the option of retaining finds on a revisable basis and may defer accessioning until a full and proper assessment can be made of what should be retained and what dispersed. This should take place within an agreed time period.

Acquisition

As part of the acquisitions process, objects need to be assessed for any potential hazards, since compliance with the relevant health and safety regulations is crucial. Objects that contain hazards may also affect the decision to acquire - and, therefore, need to be assessed prior to entry.

Acquisition provisos

Avoid acquiring objects with terms and conditions. Always take professional legal advice if in doubt. The acceptance of objects in lieu of tax is subject to specific requirements; organisations should refer to the relevant government department as required.

Every acquisition by the organisation should be carefully considered for its environmental and ethical implications, as well as for its intellectual, scientific and educational significance. There are also restrictions on collecting caused by inability to store or conserve objects, or storage and use problems caused by objects made of ephemeral or fugitive materials. The organisation must try to ensure that the acquisition of objects does not contravene any local, national or international law, treaty or recognised code of practice. Anyone collecting on behalf of the organisation must adhere to the same legal and ethical constraints. The organisation should ensure that both statutory and amateur groups from which it receives material are aware of, and abide by, its policies.

Unnumbered objects

Objects found in an organisation with no number or provenance, for example during audit or inventory, may only be accessioned if you are confident that they are the property of the organisation and they are required. Every effort should be made to trace the origins of such objects, including all possible external sources and internal records (e.g. entry records, correspondence, loans files, etc.) and to reconcile them with existing records. In such cases, always document and retain all information about the find and any subsequent accession. This will enable the audit trail to be picked up in the case of any subsequent claims to the object.

Archives

"Where a substantial archive illustrates and enhances context, its acquisition should first be discussed with the appropriate archive service. If the museum proposes to retain such an archive, reference should be made to the Museums & Galleries Commission's Code of Practice on Archives for Museums in the United Kingdom, 1996."

(From **Museums & Galleries Commission**. *Standards in the Museum Care of Musical Instruments* 1995. See 1996 revised edition of *Code of Practice on Archives*)

Legal environment

Ownership of archaeological finds - England, Wales and Northern Ireland

The Treasure Act 1996 (supplemented by *Treasure (Designation) Order 2002*) replaced the common law of treasure trove in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. It confirms that treasure vests in the Crown or the franchisee if there is one, subject to prior interests and rights. It removes the previous need to establish that objects were hidden with the intention of being recovered (except in a few cases), and defines the precious metal content required for a find to qualify as treasure. It also extends the definition of treasure to include other objects found in archaeological association with finds of treasure.

In Northern Ireland, the *Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995* includes a statutory requirement for the finder of any archaeological object to report the circumstances of its finding and the nature of the object within 14 days. The object should be reported to the Ulster Museum, the police, or the Department of the Environment for Northern Ireland. In addition, the Order makes it an offence to excavate any land while searching for archaeological objects without a licence.

Acquisition

Ownership of archaeological finds - Scotland

Under Scottish *Treasure Trove* and *bona vacantia* law, all owner-less objects belong to the Crown, and all finds must be reported - via the police, procurator fiscal, local museum, regional/island archaeologist or Treasure Trove Advisory Panel secretariat in the National Museums of Scotland - to the Crown agent, the Queen's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (Q<R). Where the Crown chooses to exercise its right, the Q<R (advised by the Treasure Trove Advisory Panel) disposes of the finds to museums on the Scottish Museums Council Approved List or to the National Museums of Scotland. Finds from Historic Scotland sponsored excavations, if not claimed by the Crown, are disposed of by the Finds Disposal Panel. With other finds not claimed by the Crown, ownership passes to the finder. The landowner has no say in the matter.

Ownership of finds on historic wrecks

If the wrecks are scheduled, then the situation is the same as on land. In other cases, finds may be sold on the open market by the finder to recover the costs of diving, etc.

For a summary of the legal framework affecting archaeology in England and Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland, see **Society of Museum Archaeologists**. *Towards an Accessible Archaeological Archive. The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Museums: Guidelines for Use in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales*. SMA, 1995.

The Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981

It is an offence to damage the habitat or to injure or take from the wild certain species of plants, animals and birds. A licensing system covers exceptions.

Zoo Licensing Act, 1981 for living collections

See: **Museums & Galleries Commission**. *Standards in the Museum Care of Biological Collections*. 1992.

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

CITES controls trade in wildlife and wildlife products to prevent endangered species of plants and animals from becoming extinct. It is a UN convention which is strictly implemented by the UK and other EU states to provide extra legal protection for many species.

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for acquisition needs to take into account these rights. See the **Rights management** procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have policies and guidelines on acquisition. It is good practice to include the:

- Collecting policy governing what it acquires (see [Note](#) below);
- Authorisation policy for agreeing acquisitions;
- Statement of the terms and conditions under which objects will normally be acquired;
- Guidelines for additional storage, transport and conservation costs which will normally be considered for an acquisition;
- Reproduction rights that it normally expects to acquire with an object and the efforts to be made to establish who owns the rights if not the organisation;
- Maximum time permitted to elapse between the entry of an object and the completion of the accessioning procedure;
- Standard format for numbering systems;
- Preferred marking and labelling methods (see [Note](#) below).

The policy may also require that acquisition records are checked and verified. See the *Audit* procedure for full details on how to do this.

Acquisition

Note: Collecting policy

The organisation's acquisition policy should explain why the organisation collects particular groups, or in particular areas. It should describe the historical collections held by the organisation, and explain how the current acquisition policy fits into the organisation's overall policy. Every effort must be made to harmonise the collecting policy with those of other museums, libraries and archives collecting locally or in the same fields. Except in an emergency, organisations should collect only objects for which they have the facilities and expertise to care. In certain cases, such as larger and working objects, additional questions need to be addressed (for examples, see Museums and Galleries Commission's *Care of Collections Series*). The organisation should have a procedure for passing to other appropriate organisations information about objects which it cannot acquire, but which deserve preservation.

Note: Labelling and marking methods

Whilst in general marking and labelling techniques should not damage an object, this may not always be possible, e.g. in the case of larger objects. Sometimes durability is more important than reversibility. Organisations should develop written conventions covering the location of marks or labels.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the acquisition of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the acquisition of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*,
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Object assessment

- 3 Evaluate and authorise acquisitions according to agreed organisational policy and retain any written documentation of this process. (See [Before you start - Policy requirements](#).) Record a reference to this.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).
- 4 Properly plan for the receipt of the object and consider all implications concerned with the acquisition. For example confirm that appropriate long-term storage or display space is available for the object(s) to be acquired and that sufficient staff time has been allocated to undertake the acquisition process.
 - 5 Carry out and record a condition check.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Complete a condition report for the object(s) to be acquired. The condition report should be appropriate to the circumstances. Make a brief note of the condition, e.g. 'Small crack on base', 'Stain on back'. An image or a more comprehensive condition report may be necessary in some cases. It is important to check the condition of an object before acquisition to ensure that the 'hidden' costs of conservation can be avoided or planned for by the organisation. It may be necessary to record different types of information e.g. the working capacity of large objects or the condition of only a sample of a large group of objects.

If the acquisition comes as a disposal/deaccession from another organisation, it may arrive with an existing condition report. This should be compared with your condition report and any discrepancies between them discussed with the organisation disposing of the object.

Obtaining title

6 Obtain unambiguous evidence of title to the object. This must include the following documentation:

- A reference to the formal title of the legal body that is acquiring the object;
- The name and address of the previous owner of the object and of any agent;
- A brief description of the object;
- A signature confirming transfer of title to the organisation;
- The method of acquisition;
- The assignment to the organisation of any rights (e.g. copyright) associated with the object and currently held by the owner;
- Relevant legal clauses so that the organisation complies with the *Data Protection Act* and the *Freedom of Information Act* legislation.

If necessary, make a record of the steps taken to obtain title, and a record of the extent to which title has been obtained and/or demonstrated.

Information requirements:

- *Acquisition information*;
- *Object identification information*;
- *Reference information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

7 Depending on the method of acquisition, obtain in addition the following documentation:

Bequests

- A legal copy of the relevant section of the will;
- The agreement of the executor (signature confirming transfer of title).

Ideally, the organisation should obtain a legal copy of the full will.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

Field collection

- A reference to collection site and other field collection information;
- Evidence of right of title as appropriate;
- Evidence of internal and external justification for the collecting;
- Proof that the collecting is both legal and licit;
- Evidence of external responsibilities i.e. compliance with Memoranda of Understanding between the organisation and other organisations/countries/governments;
- Evidence of CITES (The 'Washington' Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) plus export and import permits where applicable.

Acquisition

Information requirements:

- *Object collection information;*
- *Object identification information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Gifts

- The signed offer of an object from the donor, including any terms specified - although any gift with attached conditions is strongly discouraged. (A signature confirming transfer of title is preferable, although a signed entry form would give evidence of the reason for deposit where a gift was intended.);
- The signed acceptance of the object by the organisation, including any agreed terms.

Information about all gifts must be accessible by donor name.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Purchases

- A signed statement from vendors stating that they are the legal owners;
- A signed statement of the provenance of the object (if known);
- The original invoice and receipt identifying the goods purchased;

The details and conditions of any grant aid received for the purchase.

Information requirements:

- *Acquisition information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Exchange

- The transfer of title to the object for which the non-monetary exchange was made.

Acquisition

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Treasure

- A record of the treasure inquest, including any expert report submitted as evidence. See [Before you start - Legal environment](#) above for further information about ownership of archaeological finds.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

All original documents supporting title should be located in a secure fire proofed area as a core part of the long-term documentation about the collection.

Copyright

- 8 In all relevant cases establish and record the owner of the copyright and other rights associated with the object and its use. Whenever possible obtain copyright for the organisation
[Go to [Rights management - Procedure](#)]

Accessioning the object

- 9 Assign a unique number to the object. The organisation should have a policy for deciding the format of its numbers. Parts of a single object may be assigned the same root number, but with a unique extension appended to each one. Where large numbers of similar objects are gathered together in a secure container, the container may be numbered, its contents counted and the total recorded (e.g. beads in a box, a box of sherds, a tray of insects). For further details on numbering see [Sources of help and advice](#).
- 10 Process the acquisition of archives or large sets of specimens by describing a set or an archive as a single object, and assigning a single object number. Sort, list and provide access to archives acquired in this way according to established archival practice. (See **Cook & Procter**, 1989.)

Acquisition

- 11** Record the following information in the accession register for each object or associated set of objects identified by a single number:
- The object number;
 - A brief description containing sufficient information to identify each object and separately numbered part. The description should be sufficient to allow identification in the absence of the object number;
 - The date of entry in the accession register;
 - The method of acquisition;
 - The source (name and address of donor or vendor);
 - The entry form number;
 - The transfer of title form number if separate from entry form;
 - Any conditions (or reference to any conditions) pertaining at the time of acquisition.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
 - [Acquisition information](#);
 - [Object entry information](#);
 - [Date information](#);
 - [Organisation information](#);
 - [People information](#);
 - [Person information](#);
 - [Address information](#).
- 12** The accession register should be made of archival quality paper and be bound in permanent form. If a computer system is being used, copies of new records should be printed out on archival quality paper using a durable print medium and securely bound at regular intervals. The print-out should be signed and dated, preferably on every page.
- The original register should be kept in a secure condition, ideally in a fire-proof cabinet.
- Duplicate copies of registers should also be maintained. Microfiche copies, photocopies, CD-ROM versions, are acceptable. Copies must be held at an alternative location. Copies should be produced sufficiently often and kept securely enough to prevent the information being tampered with.
- Organisations constituted as companies or charitable trusts should have a second copy of their accession register held with another registered organisation since in the event of liquidation, the original may be held as a record relating to an asset, thereby preventing access to the information.
- 13** Mark or label the object with its unique number. The method will depend on the type of material and its condition. The preference should normally be physically to mark objects; however in some cases this may not be possible, for further details see MDA's [Labelling and marking](#) fact sheet (see [Sources of help and advice](#) below).
- 14** If possible, practically and legally, photograph the object.
[Go to [Use of collections - Procedure](#)]
- 15** Record the initial the location of the object.
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

Acquisition

16 Further information which should be recorded for each object or group of objects includes:

- The reason for acquisition;
- The date of acquisition (i.e. date that title was acquired, which may predate formal accessioning);
- The history of the object;
- The form of acknowledgement (credit line);
- Any additional contextual information received directly from the acquisition source;
- Any additional information about the acquisition of the object.

The greatest effort should be made to acquire all available information and associated objects with each object at the time of collecting, particularly where an object is removed from its context.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Acquisition information*;
- *Use of collections information*;
- *Object history and association information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

17 In the case of gifts, send an acknowledgement to the donor, together with the object number and information about access.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Association of Independent Museums. *AIM Guidelines 14, 'Museum Collecting Policies and Loan Agreements'*, revised. 1988.

Cook, Michael & Procter, Margaret. *Manual of archival description*. (Second edition.) Aldershot: Gower, 1989.

Council of Europe. *Explanatory report of the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage*. Malta: 1992.

English Heritage. *Management of Archaeological Projects*. London: English Heritage, 1991.

Fleming, David & Paine, Crispin & Rhodes, John G. (eds). *Social History in Museums*. (Chapter 25, 'Collecting policies', pp 171-175; Chapter 26, 'Collecting methods', pp 176-208). London: HMSO, 1993.

Holm, Stuart. *Facts and Artefacts. How to document a museum collection (Second edition)*. (Chapter 7, 'Accessioning', pp 13-17) Cambridge: MDA, 1998.

Lee, W. L., Bell, B. M. and Sutton, J. F. (eds), *Guidelines for acquisition and management of biological collections*, Association of Systematics Collections, Lawrence (Kansas).

Lord, Barry & Lord, Gail Dexter & Nicks, John. *The Cost of Collecting: Collection Management in UK Museums*. (Chapter 5, 'A framework for management', pp 61-75). London: HMSO, 1989.

MDA. *Accession records*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/acc.htm>>

MDA. *Bulk accessioning and the SPECTRUM standard*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/bulk.htm>>

MDA. *Collection descriptions*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/cdf.htm>>

MDA. *Developing a documentation procedural manual*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/procman.htm>>

MDA. *Documentation - why bother?* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/bother.htm>>

MDA. *Documenting photographs*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/docphoto.htm>>

MDA. *How to write a documentation plan*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

MDA. *Labelling and marking museum objects*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/labels.htm>>

MDA. *MDA Codes*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/mdacodes.htm>>

MDA. *Numbering*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/number.htm>>

Acquisition

MDA. *Protecting your records*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/protect.htm>>

MDA. *SPECTRUM Terminology*. [webpages].
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/spectrum-terminology/>>

MDA. *Terminology control*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

MDA and University of Leicester, Museum Studies Department. *Missing Links? Labelling and marking museum objects*. [video] University of Leicester, 1995.

Museums Association. *Acquisition. Guidance on the ethics and practicalities of acquisition*. London: Museums Association, 2004.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/ns/ethics_acquisitions.pdf>

Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Museums & Galleries Commission. *Code of Practice on Archives for Museums & Galleries in the United Kingdom*, revised edition. London: MGC, 1996.

Museums & Galleries Commission. *Guidelines for a Registration Scheme for Museums in the United Kingdom*. London: MGC, 1989.

Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards in the Museum Care of Collection Series*. London: MGC, 1992 onwards.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). *The Accreditation Standard*. London: MLA, 2004.
<http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/accreditation_standard.pdf>

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections*. (Section 1, 'Standards for collecting', pp 13-14; Section 2, 'Standards for the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives', pp 15-18). London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1992.

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Biological Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1992.

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Geological Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1993.

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1994.

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Musical Instruments*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1995.

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Photographic Collections*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1996.

Sheppard, Julia & Foster, Janet. *British Archives*. (Second edition). New York: Stockton Press, 1989.

Society of Museum Archaeologists. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections: Guidelines for Use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*. Society of Museum Archaeologists, 1993.

Acquisition

Stansfield, G., Mathias, J. and Reid, G. *Manual of Natural History Curatorship*. London: HMSO, 1992.

Organisations

Biology Curators Group

<<http://www.bcg.man.ac.uk>>

Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

<<http://www.cites.org>>

Geological Curators' Group

<<http://www.hmag.gla.ac.uk/gcg/>>

MDA

<<http://www.mda.org.uk>>

Museums Association

<<http://www.museumsassociation.org>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) (Acceptance in-lieu procedures)

<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

The National Archives

<<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk>>

Regional Agencies [links webpage]

<<http://www.mda.org.uk/linkamc.htm>>

Royal Geographical Society

<<http://www.rgs.org>>

Society of Archivists

<<http://www.archives.org.uk>>

UK Registrars' Group

<<http://www.ukrg.org>>

Inventory control

Definition

The maintenance of up-to-date information accounting for and locating all objects for which the organisation has a legal responsibility. This may include objects on loan, unaccessioned or previously undocumented items, temporarily deposited objects and support collections.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the inventory control of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for inventory control must:

- Enable accountability for any object, at any time;
- Enable the provision of up-to-date information about **all** objects in the care of the organisation - including loans in and out, temporarily deposited objects and other unaccessioned objects;
- Provide a reference to ownership of each object;
- Provide the current location of each object.

Before you start

In most museums, the primary source of inventory information for catalogued items will be the catalogue record, particularly in computerised systems where there is seldom any benefit in holding location records separately.

Inventory information for short-term deposits, items waiting to be catalogued, etc. will probably reside in the entry documentation and possibly the accession register. In the case of computerised catalogues, the software should be capable of extracting core inventory information and presenting this separately from the full catalogue record.

When retrospectively inventorying an existing collection it is important to scope the project beforehand. There may be serious resource implications in a major inventory project dependent on the size of the collection and the shortfall in or inadequacies of existing inventory information. A carefully crafted and thoroughly researched project plan will do much to ease the process. Points to consider include:

- The number of specimens and objects to be inventoried. It may be necessary to physically count the collection or collection records. Large collections may require some form of statistical analysis;
- The number and distribution of store locations;
- Whether some form of stores rationalisation (e.g. grouping similar items together) is needed prior to the inventory to make the process more efficient (but beware of disturbing the as-yet-unrecorded relationship between disparate items forming part of a single donation);
- Whether the collection can be grouped for high-level inventory;
- The likelihood that such an inventory will lead to a full retrospective documentation project;
- The impact on human and hardware and software resources, ITC network infrastructure, marking and labelling equipment, imaging equipment, etc.;
- Whether opportunity will be taken to incorporate other processes such as condition assessment;
- Possible sources of funding for staff and equipment;
- Commitment from management to guarantee sufficient time and resources for the project.

It is important that movement control procedures are in place before the inventory begins to prevent unrecorded movement of items post-inventory.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for controlling an organisation's inventory needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation should have a policy on inventory control. It is good practice to state:

- When inventory records must be created and edited;
- What is to be inventoried;
- Who is allowed access to inventory information;
- Who is allowed to update inventory information;
- Required security measures for the inventory;
- The frequency and extent of audit checks on inventory information.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to controlling an organisation's inventory.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to controlling an organisation's inventory. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Maintaining the inventory

- 3 Since relevant data may be split between several recording systems, possibly maintained by different people and held in different places, it is important to identify clear responsibility for ensuring that inventory information is fully accessible and up-to-date.
- 4 The following core inventory information must be available for each object or group of objects in the care of the organisation:
 - Object number (e.g. accession number, inward loan number, entry number, etc.). If the item does not currently bear a number it may require the issue of a temporary number until its original number can be traced or a new permanent number allocated if it is untraceable. Temporary numbers must be distinct from other object identification numbers used by the organisation. The format of all numbers should be clearly stated in the organisation's procedural manual;
 - Object name;
 - Brief description, ideally sufficient to uniquely identify the object or group (if a group, note also the physical appearance of the group as a whole, e.g. 'one 10-drawer cabinet of butterflies', '5 boxes of unsorted potsherds'.);
 - Location of the object;
 - Date inventory information is recorded and the recorder's name;
 - Status of the object (i.e. whether acquired, deposited, on loan, found in store, etc.).

This information is created and maintained by many different procedures.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Object location information*;
- *Location information*;
- *Address information*;
- *Record information*;
- *Amendment history*;
- *Date information*;
- *Acquisition information*;
- *Loan in information*.

Inventory control

- 5** Record inventory information as soon as new objects enter the organisation. The process will normally start with the creation of an object entry record. Ideally this information should be immediately transferred to a central inventory database, but in practice this might not be possible. A well-managed *Object entry* procedure should allow adequate inventory control of recent deposits without going to these lengths.
- 6** If an object is to be retained, details will be entered in the accession register, loan register, handling collection inventory, etc. It will not normally be wise to maintain changeable inventory data in these formal archive records, which should be handled as little as possible. However, if there is likely to be any delay in creating catalogue or similar records for day to day use, the initial location of the object can be included in the formal register entry. (See the *Acquisition* procedure.)
- 7** Once a catalogue or similar working record has been established, this is likely to hold the up-to-date inventory data, although in the case of a manual system there might be separate cards holding location data and temporary moves may simply be recorded on proxy cards. (See the *Cataloguing* procedure.)

In a computerised collections management system it should be possible to present inventory data in location order to facilitate checking using the *Audit* procedure.

- 8** Mark the object number on the object itself. If this is inappropriate due to the physical nature of the object or because the number will only be applied temporarily (e.g. entry number, inward loan number), attach a label to the object (or its stand/container/support).

The object number marked on or attached to the object must always be recorded in exactly the same form in the inventory data. Where poor numbering strategies have resulted in identity numbers that are inconsistent and do not sort logically, the current object number may have been normalised (e.g. by inverting year and running number or expressing the year component in full when originally only the last two digits were included). In that event, the original form of the number should be preserved as an 'assigned number' which must form part of the core inventory data.

- 9** To maintain the authority of inventory information, update it whenever:
 - Deposited objects are returned to their owners (see *Object exit*);
 - Deposited objects are acquired (see *Acquisition*);
 - Loans in are returned (see *Loans in*, *Object exit*);
 - Outward loans leave the premises (see *Loans out*);
 - Objects are disposed of (see *Deaccession and disposal*, *Object exit*);
 - Objects move within the organisation (see *Location and movement control*);
 - Objects are lost or mislaid (see *Audit*, *Loss and damage*);
 - A disaster occurs, or theft or other wrongful act is detected or suspected (see *Audit*, *Loss and damage*, *Risk management*).

It is part of the audit function to verify inventory information (see the *Audit* procedure).

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Audit Commission. *Audit Guidelines - Leisure - Phase 2.* London: National Audit Office, 1990.

HM Treasury. *Government Accounting 2000.* London: HMSO, 2000.
<<http://www.government-accounting.gov.uk>>

MDA. *Developing a documentation procedural manual.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/procman.htm>>

MDA. *Documentation - why bother?* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/bother.htm>>

MDA. *Documenting photographs.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/docphoto.htm>>

MDA. *How to write a documentation plan.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

MDA. *SPECTRUM Terminology.* [webpages].
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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums.* London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Roberts, Andrew D. *Planning the documentation of museum collections.* ('Inventory and location control documentation', pp 96-108). Cambridge: MDA, 1985.

Smith-Finch, Peggy. 'The essential collections inventory' in Case, Mary (ed.) *Registrars on Record: Essays on Museum Collections Management* (pp 145-158). Washington: American Association of Museums, 1988.

Organisations

Audit Commission
<<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk>>

National Audit Office
<<http://www.nao.org.uk>>

Location and movement control

Definition

The documentation and management of information concerning the current and past locations of all objects or groups of objects in the organisation's care to ensure the organisation can locate any object at any time. A location is a specific place where an object or group of objects is stored, displayed, etc.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the location control of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting location and movement control must:

- Provide a record of the location where an object is normally displayed or stored;
- Provide a record of the location of an object when it is not at its normal location;
- Enable access to location information by, at the very least, object number and by location name;
- Provide an up-to-date record of the relocation of an object within the physical or administrative boundaries of the organisation;
- Provide an up-to-date record of any movement of an object across the physical or administrative boundaries of the organisation;
- Provide a record of the person responsible for moving an object;
- Provide a record or a statement of the persons responsible for authorising object movement;
- Provide a history of an object's previous locations, while in the organisation's care.

Before you start

Location and movement control is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

The procedure ensures that every object in the organisation's care can be found at any time when required and that an accurate list (complete and up-to-date) is available for any location to facilitate audit. Every object should have its location recorded at all times for the duration that it is in the care of the organisation. This procedure should be used each time an object is moved, for whatever reason.

Legal environment

Health & Safety legislation is relevant to the movement of objects. Generally, the museum's *Code of Practice* should identify the potential hazards of objects, and define and describe the safe practices required for storage and handling. This will include protective equipment to be worn when moving objects.

When moving items, organisations should bear in mind the risk that objects may cause, and the requirements of relevant legislation and regulations such as the:

- *Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971* (see Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards in the Care of Biological Collections*);
- *Health & Safety at Work Act, 1974*, requires safe plant and systems, the safe handling, storage and transport of articles and substances, and the provision of information and instructions;
- *Dangerous Wild Animals Act, 1976*, for living collections;
- *Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH), 1990*, requiring the identification and reduction of risk associated with certain substances, e.g. textiles may have been treated in the past with poisonous materials as a moth preventive;
- *Personal Protective Equipment at Work regulations, 1992*, required for operating or handling collections;
- *Manual Handling Regulations, 1992*, specifying equipment required for handling certain objects;
- *Provision and Use of Work Equipment, 1992*, requiring the maintenance of equipment in use;
- *Health & Safety Regulations, 1992*, requiring that risk assessments be carried out where the hazards of substances and equipment are suspected of creating a risk to those who come into contact with them;
- *Firearms Acts (Amendment) Regulations, 1992*, requires an assessment of firearms in the collection, followed by acquisition of appropriate licence or deactivation of the weapons involved. (At the time of writing, there are proposed amendments to existing legislation.)

The risk assessments will take into account the above regulations, and in the case of organisations with more than five employees, the results noted. The risk assessment will include:

- Identification of the hazard e.g. a substance;
- Who is at risk and how e.g. the person moving an object;
- An evaluation of the severity and likelihood of a risk e.g. trivial, moderate, intolerable.

As well as the report resulting from the risk assessment of a collection, a note should be placed in the object's record with regard to:

- Recommendations for its handling;
- Recommendations for its storage;
- Details of any potential hazards to people or other objects.

Location and movement control

Documentation systems and procedures should actively provide for the recording of all such information, including where relevant the size and weight of the complete object and of its component parts. This documentation should always be referred to before any part of an object is moved.

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for location and movement control needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

Only persons assigned the appropriate authority should be permitted to amend a location or movement record. Location records should be made secure in order to prevent unauthorised persons gaining access.

The organisation should define its physical or administrative boundaries in relation to the movement of objects.

The organisation must have a location and movement control policy. It is good practice to include:

- A requirement to maintain an up-to-date location for all objects it has responsibility for;
- The identification of the persons with authority to access location and movement records;
- The identification of persons with authority to edit location records. (For security reasons these persons may need to be named.);
- The identification of persons with authority to request and approve object movements;
- The identification of persons with authority to move objects and under what circumstances;
- A statement of the physical security required by locations;
- The conditions for the storage and display of objects.

The organisation should determine the length of time an object may remain in a location without the location record being updated. For example, during the installation of an exhibition, an object may be moved within the exhibition area several times in one day. In the case of providing objects for researchers, the museum may wish to record each time an object is brought to the research room. The minimum requirement should be that an object is not left unattended outside normal working hours without updating the location.

The policy should require that all recorded movements be maintained to provide an 'audit trail' as part of the object's history.

The policy may also require that location records are checked and verified at specified intervals. See the *Audit* procedure for full details on how to do this.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the control of the location and movement of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the control of the location and movement of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Identifying and describing locations

- 3 Assign a unique name or number to each display and storage location. This must be of sufficient and appropriate detail to locate any object precisely and may be expressed as a hierarchy (e.g. building/room/case, etc.) or using a classification system if items are stored in strict classified order (in some cases both approaches may be combined - e.g. small objects store - domestic - cookery). For natural science collections see *Note* below. A greater amount of location detail may be required for smaller objects, e.g. fossils on a tray, letters in a box.

Note: Natural science collections

Many natural science collections organise material as part of a classified system. New material is therefore added into the system at the relevant point in the classification. This literally has a knock on effect often meaning that large numbers of items are displaced to new drawers or trays to maintain the order. In an actively developing collection many hundreds or thousands of items are therefore relocated to different drawers or even cabinets. The maintenance of precise location information in the sense of drawer numbers etc. in these circumstances presents enormous problems.

Scientific curators would maintain that the classification provides exact location control in the sense that any item has an exact place within it and is easily found. Since over half of all geology collections are arranged according to a classification (see **Doughty** 1982) and data are available for biological collections illustrating a similar situation, a pragmatic solution is essential.

Information requirements:

- *Location information.*

- 4 Create and maintain a detailed record of all location descriptions used and how they should be recorded. It is useful to have annotated store and gallery plans.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

5 Record where necessary information about each location, including the following:

- Address (if separate from a main site);
- Environmental conditions;
- Security details;
- Access details.

Information requirements:

- [Location information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Recording locations of objects

6 Depending on the organisation's recording systems, record the location of each object as part of the entry record, the catalogue record, a separate location record or together with other object information on a single system. However, normally only record an object's location in one place as the use of a single record ensures consistency and accuracy. It may be necessary to refer from the normal location record to an additional location record for an object if it is moving for a very short period of time. An example of this is the use of a 'daybook' while an exhibition or display is being mounted.

In the case of large discrete groups of objects located together, record the location for the group. Where an object is separated from its 'home' group, it should have its own location record.

Where part of an archaeological or other archive is permanently deposited in a location outside the organisation's custody, that location should be recorded as part of the location record for the archive within the organisation.

7 The location record may indicate whether it is the normal location where an object is to be found, or whether the object is only to be found there temporarily. If the object is only temporarily located, a date should be specified for the return of the object to its normal location.

Moving objects

8 Obtain and record appropriate authorisation for all moves according to whether they are internal or external. In smaller organisations, where a limited number of persons have the authority to approve moves, a list of the persons so authorised may suffice. Any such list should be kept up-to-date and should ideally contain no more than two or three names. No objects should be moved without the knowledge of one of the authorised persons. Record a reference to the list.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

9 Check the condition of the object before moving to confirm that it is fit to be moved.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Prepare the object for movement according to the requirements of the type of object. Confirm that a suitable location is available to which the object can be moved.

Information requirements:

- [Object requirement information](#).

- 10** Where an object needs to be dismantled for moving, this process should be documented in sufficient detail to explain what was done, together with the reasons behind the decisions taken. It is particularly important to record the methodology of assembly and disassembly, which may itself provide useful research information and to include explanations of any alternative numbering systems utilised as part of this process (see **Paine** 1994).

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

- 11** In the case of large or awkward objects, *Health & Safety* regulations require written evidence of the formal assessment of the move.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

- 12** Where the movement of objects involves transport use the *Transport* procedure.
[Go to [Transport - Procedure](#)]

Updating locations

- 13** Record the following information as soon as an object has been moved, the:

- Old location;
- New location;
- Date of move;
- Person moving the object;
- Signature of person accepting custody of the object;
- Reason for move;
- Additional information about the move as required.

The above information may be recorded on a separate movement recording form. If so, the information should be transferred as soon as possible to the master location record.

Information requirements:

- [Object location information](#);
- [Location information](#);
- [Movement information](#);
- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

In smaller organisations, the name of the person moving an object may be dealt with in the same way as the person authorising the move, as described in [Step 8](#) above.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Committee of Area Museum Councils. *Museum Factsheet Guidelines to Safety in Working Museums*. London: Committee of Area Museum Councils, 1992.

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Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects*. London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1994.

Roberts, Andrew D. *Planning the documentation of museum collections*. ('Inventory and location control documentation', pp 96-108). Cambridge: MDA, 1985.

Organisations

Home Office, Operational Police Policy Unit (advice on firearms)
0207 273 2343

Museums Weapons Group
Tel: 0113 220 1876

Transport

Definition

The management and documentation of the transportation of objects for which the organisation is partially or fully responsible.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy relating to the transportation of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for documenting and managing transportation must:

- Ensure that all transportation is carried out in compliance with the organisation's transport policy;
- Ensure that there is an audit trail recording the reasons why an object is transported and that all appropriate risk and condition assessments have taken place;
- Record the mode of transportation, dates and those responsible for undertaking the transportation;
- Maintain an audit trail of movements and ensure that the organisation maintains appropriate records;
- Ensure that all legal obligations are complied with, including any customs requirements;
- Ensure that appropriate insurance/indemnity arrangements are in place prior to transportation taking place.

Before you start

From time to time, every organisation will find it necessary to transport items from their collections. The reasons of the transportation may include:

- Acquisition;
- Loans in or out;
- Conservation;
- Reproduction or research;
- Exhibition and display;
- Disposal.

The transportation can take place:

- To the organisation from another place (including private individuals);
- From the organisation to another place (including private individuals);
- Between places owned by the organisation (e.g. from store to display).

The complexity of the transportation will depend upon the nature of the collections being moved, the reasons for the movement and the type of journey.

Use the procedure for any movements of objects that including vehicles either owned by the organisation, or by a third party. Use the procedure in conjunction with other procedures, as appropriate.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the transportation of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy stating its position in relation to how it transports its own collections and, also, objects owned by a third party. It is good practice for the policy to:

- Identify the circumstances when it will undertake its own transportation;
- Identify the circumstances when it will call in the expertise and resources of a third party for transportation;
- Identify the accepted standards of care that it applies to the transportation of objects and state the occasions when it may vary from those standards;
- Identify the costs involved in transportation and responsibilities for meeting those costs (for example, in the case of loans, the borrower pays for transport);
- State any legal and financial obligations that it may have in relation to transportation.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written policy** that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written documentation procedural manual** that refers to the transportation of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the transportation of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Initiating transportation

- 3 The transportation of objects is initiated from within the *Location and movement control* procedure. [See [Location and movement control - Moving objects - Step 12](#)]

Decisions regarding the movement of objects must only be made by authorised persons, with responsibility for managing collections. The organisation's collections management policy and other policies (such as loans), will identify such responsibilities.

- 4 Once the decision has been made to transport objects, the person or department responsible for arranging this, should be provided with the following information:
 - The reason transport is required;
 - The name of the person responsible for approving the movement of the object;
 - The owner of the object (the organisation or a third party);
 - If there are any special conditions that apply (including those of the UK *Government Indemnity Scheme*);
 - A copy of the agreement between those sending and receiving the object(s), confirming the reason for the movement;
 - A description of the object(s) being transported (see [Note](#) below);
 - Whether a courier is required;
 - The contact names and addresses for collection and delivery, with preferred dates for the transportation.

Record references to this information (where appropriate).

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Transport

Note: Object description

The information provided should be sufficient to clearly identify the object and for transportation should include its:

- Object number;
- Brief description;
- Physical description (including dimensions and weight);
- Valuation (if the object is to be insured or covered by UK *Government Indemnity Scheme*);
- Condition (and availability of a condition report);
- An indication of any *Health & Safety* issues associated with transporting the objects.

This information may be accessible from the organisation's own documentation system.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object description information](#);
- [Object valuation information](#);
- [Condition and technical information](#);
- [Reference information](#).

If documentation does not exist for the object and it is not on the organisation's premises, then the *Pre-entry* or *Loans in* procedure should be followed to allow for its documentation and tracking of movement.

[Go to [Pre-Entry - Procedure](#)] or [Go to [Loans in - Procedure](#)]

- 5** The person making the arrangements for the transportation should establish whether there are any access issues that may exist at the collection or delivery destination and assess any handling issues, for example if specialist handlers or equipment will be required. Agree the route with all the parties involved.

Information requirements:

- [Object requirement information](#);
- [Reference information](#).

- 6** Establish the most appropriate means of transport. Influences on the decision are:

- The organisation's collections management policy and other policies (such as that on *Loans out*);
- The types of objects being transported (e.g. the organisation's vehicles may be constrained by loading limits);
- The requirement for the agreement from a third party (depending upon the reason for the transport). Organisations and individuals lending objects to the organisation must approve the proposed arrangements.

Options include:

Public transport

It may be appropriate, and cost effective, to transport low value items by post, courier company or public transport.

Transport

In-house transport

This includes use of the organisation-owned vehicles or staff's (or volunteer's) personal vehicles. The organisation's collections management policy may determine the circumstances when this method is used.

Depending upon the organisation's resources and demands upon available vehicles, there may be a booking system managed by a central body, such as a registrar's or facilities department. Follow the organisation's internal procedures for arranging dates for collections and deliveries.

Third party transport (e.g. a transport agent)

Refer to the organisation's policy regarding contracting external suppliers and follow the required steps to comply with accounting procedures. Supply the agent with the following information:

- Details of the objects to be moved, their destination, the reason for the move and desired dates;
- Any known areas of difficulty, such as access, handling restrictions, weight loading etc.

If the object is travelling to or from abroad, the transport agent will have to undertake Customs clearance. For items travelling abroad, arrange for the necessary licences to be obtained by the agent.

Receive confirmation of transportation from the agent, along with the following information:

- The vehicle registration;
- The names of drivers;
- The mobile phone number of the vehicle's driver.

Once confirmed, circulate details of the arrangements to the appropriate persons (e.g. curator, conservator, security and technical handling staff).

Carrying out transportation

- 7** Arrange for any conservation treatment necessary to make the object safe to travel.
[Go to [***Conservation and collections care - Procedure***](#)]
- 8** Arrange for the object to be appropriately packed prior to transport to provide suitable protection from environmental changes or vibration during the transit. In the case of loans in, these arrangements may be made by a third party.
- 9** Arrange insurance or indemnity as appropriate, according to the organisation's policy regarding insurance.
[Go to [***Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure***](#)]
- 10** Prepare appropriate documentation for the transportation. For transportation of objects between the organisation's premises, follow the procedure for *Location and movement control*.
[Go to [***Location and movement control - Procedure***](#)]

For objects leaving the organisation's premises, follow the procedure for *Object exit*.
[Go to [***Object exit - Procedure***](#)]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

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Buck, Rebecca A. and Gilmore, Jean Allman. *The New Museum Registration Methods*. (Fourth edition). American Association of Museums, 1998.

Cannon-Brookes, P. 'A Draft Code of Practice for Escorts and Couriers', in *International Journal of Museum Management and Curatorship* 1 (March), 1982, pp.41-60.

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

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Museums & Galleries Commission. *Guide to Transport Conditions under the Government Indemnity Scheme*. [webpage] London: MGC, 1998.
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk/information/advice/secure15.asp>>

Richard, Mervin & Mecklenburg, Marion F. & Merrill, Ross M. *Art in Transit: Handbook for Packing and Transporting Paintings*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1991.

Rose, Cordelia. *Courierspeak. A phrase book for couriers of museum objects*. Washington DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1993.

Stolow, Nathan. *Conservation and Exhibitions: Packing, Transport, Storage and Environmental Considerations*. London: Butterworth, 1987.

Organisations

Care of Collections Forum
Tel: 01324 504689

Museums Association
<<http://www.museumsassociation.org>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (Security Adviser)
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Touring Exhibitions Group
<<http://www.teg-net.org.uk>>

UK Registrars' Group
<<http://www.ukrg.org>>

Cataloguing

Definition

The compilation and maintenance of key information, formally identifying and describing objects. It may include information concerning the provenance of objects and also collections management documentation e.g. details of acquisition, conservation, exhibition and loan history, location history, etc. It need not bring together in one location everything known about an object, but should provide cross-references to any other relevant information source known to the organisation.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the cataloguing of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

Cataloguing information must:

- Provide a level of description sufficient to identify an object or group of objects and its differences from other, similar objects;
- Provide an historic archive relating to an object or cross-references to sources where information can be found;
- Be held in a system that allows convenient access using indexes, free-text retrieval, etc.

Before you start

Cataloguing is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

It will enable:

- Storage of information - the catalogue brings together and keeps securely information about each item in the collection;
- Accessibility of information - the catalogue structures this information so that it can be searched easily and reliably.

A catalogue record is the bringing together of information resulting from other procedures. The generation of object description, identification, historical and contextual information usually begins at the entry and acquisition stages, and develops as the result of research. Collections management information is produced as the result of procedures described in *SPECTRUM*.

Collections management information

Access to collections management information as part of catalogue information is vital. It ensures access to the object's history within the organisation, as well as prior to acquisition. For example, it is important to have a record of where and when an object has been exhibited.

This type of information need only be recorded during the collections management process itself and not re-recorded as part of a catalogue record, providing that the source of such information is identified within the catalogue record. This identification may take the form of a reference number and, at its simplest, the collections management information in a catalogue record may comprise a series of reference numbers linking to records elsewhere.

Objects not part of the organisation's collections

Information may be recorded about objects which are not part of the collections, for example long-term loans, objects proposed for acquisition or objects which have been disposed of.

Sources of information from outside the organisation

Information may be contributed and recorded from persons outside the organisation, e.g. visiting researchers and curators, or other visitors with relevant knowledge of the object. All new information should be substantiated before being added to a catalogue record with an authority for the attribution.

The sorting, listing and provision of access to archives dealt with in this way should be according to established archival practice. References for archival description are listed in [Sources of help and advice](#).

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for cataloguing needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on cataloguing. It is good practice for it to state:

- The level and depth of cataloguing appropriate to the collection (see [Note](#) below);
- The required minimum or 'core' content of a catalogue record for different types of object;
- The expected content of a typical 'full' catalogue record for different types of object;
- The maximum time permitted to elapse between the acquisition of an object and the completion of a catalogue record.

Note: Levels of cataloguing

Organisations should have clearly defined levels of cataloguing to ensure that consistency is maintained, making reference to the status of the collection and the type and size of collection being catalogued. In some cases (e.g. a significant complex object with much associated contextual information) it will be desirable and possible to catalogue objects at item level and develop extensive records. In other cases (e.g. large collections) it will be more appropriate, or only possible, to catalogue at the level of collection or group, and the inventory level may suffice. Catalogue information should include a reference to the level of cataloguing employed.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to cataloguing.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to cataloguing. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Format of the catalogue

- 3 Create a record for each object or group of objects and make these records accessible by object number. Other retrieval options will be provided by indexing, (see *Step 7* below).

Allow for the addition of information as it becomes available.

- 4 Catalogue information must include, at the very least:
 - The object number or entry number;
 - The object name;
 - The number of items or parts described in this record;
 - A brief physical description;
 - A reference to acquisition method, date and source information;
 - A reference to location information;
 - A reference to available images.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Acquisition information*;
- *Object location information*;
- *Reference information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Location information*;
- *Address information*.

- 5** Depending on the information available and the type of object, catalogue information should also include the:

- Curatorial responsibility (e.g. the department);
- Information about the creation of the record (e.g. information source, recording date);
- Identification information (e.g. title, full classification);
- Object description information (e.g. physical description, dimensions, inscriptions, colour, material, sex, age, phase);
- Field collection information (e.g. excavator, site);
- Content and subject information;
- Production information (e.g. maker, technique). In some instances e.g. natural sciences, this will include objects derived from or modifying an original object;
- Other historical information (e.g. use, associations);
- Other historical reference numbers;
- References to published bibliographic information;
- References to collections management information.

Note: Collections management information will also be included unless held in a separate system.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object description information;*
- *Object production information;*
- *Object history and association information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *People information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Place information;*
- *Amendment history;*
- *Institution information.*

Updating the catalogue

- 6** Update the catalogue record, as required, to reflect the outcome of other procedures. For example, new information may come to light as a result of historical research, conservation work, etc. If the catalogue also serves as the master location record then it must be updated after each movement.

Access to the catalogue

- 7** Improve access to catalogue information by the provision of indexes and/or free-text retrieval. These should be appropriate to the nature of the collection. Typically they might include:

- Object name;
- Subject index;
- Field collection site;
- Artist/maker/manufacture;
- Source (e.g. donor, vender, etc.);
- Production date;
- Associated persons;
- Associated peoples;
- Associated places.

Security of the catalogue

- 8 The museum catalogue is the most complete account of the history of each item, so it is essential to keep this information secure.

In a manual system catalogue records should be on good quality card or paper. If typed, a carbon ribbon should be used. If hand-written, use a permanent black ink. It may be difficult to make copies of manual catalogue records, particularly as they may be regularly updated. Try to keep a copy of any catalogue information which is not held in entry or accession records, and could not be reconstructed in any other way.

If a catalogue is computerised, then computer backups can be made more easily and frequently. Copy any new additions or changes at the end of the day and re-copy the whole file at the end of the week.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Aitchison, J. and Gilchrist, A. *Thesaurus Construction*. (Second edition). Aslib, 1987.

British Standards Institute (BSI). *Establishment and development of monolingual thesauri*, BS 5723-1987. London: BSI, 1987.

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Stone, Sheila M. in **Thompson, John M.A.** *Manual of Curatorship.* (Second edition). (Chapter 24, pp 213-228). Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1992.

Object condition checking and technical assessment

Definition

The management and documentation of information about the make-up and condition of an object, and recommendations for its use, treatment and surrounding environment.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the condition checking of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting condition checking must:

- Ensure that the documentation of condition checks is completed by trained persons;
- Ensure that all condition check documentation is up-to-date;
- Ensure all information is documented and is accessible via the object number;
- Ensure that individual and collective responsibilities within the organisation for condition checking are clearly defined and identified;
- Ensure that the date, name of the condition checker and the reason for checking is recorded;
- Ensure condition checking is carried out whenever a change to the object, its use or surrounding environment occurs;
- Enable the condition of an object to be monitored over time;
- Ensure that a set procedure is followed when object condition 'danger signals' are observed;
- Ensure a condition check happens as part of the following procedures: *Object entry, Loans in, Acquisition, Conservation and collections care, Use of collections and Deaccession and disposal*.

Before you start

Definition of terms:

- *Condition check* - the act of checking the condition of an object or group of objects usually through observation and often with recommendations about its use, treatment and surrounding environment;
- *Condition survey* - an ongoing series of condition checks that can help determine if an object is deteriorating or improving in condition;
- *Condition audit* - an action to determine the condition of many objects;
- *Technical assessment* - a thorough scientific examination of an object leading to a detailed report on the make-up of the object and its condition, often with recommendations about its use, treatment and surrounding environment.

Object condition checking and technical assessment is closely linked to *Conservation and collections care*, with several condition checks or technical assessments likely to be made in the course of conservation treatment. The maintenance of condition records provides an audit trail of changes to an object, and can provide information on changes from events such as floods, accidents or vandalism.

This procedure is also linked with *Use of collections* where a technical assessment may be part of and support the research of an object.

The result of a previous check should not be relied upon; checks are only valid on the date they are performed as an object's condition is likely to change over time. The reason for the condition check will also have an effect upon the information recorded. However, previous check results should be kept for reference, as deterioration may only be apparent from an assessment of accumulated condition checks and are therefore of use in a condition survey.

A condition check may be an appropriate time to carry out a *Health & Safety* risk assessment of the object.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the condition checking and technical assessment of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on the condition checking of objects. It is good practice for it to state:

- Who is allowed to check the condition of an object;
- Which organisational procedures require condition checking to occur;
- What standard of checking is required for each procedure;
- The frequency of condition checks for objects in different categories of risk.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written policy** that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written documentation procedural manual** that refers to the condition checking and technical assessment of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the condition checking and technical assessment of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Procedure initiation

- 3 *Object condition checking and technical assessment* may be initiated by a condition survey or audit or by the implementation of another procedure. Refer to the appropriate procedure to find out when the condition of the object should be checked. In cases where large groups of objects are being checked, it may be necessary to take sample items rather than check a whole collection.
- 4 The area where the condition check takes place must have adequate lighting in order to be able to make a true record of the colour and condition of the object. Relevant handling and storage materials and a suitable quarantine area for objects found to be infested, contaminated or containing hazardous materials must be available. If the object needs to be moved as part of the condition check, use the *Location and movement control* procedure.
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

Carrying out a check

- 5 Always refer where available to:
 - Previous condition checks and technical assessments carried out on the object;
 - *Health & Safety* information about the object;
 - Handling guidelines;
 - Information about the object's environmental, storage and display history.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
 - [Object condition and technical assessment information](#);
 - [Object requirement information](#);
 - [Date information](#).
- 6 Condition check information should include the:
 - Object number;
 - Condition details;
 - Date of the condition check/assessment;
 - Name of the condition checker/technical assessor;
 - Method used in the condition check/assessment;
 - Reason for the condition check/assessment.

Information requirements:

- **Object identification information;**
- **Object condition and technical assessment information;**
- **Condition check/technical assessment information;**
- **Date information;**
- **Organisation information;**
- **Person information.**

- 7** The condition information may be recorded on an entry record, a catalogue record or on a separate record with access provided from other documentation files. This can be duplicated in the form of an 'Object Passport' to remain with the object identifying special conditions, hazards, etc.

Record as much detail about the condition of the object as required by the procedure. For example:

- A brief comment e.g. 'fair, cracked lid' when an object enters the organisation;
- A full technical assessment carried out by a conservator to determine the make up of the object and conservation actions which may be required. The condition of the object should be recorded before any treatment takes place.

Positive information, such as 'no cracks' can be very useful, as is contextual information such as 'minor scratches, consistent with use'. Photographic records are highly desirable (if legally possible), but cannot replace a written condition check. Use sketches or diagrams in addition to photographs to indicate areas of loss or damage.

- 8** In instances where a condition audit is being conducted, or where it is necessary to categorise objects according to condition, it may be useful to assign a single controlled term, e.g. good, fair, poor. The overall condition of the object will be the same as the most serious individual condition which has been identified.

- 9** Record action which should be taken to:

- Improve the object's surrounding environment;
- Treat the object through interventive means;
- Address *Health & Safety* issues, e.g. hazardous materials.

Recommendations may be part of the technical assessment and give a detailed outline of treatment and projected outcome. It may be appropriate to assign a conservation treatment priority to the proposed work.

Information requirements:

- **Object condition and technical assessment information.**

Always consult a conservator or other appropriate specialist before taking action which may directly affect the condition of the object. In all cases of loans in, the written permission of the owner should be obtained before work is undertaken.

[Go to **Conservation and collections care - Procedure**]

- 10** If the condition of the object gives cause for concern, or if it differs from that recorded in previous condition checks, obtain the opinion of a conservator or other appropriate specialist before continuing with the procedure which initiated the check.

- 11** When condition checking is part of another procedure, the following information should also be recorded and relevant points noted:

Object entry

- Environmental history;
- Environmental history dates;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Hazard note;
- Handling requirements;
- Packing/unpacking requirements;
- Special requirements.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information;***
- ***Object requirement information.***

Condition information may be needed in the event of a claim that damage has occurred.

Loans in

- Environmental history;
- Environmental history dates;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Hazard note;
- Handling requirements;
- Packing/unpacking requirements;
- Special requirements;
- Display recommendations.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information;***
- ***Object requirement information.***

This information may well be supplied by the lending organisation, if not, minimum standards for the organisation should be followed.

The condition checking of objects after unpacking on arrival and immediately before re-packing is required by the *Government Indemnity Scheme*. For loans indemnified while in transit to the borrowing organisation, condition reports will be required, made out either by the borrower or, if acceptable to the borrower, by the lender before packing and after re-packing at the lender's premises.

Acquisition

- Environmental history;
- Environmental history dates;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Hazard note;
- Handling requirements;
- Packing/unpacking requirements;
- Special requirements;
- Conservation treatment priority;
- Display recommendations;
- Storage recommendations.

Information requirements:

- [*Object condition and technical assessment information*](#);
- [*Object requirement information*](#).

Acquisition provides a good point for in-depth condition checks on all objects.

Location and movement control

- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Packing recommendations;
- Special requirements;
- Storage recommendations.

Information requirements:

- [*Object condition and technical assessment information*](#);
- [*Object requirement information*](#).

Some or all of this information may already exist.

Conservation and collections care

After conservation the following need to be reviewed and updated as necessary:

- Conservation treatment priority;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Hazard note;
- Next check date;
- Packing recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Storage recommendations.

Information requirements:

- [*Object condition and technical assessment information*](#);
- [*Object requirement information*](#).

Object condition checking and technical assessment

Risk management

- Handling recommendations;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Hazard note.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information;***
- ***Object requirement information.***

Insurance and indemnity management

This procedure may not initiate a condition check, but any existing check may be referred to in the event of a claim.

Valuation control

This procedure may initiate a condition check or existing information may be referred to during valuation.

Audit

A condition audit may be carried out as part of other auditing procedures.

Use of collections

- Display recommendations;
- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Next check date.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information;***
- ***Object requirement information.***

It is worth noting the condition of things that may alter during display, such as colour.

Object exit

- Environmental recommendations;
- Handling recommendations;
- Packing recommendations;
- Special requirements;
- Storage recommendations.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information;***
- ***Object requirement information.***

Object condition checking and technical assessment

Loans out

- Display recommendations;
- Next check date.

Information requirements:

- ***Object condition and technical assessment information***;
- ***Object requirement information***.

The information recorded for a loan out should be as detailed as feasible, taking into consideration the importance of the object. Insurance and indemnity may require this information in the event of a claim.

Deaccession and disposal

The condition of an object is sometimes used as a reason for deaccession or disposal.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Bordass, B. *Museum Collections in Industrial Buildings*. London: MGC, 1996.

Cassar, May. *Environmental Management Guidelines for Museums and Galleries*. London: MGC & Routledge, 1995.

Corfield, Michael. 'Conservation documentation' in Thompson, John M.A. *Manual of Curatorship*. (Second edition) (Chapter 25, pp 229-233), Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1992.

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Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards in the Museum Care of Collections*. sseries. London: MGC, 1992 onwards.

O'Reilly, P. & Lord, A. *Basic Condition Reporting: A Handbook*. New York: South East Registrars' Association, 1988.

Organisations

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)
<<http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca>>

Getty Conservation Institute
<<http://www.getty.edu/conservation/>>

National Museums of Scotland
<<http://www.nms.ac.uk>>

Conservation and collections care

Definition

The documentation and management of information about interventive and preventive conservation activities.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the management and documentation of care of collections including the conservation (interventive and preventive) of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting conservation must:

- Ensure all conservation information is accessible via the object number, and is up-to-date;
- Ensure appropriate authorisation is received prior to conservation taking place;
- Ensure details of all interventive conservation work and preventive conservation measures are recorded, with the name of the person who performed the work, the organisation to which they belong and the date on which it took place;
- Ensure catalogue record is updated if any new information is established or information lost as a result of conservation;
- Ensure that after conservation treatment, call-back condition checks or periodic care activities are scheduled by date.

Before you start

Conservation and collections care is linked to the *Object condition checking and technical assessment* procedure.

Care of collections includes interventive conservation which may result from:

- A loan request;
- An acquisition;
- A display;
- A disaster;
- General degradation of an object.

Techniques may include actual treatment of an object to:

- Conserve it, minimising further decay;
- Restore it, with aesthetic and operational considerations in mind;
- Produce a support for display or packing.

Preventive conservation involves care of collection practices and procedures that benefit the collection as a whole. These may include the:

- Monitoring and control of environmental conditions;
- Improvement of storage conditions;
- Quarantine procedures;
- Training of staff or volunteers;
- Improvement in disaster procedures;
- Guidelines for contractors, film units working in museums and events etc.

Maintenance of these records helps contribute to the history of use of the object.

Levels of recording

The extent and form of the conservation documentation will depend on the type of conservation event or treatment and its effect on the object concerned. Special circumstances may determine the level of detail possible. These include disaster recovery, emergency minor conservation treatment, mass or bulk treatment, preventive conservation measures, housekeeping activities (e.g. dusting objects on open display). Emergency records should be completed in full when conditions allow.

Where conservation treatments known to invalidate analytical techniques or remove potential information are undertaken, the effect of these should be noted as part of the result. Any procedures for preserving information (e.g. sampling prior to treatment), should be recorded. Such treatments include heat treatment of metals and removal of all soil from archaeological objects. All treatments should be recorded in full for future reference for health and safety reasons and in case materials used begin to degrade and require removal.

Conservation and collections care

Care, conservation and maintenance plans

The Museums & Galleries Commission (now MLA) *Standards in the Museum Care of Collections* series recommended establishing care, conservation or maintenance plans for objects. For example, in *Standards in the Museum Care of Musical Instruments*, 1995:

"Every musical instrument should ideally have its own care plan. The care plan should set out a programme of conservation and curatorial care, based on the latest assessment of the importance of the instrument and of its function in the museum ... The care plan sets out the programme of care agreed between conservator and the staff or volunteers who are to carry it out. It should include an assessment of the instrument's condition when received, the action required, materials to be used and timescale, and should cover basic cleaning as well as more invasive treatment. For instruments to be played, the care plan should also set out the rules and conditions for playing ... Regular review - at least every five years - of both the assessment and the care programme is vital, as the status of an object may change over time."

Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries

Resource (now MLA) published this in 2002. It set out three levels of care that organisations can measure their practice against:

- Basic Practice - a minimum standard that should be achievable by all organisations;
- Good Practice - a standard representing professional good practice, tempered by realistic expectations and achievable by most organisations;
- Best Practice - the highest standard to which an organisation can aspire.

Conservation and collections care is not a *Primary Procedure* for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme*, however the *Accreditation Standard* (Section 4.5.3, p38) states:

" In addition to the above, Conservation Treatment Records as described in SPECTRUM Procedure: Conservation & collections care must be maintained at the SPECTRUM minimum standard for any items in the collection undergoing conservation treatment."

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the care and conservation of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on the conservation of objects. It is good practice for it to state:

- Care of collections standards;
- The instances where conservation will be considered;
- That mutual agreement is to be reached through discussion with relevant parties as to the conservation approach and treatment, etc. with reference to the organisation's care of collections policy, forward plan, aims and objectives of relevant projects and any other plans e.g. building conservation;
- Who is allowed to authorise conservation;
- The requirement for external conservator's references and professional accreditation where relevant to be verified;
- The level of detail to be recorded including photographic/digital images (if legally possible).

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the care and conservation of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the care and conservation of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Initiating and planning conservation work

- 3 Interventive and preventive conservation may be initiated:
 - By routine procedures;
 - As part of the requirements of a specific project or enquiry;
 - By a request or order from an authorised person.

The work may be carried out in-house or by external conservators.

- 4 Preventive and interventive conservation may be an outcome of a condition assessment.

If available, and confidentiality permitting, the following information should be provided to the person responsible for carrying out the treatment or preventive measures:

- Object number;
- Brief description;
- Materials;
- Location;
- Technical descriptions and condition assessments;
- Previous conservation history;
- Recommended treatment or conservation requirements resulting from condition assessments and intended use;
- Reason for conservation being necessary;
- Person or organisation making the request;
- Date of request;
- Date for completion;
- Insurance conditions and requirements for external conservator/contractor;
- Any *Health & Safety* problems presented by the object and therefore risk assessments.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object description information](#);
- [Object location information](#);
- [Object conservation and treatment information](#);
- [Object conservation and treatment information](#);
- [Insurance information](#);
- [Use of collections information](#);
- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#).

Examination during treatment may provide further information to enhance or revise the information recorded above.

- 6** If the object is to be moved, refer to *Location and movement control*, *Insurance and indemnity management* and *Object entry* to ensure that the location is updated and the object is properly insured and accounted for at all times.

Agreeing conservation work with conservators

- 7** If a conservator has previously carried out assessments and made recommendations for treatment, this can form the basis of reaching agreement on work to be done. If this is not the case, a condition check and recommendations for treatment will be carried out by the conservator on receipt of the object.

[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

- 8** The conservator must obtain approval for treatment from the legal owner of the object or their designated representative. The agreement between the authorised person in the organisation and the conservator will be based on the carrying out of treatment as recommended, discussed and agreed following the condition check/assessment.

In the case of an external (contracted) conservator, the agreement will be more formal and include a reference to: costs, security, insurance, *Health & Safety*, access and other aspects relating to the period of time when the object is in the conservator's care.

The following should be recorded:

- The assessment and recommendations following a condition check;
- A timetable of work;
- The conservator's/contractor's name and organisation;
- The authority to carry out the work and the person responsible;
- The formal requisition/order for work contract e.g. whether or not full payment will be made before the receipt of full records;
- The transport, handling and insurance arrangements as appropriate for transit;
- The security, access and insurance arrangements for the object while in the care of the conservator/contractor.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object requirement information;*
- *Object condition and technical assessment information;*
- *Insurance information;*
- *Use of collections information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information.*

Recording remedial and preventive conservation work

- 9** Conservation documentation is an important part of an object's history and should be available through the object catalogue record. The following must be recorded:

- The conservator's/contractor's name(s) and organisation;
- The organisation's contact/authoriser;
- The dates (start, finish);
- The type of work (e.g. conservation treatment, preventive measures, condition report, loan condition report);
- The action carried out (location, procedure, method, materials used, duration, result);
- The reference numbers of reports, photographs, drawings, X-radiographs or other types of image;
- The new or revised handling, packing, storage and display recommendations;
- The packing/support instructions if part of the work;
- The updates to the care and maintenance plan - if appropriate;
- The *call-back* or periodic care activity date - if appropriate;
- The new or reproduction parts fitted to an object should be fully documented.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Conservation and treatment information;*
- *Object requirement information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information.*

- 10** Confirm that all records have been received and added to the documentation system. Procedures must be place for the longer term care of an item e.g. monitoring and control of the environment, handling and packing, housekeeping procedures and specified assessment periods.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (AIC). *Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Practice*. AIC, 1994.

<<http://aic.stanford.edu/pubs/ethics.html>>

Cassar, May. *Environmental Management Guidelines for Museums and Galleries*. London: MGC & Routledge, 1995.

Corfield, Michael. 'Conservation documentation' in Thomson, John M. A. *Manual of Curatorship*. (Second edition), (Chapter 25, pp 229-233), Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1992.

European Confederation of Conservator-Restorer Organisations (ECCO). *ECCO Professional Guidelines: The Profession and the Code of Ethics*. Brussels, ECCO, 1993.

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MDA. *Terminology control*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.

<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. London: Museums Association, 2002.

<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards in the Museum Care of Collections* series: 1 - Archaeological Collections, 2 - Biological Collections, 3 - Geological Collections, 4 - Larger and Working Objects (Social and Industrial History), 5 - Musical Instruments, 6 - Touring exhibitions, 7 - Photographic collections, Others forthcoming. London, MGC, 1992 onwards.

Resource. *Benchmarks in Collection Care for Museums, Archives and Libraries. A self-assessment checklist*. Resource: London 2002.

<<http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/benchmarks.pdf>>

Roberts, D. A. (ed.). *Terminology for museums: Proceedings of the Second Annual Conference of the Museum Documentation Association*. (Section XI, 'Discipline developments: conservation', pp 466 - 517), Cambridge: MDA, 1990.

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC). *UKIC Code of Ethics and Rules of Practice*. UKIC, 1996.

<http://www.ukic.org.uk/ukic_ethics.doc>

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (UKIC). *Guidelines for Archaeological Conservation Practice*. Archaeology Section. UKIC, 1990.

Organisations

American Institute for Conservation

<<http://aic.stanford.edu>>

Canadian Conservation Institute (CCI)

<<http://www.cci-icc.gc.ca>>

Getty Conservation Institute

<<http://www.getty.edu/conservation/>>

International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC)

<<http://www.iiconservation.org>>

Institute of Paper Conservation

<<http://palimpsest.stanford.edu/ipc/>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR)

<<http://www.sscr.demon.co.uk>>

Society of Archivists

<<http://www.archives.org.uk>>

United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC)

<<http://www.ukic.org.uk>>

Risk management

Definition

The management and documentation of information relating to potential threats to an organisation's collections and the objects for which it is temporarily responsible. It includes the provision of information enabling preventative measures to be taken as well as documentation supporting disaster planning.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have policies covering risk management, disaster planning and recovery planning. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

Documentation should support the following functions which should be carried out by the organisation:

- A risk assessment on objects in its care;
- The establishment of building codes and priority codes identifying items for immediate removal from the disaster area;
- The maintenance of an information file of individuals and organisations to approach in the event of a disaster (to be reviewed annually);
- The training of staff and volunteers in the management of risk and in disaster recovery;
- Accountability for objects during and after a disaster.

Before you start

Risk is defined as the uncertainty of outcome, whether positive opportunity or negative threat, arising from actions or events.

Risk management involves identifying and assessing risks, assigning ownership, taking action to mitigate or anticipate them, and monitoring and reviewing progress. It deals specifically with the management of risk in respect of an organisation's collections and the objects for which it is temporarily responsible.

The procedure should be consistent with, and integral to, the organisation's overall risk management strategy. Many organisations maintain a risk register detailing the key risks that it faces. As new risks are identified or terminated, the register is updated accordingly. As many of the risks listed will also be pertinent to collections, this is a good place to start. Likewise, following any review of risk to collections, ensure that the organisation's risk register is updated as necessary.

For information about managing and documenting an efficient response to the discovery of damage to or loss of object(s) while in the care of the organisation see *Loss and damage* procedure.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the management of risk needs to take into account these rights. See the *Rights management* procedure for full details on this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy to deal with risks to collections such as fire, flood, pests, accidental damage, theft and vandalism before they occur, as well as a detailed disaster plan to ensure damage limitation in the event of a disaster. The disaster and recovery plan should be tailored to the specific needs of an organisation and its collection. Its general contents should be known to all staff and volunteers through prior discussion and through regular training sessions and emergency exercises. Liaison with the public emergency services requires continued revision to ensure that it remains relevant.

The risk management strategy and disaster and recovery plan drawn up by the organisation should make effective use of the procedures and documentation described here.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of risk.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of risk. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Assessing risk

- 3 The *Minimum Standard* in all procedural sections relevant to the organisation's operations should be met in order to reduce the risk to the collections and objects on loan and to the organisation in the event of a disaster.
- 4 Risk assessment involves a number of stages to identify the:
 - *Inherent risks* associated with the objects, i.e. the exposure arising from specific risks before any action has been taken to manage them;
 - *Risk appetite* of the organisation, i.e. the amount of risk that is considered to be tolerable by the organisation;
 - Internal controls that will be set in place to minimise the risks;
 - *Residual risk*, i.e. the level of risk remaining after internal controls have been exercised.

There are many methods of measuring risk, but most involve a combination of likelihood and impact, including the perceived importance of those risks relative to the objectives of the organisation.

An assessment of objects at risk from their condition or surrounding environment may be carried out as part of a general *collections audit* or a specific *condition audit*. The assessment should consider:

- The potential risk to the object from its present location (theft, flood, fire, vandalism, inappropriate environmental conditions);
- The potential risk to the object from its present condition including building condition and maintenance;
- The potential risk which the object poses to other objects or people e.g. poison arrow heads, petrol in engines, silver nitrate film;
- The potential risk which the object faces from its future use;
- Monitoring of risk by sampling to minimise risks.

5 The assessment may lead to plans for minimising the risk, such as recommendations for the:

- Repair and maintenance of building (schedules and logs to be maintained);
- Re-housing of the object;
- Changes in general housekeeping routines;
- Changes in handling, storage (including materials and equipment), environmental or security recommendations of the object;
- Production of a disaster plan;
- Reassessment of insurance arrangements;
- Review of collecting policy;
- Policy of recording key information required in the event of loss, such as photographic record (if legally possible), labelling and marking, and recording location (see the *Object ID* website for an example of such information);
- Implementation of a retrospective documentation programme;
- Reassessment of organisational policy and practice in access to and the use of collections e.g. display, research or operation;
- Conservation of the object.

These recommendations are put into action by addressing the risks in one of the following ways:

- Toleration (for example the cost of taking an action may be prohibitive and the organisation may prefer to tolerate this level of risk);
- Transfer (some risks may be transferable i.e. by taking out insurance);
- Termination (it may be best to stop some activities if they pose too great a risk);
- Treatment (many risks fall in this category and treatment can ensure the level of risk is controlled);
- Taking the opportunity (this recognises that risk management is an opportunity not only to mitigate threats but also to exploit positive opportunities).

6 The risk assessment should be reviewed at agreed intervals to ensure up-to-date implementation of action points and assessment of new risks.

Producing a disaster plan

7 The organisation should have in place a system of good building maintenance and housekeeping which will reduce the risk of disaster and enable it to be better prepared to cope should problems occur. A disaster and recovery plan should include procedures in place to manage the risk, and actions to take should there be a disaster. Include the information identified in [Steps 8 to 17](#) below. Record references to the disaster plan and any other separate documents created.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

8 Identify and list the names, addresses and telephone numbers of the following. Clearly specify when these numbers should be used to ensure that access to personal details is controlled under the terms of the *Data Protection Act*:

- Site managers, keyholders and other relevant staff (or volunteers);
- Essential utility companies;
- Contracted companies e.g. fire and security companies;
- Local services e.g. plumber;
- Professional services to be called upon e.g. glaziers, plumbers, locksmiths, pest control, disaster response companies, freezing and drying services, valuers, removers and transport hire, etc.

Risk management

- 9** Identify and list the locations to be used in the case of evacuation. This may include off-site locations and must include provision for a *command centre*. A low cost option is to arrange reciprocal agreements with neighbouring organisations. Record a reference to this document.
- 10** Establish and record priority codes identifying items for immediate removal from the disaster area. These codes should be listed in the plan. It may be appropriate to mark locations and/or boxes with these codes, or else produce inventories of objects or collections in order of salvage priority.

Information requirements:

- ***Object identification information;***
- ***Object requirement information;***
- ***Object location information.***

- 11** Draw up site plans to show:

- Annotations with location codes for each building/space;
- Emergency access and egress points;
- Location of utility supply routes and cut-off points;
- Location of emergency equipment e.g. security system panels, fire extinguishers, first aid equipment, salvage equipment;
- Location of hazardous areas;
- Location of collections and salvage priority list.

These plans should be confidential and up-to-date, with a copy being made available to emergency services on their arrival. They need to be clear and simple if they are to be of value in an emergency situation. Bear in mind that members of the emergency services may not understand museum jargon.

Copies should also be kept off-site, in a well-known location and an up-to-date inventory be kept with this information.

- 12** If it is the organisation's policy to insure collections, list the contact names and addresses of relevant organisations and individuals.
- 13** Identify and list good collections care and housekeeping practices such as cleaning routines, storage standards (e.g. storing collections at least six inches off the ground).
- 14** Identify and list equipment which may be needed in the case of an emergency based on risk assessment of most likely disasters. Note the location of the salvage store. (See ***Step 8*** above.)
- 15** Establish and record immediate measures to be followed in the event of having to care for objects following an emergency e.g. raise alarm, call emergency services, evacuate collections, etc. This should include measures to protect collections still housed within damaged buildings.
- 16** Establish and record first aid measures for damaged collections, by type of material, drawn up in consultation with conservators. Appropriate materials and equipment must be available to support these measures.
- 17** Establish and record the location of a duplicate copy of the inventory information to account for objects immediately after the disaster. Procedures must be in place for the backup of collections information.
- 18** The organisation may choose to initiate a policy of making security photographs or reproductions (if legally possible) to act as a record in the event of objects being lost.

Risk management

- 19** The organisation must plan to provide training to new and existing staff and volunteers to ensure that disaster and recovery plans can be put into action. This should include updating knowledge and training to cover changes to buildings, policy, plans, police cover, risk and types of risk. Organisations should specify the intervals when this training should take place. The plan must be reviewed at agreed intervals (which must be no less than annually) and updated immediately to reflect changes in key personnel, procedures and locations.

Sources of help and advice

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<<http://www.object-id.com/prelim/>>

Waller, R. R. 'Risk Management applied to Preventive Conservation' in Rose, C. L., Hawkes, C. A. and Genoways, H. H. (eds.). *Storage of Natural History Collections: A Preventive Conservation Approach Vol 1*. Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections. 1995.

Organisations

Object ID
<<http://www.object-id.com>>

SAFECOMP: The international Conference of Computer Safety, Reliability and Security
<<http://www.safecomp.org>>

Insurance and indemnity management

Definition

Documenting and managing the insurance needs of objects both in an organisation's permanent collection and those for which it is temporarily responsible.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the insurance of objects including the indemnification of objects under the terms of the Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS). Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting insurance must:

- Ensure that all the objects in an organisation's care are appropriately insured within the terms of legal and statutory requirements;
- Ensure that all the objects in an organisation's care are appropriately insured within the terms of the organisation's policy;
- Ensure that all insurance policies are reviewed regularly and renewed as required;
- Ensure that current insurance liabilities are up-to-date;
- Enable indemnification of all eligible objects in the organisation's custody and while in transit;
- Ensure that the appropriate minimum liability sum or excess is available to be paid if required.

Before you start

Objects may be insured against theft, loss or damage. Insurance for damage may be needed to cover the cost of remedial conservation work. Determination of insurance needs will depend on an assessment of the whole range of risks to which the collection may be susceptible, and the identification of particular risks which it may be appropriate to meet through insurance (see *Risk management*). Therefore it will be necessary to work with insurance providers to ensure that the procedure meets minimum standards.

The Government Indemnity Scheme (GIS) is managed by MLA and is a non-commercial insurance programme. It provides cost-free (excepting the minimum liability exclusion) indemnity cover for loans to non-national organisations, galleries and libraries, including loans from other non-national organisations or private lenders. Compensation is paid to the owner by the government.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the insurance of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy governing the insurance of objects including accessioned collections, loans in, enquiries and other deposits. It is good practice for it to state:

- Which objects it **must** insure;
- Which objects it is **prudent** to insure;
- When objects must be insured;
- Who is responsible (e.g. borrower) for arranging insurance and renewal.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the insurance of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the insurance of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Identifying insurance needs

- 3 The organisation must identify:
 - Which objects it **must** insure. This includes instances where there is a legal or statutory requirement, or where there is a contractual obligation to insure);
 - Which objects it is **prudent** to insure;
 - Objects subject to public liability legislation.

Insurance arrangements may be limited by the nature of the organisation or its governing authority or budget. Implement insurance cover on the basis of items needing continuous cover and those needing additional or short-term cover.

Permanent Collections

Insurance arrangements agreed for items in the organisation's permanent collections are likely to be continuous as long as they remain on the organisation's own premises, i.e. for so long as the risk remains the same. They are likely to be amended only in the light of changes in valuation, or if it is decided that the basis of cover needs to be extended or reduced. Loans in and loans out, however, may necessitate additional insurance for a fixed period. When insuring for conservation purposes, take note of developments in techniques and consequent changes in costs.

Categories which **must** normally be insured include the following:

- Objects on loan to the organisation - these are normally subject to contractual agreements, including a requirement to insure;
- Objects on loan from the organisation - it is normally the borrowing organisation's responsibility to insure objects on loan to them. In instances where this is not the case, specific agreement must be reached with the borrower;
- Working exhibits - there are statutory liabilities requiring specialist cover associated with aeroplanes, cars, boats, locomotives, steam vehicles, mechanised exhibits and mining equipment.

Identify those objects which it is **prudent** to insure continuously. These may include the following:

- Objects with a readily identified high market value - these may include fine art, precious metals, gemstones and coin collections, clocks, watches and certain classes of biological material. (In the latter case, selling ivory or horn contravenes the law, and there is technically no market other than the black market - insurance should therefore be for conservation needs only.);
- Objects which may not have a readily identified market value but which are of great value to the organisation - these might include objects: central to the organisation's displays; with a high replacement cost, e.g. a replica engine; of considerable significance to an excavation, or to the local history of the region e.g. a significant burial group;
- Objects in transit or on loan to another organisation for conservation or display, i.e. at additional risk - in these cases responsibility for insurance may be transferred under agreement to another party.

When arranging the acquisition or deposition of objects from a distance, determine whether and which items should be covered by insurance in transit, who is responsible for providing cover and to what level. It may be necessary to approve the mode of transport in consultation with the insurers.

When arranging the deposition of archaeological project archives, it is expected that the project archaeologist will be responsible for insurance of the archive in transit. Other instances where insurance in transit is highly desirable include the collection/delivery of treasure trove and objects purchased from salerooms or antiquity dealers.

Assess new acquisitions against the above criteria and amend cover as required.

For items on loan from the organisation, the loan agreement should include a stipulation that the item be insured for the specified value for all risks, including transit cover from the time it leaves the organisation to the time it returns (i.e. 'nail to nail' cover).

Valuing objects

- 4 Provide the insurers with current valuations for all objects to be insured. Valuations of objects which are not the property of the organisation must be agreed in writing by the relevant owners.
[Go to [Valuation control - Procedure](#)]

There is an inherent difficulty in determining the financial value of some types of material e.g. archaeology, natural history (see *Valuation control*). Each organisation may take its own view on how far it can realistically insure collections of non-precious and bulk material.

Insuring objects

- 5 An insurer working directly with organisations will require information about the organisation and its security management and invigilation arrangements. When insuring permanent collections, the insurer will require a schedule of collections with values. Where values are significant, this may require the organisation to provide an itemised list of objects and their values. When insuring loans, the organisation should provide valuations agreed between the lending and borrowing organisations. When insuring touring exhibitions, venues must be clear as to their responsibilities, especially for the transport of exhibits.

When setting up an insurance arrangement establish and record the following:

- The reference number of the item being insured (e.g. accession number, loan number);
- A brief description of objects being insured;
- The insurance method (e.g. commercial, indemnity);
- Who is providing the insurance (name, address);
- The amount to be insured (and currency);
- The date the cover is beginning and ending;
- Who has authorised this arrangement;
- Special conditions attached to this arrangement.

Information requirements:

- ***Object identification information;***
- ***Insurance information;***
- ***Indemnity information;***
- ***Reference information;***
- ***Date information;***
- ***Organisation information;***
- ***Person information;***
- ***Address information.***

- 6** Retain written evidence of insurance. The object record must refer to the appropriate insurance file. Insurance certificates should be checked to ensure they cover required periods, values and conditions.
- 7** Restrict access to and protect the security of insurance records.
- 8** Monitor and update cover as required.

Claiming against insurance

- 9** In the event of a claim for loss or damage the insurer will request information as part of their claims procedure. It will be necessary to provide a full description of the item including the following information:
 - A physical description (including up-to-date conservation reports and observations by the conservator);
 - Any inscriptions (including the object number as marked on the object, stamps, other marks);
 - The materials;
 - The maker;
 - The dimensions;
 - A photograph or other image (preferably colour);
 - The circumstances of loss or damage;
 - The valuation.

In large groups of objects, specimens or finds, provide as much information as possible at group level, and for an average or typical component. Refer to the *Loss and damage* procedure to provide full records of lost, stolen or damaged items.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object description information;*
- *Object production information;*
- *Valuation information;*
- *Loss information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Sources of help and advice

Publications

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Organisations

MLA (Government Indemnity Scheme)
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/gis/00gis.asp>>

Valuation control

Definition

The management of information relating to the financial valuations placed on individual objects, or groups of objects, normally for insurance/indemnity purposes.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the valuation of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting valuations must:

- Ensure that the method used for valuation is approved and constantly applied;
- Ensure that valuation information is treated in confidence and not released to anyone without the appropriate authority;
- Ensure that valuations are updated as and when required;
- Ensure that valuation information is available as required to support the related procedures.

Before you start

There are a number of likely reasons/opportunities for carrying out a valuation which are explained in the following procedures:

- *Loans in;*
- *Acquisition;*
- *Inventory control;*
- *Cataloguing;*
- *Conservation and collections care;*
- *Risk management;*
- *Insurance and indemnity management;*
- *Audit;*
- *Use of collections;*
- *Loans out;*
- *Retrospective documentation.*

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the valuation of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on valuation. It is good practice for it to state:

- That for ethical reasons and liability considerations, the organisation will not carry out valuations for commercial organisations or private individuals;
- A clear authorisation policy for a valuation;
- Who has access to valuation information and who is authorised to provide valuations;
- The measures to ensure the security of valuation information;
- The method and frequency of updating valuation information.

It is the general assumption that objects in an organisation's collection are not assets which will be realised by sale. Valuation of these objects is therefore usually directly related to present or potential insurance needs.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the valuation of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the valuation of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Carrying out valuations

- 3 Refer to the appropriate procedures and organisation policy to identify which objects require valuation.

Most organisations will only insure selected 'specified' objects on an indemnity or agreed figure basis. The bulk of collections, if insured at all, will be covered on an 'unspecified' basis providing cover up to a maximum figure for any one object. In some instances, but not all, the maximum figure per object can simply be updated in line with inflation.

It may be impossible to ascertain a current 'market value' for certain types of object. It will therefore be necessary to establish a variety of principles for the valuation of different types of object such as current monetary value, if known; original valuation or purchase price, uplifted for inflation; replacement value; cost of transport; cost of acquiring another object of comparable significance, etc.

Valuations for conservation and repair can be a problem, and can be different from 'market value' (e.g. a ceremonial chair of small intrinsic value may be irreplaceable because of local associations: if damaged it may cost several times its value to restore).

The purchase price may have no direct relation to a valuation (e.g. a vendor may intentionally sell an object to an organisation at less than its market value)

- 4 Follow the organisation's authorisation policy for obtaining a valuation. Sources of valuation include: curator, professional valuers, and lenders. If the object is not the property of the organisation, agree the valuation in writing with the owner.
- 5 Record the following information about the valuation, the:
 - Object reference number (e.g. accession number, loan number);
 - Brief description (of what is being valued);
 - Valuation;
 - Currency of valuation;
 - Valuer;
 - Date of the valuation;
 - Authorisation of the valuation;
 - Reason for the valuation.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
 - *Object valuation information*;
 - *Valuation information*;
 - *Date information*;
 - *Organisation information*;
 - *Person information*;
 - *Address information*.
- 6** Implement the organisation's policy for controlling access to, and the security of, valuation information.
- 7** Retain any original documents (e.g. those signed by a valuer etc.) and make a reference to their location in the object record. Monitor and update valuations as required within the appropriate procedure; for example, the valuation of an item may fluctuate while on loan. Update the insurance or indemnity cover so that it is appropriate, in the light of a changed valuation.
[Go to *Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure*]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

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Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums*. London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Audit

Definition

The examination of objects or object information, in order to verify their location, authenticity, accuracy and relationships.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the auditing of the collections and related information. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting audits must:

- Ensure that the organisation maintains, manages and documents a regular review of the objects in its collections and the information relating to them;
- Ensure that the audit of objects is based on the physical presence of the objects;
- Ensure that all relevant object-related documentation is updated as required in a timely manner;
- Ensure that remedial action is taken as required, following discovery of missing objects, wrongly or inadequately documented objects, or undocumented objects;
- Ensure that, wherever possible, inventory checks are conducted or witnessed by a person not responsible for their custody or record-keeping.

Before you start

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for management of audit needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation should establish a series of triggers and categories of object and information for deciding audit timing and priority. These may take account of one or more of the following:

- The storage location of objects;
- The time since last audit;
- The historic significance;
- The scientific significance;
- The monetary value of an object;
- The ownership status (whether the object is accessioned, on loan or deposited);
- The security of storage or display arrangements;
- The type of object information;
- A suspicion of theft, fraud or other misconduct;
- Any unresolved results from a previous audit;
- Who will be conducting or responsible for the audit (e.g. internal staff, external bodies);
- At what level the audit takes place i.e. batch or group level (e.g. by box, bag or context for bulk finds and environmental remains) or individual object level (e.g. for small finds, objects illustrated and published, type specimens, objects of high financial value, or high security risk).

Those involved in the audit must agree and document the conventions used for conducting and recording the audit.

Updating records as part of an information audit should be done according to the organisation's documentation policy. Records containing historical, cultural, natural science and ethnographic information are instances where the organisation may take a specific point of view about the type and currency of information which should be retained.

The policy should also address the requirements that curators and conservators should agree on the action taken when object numbers are found to be inaccurate or missing.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to management of audit.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of audit. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Identifying audit requirements

- 3 Identify the parts of the collections which are to be audited, the areas of the collections which are audited and the frequency with which audits are carried out. Any audit cycle adopted should reflect this policy, ensuring that the chosen areas of the collections are evenly covered. Factors affecting a decision to audit a section of the collections include:
 - Location;
 - Condition;
 - Risk;
 - Value;
 - Historic or scientific importance.

It is often sufficient to audit a sample selection of objects. If samples are chosen, take steps to make them properly representative, for example by selecting random object numbers. It will be necessary on occasions to audit an entire collection over a period of time, or to ensure that all the information relating to a particular subject is correct and up-to-date.

Auditing objects

- 4 Decide the group of objects to be audited, e.g. individual objects (dependent upon established priorities - see below), an arbitrary or representative sample, or the entire contents of a store location (e.g. a drawer). The first two categories ('object audits') work from an established inventory to the object. The last ('store audit') attempts to reconcile the contents of an entire store location with the inventory records for that location.

Use the inventory and location information to derive a list of objects which are to be audited.

[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]

[Got to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

- 5 Using the inventory and location records verify the following:
 - The presence of the object;
 - The accuracy of the number marked on the object;
 - The accuracy of the object description on the inventory and other documentation;
 - The accuracy of the location information.

6 The audit can also be used as an opportunity to:

- Reassess the environmental, storage and security needs of objects;
- Update labelling and marking of objects;
- Carry out a condition check of object;
- Reassess the status of objects held on temporary deposit or as part of non-accessioned collections;
- Review the access category of objects;
- Gather information to use for the rationalisation of collections, including transfer and disposals;
- Take a photographic or digital image where one does not already exist (if legally possible) or confirm the accuracy of any existing image.

Documenting the audit

7 Mark the object record with the following information:

- The date an object was found present at a location;
- The date an object was found to be missing from a location;
- The date the object information was checked;
- The name of the person checking the object and its information;
- Any discrepancies including errors in identification number, description, etc.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification*;
- *Object audit information*;
- *Audit information*;
- *Object location information*
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

8 Update or amend information as required:

Annotate the inventory with any discrepancies in the object description or location.
[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]

Any discrepancies in the object number or location must be checked with the *accession register* and location records respectively before alteration to inventory information.
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

If the object does not appear in the collections inventory, yet clearly belongs to the organisation, the *Acquisition* procedure should be used to process the object into the appropriate collection.
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]

If the object number as marked on the object does not match the *accession register* number, but the description of the object matches, check all related documentation thoroughly. Record a cross-reference on the *accession register* to the number marked on the object. Except in the case of obvious errors, only change the number as marked on the object as a last resort, for example to avoid confusion between two objects with identical numbers. If the number is changed, then record the replaced erroneous number as an 'other number' to maintain compatibility with older, unaltered or unalterable records and publications.

Audit

If the number on the object matches that on the *accession register*, but it is clear that the object is not that which is described, investigate the possible identity of the object by examining all pertinent acquisition and object records. This may involve a search through archive material. Add a note to the *accession register* to record the discrepancy and explain any actions taken, but the original description must remain visible. This will provide an audit trail should further discrepancies arise and may help reconcile the object record with previously overlooked information discovered during any subsequent examination of collections documentation or archives.

[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]

[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]

Following the procedure for *Inventory control*, compile a schedule of objects found for which no object records have been located, with the following information:

- The date the object was found;
- The location where it was found;
- The name of the person who found it;
- Any identification number marked on the object;
- A brief description of the object;
- The inventory number assigned to the found object.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object location information](#);
- [Location information](#);
- [Object audit information](#);
- [Audit information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

The resolution of some of these problems may require a partial or full collections or information inventory.

[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]

Auditing object information

9 An information audit may be required for the following reasons:

- To check that current valuations are recorded and realistic;
- To check that identity numbers are present and not duplicated;
- To check that other vital information is readily available;
- To check that other information describing or associated with the object is accurate and up-to-date;
- To check that useful information has not been overlooked during the creation of inventory or catalogue records, e.g. the social historical dimension of natural history or fine art objects. This may particularly be the case in historic records made prior to the establishment of modern museum disciplines and practice;
- To check that basic information sources (e.g. registers, day books, history files and entry forms) are accounted for, accessible, appropriately stored and secure;
- To make sure that records associated with the objects have only been amended by authorised personnel (see [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) above);
- To ensure that recorded acquisitions can be traced within the collection.

10 Update all records holding or referring to the information being audited.

- 11** It may be necessary in digital systems to lock records of objects being audited until the audit is complete.

Post-audit action

- 12** The results of an object or information audit may require the following action:

- Reporting of results to senior organisational management;
- Investigation of missing objects;
[Go to [Loss and damage - Procedure](#)]
- Initiation of a full retrospective inventory;
[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]
- Reporting on objects in need of conservation;
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]
- Investigation of unmarked, unaccessioned or inadequately accessioned objects;
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]
- Accessioning of newly discovered objects;
[Go to [Acquisition - Procedure](#)]
- The creation of a 'missing list' to record all items not found during the audit, whether actually or nominally part of the collection. (Some of these will be known objects unaccounted for, and others will be objects recorded in acquisition records but not on the register or inventory.);
[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]
- The re-cataloguing of objects from newly discovered sources of information;
[Go to [Cataloguing - Procedure](#)]
- The acquisition or generation of replacement documentation from backups or from other sources (e.g. local authority archives, county records office);
- Changes in display or conservation policy to ensure, for example, that identification numbers are clearly marked on display labels where possible, or that identifying labels are not removed from objects without the knowledge of those responsible (e.g. curatorial or documentation staff).

- 13** If the audit highlights a flaw in a procedure (e.g. inaccurate movement control resulting in objects being mislaid), it is important that the relevant procedure be reviewed, revised or reinforced as required. It is then advisable to re-audit affected objects to ensure that the procedure is working effectively.

Sources of help and advice

Publications

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Roberts, D. A. *Planning the documentation of museum collections.* Section 8, 'Documentation and collections audit', pp 123-131. Cambridge: MDA, 1985.

Organisations

Audit Commission
<<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk>>

National Audit Office (Education & National Heritage Department)
<<http://www.nao.org.uk>>

Rights management

Definition

The management and documentation of the rights associated with the objects and information for which the organisation is responsible for, in order to benefit the organisation and to respect the rights of others.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the management and documentation of rights. Refer to [*Before you start - Policy requirements*](#) for details.

The procedure for managing and documenting rights associated with the material (objects, photographs, etc.) for which the organisation is responsible for must:

- Ensure that the organisation has taken account of relevant rights legislation, and monitors changes;
- Ensure that fully documented research into all associated rights is carried out as soon as new material is acquired;
- Record, and monitor changes, full details of all associated rights;
- Ensure that any contract negotiations, for the use of intellectual property rights (IPR) assets, is carried out, taking into account the issues of: legal entity, legal restrictions, funders' requirements and the tax situation;
- Ensure that the rights of others are respected by the organisation and any other third party users;
- Ensure that the rights of the organisation are respected by others;
- Ensure that there is an awareness of material sensitive to publication right, and that any publication rights remain the property of the organisation and are not accidentally lost;
- Ensure that when the organisation creates new material it records the associated rights;
- Ensure that when the organisation commissions works, all IPRs are assigned to the organisation.

Before you start

Rights management is required whenever an organisation acquires, borrows, lends or wants to use its collections and material associated with them. Use can be 'internal' (e.g. conserving an object, holding information on donors, etc.) or 'external' (e.g. public facing activities such as displaying material on a website, catalogue, etc.). The right of ownership of an object is separate from any other rights that are associated with it. When these rights are held by others, the organisation will be legally constrained as to how it can use the object, without their prior permission.

Rights management may be required in the following procedures:

- *Pre-entry;*
- *Loans in;*
- *Acquisition;*
- *Cataloguing;*
- *Object condition checking and technical assessment;*
- *Conservation and collections care;*
- *Insurance and indemnity management;*
- *Use of collections;*
- *Loans out;*
- *Deaccession and disposal.*

Legal environment

The legal environment for rights is complex, with much being dependent on national implementations of international conventions and European directives. Therefore only brief notes will be given here. Refer to [Sources of help and advice](#) for further details.

Intellectual Property Rights (IPR)

Some IPR are 'automatic' (e.g. copyright), upon the creation of the material expression of an idea, while others have to be applied for and granted (e.g. trade marks). It is also possible to optionally register some rights, giving enhanced protection (e.g. designs).

IPR are also 'territorial' with the details of what they are, how long they last, and what they protect varying between different jurisdictions. This has considerable implications when the Internet is the publication medium.

The main types of IPR, which an organisation is most likely to come across are:

Copyright

Copyright protection is automatically offered to original works or those that show reasonable skill or judgement, regardless of artistic merit. It is an exclusive right offered to the author of the work which prohibits the distribution, copying (by any means), performing, rental, broadcasting or placing online etc. of the work without the author's consent.

Works need to fall within one or more categories in order to be protected by copyright. These include:

- Artistic works (e.g. paintings, sculpture, photographs, engravings, prints, diagrams, architectural drawings, maps, craftwork, etc.);
- Literary works (e.g. encompassing the written word, but also html, programming code, some databases, e-mails, etc.);
- Musical works;
- Dramatic works (including dance and mime);
- Films (in any media);
- Sound recordings (in any media);
- Typographic works (e.g. published editions of literary works);
- Broadcasts (by wireless, cable and satellite, but excluding most transmissions over the Internet).

Rights management

Although copyright ownership will normally belong to the author of the work, the exception to this is where the author is the employee of an organisation, in which case the copyright belongs to the organisation. The right will last for the lifetime of the author and for a period of years after the year of their death. The period after the death depends on the type of work and the legal territory. For artistic works, in the UK, the period is usually 70 years.

Since copyright protection usually extends beyond the lifetime of the original author, the privileges that it offers will pass on to a nominated or entitled person (the 'rights holder') upon the death of the original author. This will continue until the period afforded copyright protection post the death of the author has elapsed. Subsequently, copyright would be deemed to have expired and permission will no longer need to be sought. However, despite the expiry of copyright, other rights may still subsist in the work (or its image) and these will require clearance before being the work or its image can be used by the organisation.

If an organisation wishes to reproduce a work (e.g. photography, scanning, etc.) then it must get permission from the copyright holder before carrying out any reproduction.

There are exceptions to copyright restrictions that allow the 'limited' use of works, e.g. for non-commercial research, criticism and review etc. ('fair dealing' exceptions). However these exceptions have limited use within the normal operations of collection-holding organisations, e.g. taking photographs for security, identification, publicity or conservation etc. Unless the organisation can satisfy the requirements under the exceptions, that the use is also fair, then permission should always be sought.

Moral rights

Together with copyright, these are afforded to the author of an original work upon its creation. They relate to the right of authors (e.g. artists, writers, film directors, etc.) of works to be recognised (or not) as the creator (the 'right of paternity'); the right to object to false attribution and also the right to object to any treatment of their work which, in their opinion, is 'derogatory' (e.g. distortion or mutilation). An additional right relates to the privacy of certain films and photographs. The right of paternity normally has to be asserted (in writing). Moral rights may be waived, but not assigned to others. In a collection context, inappropriate conservation or display or the reproduction of detail, or manipulation of an image without authorisation of the rights holder, may be construed as derogatory treatment.

Publication right

Concerns works that are no longer in copyright and have not been previously published (or communicated to the public). This is an economic right and similar to copyright (although without the associated moral rights) and is given to those who publish the work for the first time. In the UK the right lasts for 25 years after the first publication. Organisations should be careful not inadvertently give away to researchers accessing their collections this right, and thus limit the organisation's own use of its collections.

Trade marks

Concerns the protection of the 'brand' of a trader (its goods and services), by means of a sign that distinguishes from other traders. It has to be applied for and registered in every territory where the protection is wanted. It gives its owner the exclusive right to use it.

Designs

Concerns the protection of product appearance, preventing the deliberate copying of its various aspects, e.g. colour, shape, materials, etc. Designs can be registered. In the UK protection lasts up to 10 years after the first marketing of products based on the design.

Patents

Concerns the protection for inventors, preventing others copying and making use of the invention without their permission. The right has to be applied for and granted in every territory where the protection is wanted. In the UK patent rights generally last for 20 years.

Rights management

Performers' rights

Concerns the rights performers have with respect to any live performance they take part in, and also the recording and broadcasting of that performance. Permissions (with possible fees) are needed, in advance, for these types of activities to take place.

Database right

Concerns, in addition to any copyright that exists, any database which is the result of a 'considerable' investment. It is an automatic right, and protects against any extraction and reuse of data without the permission of the owner. In the UK it lasts for 15 years from the creation or publication of the database.

These rights are separate from the ownership of any object associated with them, e.g. an organisation may own a modern art work, but it is unlikely that it owns the rights associated with it. If an organisation does not own the associated rights then the ways in which an object can be used will be restricted. It is possible for the rights holder(s) to grant the organisation a licence to use their intellectual property (IP) assets. Conversely it is possible for the organisation to grant licences to others to use the IP assets it owns.

Other rights

Data Protection

Concerns the personal information of living individuals, which has to be accurate, lawfully held and 'processed' (e.g. published) for the purpose(s) agreed by that individual. In a collection-holding context, for example, it is not possible to put online the names of donors onto an organisation's website without their express permission. The names of artists are not protected by this (however see *Moral rights* above for the right of an artist not to be recognised).

Human Rights

Concerns, in the context of collection-holding, the rights of an individual to privacy. Photographs, for example, showing individuals (including employees) cannot be used without their prior permission. Where the photographs show crowds then privacy is not an issue.

Personality Rights

Concerns the right of 'well-known' persons not to be used in advertisements or to promote businesses without their permission. An organisation does not have the right to photograph or use such photographs without permission.

Freedom of Information

Concerns the general right of access to information held by public authorities. In the UK the *Freedom of Information Act 2000* came into force in 2005 and represents good practice in public access to information. As a result, it may be appropriate for non-public organisations to implement some of its aspects even if they are not legally obliged to do so.

These rights are separate from the ownership of any object or any intellectual property rights associated with them.

Policy requirements

Your organisation must have policies and guidelines on rights. It is good practice for these to state the:

- Steps to be taken to research rights associated with works that become (or might become) the responsibility of the organisation;
- Steps to be taken to ensure the protection of the rights of the organisation and the rights of others;
- Steps to be taken to ensure the legal basis of any contract negotiation for rights licences;
- Response to claims to breach of rights both against and on behalf of the organisation;
- Organisation's use of external contractor's and volunteers, and the organisation's arrangement for IPRs of the work they create.

Rights management

Regularly review these policies and guidelines, especially in light of changes of legislation, and changes in the activities undertaken by the organisation.

Rights research

An organisation's guidelines for rights research should include the:

- Steps the research should contain;
- Ways of contacting rights holders;
- Methods of communication, e.g. 'special delivery' for outgoing mail and a freepost or stamp-addressed envelope for return;
- Need to include a highlighted deadline with the request to a rights holder;
- Need to document all relevant communication whether by phone, fax, e-mail, letter or person-to-person meeting.

Rights protection

The purpose of rights protection is to:

- Ensure that the rights held by others are respected by the organisation and by any other third-party users;
- Ensure that the rights held by the organisation are respected by others.

An organisation's guidelines on the rights protection should include the:

- Steps to be taken to make staff (or volunteers) aware of the rights associated with the material they are proposing to use;
- Steps to be taken to make third-party users aware of the rights associated with the material they are proposing to use;
- Steps to be taken to protect the rights (see [Note](#) below);
- Steps to be taken in response to breach of rights by the organisation;
- Steps to be taken in response to breach of rights, both the organisation's and others, by third parties.

Note: Protecting rights

In practical terms these include:

- Limiting access - at its most draconian, this would mean not letting anybody have access to the material, however more likely is limited access based on the rights situation. Online material could be protected by use of passwords (however there is no guarantee that they will be fully secure);
- Limiting use - one method that can be used is to 'trust the user', backing this up by the use of textual accreditation (credit lines, copyright notices and terms and conditions of use) separate from the material or with visual accreditation actually marked on it. With digital visual material, other possibilities include: scarring, low image size, low image quality (however with all these ensure that the holder of the moral rights does not consider them as being derogatory treatment);
- Discovering misuse - with digital material, technical methods include: digital encryption, digital watermarking and fingerprinting (all three backed up by tracking mechanisms). Carrying out a monitoring scheme for misuse would also be helpful.

Contract issues

Licences granting others the IPR assets of the organisation and those granted to the organisation are legally binding contracts. As a result both parties to the contract must be 'legal entities' able to enter into contracts for those rights. For the organisation the tasks are:

Rights management

- To identify the legal entity able to enter into agreements in this area (e.g. the full legal name of the organisation must appear in the licence, or a trading company might have been set up by the organisation to handle this area);
- To establish if the legal entity has any legal restrictions on its negotiation of contracts (e.g. for a charity the licence must be in furtherance of the legally stated aims of the charity; or a government-run organisation might only be able to enter into licences for educational use, etc.);
- To establish if any external funding of an organisation restricts the licence being considered (e.g. a funder of a digitisation project may insist that it be able to put on its website the material being created. The result would be that the organisation would have to negotiate on the funder's behalf with the rights holder).

Establish the tax position with regard to the licence being considered (e.g. examine the implications for the payment of Value Added Tax (VAT) in the licence).

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the **Before you start** section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written policy** that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written documentation procedural manual** that refers to the management of rights.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of rights. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Rights research

- 3 Carry out and record proper research into the rights (especially copyright) associated with objects and other material, in accordance with the policy and guidelines of the organisation (see **Before you start - Policy requirements** above).

The research should take place as soon as possible after the material becomes the responsibility of the organisation, and must take place before any proposed use of the material happens.

Record, in particular, when rights holders cannot be located and keep a 'due diligence' file containing copies of all enquiries.

Record a reference to the file.

Information requirements:

- **Object identification information**;
 - **Reference information**.
- 4 After research, for each right, record the:
 - Reference number of the object or record associated with the right;
 - Type of right;
 - Details of the holder(s) of the right;
 - Start date of the right;
 - End date of the right;
 - Reference to any documentation associated with the right, including licences or waivers granted to and by the organisation.

Indicate where it has not been possible to identify the rights holder. Review this information on a regular basis, and update when necessary (e.g. the rights holder changes).

Also include materials that are sensitive to publication right where that has not been asserted by the organisation.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Object rights information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Address information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Reference information*.

IPR licence management

- 5 Where a new use of a work is proposed and the organisation does not have the necessary rights, carry out negotiation with the IPR holder in order to obtain a licence for the use. Take into account the legal issues concerning both parties to the contract (see *Before you start - Contract issues* above).
- 6 For each licence granted to the organisation to use another's IP assets record:
 - The reference number of the licence;
 - The reference number(s) of the work(s) covered by the licence;
 - The IPR status of the content of the work(s) covered by the licence, where another work is depicted, e.g. a photograph (the work) of a modern art work (the content);
 - The details of the holder(s) of the rights being granted by the licence (NB there may be more than one holder, each with more than one set of contact details);
 - An outline of the rights being acquired by the organisation;
 - The details of sub-licences granted to third parties;
 - A note of warranty and indemnity clauses in the licence;
 - A note on past history; date previous rights granted etc.;
 - A note of any restrictions to the rights licence granted;
 - The start date of the licence;
 - The end date of the licence;
 - Details of the negotiator of the licence on behalf of the organisation;
 - Details of this record (recorder and date when it was created or last changed).

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Object rights in information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*;
- *Date information*.

- 7 Where a new use of a work is proposed, where the organisation does hold necessary rights, carry out a negotiation with those wishing to use the IPR assets, in order to grant a licence for the use. Take into account the legal issues concerning both parties to the contract (see *Before you start - Contract issues* above).

8 For each licence granted by the organisation to another for the use of its IP assets record:

- The reference number of the licence;
- The reference number(s) of the work(s) covered by the licence;
- The IPR status of the content of the work(s) covered by the licence, where another work is depicted, e.g. a photograph (the work) of a modern art work (the content);
- The details of the organisation(s) or person(s) being granted by the licence;
- The details of the other holder(s) of the rights being granted by the licence (i.e. other than the organisation);
- An outline of the rights being granted by the licence;
- Details of sub-licences granted to third parties;
- Note of warranty and indemnity clauses in the licence;
- A note on past history; date previous rights granted etc.;
- A note of any restrictions to the rights licence granted;
- The start date of the licence;
- The end date of the licence;
- Details of the negotiator of the licence on behalf of the organisation;
- Details of this record (recorder and date when it was created or last changed).

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Object rights out information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Address information*;
- *Date information*.

Ensuring publication right

9 Monitor the use of works which are sensitive to publication right, including those unpublished works about to come out of copyright. Do not allow them to be published by others without ensuring that a contract with them assigns publication right to the organisation. When the work is published amend rights records to reflect this.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Object rights information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *Address information*;
- *Date information*.

Rights in new works

10 Where it is proposed that any new work is not to be created by an employee of the organisation, (e.g. hired photographer, unpaid volunteer, etc.), attempt to negotiate a contract for the creation of the works which maximises the rights assigned to the organisation.

- 11** When the organisation creates new works, (e.g. photographs of objects, text for a catalogue, object records, etc.), research and record all the associated rights (see [Steps 3-4](#) above).

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Reproduction information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information;*
- *Date information.*

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Ashby, Helen; McKenna, Gordon and Stiff, Matthew. *SPECTRUM Knowledge*. ('Legal Issues', pp72-77). Cambridge: MDA, 2001.

Botterill, Rosa (ed). *EMII-DCF Framework Report*. ('Legal Requirements', pp12-91). Cambridge: EMI-DCF, 2003.

<http://www.emii-dcf.org/dokument/frame.pdf>

MDA. *Copyright Essentials*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.

<http://www.mda.org.uk/cbasics.htm>

MDA. *Copyright for Collections*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.

<http://www.mda.org.uk/cbasics.htm>

MDA. *Data Protection*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2002.

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MDA. *Developing a documentation procedural manual*. [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.

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<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>

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<http://www.mda.org.uk/spectrum-terminology/>

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<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>

Padfield, Tim. *Copyright for Archivists and Users of Archives* (Second edition). London: Facet Publishing, 2004.

Stokes, Simon. *Art & Copyright*. [Revised Paperback Edition] Oxford: Hart Publishing, 2003.

Stokes, Simon. *Digital Copyright: Law and Practice*. London: Butterworths/LexisNexis, 2002.

Wienand, Peter; Booy, Anna and Fry, Robin. *A Guide to Copyright for Museums and Galleries*. London: Routledge, 2000.

Zorich, Diane. *An Introduction to Managing Digital Assets*. Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 1999.

http://www.getty.edu/bookstore/booksites/intro_mda/

Rights management

Zorich, Diane. *Developing Intellectual Property Policies: A How to Guide*. Gatineau (Quebec): Canadian Heritage Information Network (CHIN) and National Initiative for a Networked Cultural Heritage (NINCH), 2003.
<http://www.chin.gc.ca/English/Intellectual_Property/Developing_Policies/>

Organisations

BAPLA (British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies)
<<http://www.bapla.org.uk>>

Government IP Portal
<<http://www.intellectual-property.gov.uk>>

Her Majesty's Stationery Office
<<http://www.hmso.gov.uk>>

Information Commissioner
<<http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk>>

LACA (Libraries and Archives Copyright Alliance)
<<http://www.cilip.org.uk/committees/laca/laca.html>>

MDA
<<http://www.mda.org.uk>>

Museums Copyright Group
<<http://www.museumscopyright.org.uk>>

TASI (Technical Advisory Service for Images)
<<http://www.tasi.ac.uk>>

UK Patent Office - Copyright
<<http://www.patent.gov.uk/copy/>>

Use of collections

Definition

The management and documentation of all uses of and services based on collections and objects in the organisation. These include exhibition and display, education handling collections and the operation of objects, research and enquiries, reproduction and the commercial use of objects and associated documentary archives. Users include staff (and volunteers) or the public, whether in person, by letter, telephone or any other means of communication.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the use of collections. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The minimum standard for use of collections must:

- Enable the use of objects by internal and external users for such purposes as research, display and operation;
- Enable effective control of access to the collections and information associated with them;
- Enable the planning and scheduling for the use of objects;
- Ensure continuous accountability for objects and associated documentary records;
- Add significant information derived from research to the catalogue, and make important results public through publication, exhibition or other means as and when appropriate;
- Maintain a record of use and users associated with the collections;
- Ensure that details of use are accessed by a relevant object number.

Before you start

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for managing the use of the organisation's collections needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

In creating a policy the organisation will need to make sure that it has the rights to use its collections as it wishes and that the rights it has are not unconsciously given away to third parties. See the *Rights management* procedure for what this involves.

If the organisation has implemented *Pre-entry*, *Object entry* and *Acquisition* procedures, its policy on use will have been evident at these points and terms for use of individual objects will already have been established.

It is good practice for the organisation's policy covering the use of collections to detail:

The levels of access - afforded to different types of object based on appropriate criteria such as:

- Status;
- *Health & Safety*;
- Conservation and security;
- Location;
- Resources;
- Sensitivity (e.g. potentially offensive material, human remains, etc.).

The persons - authorised to provide access to objects and documentation;

The provision of catalogues and indexes of collections (e.g. in publications);

A response time - for confirming the presence or absence of particular types of object;

The appointment hours - within which an appointment to study the object or objects can be offered;

The provision of suitable facilities - for use by the researcher, including standards to control:

- The security of objects (invigilation of visitors, checking objects after enquiry);
- Sensitive information (restricting access to certain categories of information).

Terms and conditions - for assessment of objects not part of the organisation's collections e.g. valuations, authentication, etc.;

Specific clauses - pertaining to different types of use, including:

- For research - reference to work of related organisations and collections; academic societies, specialist groups or individuals;
- The standard of research required from staff (or volunteers);
- The means by which results are documented;
- The parameters for destructive or damaging research on accessioned specimens.

Use of collections

Exhibition:

- The method and frequency for monitoring objects on display;
- The standards for project management and scheduling;
- The treatment of confidential or sensitive information such as the location of archaeological sites and the display of human remains or objects of religious significance.

Operation:

- The types of use permitted for each collection (e.g. use of music instruments);
- What is required from the user by way of request;
- Who can give authority for use.

Reproduction - the types of reproduction permitted.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of the use of the organisation's collections.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of the organisation's collections. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Initiating request or proposal for use

- 3 Create or obtain a record which includes information from the proposed user as the basis for initiating the procedure. The record may be in the form of a standard application form (e.g. for reproduction, exhibition or research). It should include:
 - The proposed user(s) - name, contact details and background (e.g. previous relevant experience);
 - The date of request;
 - The details of the proposed use, including events, activities or reproductions which may be associated with it. For reproductions, details must include: the image required (e.g. part of object, detail); type (e.g. colour transparency), size and number of reproductions required;
 - A brief description of the object;
 - The date(s) of proposed use or date that reproductions are required;
 - The place of proposed use and its condition (e.g. environment, security).

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Use of collections information*;
- *Object location information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Place information*;
- *Address information*.

The above covers information required for all types of use, however, certain types of use will require additional information to be recorded. The request may, for example, be in the form of:

Full exhibition proposal, including:

- A timetable;
- A statement of resources required;
- The theme or scenario of an exhibition;
- The objectives of the exhibition;
- The exhibition title;
- Constraints or standards to follow and the use of contractors and their requirements such as method and timing of payment.

Full exhibition proposal, including:

- A timetable;
- A statement of resources required;
- The theme or scenario of an exhibition;
- The objectives of the exhibition;
- The exhibition title;
- Constraints or standards to follow and the use of contractors and their requirements such as method and timing of payment.

Standard research application form, including:

- The researcher's name, affiliation, address and telephone number;
- Proof of identity;
- The name, address and telephone number of referee;
- The date and duration of visit;
- The purpose of visit;
- Which items and documentation are requested.

Record a reference to the application form.

Information requirements:

- [*Reference information*](#).

Requests for use on loan

- 4** Requests from external sources to borrow items for exhibition, research, reproduction or otherwise should be processed according to the *Loans out* procedure.
[Go to [*Loans out - Procedure*](#)]

Evaluating a proposal or request for use

- 5** The following information will need to be gathered before the organisation is able to thoroughly evaluate the request and decide whether to authorise the use:
- The list of potential objects and documentary records;
 - The availability of objects and documentary records and suitability for use;
 - The organisation's policy or codes of ethics with which the proposed use must not conflict;
 - The relevant catalogue information (e.g. object history, production information, field collection information, etc.);
 - The condition of the objects;
 - Whether objects will be put at risk by a reproduction process. If necessary, carry out subsequent recommendations (e.g. object consolidation to improve strength);
 - The object's conservation/maintenance plan and operating log;
 - The environmental requirements of the objects;
 - The handling and display requirements including methods to be used for making reproductions;
 - The hazard note restricting use on the grounds of status, *Health & Safety* or condition;
 - The availability of reproductions;
 - Copies of, or references to, relevant correspondence;
 - Ownership, legal/licence requirements and conditions attached to the use of the object(s);
 - Legal or ethical issues concerning the use of sensitive material;
 - Acknowledgements to be incorporated;
 - Dimensions of objects;
 - Locations of objects.

The organisation may also need to augment the information above by carrying out additional research as required to determine suitability of purpose, user or place of proposed use. This may involve requesting completion of a *standard facilities* report of a proposed venue e.g. concert hall where a musical instrument will be played, or the personal references supplied by a researcher.

It may be necessary to seek advice from an expert in the relevant field, particularly when the proposed use goes beyond day-to-day situations.

Authorising the proposed use

- 6 If the authority to allow the use of collections as proposed is not vested in the person evaluating and processing or proposing the requested use, then seek authority from the appropriate source. In practice this may mean, for example:

- The head of governing body for items of great significance with access restricted to *bona fide* scholars;
- Education team staff (or volunteers) for handling collections used by school groups.

Where authority has been sought, the decision should be formally passed to the proposer. If authority has been granted, it may be necessary to stipulate certain conditions or restrictions and to make this agreement in writing.

Preparing for use

- 7 Reserve selected and available objects for the period of use.
- 8 Initiate condition checking.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Initiate conservation work if required.
[Go to [Conservation and collections care - Procedure](#)]

- 9 Initiate reproduction of objects if required.

The organisation will need to pass on much of the information gathered to the person reproducing the object. This includes:

- Object number;
- Brief description of the object;
- Dimensions of the object and the dimensions as it will appear in the reproduction (e.g. will the object be reproduced in an open or closed position);
- Handling requirements for the object;
- Storage requirements for the object;
- Type, size and number of reproductions required (e.g. colour transparency, black and white print, scale of model, material to be used etc.);
- View required (e.g. part of object, close-ups, etc.);
- Location of object;
- Contact name of the person in the organisation with responsibility for the object;
- Date by which the work is to be completed.

Where possible, record the following reproduction information in catalogue record:

- Reproduction number (where appropriate);
- Brief description of reproduction, with reference to original object and its accession number if appropriate;
- Date of reproduction;
- Person or organisation requesting the reproduction;
- Person or organisation who made the reproduction;
- Reason for reproduction;
- Type of reproduction;

Use of collections

- Description of the reproduction (which part of the object was reproduced, what else appears in the reproduction);
- Copyright ownership details;
- Copyright note (restrictions, etc.);
- Location of reproduction.

Information requirements:

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Use of collections information*](#);
- [*Object production information*](#);
- [*Object location information*](#);
- [*Object rights information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Organisation information*](#);
- [*People information*](#);
- [*Person information*](#);
- [*Place information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

10 Refer to the catalogue records or available information as required.

Implementing use

11 Arrange a timetable of use, and arrange for required objects to be at the appropriate location at the agreed time. Record the locations of all the objects at their permanent and temporary locations according to organisational policy.
[Go to [*Location and movement control - Procedure*](#)]

Information requirements:

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Object location information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

12 *For exhibitions and displays:*

- Condition check objects immediately prior to installation;
[Go to [*Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure*](#)]
- Refer to conservators or relevant specialists as appropriate;
[Go to [*Conservation and collections care - Procedure*](#)]
- Maintain control over the objects by monitoring and recording environmental, audit, condition and security checks as per organisational policy. Undertake any remedial action required.

Information requirements (condition check):

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Object condition and technical assessment information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Person information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

Information requirements (conservation):

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object conservation and treatment information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

For research and enquiries:

- Before research appropriate documentation has to be in place, e.g.: references for users of valuable objects; agreement regarding the proposed use of research material and the provision of research (published or in note form) for organisation use; acceptance of copyright terms; record of understanding of any hazards;
- A member of staff (or volunteer) should be present to sign visitors in and out of the building, escort to and from research area and supervise session;
- Undertake object handling instruction to visitors, as required;
- Provide access for visitors to catalogues and indexes which will help them retrieve appropriate information about objects and archives. Staff (or volunteers) should assist visitors in locating the resources appropriate to their enquiries.

Record a reference to the agreement.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

For analytical research:

- Before research, appropriate documentation has to be in place, e.g. an agreement regarding the return of samples as a condition of research carried out externally; photographic record or cast of the sample in existing state, etc.;
- Record in detail any samples which are taken and any additional pieces generated as a result of the analysis;
- Record either the return of all sampled material or record the location of any samples remaining in another collection, linking to the source material record;
- If investigative and destructive processes are carried out, such as scientific research or destructive conservation analysis, or samples are passed to another collection for research or reference purposes, consult procedures for deaccession and disposal in line with organisational policy.

Record a reference to the agreement.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

For education handling collections:

- Record the object name and number (if there is one) of items and condition check prior to use or removal off-site (e.g. for schools outreach work);
- Brief teaching staff (or volunteers) on handling techniques and basic care;
- Keep and update user log for on-site sessions or location record for off-site activity;
- Agree timetable and procedure for collection return (including item count and condition check).

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object condition and technical assessment information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

For the operation of objects:

- Check that the object is approved for operation;
- Assess condition of object prior to operation;
- A log should record any running repairs and replacement of parts;
- A designated representative must supervise transport, installation and operation if the object is being operated off-site;
- Only operate any object in conjunction with current *Health & Safety* statutory requirements.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object condition and technical assessment information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

For commercial use:

- Record the object name, number of items and condition check result prior to use;

Record the use made of objects for publication or licensing purposes to include, for example, when and how often an object is illustrated in a published work, or which objects have been sold in a replicated form.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object condition and technical assessment information;*
- *Object use information;*
- *Reference information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Closure

13 Manage the closure of the usage as follows:

- Authorise the removal of all objects from the area of use;
- Check and report on their condition. If an item's condition has changed, a note should be made in the presence of the user, e.g. researcher or operator;
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]
- Take remedial action as required;
[Go to - [Conservation and collections care - Procedure](#)]
- Move objects back to their normal locations and update location records;
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]
- Update the relevant project or activity files with details of the closure (e.g. exhibition file, researcher file, operating log).

Information requirements (condition):

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object condition and technical assessment information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Information requirements (conservation):

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object conservation and treatment information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Information requirements (location):

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object location information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Address information](#).

14 Add details of objects uses to their catalogue information, including the:

- Date and place of use;
- Name of user;
- Purpose and outcomes of use (e.g. exhibition title, event, etc.);
- Reference to publication in which the object appears;
- New information resulting from research.

[Go to [Cataloguing - Procedure](#)]

15 Document the findings of a post-project review for future reference, and incorporate findings as applicable into local procedures for future use.

Record a reference to the review.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Sources of help and advice

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Object exit

Definition

The management and documentation of objects leaving the organisation's premises.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the exit of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for documenting and managing object exit must:

- Ensure that legal requirements and the organisation's policy are fulfilled when objects leave its premises;
- Ensure that the organisation is able to account for the exit of all objects from its premises, including those which have been deposited as offers or for identification or loaned;
- Ensure that location information for accessioned objects leaving the organisation's premises is maintained;
- Ensure that all objects leave with appropriate authorisation;
- Ensure that a signature of acceptance from the recipient is always obtained when transferring custody of an object between parties. Where the first recipient is a courier it may also be necessary to get a signature from the person or organisation to which it is being delivered.

Before you start

Object exit is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard*.

Exit documentation is the logging of any item from the permanent collections which leaves the organisation's premises. It should be applied to all outward loans, temporary transfer of material for conservation, copying etc, permanent transfer to another organisation, or the destruction of an object due to damage.

However, if an object is being returned to its owner (e.g. an unwanted offer of a gift), this does not normally require the creation of a separate exit record as its removal will be logged on the appropriate entry form. In this case the terms and conditions of the original deposit should have specified the action which would be taken to return the object. The organisation will also need to take advice from its normal source of legal advice to define the steps which should be taken if the original owner of a deposited or loaned item cannot be contacted or has died. Such advice will normally be with a view to either accessioning or disposing of the object.

Assessment and payment of costs are not taken into account in this procedure. Refer to the appropriate procedure within which the costs are incurred for information.

Object exit may need to be taken into account in the following procedures:

- *Object entry*;
- *Loans in*;
- *Location and movement control*;
- *Conservation and collections care*;
- *Risk management*;
- *Use of collections*;
- *Loans out*;
- *Deaccession and disposal*;
- *Transport*.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the management of objects leaving the organisation needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy governing the exit of objects from the organisation. The policy should take account of all outward loans, temporary transfer of material for conservation, copying etc, permanent transfer to another organisation, or the destruction of an object due to damage. It good practice include details of:

- The standards of transport required;
- When a courier is required;
- Who will bear the risk for objects in transit;
- The steps for dealing with deposited objects for which the original owner or lender cannot be contacted or who has died (these should be specified in the terms and conditions of deposit, see *Object entry* procedure).

Object exit

The organisation's policy will also need to be informed by advice from its normal source of legal advice which should define the steps to be taken if the original owner of a deposited or loaned item cannot be contacted or has died. Advice will be with a view to either accessioning or disposing of the object.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of objects leaving the organisation.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the management of objects leaving the organisation. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Initiating a despatch

- 3 Refer to the appropriate procedure to establish the point at which the object should leave the organisation and the additional information and documentation required. These procedures are:
 - *Object entry*;
 - *Loans in*;
 - *Loans out*;
 - *Deaccession and disposal*.
- 4 Authorise the exit according to organisational policy and appropriately for the procedure within which it is taking place. The release must be authorised in writing and must be legal, ethical and unambiguous. It must not violate or contravene any existing contractual agreements. An exit form or receipt can be used to indicate the authorisation for the release of an object.
- 5 Maintain a secure record of all exits and include for each exit, the:
 - Object or entry number;
 - Brief description;
 - Person responsible;
 - Condition;
 - Valuation if required for indemnity or insurance;
 - Authorised signature of the organisation the object is leaving (or reference to signature, if a computer record);
 - Destination name, address and telephone number;
 - Reason for exit;
 - Signature of receiving officer/agent (or reference to signature, if a computer record);
 - Date of exit;
 - Date of delivery;
 - Anticipated return date and method;
 - Reference to appropriate file containing additional details (e.g. *Loans in* file if object was on loan and is being returned).

Object exit

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object entry information](#);
- [Object exit information](#);
- [Valuation information](#);
- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [People information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

- 6** Exit information must be consistent with other information required for inventory control, including updating the entry information for all temporarily deposited objects.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object entry information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [People information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

- 7** Organise agents, couriers and transport as required and record details.
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)] and then
[Go to [Transport - Procedure](#)]

If appropriate, advise security and front of house staff (or volunteers) of changes in display.

- 8** Appropriate documentation must accompany the object. This includes the following:

- A receipt for signature and return by the recipient;
- The appropriate export and customs documents (for objects travelling overseas);
- The appropriate insurance or indemnity documents;
- The unpacking instructions (where required).

- 9** Keep the exit record secure. Notify security staff (or volunteers) of the time and date of the exit if required to do so, or if the exit poses a security risk. Details of material currently out on loan are particularly important and must be protected. Use good quality materials and make backup copies to ensure their survival. The copies, or better still the originals, should then be stored securely away from the set in use. For exit records, if a multi-part, carbonless form is used, the organisation may retain extra copies. One of these can serve as the backup. Provided they are stored away from the light, most should long outlive their usefulness. If an entry form is filled in with a ball point pen, use one of known archival quality as the inks in ordinary ball point pens are known to fade.

Object exit

10 After the object's arrival at its destination has been confirmed:

- Request and record return of receipt from owner/recipient;
- Act immediately on any problems reported;
- Update inventory records;
[Go to [*Inventory control - Procedure*](#)]
- Update location records;
[Go to [*Location and movement control - Procedure*](#)]
- Update insurance and indemnity records.
[Go to [*Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure*](#)]

Information requirements (insurance and indemnity):

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Valuation information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Organisation information*](#);
- [*Person information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

Information requirements (location):

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Object location information*](#);
- [*Location information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

Sources of help and advice

Publications

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Object exit

Loans out

Definition

Documenting and managing the loan of objects to other organisations or individuals for a specific period of time and for a specific purpose, normally exhibition/display, but including research, conservation, photography and education.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the assessment of loan requests and a standard set of conditions which borrowers must meet. Refer to [*Before you start - Policy requirements*](#) for details.

The procedure for documenting and managing loans out must:

- Ensure that all loan requests are assessed according to the organisation's policy;
- Ensure that there are written agreements signed by both borrower and lender before the loan commences;
- Ensure that the loan is for a finite period;
- Ensure that the organisation retains a record of all loans, including details of the borrower, the venues, the loan period and the purpose of the loan;
- Enable effective control of the loan process;
- Ensure that the borrower confirms their intent and ability to provide an acceptable level of care, security and safekeeping for the object and to conform to the conditions of loan specified;
- Ensure that the loaned objects are covered by insurance or indemnity as appropriate for the duration of the loan period.

Before you start

Loans out is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard*.

Loans can be initiated either by the receiving organisation or by the lender. Reasons for a proposed loan might include:

- Exhibition;
- Photography;
- Research;
- Conservation.

Scientific research loans

It is recognised that within scientific collections, loans are usually more frequent and less formal. Loans are usually organised under an international tradition, often discipline-specific. For example, organisations may already have established loan agreements with other bodies, or the loan itself may carry an agreement with it for return with the acknowledgement of receipt.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the lending of objects by the organisation needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy on loans made by it. It is good practice for it to state:

- Categories of objects which may and may not normally be loaned out;
- Categories of borrower which will not normally be eligible to receive loans;
- Reasons for a loan which will not be considered;
- Conditions for loans out addressing the following issues, the:
 - Timetable requirements e.g. minimum period of notice required;
 - Number of objects able to be loaned;
 - Maximum length of loan permitted;
 - Potential costs that the borrower will be expected to meet;
 - Maximum number of venues permitted in a single tour;
 - Public access to object;
 - Provision of valuations;
 - Insurance/indemnity requirements;
 - Handling conditions;
 - Restrictions on preparation, conservation and analysis of the loaned material;
 - Packing requirements;
 - Shipping/transport/customs requirements;
 - Courier requirements;
 - Display, use and storage conditions;
 - Security of venue;
 - Environmental conditions;
 - Smoking, eating and drinking around the object;
 - Borrower's contingency planning arrangements;
 - Protection of rights (e.g. copyright and reproduction right);
 - Acknowledgements and credit line requirements in displays and publications;
 - Terms of monitoring object condition and environment;
 - Arrangements for renewal, transfer or cessation of the loan;

Loans out

- Catalogues required from borrower.
- In addition, organisations with natural science collections making research loans will address the issues of:
 - Ownership of specimens and preparations made from the loan;
 - The recording of new information and retention of existing labels.

Terms and conditions should be made available to those considering making a request to borrow.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the lending of objects by the organisation.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the lending of objects by the organisation. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Assess the request

- 3 On receiving a loan request, this must be in writing, check that the potential borrower has provided the following information:
 - The details of the required object(s), including the object number and brief description;
 - The name, address and contact details of borrower;
 - The name and status of individual making request;
 - The purpose of loan and, if intended for exhibition, the scope of the exhibition and details of all venues;
 - The proposed dates of the loan;
 - A brief statement of the indemnity or insurance provisions which will be made.

Record the information in a loan record. The loan record may be a manual or computer file, cross-referenced to the inventory information for any objects requested.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information*;
- *Loan out information*;
- *Use of collections information*;
- *Object valuation information*;
- *Insurance information*;
- *Date information*;
- *Organisation information*;
- *People information*;
- *Person information*;
- *Address information*.

Loans out

- 4** Acknowledge the request, stating whether or not the object is available for loan and if the organisation is prepared to consider the loan. Criteria which may affect the decision to consider a loan are:

- The availability of the object(s) requested;
- The condition of the object
- A risk assessment to the object as well as to the borrower and/or users (e.g. potential hazards of radioactive, explosive or flammable material);
- Ethical considerations such as condition, risk or sensitivity;
- The acceptability of the purpose of loan;
- That objects on loan to the organisation should only be loaned to a third party with the written agreement of the owner. The agreement should specify any terms and conditions of loan and a copy should be retained;
- Whether the organisation has the right to lend.

If the object is to be considered for loan, it should be reserved for that purpose.

Record a reference to the acknowledgement.

Information requirements:

- ***Reference information.***

Negotiation and exchange of key information

- 5** If the object is being considered for loan, send the prospective borrower any general conditions of loan which apply, together with a request for further information about the loan. This may include a request to complete a *facilities report* (see ***Sources of help and advice***).
- 6** Depending on the circumstances, and on obtaining further information, the following should be assessed before deciding whether or not to lend.

The suitability of the proposed borrower, taking into account:

- A reference to previous loans to a particular borrower or venue;
- Information gained from a site visit to the proposed venue;
- Consulting the relevant Regional Agency or the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Security Adviser;
- Assurance that the object will be adequately covered in the event of damage or loss.

Other aspects include:

- Necessary schedule to meet the loan;
- Costs (e.g. of conservation work);
- Specific requirements relating to the object(s) requested (e.g. couriers required);
- Security considerations;
- Environmental considerations.

Use to be made of collections (e.g. working objects).

- 7 Notify the prospective borrower of the decision to lend. The decision must be made by an authorised individual or group based on the considerations above. Refusals to lend objects should be accompanied by an explanation, referring to the organisation's loans policy where appropriate.

Record references to any documents created during this part of the procedure.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

Agreeing the loan

- 8 Following a decision in principle to lend, provide the prospective borrower with the following information for each object:

- The name and address of owner;
- Its valuation;
- Its condition;
- Its display requirements;
- Its environmental requirements;
- Its handling recommendations;
- Its dimensions;
- Photographs for research or publicity (if legally possible);
- Any additional descriptive and historical information as required;
- The estimated costs that the borrower will be expected to meet.

- 9 Finalise the conditions of loan and record all decisions on the related file. Include the following:

- The insurance and indemnity requirements;
- The terms of reproduction;
- The packing requirements, transport, courier and other shipping requirements;
- Any additional terms and conditions as agreed with the lender, including costs and the method of acknowledgement for labels, etc.

It may be necessary to repeat **Steps 8-9** depending on the availability of objects, security and environmental conditions, etc.

Information requirements (steps 8-9):

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object description information;*
- *Loan out information;*
- *Use of collections information;*
- *Object requirement information;*
- *Object valuation information;*
- *Insurance information;*
- *Object collection information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *People information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Loans out

- 10** When the loan is confirmed, an appropriate agreement must be signed by lender and borrower. The agreement should refer to all conditions for the loan as agreed at [Step 9](#), and may depend on agreed requirements being met, e.g. a satisfactory security report.

When lending to another organisation, the situation is likely to arise where the borrower has a standard agreement for *Loans in* and the lender has one for *Loans out*. The use of more than one loan agreement is not recommended. The onus is on the borrower to accept the standard agreement of the lender, providing all necessary points are covered. If necessary draft a one-off agreement that covers all relevant points to the satisfaction of both parties.

Record a reference to the agreement.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Schedule and prepare the loan

- 11** Construct any required display equipment.

Carry out and record a condition check.

[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object condition and technical assessment information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Carry out any necessary conservation work and record.

[Go to [Conservation and collections care - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Conservation and treatment information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

- 12** Obtain if necessary, and retain, a photograph of each object being loaned out (if legally possible).
[Go to [Use of collections - Procedure](#)]

- 13** Make the appropriate packing and shipping arrangements, including appointing and briefing a courier and/or agents if appropriate. It is reasonable to share couriers with another organisation where appropriate, providing all couriers are briefed and issued with the necessary documentation.

Appropriate provision should be made for Customs with overseas loans, especially if unpacking for inspection will endanger the physical well-being of the object. Confirmation of holding of necessary Customs documents and export licenses should be made by all parties concerned.

With transport arrangements, care should be taken to ensure that the size, weight and nature of the packaging comply with the shippers' conditions. For instance, items carried in passenger accommodation on aircraft (i.e. with the courier) will be subject to limits on size of the package.

Loans out

- 14 Confirm that a satisfactory report has been received from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Security Adviser, or qualified individual, and that all security conditions have been met. If the report is unsatisfactory, the potential borrower may be given an opportunity to comply fully with the security standards required for the loan before any final decision is taken to terminate the request.
- 15 Obtain evidence of insurance arrangements or compliance with *Government Indemnity Scheme* conditions in advance of despatching the object. Update records.
[Go to [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Insurance information](#);
- [Indemnity information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

- 16 Despatch the object and update the location record. Obtain confirmation of the safe arrival of the object.
[Go to [Object exit - Procedure](#)]

Update the location record.

[Got to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Object location information](#);
- [Location information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Monitor the loan

- 17 Monitor loans by updating the following information according to the terms of agreement:

- Object condition (at least annually);
- Environmental and display conditions (at least annually);
- Insurance and indemnity policies (before renewal dates).

Note: Objects on loan to the organisation

If the ownership of an object changes while on loan to a third party, terminate the current loan agreement at the time of transfer of title and facilitate the signing of a new agreement.

[Go to [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Insurance information;*
- *Indemnity information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Organisation information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Renewal of loans

- 18** Although a loan must be for a finite period, at the end of the agreed period an application for renewal may be considered provided adequate notice is received.
- 19** Renewal of the loan is dependent on satisfactory monitoring and the written agreement of the lender and borrower. Obtain and retain a copy of any further agreement. Record a reference to the agreement.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

Arrange for return

- 20** Confirm the arrangements for the return of the object, and plan its return to the organisation. (See [Step 13](#))
[Go to [Location and movement control - Procedure](#)]
- 21** When the object returns, unpack it and carry out a recorded condition check, reporting any problems.
[Go to [Object condition checking and technical assessment - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Condition and technical assessment information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Follow up with remedial action as required.

[Go to [Conservation and collections care - Procedure](#)]

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Conservation and treatment information;*
- *Date information;*
- *Person information;*
- *Address information.*

Loans out

Update insurance and indemnity records, if required.

[Go to [*Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure*](#)]

Information requirements:

- [*Object identification information*](#);
- [*Indemnity information*](#);
- [*Insurance information*](#);
- [*Date information*](#);
- [*Organisation information*](#);
- [*Person information*](#);
- [*Address information*](#).

Closing the loan

- 22** Invoice the borrower for any remaining costs incurred during the preparation for loan according to the terms of the loan agreement.
- 23** Acknowledge safe receipt of the object by returning the borrower's receipt and confirm that all the final conditions of loan have been met (e.g. payment of costs, receipt of catalogues).
- 24** Record any information such as details of security incidents, courier reports, etc., which may be relevant in case of future requests from the borrower. Retain and make accessible the loan file for future reference.

Information requirements:

- [*Object identification information*](#);
 - [*Loan out information*](#);
 - [*Use of collections information*](#);
 - [*Date information*](#);
 - [*Organisation information*](#);
 - [*People information*](#);
 - [*Person information*](#);
 - [*Address information*](#).
- 25** Loan and exhibition information must be accessible via the object's cataloguing information, with references to any information held on a separate loan record.
[Go to [*Cataloguing - Procedure*](#)]

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Association of Independent Museums. *AIM Guideline 14. 'Museum Collecting Policies and Loan Agreements'*, revised. Association of Independent Museums, 1988.

British Museum. *A Guide to the Storage, Exhibition and Handling of Antiquities, Ethnographia and Pictorial Art.* British Museum Publications, 1990.

Case, Mary. (ed). *Registrars on Record: Essays on Museum Collections Management.* Washington: American Association of Museums, 1988.

Department for Culture, Media and Sport. *Government Indemnity Scheme.* [webpage]
<http://www.culture.gov.uk/cultural_property/government_indemnity.htm>

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MDA. *How to write a documentation plan.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

MDA. *Loan records (outgoing loans).* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/loanso.htm>>

MDA. *Numbering.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/number.htm>>

MDA. *Protecting your records.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/protect.htm>>

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MDA. *Terminology control.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
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Merritt, E. *Trust or Verify: conditions on outgoing loans.* Collection Forum, 1992.

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Museums & Galleries Commission. *Standards in the Care of Touring Exhibitions.* London: MGC, 1995.

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). *The Accreditation Standard.* London: MLA, 2004.
<http://www.mla.gov.uk/documents/accreditation_standard.pdf>

Paine, Crispin (ed.). *Standards in the Museum Care of Larger and Working Objects.* London: Museums & Galleries Commission, 1994.

Loans out

Richard, Mervin & Mecklenburg, Marion F. & Merrill, Ross M. *Art in Transit: Handbook for Packing and Transporting Paintings*. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1991.

Sandsmith H.S. and Stainton S. *The National Trust Manual of Housekeeping*. Viking, 1991.

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/StandardFacilitiesReport.doc>>

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report Display Case Supplement*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/DisplayCaseSupplement.doc>>

UK Registrars' Group. *UKRG Standard Facilities Report Security Supplement*. UK: UK Registrars' Group, 2004.
<<http://www.ukrg.org/word/SecuritySupplement.doc>>

Ware, Michael E. *Museum collecting policies and loan agreements*. UK: Association of Independent Museums, 1988.

Wilkinson, David. *First Aid for Finds*. Rescue and United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section, 1987.

Organisations

MDA

<<http://www.mda.org.uk>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (Security Adviser)

<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Regional Agencies [links webpage]

<<http://www.mda.org.uk/linkamc.htm>>

Registrars' Committee of the American Association of Museums

<<http://www.rcaam.org>>

UK Registrars' Group

<<http://www.ukrg.org>>

Loss and damage

Definition

Managing and documenting an efficient response to the discovery of loss of, or damage to, object(s) whilst in the care of the organisation.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the response to the loss of or damage to objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure and documentation for loss and damage must:

- Enable the organisation to take all reasonable steps to prevent further loss or damage;
- Ensure that all decisions and actions in the organisation's response to damage or loss are fully documented.

Before you start

Loss or damage can be caused by environmental factors, accidental damage, wilful damage, theft or temporary loss. The procedure should enable the organisation to respond to the discovery of damage or loss, documenting all decisions and actions.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the insurance of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation's policy for responding to the loss of objects should state:

- Which persons are responsible for taking action;
- Which persons in the organisation and which external bodies should be informed;
- Which persons are responsible for media liaison.

It is also necessary for the organisation to have a contingency plan for immediate action in the event of loss or damage. This should be in the organisation's *disaster plan*.

A decision should also be taken as to the period of time which should elapse before the object is considered to be formally lost or stolen, rather than mislaid. This will vary depending on circumstances. For example, an object on display is unlikely to be mislaid and will normally need to be reported as stolen immediately. Whereas an object missing from a secure store is more likely to have been mislaid, and it may be unwise to report it as stolen without conducting further inquiries.

See the [Sources of help and advice](#) for details of *Object ID*, an international standard for the description objects that is promoted by law enforcement agencies.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the [Before you start](#) section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written policy** that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written documentation procedural manual** that refers to the loss and damage of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the loss and damage of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.

Response to damage

- 3 Follow appropriate steps outlined in the contingency plan for immediate action, evacuation of collections and first aid to damaged objects.
[Go to [Risk management - Procedure](#)]
- 4 For objects on loan to the organisation, inform the owner immediately.
- 5 Wherever practical refer to the *Minimum Standard* in the following procedures when moving damaged objects: *Location and movement control*, *Object exit*.
- 6 Refer to the *Minimum Standard* in the following procedures when assessing the condition and conservation needs of damaged objects: *Object condition checking and technical assessment*, *Conservation and collections care*. Provide conservators with catalogue information and previous technical assessment and conservation reports.
- 7 Record the following for each object or group of objects which have suffered damage, the:
 - Dates of discovery and reporting of the damage;
 - Names and details of those involved in the discovery and reporting of the damage;
 - Details of the circumstances of the damage;
 - Details of the objects;
 - Details of the damage and references to any condition reports.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Loss/damage information](#);
- [Object condition and technical assessment information](#);
- [Reference information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Response to loss

- 8** Loss occurs when, as a result of audit or otherwise, an object(s) cannot be located or identified. On discovery of a loss, implement the organisation's security procedure or *disaster plan*.
[Go to [Risk management - Procedure](#)]
- 9** On discovery of a loss by theft or other incident, inform all necessary authorities according to the organisation's policy as soon as possible. This normally includes the following:
- Person responsible for the object(s);
 - Internal security staff or volunteers;
 - Police (where appropriate);
 - External agencies or specialists.

Although the initial report may be verbal, a written report should be made as soon as is possible. Retain copies of all correspondence and records of all telephone calls associated with the theft; this information may be required. Record references to these.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).
- 10** Confirm the exact number and nature of the missing object(s) and retrieve all relevant documentation relating to the object(s).
[Go to [Inventory control - Procedure](#)]
- 11** For objects on loan to the organisation, inform the owner immediately.
- 12** In the case of theft, provide the police with photographs and other descriptive material required to identify the object.
[Go to [Risk management - Procedure](#)]
- 13** Record the following for each object or group of objects following a loss:
- Dates of the discovery and reporting of the loss;
 - Names and details of those involved in the discovery and reporting of the loss;
 - Details of the circumstances of the loss.

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Loss/damage information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

Follow-up action

- 14** Information must only be made available to senior staff, trustees and members of the press as is specified in the organisation's policy.
- 15** Inform the relevant insurance company, insurance advisor or indemnity provider of the loss as appropriate.
[Go to [Insurance and indemnity management - Procedure](#)]

16 For thefts, inform appropriate authorities including the:

- Appropriate Regional Agency;
- Museums, Libraries and Archives Council Security Adviser;
- Appropriate stolen property publications (e.g. *Trace*).

Recovery of thefts

17 Thefts may be recovered after months, or even years. It is important to retain all documentation relating to the object and its loss, even if it is never found. If an object is recovered, record the new location and update the details on the loss.

Information requirements:

- ***Object identification information;***
- ***Loss/damage information;***
- ***Object location information;***
- ***Reference information;***
- ***Date information;***
- ***Person information;***
- ***Address information.***

Sources of help and advice

Publications

Burke, Robert and Liston, David. (eds.) *Museum Security and Protection: A handbook for cultural heritage institutions.* (Chapter 4, 'Protection, security and conservation of collections', pp 91-120; Action Guide 10B, 'Interpol theft reporting guide for works of art and items of cultural property'). London: Routledge, 1993.

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/procman.htm>>

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/bother.htm>>

MDA. *Exit Records.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/exit.htm>>

MDA. *How to write a documentation plan.* [fact sheet] Cambridge: MDA, 2005.
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/plan.htm>>

MDA. *SPECTRUM Terminology.* [webpages].
<<http://www.mda.org.uk/spectrum-terminology/>>

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<<http://www.mda.org.uk/term.htm>>

Museums Association. *Code of Ethics for Museums.* London: Museums Association, 2002.
<http://www.museumsassociation.org/asset_arena/text/cs/code_of_ethics.pdf>

Thornes, Robin. *Protecting Cultural Objects Through International Documentation Standards.* Santa Monica, California: The Getty Art History Information Programme, 1995.
<<http://www.object-id.com/prelim/>>

Organisations

Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, Northern Ireland
<<http://www.dcalni.gov.uk>>

Department for Culture, Media and Sport
<<http://www.dcms.gov.uk>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

Object ID
<<http://www.object-id.com>>

Scottish Executive Education Department
<<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Departments/ED/>>

Trace
<<http://www.trace.co.uk/magazine/>>

Deaccession and disposal

Definition

The management of disposal (the transfer, or destruction of objects) and of deaccession (the formal sanctioning and documenting of the disposal).

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy covering the disposal and deaccession of objects. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure and documentation for deaccession and disposal must:

- Ensure that the decision to dispose is carefully considered and that all relevant evidence and opinions are sought according to the organisation's policy;
- Ensure that all relevant evidence and opinions are sought according to statutory legal requirements;
- Ensure that the organisation makes every effort to determine title to objects involved and that they are free from relevant special conditions attached to the original acquisition;
- Ensure that the decision to dispose does not rest with an individual and the action is formally approved by a governing body;
- Ensure that preference for transfer be given to recognised organisations (e.g. *Accredited museums* in the UK);
- Ensure that title to the object is transferred to any receiving organisation;
- Ensure that objects disposed of are marked as such on the accession register;
- Ensure that items to be destroyed are disposed of in a responsible manner (e.g. unwanted archaeological material will not mislead future archaeologists);
- Ensure that all decisions and actions are fully documented.

Before you start

The *MA Code of Ethics (2003)* and also the *MA Ethical Guidelines - Disposal (1996)* should be consulted before undertaking any deaccession or disposal.

Deaccession and disposal is not a *Primary Procedure* for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme*, however the *Accreditation Standard* ('Disposal procedures', p49) states:

"Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal."

The transfer of objects includes gift, sale and exchange.

Natural science and archaeological collections have different criteria for the retention and disposal of objects. Certain categories of bulk archaeological and natural history material from fieldwork may be destroyed provided that the material has been fully analysed and published and all relevant records deposited with a relevant authority. (Where applicable, an adequate and representative proportion should be retained in perpetuity for future research and reference.)

'Reviewable' material (i.e. held for a specified period either for a full assessment and selection, or because it is organic material of limited durability) need not normally be referred to a governing body for approval to dispose since it does not hold accessioned status and a more straightforward procedure is suitable. However, its disposal should be no less strictly managed and documented. The organisation's disposal policy should identify the persons responsible for requesting and authorising disposal of reviewable material, and ensure that documentation of the decision and method of disposal are retained. Refer to the organisation's disposal policy and [Sources of help and advice](#) for further information.

Specimens facing destructive or damaging research must undergo the same process of assessment as described in [Step 5](#) below. This includes DNA and molecular sampling.

From Museums & Galleries Commission *Standards in the Care of Geological Collections*:

"This should include consideration of the risks involved, the effects on the specimen and the value of the results to be obtained. Non-destructive, or non-damaging investigative procedures should be used wherever possible. The disposal policy should clearly state the powers delegated to professional staff with regard to decisions concerning destructive research and potentially damaging processes undertaken on accessioned material. It may be appropriate to retain an element of the unaccessioned residue arising from field collecting for research of this kind."

Funds received from any disposal should be made available for the benefit of the remaining collections.

Legal environment

The legal position on disposal of certain items should be fully investigated before undertaking any disposal procedure e.g. items covered by (CITES), drugs and pharmacological items, radioactive objects, hazardous items are covered by COSHH, items containing asbestos, firearms and other militaria, human remains, etc.

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for the deaccession and disposal of objects needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation's policy for the deaccession and disposal of objects should be regularly reviewed. It must have been formally accepted by the governing body. Prime considerations for the method of disposal should be the maintenance of public access to the item and an acceptable level of care for the object(s) concerned. There must be a strong presumption against disposing of any object from the collection except in specified circumstances listed in the organisation's disposal policy. Deaccessioned objects may be useful to the organisation as part of loan, educational, display or scientific analysis collections. These separate collections may require appropriate levels of documentation than those required for the permanent collection. Where relevant, the organisation should have a policy addressing the:

- Disposal of human remains;
- Disposal of sacred objects;
- Conditions and limitations on destructive research (see below).

Specimens facing destructive or damaging research must undergo the same process of assessment for a standard disposal/deaccession. Therefore it is highly recommended for organisations that receive requests for destructive sampling to develop a separate destructive sampling research policy (to include DNA and molecular sampling as well as more traditional destructive/damaging sampling methods e.g. microscope thin sections, scanning electron microscopy, chemical analysis, etc). This policy should include:

- A stipulation that non-destructive, or non-damaging investigative procedures should be used wherever possible;
- A statement declaring that the organisation has the right to refuse any request;
- A consideration of the risks involved, the effects on the specimen and the value of the results to be obtained. This may be justified by receiving a written statement stating:
 - A brief outline of the project;
 - A brief justification of the material required to do the research;
 - Evidence that the proposed techniques produce reliable results.
- The policy should clearly state the powers delegated to staff or volunteers with regard to decisions concerning destructive research and potentially damaging processes undertaken on material. This should include, for example:
 - What material can be used;
 - The precise location on the object that the sample can be taken from;
 - The amount (size/weight) and form of the sample allowed;
 - The location within the organisation that sampling can occur.
- Terms of agreement for the organisation and the person/organisation undertaking the request. This should include:
 - The procedure for return of residues from the sampling;
 - The procedure for disseminating the results from the analysis (e.g. publication in a recognised journal, or GenBank for DNA sequences);
 - The procedure for the analytical method especially if it differs from established/published methods.
- A position statement on bioprospecting if the organisation holds biological material. Bioprospecting is the search for commercially valuable biochemical and genetic resources in plants, animals and micro-organisms and is covered by the United Nations *Convention on Biological Diversity*, agreed at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This convention reaffirms the sovereign rights of states over their own biological resources and their responsibility for using their resources in a sustainable manner. Funds received from any disposal should be made available for the benefit of the remaining collections.

Procedure

Procedure set-up and review

- 1 Study the *Before you start* section above in order to:
 - Be aware of the *legal environment* affecting operation of the procedure;
 - Create the **written** *policy* that will govern the operation of the procedure;
 - Create the part of the **written** *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the deaccession and disposal of objects.
- 2 Regularly review and change, if necessary, the part of the *documentation procedural manual* that refers to the deaccession and disposal of objects. Changes may be made because of:
 - Changes to the *legal environment*;
 - Changes to the *policy* of the organisation.
- 3 Retain all documentation generated in the disposal process and make it accessible if needed.

Establishing the case

- 4 The organisation must establish that it has title to the object to be disposed of and that conditions placed on the organisation as part of the acquisition process do not prevent subsequent disposal of the object.

Where there are no records documenting entry into the organisation, or where entry records are available but the owners are untraceable, the following issues should be considered:

- Have all possible sources of information in the organisation been checked before considering disposal? The organisation should have a policy setting down the sources of information which should be checked for different collections;
- Is the object of high intrinsic or monetary value?
- Are there areas of the collection known to be undocumented, of which this object may be a part?
- Does the object fit in with the organisation's collecting policy at any time in its history?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'Yes', then there should be a presumption against disposal and the object should be investigated more thoroughly. If the answer is 'No' to all of these questions, then the organisation may be able to dispose of the object.

Even if all these questions are affirmative do not assume that it is reasonable to proceed with disposal. Authority from a governing body and, where appropriate, legal advice, should always be sought. In the event of disposal, all available information about the object and the decision to dispose should be retained and made accessible.

Note that there are situations where an organisation is obliged to dispose of an object, e.g. where it poses a public health or safety risk.

- 5** Make the case for the disposal in writing. Where appropriate and where known, include details of the proposed method of disposal and the proposed destination if applicable. Present as much supporting evidence as possible, including the following:

- An inventory list of the collection identifying duplicate items;
- An evaluation of the cultural, historic, scientific and educational worth of the object;
- A condition report by a professional adviser where there are *Health & Safety* issues;
- A recent review of the organisation's collecting policy;
- A recent review of the context of the existing collections;
- A report giving estimates of the costs for ongoing conservation, maintenance and storage of the object if it was retained by the organisation, including a condition report by a professional conservator, if appropriate;
- A photograph of the object (if legally possible);
- Valuation of the object provided by a third party;
- The relevant clauses in the organisation's disposal policy which support the decision to dispose.

Where appropriate, external advice should be obtained from a specialist in the subject, curatorial adviser if there is one, and/or the appropriate regional agency.

Record a reference to the case.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

- 6** Check that the object's description is up-to-date (and change if necessary). This will be needed for the following reasons:

- To accompany the written case for disposal;
- For the museum to copy to the future recipients of the object(s);
- To retain as an historical record.

Information requirements:

- *Object identification information;*
- *Object description information.*

- 7** Seek approval for disposal according to approved policy and procedures. Retain and make accessible a permanent copy of the approval. Record a reference to this.

Information requirements:

- *Reference information.*

Disposal

- 8** Where an arrangement has not been made with an individual organisation, and the objects are not to be destroyed, advise the relevant community or communities (e.g. museums, heritage centres, zoological gardens, science centres, archaeological trusts, etc.) of the intention to dispose either by gift, exchange or sale. Place an advertisement in an appropriate professional publication (e.g. the *UK Museums Journal*). The object should be offered to recognised organisations (e.g. *Accredited museums* in the UK). The advertisement should indicate the following:

- The number of objects involved, or approximate number if a bulk disposal;
- A description of the object(s) concerned (or subjects covered if a large number of like items);
- The preferred method of disposal;
- The terms of disposal.

Allow a minimum period of two months for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed.

- 9** When making arrangements for removal of objects, agree with recipients beforehand how to deal with costs (e.g. conservation work, packing, transport, *Health & Safety*), insurance, timing and other practical issues associated with the removal. In no circumstances send objects to another organisation without prior agreement in writing from the recipient.
- 10** Provide any recipient with an up-to-date description of the object(s) as well as any other information about the object and its history, providing the use of such information is not restricted (e.g. by *Freedom of Information* or *Data Protection* legislation). Retain the originals of documents referring to transfer of title on acquisition, valuation certificate, etc. Provide original documents relating to object's history, operating manuals, associated correspondence, conservation records, etc.
- 11** If there is no interest by a registered organisation in acquiring the object, it may be disposed of by whatever means the disposing organisation's governing body deems appropriate. (For bulk material of reference or scientific potential, even if there is no identifiable recipient, the museum should consider retaining sufficient samples to meet future requests.)
- 12** Do not remove the number from the object prior to disposal, as it forms part of the object's history.
- 13** Dispose of the object in accordance with decisions of the governing body in response to the case made for disposal.
- 14** In all instances, the proceeds of any sale must benefit the collections. In exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases should be sought from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, regional agency or relevant funding body as appropriate.

Destruction of objects

- 15** Only destroy objects in exceptional circumstances such as:
- Where an object poses a serious conservation threat to other items in the collection and cannot be countered by treatment or isolation from other objects;
 - Where an object creates a serious *Health & Safety* risk to staff, volunteers or the public which cannot be overcome in an acceptable way;
 - Where an object has deteriorated or become broken beyond reasonable repair, and no part or sample has any identifiable use or viability;
 - Where the organisation has had no interest shown by another organisation or interested individual after advertisement, and the object is unsaleable;
 - For certain categories of bulk archaeological or natural history material, from fieldwork, may be destroyed provided that the material has been fully analysed and published and all relevant records deposited with the site archive. (Where applicable, an adequate and representative proportion should be retained in perpetuity for future research and reference.)

Deaccession and disposal

- 16** Objects which have been identified by a professional conservator as a hazard should be destroyed at a designated site. All destructions should be officially witnessed and performed sensitively, in accordance with all relevant legislation and regulations.
- 17** Where a sample is required for destructive analysis it should be disposed of and deaccessioned as for normal disposals. Include any information gained from the analysis with the object's documentation.
[Go to [Use of collections - Procedure](#)]

Deaccessioning

- 18** The organisation should agree the point at which the object(s) have officially ceased to be a part of the collection. This will be at the same time as, or after, transfer of title (where appropriate) or destruction. If the object is being destroyed, the organisation records the relinquishing of title, noting the date.

If the object is being disposed of by transferring to another museum, person or organisation, the museum records the transfer of title date and the name of the recipient. Where the title to an object has been relinquished, it should be recorded that it is awaiting disposal. The record will include preferred method and date.

- 19** Formally deaccession the object following receipt of signed exit documentation confirming the arrival of the object by the recipient, or payment, or immediately after destruction as appropriate. Annotate all relevant documentation including the following:
- The original acquisition documentation;
 - The accession register;
 - The object descriptions.
- 20** Indicate clearly on the records:
- That the disposal has occurred;
 - The date of disposal;
 - The method of disposal;
 - The signature of the persons responsible for the collection and the decision to dispose;
 - A reference to the decision of the organisation's governing body to accept disposal (meeting date and minute number).

Information requirements:

- [Object identification information](#);
- [Disposal information](#);
- [Date information](#);
- [Organisation information](#);
- [Person information](#);
- [Address information](#).

- 21** Retain a separate list of disposed objects. Record a reference to this.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Sources of help and advice

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Society of Museum Archaeologists. *Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections: Guidelines for Use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*. Society of Museum Archaeologists, 1993.

Viner, D. *More than Nostalgia: Agricultural Collections in the South West of England*. (Collection Development Options pp 13-15). South West Museums Council, April 2001.

Viner, D. 'Auction room or skip?' in *Museums Journal*, 2001, Volume 101, Number 11, pp 31-33. [First part of article on disposal].

Viner, D. 'Rational thinking' in *Museums Journal*, 2001, Volume 101, Number 12, pp 26-29. [Second part of article on disposal]

Wheatcroft, P., 'Merely rubbish: disposal of natural history collections', in *Museums Journal*, 1987, Volume 87, Number 3, pp 133-134.

Organisations

Association of Independent Museums
<<http://www.museums.org.uk/aim/>>

Biology Curators Group
<<http://www.bcg.man.ac.uk>>

Geological Curators' Group
<<http://www.hmag.gla.ac.uk/gcgc/>>

Museum Ethnographers Group
<<http://www.museumethnographersgroup.org.uk>>

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)
<<http://www.mla.gov.uk>>

National Museums of Scotland
<<http://www.nms.ac.uk>>

UK Registrars' Group
<<http://www.ukrg.org>>

Retrospective documentation

Definition

The improvement of the standard of information about objects and collections to meet *SPECTRUM Minimum Standards* by the documentation of new information for existing objects and collections.

Minimum Standard

The organisation must have a policy on retrospective documentation. Refer to [Before you start - Policy requirements](#) for details.

The procedure for retrospective documentation must:

- Define the purposes of the organisation's documentation system;
- Define the organisation's understanding of the backlogs it has;
- Work towards reducing its backlog;
- Review progress on reducing the backlog on a regular basis;
- Work towards an overall improvement in the quality of information held about objects and collections;
- Review progress on the overall improvement in the quality of information on a regular basis.

Before you start

Retrospective documentation is a *Primary Procedure*. This means that in order to meet the documentation requirements for the *Museum Accreditation Scheme* an organisation must reach the *SPECTRUM Minimum Standard* for this procedure.

Types of backlog

There is no simple answer to the question “What is a backlog?” Here is a non-exhaustive list of types of backlog that an organisation might have:

SPECTRUM Procedural

An organisation should have in place all the relevant procedures in SPECTRUM that it uses. In particular:

- The organisation’s *policy requirements* for the procedure;
- The awareness of the *legal environment* under which the procedure operates;
- The implementation of the procedure set out in a procedural manual;
- A system of review for each procedure, making changes when needed.

Core information

The basic standard of documentation for objects in an organisation's collection is that ensuring accountability for any object, at any time. All objects (or groups of objects) must have the core inventory information detailed in [Cataloguing - Procedure - Step 4](#).

Accessioning

An organisation often has a backlog in the formal *accessioning* of objects into its *permanent collections*, including the writing up of information into its *accession register(s)*.

Cataloguing

A cataloguing backlog is more difficult to define. It depends on the purposes an organisation has for its documentation system (see [Step 1](#) below.). The *Museum Accreditation Scheme* defines its cataloguing requirement (see below), but many organisations will want to have a more comprehensive catalogue.

Museum Accreditation

The *Museum Accreditation Scheme* has a number of requirements for documentation. It states that a documentation system must:

- Have a documentation plan, which the organisation works to, especially in clearing backlogs;
- Implement *Object entry* - there must be a record of all objects that enter the organisation;
- Implement *Acquisition* - organisations must:
 - Maintain an accession register;
 - Have security copies of the accession register;
 - Label and/or mark all objects (or groups of object);
- Implement *Location and movement control* - all object movements must be recorded;
- Implement *Cataloguing* - there must be two indexes to give access to information. These are the object’s identity number and one other (location, donor and subject classification are suggested);
- Implement *Object exit* - there must be unique records of all objects in the *permanent collections* that leave the organisation;
- Implement *Loans in* - records must be maintained;
- Implement *Loans out* - records must be maintained.

Legal environment

Rights

Objects and other material may have rights associated with them (e.g. copyright). Also information that the organisation records about the persons will be governed by rights legislation (e.g. *Data Protection*). The procedure for retrospective documentation needs to take into account these rights. See the [Rights management](#) procedure for full details on how to do this.

Policy requirements

The organisation must have a policy for retrospective documentation. It is good practice for it to address:

- Timescale for reducing backlogs;
- Levels of resources allocated to *Retrospective documentation*;
- Number of objects/records to be addressed;
- The standard of documentation required;
- Associated roles for the activity (e.g. a condition audit, or the need to revise storage arrangements).

Procedure

Define organisation's purposes

- 1 Define the purposes of the organisation's documentation system. The primary purpose is to establish accountability - what the organisation has and where it is. Any backlog in doing this must be addressed first. Then the organisation can go on to explore its other backlogs.

Explore the other purposes of the organisation's documentation system by looking at:

- Who the 'clients' of the system are, e.g. staff, volunteers, auditors, researchers, school students, adult members of the public, etc;
- Who is involved in the operation of the documentation system - professional staff, volunteers, etc.;
- What the organisation is trying to do, e.g.:
 - Inform the general public about the history of its locality;
 - Help teachers and school students meet requirements of a curriculum;
 - Tell the story of a particular individual, industry, type of object;
 - Help in the teaching of university students.
- The organisation's mission statement;
- Who the owners of the organisation are - what their requirements (e.g. do they require audit);
- What the environment in which the organisation is operating is - legal restraints, requirements of the *Museum Accreditation Scheme*, requirements for funding, etc.

All these purposes will inform the definition of the organisation's backlogs.

Create a **written** definition of purposes of the organisation's documentation system. Record a reference to the document.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Define organisation's backlogs

- 2 Use the document purposes document produced in [Step 1](#), together with the [Before you start](#) section above to define the organisation's backlogs. This could be done by listing the different types of backlog and giving a statement about the organisation's situation with regard to that type.

Create a **written** definition of the organisation's documentation backlogs. Record a reference to the document.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Planning to clear backlogs

- 3** Create a **written** retrospective documentation plan. See [Sources of help and advice](#) for practical information on clearing backlogs. The plan should detail:
- The actions the organisation will be taking to address the backlogs (e.g. carrying out an audit or a project to label and/or mark objects in a store);
 - Detail resources (people, time, etc.) that will be used;
 - Set measurable outcomes (e.g. all objects on display have inventory records);
 - Give date-defined milestones that can be used to review progress (e.g. Phase 1 will be completed on the 31st of December 2005).

Record a reference to the document.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Reviewing progress

- 4** Regularly review the organisation's progress on tackling its backlogs. This should be based on the milestones defined in the plan.

Adjust the plan, if necessary, based on the results of the review.

Create a **written** review report and a revised plan. Record references to the documents.

Information requirements:

- [Reference information](#).

Sources of help and advice

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Holm, Stuart. *Facts and Artefacts: How to document a museum collection. (Second edition).* (Part 3, 'How to tackle backlog' pp 34-37). Cambridge, MDA 1998.

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Information groups

Information groups are sets of related units of information. They are used to record a particular aspect of an object (such as its requirements), a particular procedure or process (such as object movement), or other 'entity' (such as a person, organisation, or date).

The following abbreviations indicate where a unit of information cross references other units of information with multiple parts.

(Per) = Person units
(Peo) = People units
(Org) = Organisation units
(Pla) = Place units

Object groups

These groups are used to record aspects of an object. Some are paired with a 'procedural' or 'process' group which records the actual event. For example *Object audit information* records the audit information relating to an object while *Audit information* records information relating to an audit as a whole. The information in each group is linked to an object via the *Object number* in the *Object identification* group.

Object audit information

Use to record the object aspects of an audit. See *Audit information* group for the process aspects. Link to relevant *Audit information* using the *Audit reference number* unit.

Units of information:

Object audit category
Object audit date
Object audit note
Object audit result
Object audit type

Object collection information

Use to record information about the field collection of objects, e.g. during an archaeological excavation.

Units of information:

Field collection date
Field collection event name
Field collection event reference number
Field collection method
Field collection note
Field collection number
Field collection place (Pla)
Field collection source (Org, Peo, Per)
Field collector (Org, Per)
Geological complex name
Habitat
Habitat note
Stratigraphic unit name
 Stratigraphic unit type
 Stratigraphic unit note

Object condition and technical assessment information

Use to record the object aspects of a condition or technical assessment. See *Condition check/technical assessment information* group for the process aspects. Link to relevant *Condition check/technical assessment information* using the *Condition check/technical assessment reference number* unit.

Units of information:

Completeness

Completeness date

Completeness note

Condition

Condition date

Condition note

Conservation treatment priority

Environmental condition note

Environmental condition note date

Next condition check/assessment date

Technical assessment

Technical assessment date

Hazard

Hazard date

Hazards note

Object conservation and treatment information

Use to record the object aspects of a conservation or treatment process. See *Conservation and treatment information* group for the process aspects. Link to relevant *Conservation and treatment information* using the *Conservation reference number* unit.

Units of information:

Conservation material

Conservation note

Recall date

Treatment date

Treatment report

Object description information

Use to record the categories of the description of an object. Which units an organisation uses depends on the requirements of the organisation and on the type of object.

Units of information:

- Age
- Age qualifier
- Age unit
- Colour
- Content - activity
- Content - concept
- Content - date
- Content - description
- Content - event name
 - Content - event name type
- Content - note
- Content - object
 - Content - object type
- Content - organisation (Org)
- Content - other
 - Content - other type
- Content - people (Peo)
- Content - person (Per)
- Content - place (Pla)
- Content - position
- Content note
- Copy number
- Dimension
 - Dimension measured part
 - Dimension value
 - Dimension value date
 - Dimension measurement unit
 - Dimension value qualifier
- Edition number
- Form
- Inscription content
 - Inscriber (Org, Peo, Per)
 - Inscription date
 - Inscription interpretation
 - Inscription language
 - Inscription method
 - Inscription position
 - Inscription script
 - Inscription translation
 - Inscription transliteration
 - Inscription type
- Inscription description
 - Inscriber (Org, Peo, Per)
 - Inscription date
 - Inscription interpretation
 - Inscription method
 - Inscription type
 - Inscription position
- Material
 - Material component
 - Material component note
 - Material name
 - Material source

Information groups

Object status

Phase

Physical description

Sex

Style

Technical attribute

Technical attribute measurement

Technical attribute measurement unit

Object component name

Object component information

Object history and association information

Use to record the historic use and associations of an object.

Units of information:

Associated activity

Associated concept

Associated cultural affinity

Associated date

Associated event date

Associated event name

Associated event name type

Associated event organisation (Org)

Associated event people (Peo)

Associated event person (Per)

Associated event place (Pla)

Associated object

Associated object type

Associated organisation (Org)

Associated people (Peo)

Associated person (Per)

Associated place (Pla)

Association type

Object history note

Owner (Org, Per)

Ownership access

Ownership category

Ownership dates

Ownership exchange method

Ownership exchange note

Ownership exchange price

Ownership place (Pla)

Usage

Usage note

Object identification information

Use to record the 'core information' about an object or group of objects.

Units of information:

- Object number*
- Other number*
 - Other number type*
- Brief description*
- Comments*
- Distinguishing features*
- Number of objects*
- Object name*
 - Object name currency*
 - Object name level*
 - Object name note*
 - Object name system*
 - Object name type*
 - Object name/title language*
- Responsible department/section*
- Title*
 - Object name/title language*
 - Title translation*
 - Title type*

Object location information

Use to record the where an object is located, etc. See *Location information* for the place itself.

Units of information:

- Current location*
 - Current location fitness*
 - Current location note*
- Location date*
- Normal location*

Object production information

Use to record the aspects of the creation of an object.

Units of information:

- Object production date*
- Object production note*
- Object production organisation* (Org)
- Object production people* (Peo)
- Object production person* (Per)
- Object production place* (Pla)
- Object production reason*
- Technique*
 - Technique type*

Object requirement information

Units of information:

Use to record the various requirements an object has while in the care of the organisation and others.

Display recommendations

Environmental recommendations

Handling recommendations

Packing recommendations

Security recommendations

Special requirements

Storage recommendations

Salvage priority code

Salvage priority code date

Legal/licence requirements

Legal/licence requirements held

Legal/licence requirements held begin date

Legal/licence requirements held end date

Legal/licence requirements held number

Legal/licence requirements held renewal date

Object rights information

Use to record the rights associated with objects, whoever holds them. Reference the object using the *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Right begin date

Right end date

Right holder (Org, People, Per)

Right note

Right reference number

Right type

Object rights in information

Use to record rights for the use of an object obtained by the organisation from others. Reference the object using the *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Rights in begin date

Rights in consent status

Rights in consent status date

Rights in end date

Rights in holder

Rights in note

Rights in reference number

Rights in type

Object rights out information

Use to record rights for the use of an object granted by the organisation to others. Reference the object using the *Object number unit* in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Rights out authorisation date
Rights out authoriser
Rights out begin date
Rights out consent status
 Rights out consent status date
Rights out end date
Rights out note
Rights out reference number
Rights out requester
Rights out type

Object use information

Use to record the object aspects of a use of an object. See *Use of collections information* group for the process aspects. Link to the relevant *Use of collections information* using the *Research/use of object reference number* or *Exhibition reference number* unit.

Units of information:

Access category
 Access category date
 Access category note
Credit line
Label/raisonné text
 Label text date
Object display status
 Object display status date

Object valuation information

Use to record the object aspects of a valuation. See *Valuation information* group for the process aspects. Link to the relevant *Valuation information* using the *Valuation reference number* unit.

Units of information:

Object valuation
Object valuation date
Object valuation note
Object valuation renewal date
 Object valuation type

Procedure groups

These groups are used to record procedures and processes. Some are paired with a 'object' group which records the object aspects of the event. For example Audit information records information relating to an audit as an whole, while Object audit information records the audit information relating to an object.

Common Procedural Units

This group lists the full set of generalised units that can be used to describe a procedure in SPECTRUM. The groups below give particular units for a procedure. If an organisation wishes to record as aspect of a procedure not listed then it should model the units it uses on these. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Authoriser (Per)
 Authorisation date
Cost
 Cost note
Procedure begin date
Procedure end date
Procedure manager (Org, Per)
Procedure note
Procedure title
Reason
Request
 Request date
 Requester (Org, Per)
Requested action date
Scheduled begin date
Scheduled end date
Status
 Status date
 Status review date

Acquisition information

(use also Common units)

Use to record an acquisition event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Accession date

Acquisition authoriser (Per)

Acquisition authorisation date

Acquisition date

Acquisition funding

Acquisition funding source (Org, Per)

Acquisition funding source provisos

Acquisition method

Acquisition note

Acquisition provisos

Acquisition reason

Acquisition reference number

Acquisition source (Peo, Per, Org)

Group purchase price

Object offer price

Object purchaser offer price

Object purchase price

Original object purchase price

Original object purchase price denomination

Transfer of title number

Audit information

(use also Common units)

Use to record an audit event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Audit method

Audit reference number

Audit type

Auditor (Org, Per)

Condition check/technical assessment information

(use also Common units)

Use to record a condition check or technical assessment event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Condition check/assessment date

Condition check/assessment method

Condition check/assessment note

Condition check/assessment reason

Condition check/assessment reference number

Condition checker/assessor (Per)

Conservation and treatment information

(use also Common units)

Use to record a conservation or treatment event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Conservation method
Conservation reference number
Conservator (Org, Per)

Disposal information

(use also Common units)

Use to record a disposal event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Deaccession date
Disposal date
Disposal method
Disposal new object number
Disposal note
Disposal price
Disposal proposed recipient (Org, Peo, Per)
Disposal provisos
Disposal reason
Disposal recipient (Org, Peo, Per)
Disposal reference number
Group disposal price

Indemnity information

(use also Common units)

Use to record an indemnity event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Indemnity confirmation date
Indemnity note
Indemnity renewal date
Indemnity reference number
Object minimum liability sum

Insurance information (use also Common units)

Use to record an insurance event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Insurance note
Insurance policy number
Insurance reference number
Insurance renewal date
Insurer (Org, Per)

Loan in information (use also Common units)

Use to record a loan in event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Lender (Org, Peo, Per)
Lender's authoriser (Org, Per)
 Lender's authorisation date
Lender's contact (Org, Per)
Loan in contact (Org, Per)
Loan in conditions
Loan in note
Loan in reference number

Loan out information (use also Common units)

Use to record a loan out event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Borrower (Org, Per)
 Borrower's contact (Org, Per)
Loan out note
Loan out reference number
Loaned object status
 Loaned object status date
Special conditions of loan

Loss/damage information

Use to record a loss or damage event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Loss/damage date
Loss/damage method
Loss/damage note
Loss/damage reference number
Loss/damage reporter (Per)

Movement information (use also Common units)

Use to record a movement event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Movement contact (Per)
Movement method
Movement note
Movement reference number
Planned removal date
Removal date

Object entry information (use also Common units)

Use to record an object entry event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Current owner (Org, Peo, Per)
Depositor (Org, Peo, Per)
 Depositor's requirements
Entry date
Entry method
Entry note
Entry number
Entry reason
Packing note
Return date

Object exit information (use also Common units)

Use to record an object exit event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Delivery date
Exit date
Exit destination (Org, Per)
Exit method
Exit note
Exit reference number
Organisation courier (Per)
Shipper (Org, Per)
Shipper's contact (Per)
Shipping note

Process information (use also Common units)

Use to model any process that takes place in the organisation that it wishes to record information about. For example an organisation may wish to record the person who identified an object or the method used to date one. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Process date
Process method
Process note
Process person/organisation (Org, Per)
Process reference number

Valuation information (use also Common units)

Use to record a valuation event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information:

Valuation reference number
Valuer (Org, Per)

Use of collections information **(use also Common units)**

Use to record a use of collections event. Reference the object(s) involved using their *Object number* unit in the *Object identification information* group.

Units of information (exhibitions):

Exhibition organiser (Org, Per)
Exhibition reference number
Exhibition begin date
Exhibition end date
Exhibition title
Venue (Org)
 Venue authorisation date
 Venue authoriser (Per)

Units of information (other uses):

Research/use of object date
Research/use of object method
Research/use of object note
Research/use of object provisos
Research/use of object reference number
Research/use of object result
Researcher/user (Org, Per)

Address information

The Address information is normally used for current information which is used and updated. Use *Place information* for historical information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the type of address being recorded:

Units of information:

Address - e-mail
Address - fax number
Address - place (Pla)
Address - postcode
Address - telephone number
Address - text
Address type

Date information

Detailed information about a date may often be needed for historical information. Dates of collections management activities normally have only one date associated with them as they are in current use and precise dates are known, e.g. Entry date.

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the type of date being recorded:

Units of information:

Date - association

Date - earliest/single

Date - earliest/single certainty

Date - earliest/single qualifier

Date - latest

Date - latest certainty

Date - latest qualifier

Date - period

Date text

Location information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the type of location being recorded:

Units of information:

Location access note

Location address

Location condition note

Location condition note date

Location reference name/number

Location security note

Location type

Organisation information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the type of organisation being recorded:

Units of information:

Organisation's additions to name

Organisation's address

Organisation's contact name

Organisation's dissolution date

Organisation's foundation date

Organisation's foundation place

Organisation's function

Organisation's group

Organisation's history

Organisation's MDA code

Organisation's main body

Organisation's reference number

Organisation's sub-body

People information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the people being recorded:

Units of information:

People's association

People's culture

People's group

People's linguistic group

Person information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the person being recorded:

Units of information:

- Person's additions to name*
- Person's address*
- Person's association*
- Person's biographical note*
- Person's birth date*
- Person's death date*
- Person's forenames*
- Person's gender*
- Person's group*
- Person's initials*
- Person's name notes*
- Person's nationality*
- Person's occupation*
- Person's place of birth* (Pla)
- Person's place of death* (Pla)
- Person's reference number*
- Person's salutation*
- Person's school/style*
- Person's surname*
- Person's title*

Place information

Place information is usually historical or static; unlike an address it is rarely used in collections management procedures and is not likely to change as often as Address information.

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the place being recorded:

Units of information:

- Place association*
- Place context*
 - Place context date*
 - Place context level*
- Place coordinates*
 - Place coordinates qualifier*
 - Place coordinates type*
- Place environmental details*
- Place feature*
 - Place feature date*
 - Place feature type*
- Place name*
 - Place name type*
- Place note*
- Place owner* (Org, Peo, Per)
- Place position*
- Place reference number*
 - Place reference number type*
- Place status*
- Place type system*

Record management groups

Use this to record management information about the records in the documentation system

Amendment history

Units of information:

Unit of information added

Amendment history authoriser (Per)

Unit of information scheme

Information source (Org, Peo, Per)

Information source date

Recorder (Per)

Recording date

Recording progress

Use and provision of information

Units of information:

Confidentiality note

Information usage

Record information

Units of information:

Record type

Reference information

It may be necessary to use a number of separate units of information, depending on the reference being recorded:

Units of information:

Reference

Reference author/editor (Per, Org)

Reference association

Reference details

Reference note

Reference number

Reference publication date

Reference publication place

Reference publisher (Org, Per)

Reference title

Reference type

Catalogue number

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

This is an alphabetical listing of all the units of information. The units of information listed in bold can be found in the alphabetical sequence following. The names in italics are alternatives with which you may be more familiar.

Access category

Access category date

Access category note

Accession date

Accession number

use

Object number

Acquisition authorisation date

Acquisition authoriser

Acquisition date

Acquisition funding

Acquisition funding provisos

Acquisition funding source

Acquisition funding source provisos

Acquisition method

use for

Donation method, Method of acquisition, How acquired

Acquisition note

use for

Notes

Acquisition place

use

Field collection place

Acquisition provisos

use for

Conditions, Terms of Acquisition

Acquisition reason

use for

Justification for acquisition, Purchase reason

Acquisition reference number

Acquisition source provisos

Acquisition source

use for

Source, Donor

Acquisition status

use

Status (common unit)

Acquisition status date

use

Status date (common unit)

Acquisition status review date

use

Status review date (common unit)

Address

Address - text

Address - place

Address - postcode

Address - telephone number

Address - fax number

Address - e-mail

Address type

Age

Age qualifier

Age unit

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

<i>Agreed return date</i>	use	Return date
Amendment history authoriser		
<i>Artist</i>	use	Object production person
<i>Assigned number</i>	use	Other number
Associated activity		
Associated concept		
Associated cultural affinity		
Associated date		
Associated event date		
Associated event name		
Associated event name type		
Associated event organisation		
Associated event people		
Associated event person		
Associated event place		
Associated object		
Associated object type		
Associated organisation		
Associated people		
Associated person		
Associated place		
Association reference		
Association type		
Audit method		
<i>Audit begin date</i>	use	Procedure date begun (common unit)
<i>Audit end date</i>	use	Procedure date ended (common unit)
Audit reference number		
Audit type		
Auditor		
Authorisation date (common unit)		
Authoriser (common unit)		
<i>Body</i>	use	Organisation
Borrower		
Borrower's contact		
Brief description	use for	<i>Brief summary, Description, Summary</i>
<i>Brief summary</i>	use	Brief description
Catalogue number		
<i>Catalogue raisonné</i>	use	Label/raisonné text
<i>Charges</i>	use	Cost, Cost note
<i>City</i>	use	Place name, Place name type
<i>Classification</i>	use	Object name

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

<i>Classification system</i>	use	Unit of information scheme
<i>Classified name</i>	use	Object name
<i>Collected on</i>	use	Field collection date
<i>Collection date</i>	use	Field collection date
<i>Collection method</i>	use	Field collection method
<i>Collection name</i>	use	Title
<i>Collection site</i>	use	Field collection place
<i>Collector</i>	use	Field collector
<i>Excavator</i>	use	Field collector
Colour		
Comments		
<i>Common name</i>	use	Object name
Completeness		
Completeness date		
Completeness note		
Condition		
<i>Condition code</i>	use	Condition
Condition check/assessment date		
Condition check/assessment method		
Condition check/assessment note		
Condition check/assessment reference number		
Condition checker/assessor		
Condition date		
Condition note		
<i>Condition report</i>	use	Condition note, Technical assessment, Treatment report
<i>Conditions</i>	use	Acquisition provisos, Special conditions of loan
Confidentiality note		
Conservation material		
Conservation method		
Conservation note		
Conservation reference number		
<i>Conservation report</i>	use	Treatment report
<i>Conservation report date</i>	use	Treatment date
<i>Conservation request date</i>	use	Request date (common unit)
<i>Conservation request number</i>	use	Request reference number
<i>Conservation requester</i>	use	Requester (common unit)
Conservation treatment priority		
Conservator		
Content - activity		

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Content - concept		
Content - date		
Content - description		
Content - event name		
Content - event name type		
<i>Content - illustration</i>	use	Content - description
Content - language		
Content - note		
Content - object		
Content - object type		
Content - organisation		
Content - other		
Content - other type		
Content - people		
Content - person		
Content - place		
Content - position		
Content - script		
Copy number		
<i>Copyright holder</i>	use	Reproduction/performance rights holder
<i>Copyright note</i>	use	Reproduction/performance rights note
Cost (common unit)		
Cost note (common unit)		
<i>Country</i>	use	Place name, Place name type
<i>County</i>	use	Place name, Place name type
Credit line		
Current location	use for	<i>Location, Storage, Storage location</i>
Current location fitness		
Current location note		
Current owner		
Date		
Date association		
Date - earliest/single		
Date - earliest/single certainty		
Date - earliest/single qualifier		
Date - latest		
Date - latest certainty		
Date - latest qualifier		
Date - period		
Date - text		

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Deaccession date

Delivery date

Denomination

use

Object name

Department name

use

Responsible department

Depositor

Depositor's requirements

Description

use

Brief description

Despatch authorisation date

use

Authorisation date (common unit)

Despatch authoriser

use

Authoriser (common unit)

Despatch date

use for

Exit date

Despatch destination

use for

Destination

Despatch method

Despatch note

use for

Exit note, Notes

Despatch reason

use

Reason (common unit)

Despatch reference number

use for

Exit number

Destination

use

Despatch destination

Dig number

use

Field collection number

Dimension

Dimension measured part

Dimension measurement unit

Dimension value

Dimension value date

Dimension value qualifier

Display recommendations

use for

Exhibition recommendations

Disposal authorisation date

use

Authorisation date

Disposal authoriser

use

Authoriser

Disposal date

use for

Transfer date

Disposal method

Disposal new object number

Disposal note

Disposal price

Disposal proposed recipient

Disposal provisos

Disposal reason

Disposal recipient

Disposal reference number

use for

Transfer number

Distinguishing features

Donation method

use

Acquisition method

Donor

use

Acquisition source

Edition number

Entry date

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Entry method

Entry note

Entry number

Entry reason

Environmental condition note

Environmental condition note date

Environmental history use **Environmental condition note**

Environmental recommendations

Excavation date use **Field collection date**

Excavation note use **Field collection note**

Excavation number use **Field collection number**

Excavation site use **Field collection place**

Excavator use **Field collector**

Exhibition begin date

Exhibition end date

Exhibition organiser

Exhibition recommendations use **Display recommendations**

Exhibition reference number

Exhibition scheduled begin date

Exhibition scheduled end date

Exhibition title use for *Provenance*

Exit date use **Despatch date**

Exit note use **Despatch note**

Exit number use **Despatch reference number**

Exit reason use **Reason** (common unit)

Field collection date use for *Collection date, Date of collection, Collected on... Excavation date*

Field collection event name

Field collection event reference number

Field collection method use for *Collection method, Method of collection, Excavation method*

Field collection note use for *Excavation note*

Field collection number use for *Excavation number, Dig number*

Field collection place use for *Acquisition place, Collection site, Where collected, Excavation site, Locality*

Field collection position use **Place position**

Field collection source

Field collector use for *Excavator*

Form

Full name use **Object name**

Function use **Usage, Usage note**

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Geological complex name		
Group disposal price		
Group purchase price		
<i>Group price</i>	use	Group purchase price
Habitat	use for	<i>Locality</i>
Habitat note		
Handling recommendations		
Hazard		
Hazard date		
Hazards note	use for	<i>Warning</i>
<i>How acquired</i>	use	Acquisition method
<i>Identification</i>	use	Object name
<i>Identity number</i>	use	Object number
<i>Importance of object</i>	use	Object status
<i>Indemnity begin date</i>	use	Scheduled begin date (common unit)
Indemnity confirmation date		
<i>Indemnity end date</i>	use	Scheduled end date (common unit)
Indemnity note		
Indemnity reference number		
Indemnity renewal date		
<i>Indemnity request date</i>	use	Request date (common unit)
Information source		
Information source date		
Information usage		
Inscriber		
Inscription content		
Inscription date		
Inscription description		
Inscription interpretation		
Inscription language		
Inscription method		
Inscription position		
Inscription script		
Inscription transcription		
Inscription translation		
Inscription transliteration		
Inscription type		
<i>Institution</i>	use	Organisation
<i>Insurance begin date</i>	use	Scheduled begin date (common unit)
<i>Insurance company</i>	use	Insurer
<i>Insurance conditions</i>	use	Insurance note

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

<i>Insurance end date</i>	use	Scheduled end date (common unit)
<i>Insurance limitations</i>	use	Insurance note
Insurance note		
Insurance policy number		
Insurance reference number		
Insurance renewal date		
Insurer	use for	<i>Insurance company</i>
Label/raisonné	use for	<i>raisonné text</i>
Label text date		
Legal/licence requirements		
Legal / licence requirements held		
Legal / licence requirements held begin date		
Legal / licence requirements held end date		
Legal / licence requirements held number		
Legal / licence requirements held renewal date		
Lender		
Lender's authorisation date		
Lender's authoriser		
Lender's contact		
<i>Loan conditions</i>	use	Special conditions of loan
<i>Loan fee</i>	use	Cost, Cost note
Loan in conditions		
Loan in contact		
<i>Loan in begin date</i>	use	Scheduled begin date (common unit)
Loan in conditions		
<i>Loan in end date</i>	use	Scheduled end date (common unit)
Loan in note		
Loan in reference number		
<i>Loan in status</i>	use	Status (common unit)
<i>Loan in status date</i>	use	Status date (common unit)
<i>Loan out authorisation date</i>	use	Authorisation date (common unit)
<i>Loan out authoriser</i>	use	Authoriser (common unit)
<i>Loan out begin date</i>	use	Scheduled begin date (common unit)
<i>Loan out end date</i>	use	Scheduled end date (common unit)
Loan out note		
<i>Loan out reason</i>	use	Reason (common unit)

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Loan out reference number

<i>Loan out status</i>	use	Status (common unit)
<i>Loan out status date</i>	use	Status date (common unit)

Loaned object status

Loaned object status date

<i>Locality</i>	use	Field collection place
<i>Location</i>	use	Current location

Location access note	use for	<i>Location place</i>
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Location address

Location condition note

Location condition note date

Location note date

Location date

<i>Location place</i>	use	Location address
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Location security note

Location type

Loss/damage date

Loss/damage method

Loss/damage note

Loss/damage reference number

Loss/damage reporter

<i>Maker</i>	use	Object production organisation/people/person
<i>Manufacturer</i>	use	Object production organisation/people/person

Material

Material component

Material component name

Material name

Material source

<i>MDA code</i>	use	Organisation's MDA code
<i>Method of acquisition</i>	use	Acquisition method
<i>Method of collection</i>	use	Field collection method
<i>Method of observation</i>	use	Condition check/assessment method
<i>Minimum liability</i>	use	Object minimum liability sum
<i>Moneyer</i>	use	Object production organisation/people/person
<i>Movement authorisation date</i>	use	Authorisation date
<i>Movement authoriser</i>	use	Authoriser

Movement contact

Movement method

Movement note

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Movement reference number

Movement request date use **Request date** (common unit)

Movement requester use **Requester** (common unit)

Name use **Object name or Person**

Named collection use **Title**

Name of object use **Object name**

Next condition check/assessment date use for *Normal location*

Notes (see under subject of the note)

Number use **Object number**

Number of objects

Object audit category

Object audit date

Object audit note

Object audit result

Object common name use **Object name**

Object component information

Object component name use for *Part*

Object display status

Object display status date

Object history note

Object minimum liability sum

Object name use for *Classified name, Common name, Denomination, Full name, Identification, Name of object, Name, Other name, Object type name, Simple name, Simple object name, Specimen name, Typology, Taxonomic name*

Object name currency

Object name level

Object name note

Object name system

Object name type

Object name /title language

Object number use for *Accession number, Identity number, Number*

Object number date use **Accession date**

Object offer price

Object production date

Object production note

Object production organisation use for *Artist, Maker, Moneyer, Manufacturer*

Object production people use for *Artist, Maker, Moneyer, Manufacturer*

Object production person use for *Artist, Maker, Moneyer, Manufacturer*

Object production period use **Object production date**

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Object production place		
Object production reason		
Object purchaser offer price		
Object purchase price	use for	<i>Price</i>
Object status	use for	<i>Type status, Importance of object</i>
<i>Object type name</i>	use	Object name
<i>Object use date</i>	use	Date, Date association
<i>Object use period</i>	use	Date, Date association
<i>Object use organisation</i>	use	Organisation, Organisation's association
<i>Object use person</i>	use	Person, Person's association
<i>Object use place</i>	use	Place, Place association
<i>Object use reason</i>	use	Usage, Usage note
<i>Object use way</i>	use	Usage, Usage note
Object valuation	use for	<i>Value</i>
Object valuation date	use for	<i>Valuation date</i>
Object valuation note		
Object valuation renewal date		
Object valuation type		
<i>Old number</i>	use	Other number, Other number type
<i>Operating instructions</i>	use	Research/use of collections note
<i>Operating log</i>	use	Research/use of collections note
Organisation courier		
Organisation information (see units below)	use for	<i>Institution, Body</i>
Organisation's additions to name		
Organisation's address		
Organisation's association		
Organisation's contact name		
Organisation's dissolution date		
<i>Organisation's credit line</i>	use	Credit line
Organisation's foundation date		
Organisation's foundation place		
Organisation's function		
Organisation's group		
Organisation's history		
Organisation's main body		
Organisation's MDA code	use for	<i>MDA code</i>
Organisation's reference number		
Organisation's sub-body		
Original object purchase price		
Original object purchase price		

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

denomination

Other name use **Object name, Object name type**

Other number

use for *Previous number, Old number, Assigned number*

Other number type

Owner

use for *Provenance*

Ownership access

Ownership category

Ownership dates

use for *Provenance*

Ownership exchange method

use for *Provenance*

Ownership exchange note

Ownership exchange price

Ownership place

Packing recommendations

Packing note

Part use **Object component name**

People information (see units below)

People's association

People's culture

People's group

People's linguistic group

People's tribe use **People's group**

Permanent location use **Normal location**

Person information (see units below) use for *Person name*

Person's additions to name

Person's address

Person's association

Person's biographical note

Person's birth date

Person's death date

Person's forenames

Person's gender

Person's group

Person's initials

Person's name notes

Person's nationality

Person's occupation

Person's place of birth

Person's place of death

Person's reference number

Person's salutation

Person's school/style

Person's surname

Person's title

Person name

use

Person

Phase

Physical description

Place information (see units below)

Place context

Place context date

Place context level

Place feature

use for

Place - geographical feature

Place feature date

Place feature type

use for

Place - geographical feature type

Place - geographical feature

use

Place feature

Place - geographical feature type

use

Place feature type

Place association

Place coordinates

Place coordinates qualifier

Place coordinates type

Place environmental details

Place location

use

Place note

Place locality status

use

Place status

Place locality type

use

Place name type

Place name

Place name type

Place note

Place owner

Place position

Place reference number

Place reference number type

Place status

Place type system

Place type

use

Place name type

Planned removal date

Previous number

use

Other number, Other number type

Previous owner

use

Owner

Price

use

Object purchase price, Group purchase price

Procedure date begun

Procedure date ended

Procedure manager

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Procedure note

Procedure title

Process date

Process method

Process note

Process person/organisation

Process reference number

Provenance

use

Owner, Ownership dates, ownership exchange method, Exhibition title, Exhibition begin date, Exhibition end date, Exhibition scheduled begin date, Exhibition scheduled end date, Venue

Reason (common unit)

Reason for condition check

use

Reason (common unit)

Reason for move

use

Reason (common unit)

Recall date

Record type

Recorder

Recording date

Recording progress

Reference

Reference association

Reference author/editor

Reference details

Reference note

Reference number

Reference publication date

Reference publication place

Reference publisher

Reference title

Reference type

Relative position

use

Place position

Removal date

Reproduction/performance rights reference number

Request (common unit)

Request date (common unit)

Requested action date (common unit)

Requester (common unit)

Requested movement date

use

Requested action date (common unit)

Research/use of object date

Research/use of object method

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Research/use of object note		
Research/use of object provisos		
Research/use of object reference number		
Research result		
Researcher/user		
Responsible department	use for	<i>Department name</i>
Return date	use for	<i>Agreed return date</i>
Right begin date		
Right end date		
Right holder	use for	<i>Copyright holder</i>
Right note	use for	<i>Copyright note</i>
Right reference number		
Right type		
Rights in begin date		
Rights in consent status		
Rights in consent status date		
Rights in end date		
Rights in holder		
Rights in note		
Rights in reference number		
Rights in type		
Rights out authorisation date		
Rights out authoriser		
Rights out begin date		
Rights out consent status		
Rights out consent status date		
Rights out end date		
Rights out note		
Rights out reference number		
Rights out requester		
Rights out type		
Salvage priority code		
Salvage priority code date		
Scheduled begin date	(common unit)	
Scheduled end date	(common unit)	
Security recommendations		
Sex		
Shipper		
Shipper's contact		
Shipping note		
<i>Simple name</i>	use	Object name

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

<i>Simple object name</i>	use	Object name
<i>Site</i>	use	Place name, Place name type
<i>Source</i>	use	Acquisition source
Special conditions of loan	use for	<i>Loan conditions</i>
Special requirements		
<i>Specimen name</i>	use	Object name
Status (common unit)		
Status date (common unit)		
Status review date (common unit)		
<i>Storage</i>	use	Current location
<i>Storage location</i>	use	Current location
Storage recommendations		
Stratigraphic unit name		
Stratigraphic unit note		
Stratigraphic unit type		
Style		
<i>Subject</i>	use	Content
<i>Summary</i>	use	Brief description
<i>Taxonomic name</i>	use	Object name
Technical assessment		
Technical assessment date		
<i>Technical assessment method</i>	use	Condition check/assessment method
<i>Technical assessor</i>	use	Condition checker/assessor
Technical attribute		
Technical attribute measurement		
Technique		
<i>Terms of acquisition</i>	use	Acquisition provisos
Title		
Title translation		
Title type		
<i>Town</i>	use	Place name, Place name type
<i>Transfer date</i>	use	Disposal date
<i>Treatment duration</i>	use	Treatment report
<i>Transfer number</i>	use	Disposal number
Transfer of title number		
Treatment date	use for	<i>Conservation report date</i>
<i>Treatment materials</i>	use	Treatment report
Treatment report	use for	<i>Conservation report</i>
<i>Type status</i>	use	Object status
<i>Typology</i>	use	Object name
Unit information scheme		

List of units of information and non-preferred unit names

Unit of information added

Usage use for *Function*

Usage note

Valuation date use **Object valuation date**

Valuation note use **Object valuation note**

Valuation reference number

Value use **Object valuation**

Valuer

Venue use for *Provenance*

Venue authorisation date

Venue authoriser

Vice county use **Place name, Place name type**

Village use **Place name, Place name type**

Warning use **Hazards note**

Where collected use **Field collection place**

Units of information

This section describes fully all the units of information required throughout the procedures. Each unit of information is listed in alphabetical order and contains the following information:

Unit name

Definition	A brief description of the unit of information.
How to record	Basic guidelines on how to record the unit of information.
Examples	Samples of the information which might be recorded. The examples are not exhaustive; they are there to illustrate the kind of information which might be recorded. A semicolon is used to separate a list of examples.
Use	The relationship between this and other units of information and how often it can be recorded within any one record.
Information group	The information group that the unit of information appears in.

Access category

Definition	A record of the level of access allowed to an object or group of objects based on their needs or significance.
How to record	Use a single term or code. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	1; 2; A; B; restricted
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Previous Access categories may be retained, but should be associated with the Access category date in order to identify the current Access category.
Information group	Object use information

Access category date

Definition	The date on which an Access category was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Access category.
Information group	Object use information

Access category note

Definition	Additional information about the Access category of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Researchers allowed access only under supervised conditions.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object use information

Accession date

Definition	The date on which an object formally enters the collections and is recorded in the accessions register.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993; 6.1.1992
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition authorisation date

Definition	The date on which the Acquisition authoriser gives final approval for an acquisition to proceed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition authoriser

Definition	The name of a member of staff giving final approval for the acquisition to proceed.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition date

Definition	The date on which title to an object or group of objects is transferred to the organisation.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only, except in exceptional circumstances where title is transferred in stages.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition funding

Definition	The funding used to support the acquisition of an object.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Acquisition note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	Use in association with Group purchase price and Object purchase price.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition funding provisos

Definition	Restrictions applying to all the objects acquired with the support from an Acquisition funding source.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Use	Record once only for an Acquisition funding.
Examples	Objects purchased with funding source's support to be displayed with credit line acknowledging the funding source.
Information group	Object use information

Acquisition funding source

Definition	The Person or Organisation from whom the Acquisition funding was obtained.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for Acquisition funding.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition method

Definition	The means by which title to an object is formally transferred to the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	gift; purchase
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition note

Definition	General information about the acquisition.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Offered by the vendor at a reduced price.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition provisos

Definition	Restrictions applying to the objects in a single acquisition, including conditions for deposition of archaeological archives
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Examples	Donor to have access on request. Not to be driven.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition reason

Definition	The reason or justification for an acquisition.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	This engine is still in working condition and is one of only three still known to exist.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for information on the acquisition of an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a valuation. This will normally be the object number.
How to record	May include a year and a running number. See Object number.
Examples	1993.123
Use	The same Acquisition reference number can be used for one or more objects acquired together.
Information group	Acquisition information

Acquisition source

Definition	The People, Person or Organisation from whom an object was obtained, if different from the Owner. The Acquisition source may be an agent or other intermediary between the acquiring organisation and the Owner. For archaeological archives, use Acquisition source to record the excavating body responsible for preparing and depositing the archive with the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Acquisition information

Address - e-mail

Definition	The e-mail address used to contact an Organisation or Person.
How to record	As it is normally given.
Examples	mda@mda.org.uk
Use	As many times as required for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address - fax number

Definition	The fax number used to contact an Organisation or Person.
How to record	As it is normally given, including the area or country code as required.
Examples	01223 362521; 0101 202465976
Use	As many times as required for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address - place

Definition	The elements of an Address which are required for retrieval purposes.
How to record	It may be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a town, city or country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	As for Place.
Use	As many times as required for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address - postcode

Definition	The postcode or zip code of an Address.
How to record	As it is normally given, including spaces and capitalisation where integral to the code.
Examples	CB1 4DH; OM142354
Use	Record once only for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address - telephone number

Definition	The telephone number used to contact an Organisation or Person.
How to record	As it is normally given, including the area or country code as required.
Examples	01223 315760; 0101 202456976
Use	As many times as required for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address - text

Definition	The address of an Organisation, Person or Location as expressed for mailing purposes.
How to record	Use punctuation and capitalisation as required.
Examples	The Spectrum Building, The Michael Young Centre, Purbeck Road, Cambridge, CB2 2PD, United Kingdom
Use	Record once only for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Address type

Definition	The status or use of the Address recorded
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms
Examples	street; mailing; alternative
Use	As many as required for an Address.
Information group	Address information

Age

Definition	The numeric age of a natural science specimen when it died. Use Age unit to describe the unit of measurement used and Age qualifier to qualify the information. Use Phase for a textual description of Age.
How to record	Numerically and without punctuation.
Examples	1; 3.5; 79
Use	Record once only for a specimen.
Information group	Object description information

Age qualifier

Definition	A qualification of the statement of the Age of a natural science specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	over; under; approximately
Use	Record once only for an Age
Information group	Object description information

Age unit

Definition	The unit of measurement used to describe the Age of a natural science specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	days; years
Use	Record once only for an Age
Information group	Object description information

Amendment history authoriser

Definition	The name of the person giving final approval for a piece of information being added to a record
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Use with Recorder as required for each amendment to a record where a specific unit identifying the authoriser (e.g. Auditor, Valuer) is not available. This unit should be associated with the unit of information being amended.
Information group	Amendment history

Associated activity

Definition	An activity associated an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	weaving; boat building
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object history and association information

Associated concept

Definition	A concept associated with an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	love; peace
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object history and association information

Associated cultural affinity

Definition	A wider cultural context to which an object or group of objects relates.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	Belgic; Wessex culture; Romanesque; Anglian; Clactonian
Use	<p>As many times as required for an object or group of objects, and where more precise Object production people/person/place, Date-period, or Style are inappropriate.</p> <p>Note that some terms in common archaeological use can have a range of connotations and could be recorded under different headings, e.g. 6ic might be recorded as Date-period (chronological), Object production people (ethnic) or Cultural affinity (having intrinsic features and/or contextual associations which link object with 'Belgic' material culture).</p>
Information group	Object history and association information

Associated date

Definition	A date associated with an object or group of objects.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event date

Definition	The date of an event in an object's history.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for an Associated event name.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event name

Definition	An historical event associated with an object or group of objects, not including production and collections management events. Use the Object history note to describe details about the nature of the association.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the event name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	The Goose Fair; The Charge of the Light Brigade
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event name type

Definition	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
How to record	Use a single term without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	coronation; massacre; battle; garden party
Use	As many times as required for an Associated event name.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event organisation

Definition	An Organisation associated with an event in an object's or group of objects' history (other than field collection or ownership).
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a name and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Organisation heading
Examples	See under Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event people

Definition	A people associated with an event in an object's or group of objects' history (other than field collection or ownership)
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a tribe or a linguistic group. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event person

Definition	A person associated with an event in an object's or group of objects' history (other than field collection or ownership)
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated event place

Definition	A place associated with an event in an object's history.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a village name or a country name. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	Record once only for an Associated event name.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated object

Definition	An object associated with an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source. Use the same sources of terminology as for recording Object name.
Examples	As for Object name.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated object type

Definition	A term describing the nature of the Associated object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	furniture; food
Use	As many times as required for an Associated object
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated organisation

Definition	An Organisation associated with an object's or group of objects' history.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a name and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Organisation.
Examples	See under Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated people

Definition	A people associated with an object's or group of objects' history.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a tribe or a linguistic group. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated person

Definition	A person associated with an object's or group of objects' history.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Associated place

Definition	A place associated with an object or group of objects.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a village name or a country name. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	As for Place.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Association type

Definition	The way in which the person/group, date, object, concept, event, activity or place is associated with the history of an object or specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	worn; used; visited
Use	Record Association type as for an Associated activity, Associated concept, Associated cultural affinity, Associated date, Associated event, Associated person, people or organisation, Associated object and Associated place.
Information group	Object history and association information

Audit method

Definition	The method used to audit an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	full; random; selective
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one method applies.
Information group	Audit information

Audit reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the audit of an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of an audit.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	A1993.123
Use	Record once only for an audit.
Information group	Audit information

Audit type

Definition	The type of audit carried out on a object
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	condition; information; location
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one Audit applies.
Information group	Audit information

Auditor

Definition	The Person or Organisation carrying out an audit. The Auditor is individually accountable for the Object audit result.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Only record more than one auditor if an audit was carried out by and responsibility taken by more than one Person or Organisation.
Information group	Audit information

Authorisation date

Definition	The date on which an authoriser gives final approval for a procedure to take place.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	3/10/1996
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date authorisation was given for a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Authorisation date. Use Authorisation date for each occurrence of Authoriser.
Information group	Common procedural units

Authoriser

Definition	The name of the person giving final approval for a procedure to take place
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the name of the person who gave authorisation for a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Authoriser. Use with Authorisation date to record when the authorisation was given. Note separate units for Acquisition authoriser and Amendment history authoriser.
Information group	Common procedural units

Borrower

Definition	The details of a Person or Organisation borrowing an object from the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, for a Person, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for a Loan out reference number.
Information group	Loan out information

Borrower's contact

Definition	The details of a Person or Organisation designated by the Borrower to be responsible for dealing with the loan on their behalf.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for a Borrower.
Information group	Loan out information

Brief description

Definition	A text description of an object in approximately one sentence; normally used for administrative and identification purposes. It records the most important information from a number of separate descriptive units of information.
How to record	<p>Use normal grammar and punctuation. Give sufficient information to identify an object for the purposes of stock checking, written file titles, accessions registers etc. The information need not be unique, but use information that enables visual recognition of an object where possible.</p> <p>Aim to keep text to less than 15 words. Construct the phrase from any combination of information; the content will vary between objects and collections. It may be advisable to establish a description protocol e.g. generally begin the description from front to back, or from outside in, or have a controlled set of colours</p>
Examples	Blue spotted earthenware jug, 20th century
Use	Record at least once for an object.
Information group	Object identification information

Catalogue number

Definition	The number assigned to an object in an exhibition catalogue
How to record	Exactly as given in the catalogue, using the same capitalisation and punctuation.
Examples	A123 76
Use	Record once only for a reference if required.
Information group	Reference information

Colour

Definition	The colour of an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation unless this forms part of the name of a colour. Maintain a list of standard terms. Record colours which are important for retrieval purposes. If an object comprises many colours, record that fact only if it is significant in the production of the object. Record colours in the Physical description in the context of other aspects of an object.
Examples	red; blue; polychrome
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Comments

Definition	Additional comments made about an object by visitors, curators or researchers.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Any information can be recorded here provided there is no other identified unit of information more suitable for the purpose.
Examples	The identification of an object was thought to be wrong by Dr. H Jones who visited on 13.4.1992. He claimed to have detailed knowledge of this form of instrument; his address is held on the department's files.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object identification information

Completeness

Definition	A single term describing the completeness of an object
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	complete; incomplete; fragmented
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Use with previous Completeness information to record changes in the completeness of an object.
Information group	<i>Object condition and technical assessment information</i>

Completeness date

Definition	The date on which the completeness of an object was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Completeness.
Information group	<i>Object condition and technical assessment information</i>

Completeness note

Definition	Additional information about the completeness of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Lid missing.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition

Definition	A single term describing the condition of an object.
How to record	Use a single term or code without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes. The overall condition of an object will be the same as the most serious individual condition which has been identified.
Examples	1; 2; A; B; poor; fair
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Use with previous Conditions to record changes in the condition of an object.
Information group	<i>Object condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition check/assessment date

Definition	The date(s) on which a condition check or technical assessment process took place.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a condition check or technical assessment process.
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition check/assessment method

Definition	The method used when carrying out a condition check or technical assessment process.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	observed; x-rayed
Use	As many times as required..
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition check/assessment note

Definition	Additional information about the condition checking or technical assessment process which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The check was made in the presence of the owner.
Use	Record once only for a condition check or technical assessment process.
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition check/assessment reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the condition checking or technical assessment process. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a condition check or technical assessment.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	C1993.123
Use	The same Condition check/assessment reference number can be used for one or more objects checked or assessed together.
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition checker/assessor

Definition	The person or organisation which carried out a condition check or technical assessment process.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or organisation heading as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only, unless carried out by more than one person or organisation.
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Condition date

Definition	The date on which the condition of an object was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Condition.
Information group	Object condition and technical assessment information

Condition note

Definition	A brief description of the condition of an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe in the context of the procedure in which it is used, Referring specifically to any instability, infestation or other notable concern. Positive information can also be usefully recorded if no damage is visible. Use Technical Assessment to record a detailed condition report.
Examples	Crack on lid 21mm long, staining around the spout; Woodworm flight holes on left front leg
Use	Record once only for any occasion when the condition of an object is checked.
Information group	Object condition and technical assessment information

Confidentiality note

Definition	Restrictions agreed on the publication of details of an object, personnel, site location or other details associated with an object or archive.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe precisely the nature of the confidentiality agreement, including how long it applies.
Examples	Grid reference to be published as 4 figures only. Finder wishes to remain anonymous.
Use	Record once for every object, documentary archive or finds archive when appropriate.
Information group	Use and provision of information

Conservation material

Definition	The materials used in the conservation of an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	ethanol
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object conservation and treatment information

Conservation method

Definition	The method used in during a conservation process.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	cleaned; relined; rehoused
Use	As many times as required for a conservation process.
Information group	Conservation and treatment information

Conservation note

Definition	Additional information about conservation of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Original stretcher to be returned to the owner.
Use	Record once only for a Conservation procedure.
Information group	Object conservation and treatment information

Conservation reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the conservation of an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of conservation.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	C1993.123
Use	The same Conservation reference number can be used for one or more objects conserved together.
Information group	Conservation and treatment information

Conservation treatment priority

Definition	A term describing an object's need for Conservation treatment.
How to record	Use a single term or code, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	1; 2; A; B; urgent
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time
Information group	Object condition and technical assessment information

Conservator

Definition	The name of the Person or Organisation treating an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for a Conservation reference number unless conservation is carried out by more than one Person or Organisation.
Information group	Conservation and treatment information

Content - activity

Definition	An activity depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	tea drinking; swimming; praying
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - concept

Definition	A concept depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	love; peace
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - date

Definition	A date depicted in or described by an object
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the production stage which the date is related to. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to an object's production.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - description

Definition	A general description of a depiction in an object, or description of an object without making interpretation. This may include descriptions of the content of all audio and visual works. (Use Brief description and Physical description to describe an object's other features.)
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Hunting scene with two figures on horseback.
Use	Record only once for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - event name

Definition	An event depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the event name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	The Goose Fair; The Charge of the Light Brigade.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - event name type

Definition	A term describing the nature of the Content - event name.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	coronation; massacre; battle; garden party
Use	As many times as required for a Content event name.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - note

Definition	Additional information about an object's content which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The designs in the drawing will be used as the basis for a commissioned sculpture to mark the Millennium.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - language

Definition	The language the textual content of an object.
How to record	Use a single term to identify the language used in the inscription. Do not use punctuation except where it forms an integral part of the name of a language. Use initial capitals only for proper names.
Examples	French; English; Fr; En
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - object

Definition	An object depicted in or described by another object.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source. Use the same sources of terminology as for recording Object name.
Examples	As for Object name.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - object type

Definition	A term describing the nature of the Content - object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	furniture; food
Use	As many times as required for a Content - object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Content - organisation

Definition	The Organisation depicted in or described in an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a name and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Organisation heading.
Examples	See under Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Content - other

Definition	An aspect of the content depicted in or described in an object, not covered by the other Content units.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. The organisation should decide what aspects of content it needs to record in order to use this unit.
Examples	wood; female
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Content - other type

Definition	The type of aspect being recorded by Content - other.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	object material; person gender
Use	Once only for a Content - other.
Information group	Object description information

Content - people

Definition	A People depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a tribe or a linguistic group. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Content - person

Definition	A Person depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Content - place

Definition	A Place depicted in or described by an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a village name or a country name. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading. Record as for Place.
Examples	As for Place.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Content - position

Definition	The position on an object of a depiction or description.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	obverse; reverse; edge; front; back; side 1
Use	As many times as required for a depiction or description.
Information group	Object description information

Content - script

Definition	The script the textual content of an object.
How to record	Use a single term to identify the script used. Do not use punctuation except where it forms an integral part of the name of a script. Use initial capitals only for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	secretary hand; chancery hand; Cyrillic; unidentified far eastern script
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Copy number

Definition	A number assigned to an object by the maker within a limited edition or special run.
How to record	Use the number of an object followed by the size of the complete run if known. Note if the number of the complete run is not known. Use Other number to record serial number information.
Examples	Number 45 of 5000; Number 3 of unknown number
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Cost

Definition	The amount paid in the course of a procedure
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Cost note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the cost of a procedure, e.g. (Conservation) Cost. Record once only for a procedure carried out as required.
Information group	<i>Common procedural units</i>

Cost note

Definition	Additional information about the cost of a procedure.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Include any non-sterling currency amount as well as details of the basis for the assigning of a particular cost.
Examples	(Conservation) Cost note - The conservator estimates that the restoration will cost £450 due to high price of materials involved.
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the cost of a procedure, e.g. (Conservation) Cost. Record once only for a procedure carried out as required. Do not use for costs incurred in the transfer of title of objects.
Information group	<i>Common procedural units</i>

Credit line

Definition	Text acknowledging a donation or loan, normally used on a display label.
How to record	As agreed with the donor or lender, using normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Donated by Ms B. Smith, Sydney, Australia.
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Current location

Definition	The place within the organisation where an object is currently located.
How to record	Use a single term or code. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes. Ensure that all locations can be specifically described with unique terms.
Examples	U.23.2.4a room 1, case 3, shelf 4
Use	Record once for any object at any one time. Information about the Current location may be retained but it is only the single Current location which does not have a Removal date associated with it which is the 'active' Current location.
Information group	<i>Object location information</i>

Current location fitness

Definition	A term describing the extent to which an object's current location is fitted to an object's requirements.
How to record	Use a single term or code, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	1; 2; A; B; unsuitable; reasonable; dangerous
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object location information

Current location note

Definition	Information about the reason for an object's being at its Current location.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Located here pending completion of secure storage in Store 322.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object location information

Current owner

Definition	Details of the owner of a loaned or temporarily deposited object, or other object in the organisation's custody which does not belong to the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object entry information

Date association

Definition	How a Date relates to an event in an object's history.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	carved; commissioned; decorated; designed; manufactured; sold; used; inscribed; painted; produced; collected
Use	As many times as required for an Object production date or Associated event date.
Information group	Date information

Date - earliest/single

Definition	The earliest probable or exact date at which an event in an object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899; 29.1.1994
Use	Record once only for each event in an object's history. If the exact date of an event is known, or if only one probable date is known, only record Date - earliest /single.
Information group	Date information

Date - earliest/single certainty

Definition	A term describing the extent to which the Date - earliest/single recorded is thought to be correct.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. If left blank, the assumption is that the Date - earliest/single recorded is thought to be correct.
Examples	probably; possibly; circa; before; after
Use	Record once only for a Date - earliest/single if required.
Information group	Date information

Date - earliest/single qualifier

Definition	A qualification of the earliest probable or exact date at which an event in an object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation, or the standard statistical notation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	+ or - 150; approximate
Use	Use for a Date - earliest/single as required
Information group	Date information

Date - latest

Definition	The latest probable date at which an event in an object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Date if required.
Information group	Date information

Date - latest certainty

Definition	A term describing the extent to which the Date - latest recorded is thought to be correct.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. If left blank, the assumption is that the Date - latest recorded is thought to be correct.
Examples	probably; possibly; circa; before; after
Use	Record once only for a Date - latest if required.
Information group	Date information

Date - latest qualifier

Definition	A qualification of the latest probable date at which an event in the object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation, or the standard statistical notation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	+ or - 150; approximate
Use	Use for a Date - latest as required
Information group	Date information

Date - period

Definition	A textual expression of the period when an event in an object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	medieval; Ming; Bronze Age
Use	Record once only for an event in an object's history.
Information group	Date information

Date text

Definition	The textual expression of the date or date span when an event in an object's history is thought to have occurred.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Late 19th century or early 20th century.
Use	Record once only for an event in an object's history.
Information group	Date information

Deaccession date

Definition	The date when an item was struck off the accession register.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a disposal.
Information group	Disposal information

Delivery date

Definition	The precise date on which an object or objects leaving the organisation is due to be delivered at its destination.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a exit authorisation.
Information group	Object exit information

Depositor

Definition	The person or organisation from whom a loaned or temporarily deposited object was obtained, if different from the Current owner or Lender.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for each object or group of objects.
Information group	Object entry information

Depositor's requirements

Definition	Requirements made by a depositor or owner concerning the deposit of an object or group of objects, including conditions for deposition of archaeological archives
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Use	Record once only for each deposit.
Examples	Not to be operated.
Information group	Object entry information

Dimension

Definition	The aspect of a part or component of an object being measured.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. The organisation should agree a standard method of measuring different types of object.
Examples	height; width; depth; diameter; weight; circumference; radius; trade; size
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Dimension measured part

Definition	The part of an object measured.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	base; frame; mount
Use	Record once only for a Dimension.
Information group	Object description information

Dimension measurement unit

Definition	The unit of measurement used when measuring a Dimension.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation, or use a standard abbreviation. Maintain a list of standard terms. The organisation should decide which are the standard units for different dimensions and types of object.
Examples	m; mm; inches; troy; grains
Use	Record once only for a Dimension.
Information group	Object description information

Dimension value

Definition	The numeric value of the measurement of a Dimension.
How to record	A number, without punctuation other than a decimal point where required. The value should be to the nearest point of detail dictated by the type of object and the needs of the procedure and the organisation.
Examples	987; 0.234
Use	Record once only for a Dimension.
Information group	Object description information

Dimension value date

Definition	The date on which the Dimension value was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year. This information is of particular importance to record changes during conservation.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Dimension value.
Information group	Object description information

Dimension value qualifier

Definition	The measurement of statistical deviation given for a dimension. If left blank, the assumption is that the Dimension accuracy recorded is thought to be correct. Do not use capitalisation or punctuation.
How to record	Use the standard statistical notation
Examples	+ or - 150; approximate; to the nearest cm
Use	Record once only for the Dimension recorded if there is any uncertainty.
Information group	Object description information

Display recommendations

Definition	Specific recommendations for the display of an object in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Do not open beyond 90 degrees to display - binding very tight.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object requirement information

Disposal date

Definition	The date an object is disposed of.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a disposal.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal method

Definition	The way in which an object is disposed of.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	transferred; destroyed; sold
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal new object number

Definition	The object number assigned to a deaccessioned object by the recipient.
How to record	As provided by the recipient.
Examples	TWMS:1996.12
Use	Record once only for an object disposed of to another organisation.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal note

Definition	Additional information about the disposal of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Infestation spreading, object isolated but needs to be disposed of as soon as possible.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal price

Definition	The total price paid for an object at disposal, including taxes for which the transfer is liable. Associated with the Object number. If no individual prices are known for specific objects in the group, use Group disposal price
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of disposal. Use Disposal note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	An object can only have one Object disposal price recorded.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal proposed recipient

Definition	The People, Person or Organisation proposed as recipients for an object to be disposed of by way of transfer, gift or sale.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for a disposal.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal provisos

Definition	Restrictions applying to all the objects to be disposed of.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Disposal recipient to be within the county.
Use	Record once only for a disposal.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal reason

Definition	The reason or justification for an object or objects being disposed of.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	This engine is no longer in working, there is a duplicate in good condition already in the collection.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Disposal information

Disposal recipient

Definition	The People, Person or Organisation receiving an object to be disposed of by way of transfer, gift or sale.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for a disposal.
Information group	<i>Disposal information</i>

Disposal reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to the disposal of an object or group of objects. The number should also refer to a file containing all written documentation about the disposal.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	D1993.123
Use	The same Disposal reference number can be used for one or more objects disposed of together, but an object can only have one Disposal reference number.
Information group	<i>Disposal information</i>

Distinguishing features

Definition	A description of features which could uniquely identify an object, bringing together details from other groups of units of information such as Identification, Inscription, Condition which could in a sentence uniquely identify an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. This information may be used in the event of theft to provide the Police with information which will help identify an object in the pursuit and recovery of an object.
Examples	Monogram on base, one handle replaced.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object identification information</i>

Edition number

Definition	A number assigned to an group of objects produced at the same time by the maker.
How to record	Record information about the number and nature of a limited edition or special run, e.g. prints, casts, etc. of which an object is one. Use Title to record the model number and Other number to record the serial number.
Examples	5th edition, 1993 release.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object description information</i>

Entry date

Definition	The date on which an object or group of objects enters the organisation.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990
Use	Record once only for an Entry number.
Information group	Object entry information

Entry method

Definition	The method by which an object or group of objects is deposited.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	in person; post; found on doorstep
Use	Record more than once for a deposit only if more than one Entry method is used
Information group	Object entry information

Entry note

Definition	Additional information about the deposit of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Enquiry needs to be completed by Friday; owner leaving the country.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object entry information

Entry number

Definition	A unique number assigned to the entry of an object or group of objects and used to track objects prior to their return or acquisition. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of objects entering the organisation for the first time. The number should be the one assigned to an entry form or receipt.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	E1993.123
Use	The same Entry number can be used for one or more objects received together, but an object can only have one Entry number at any one time.
Information group	Object entry information

Entry reason

Definition	The reason for an object or group of objects physically entering the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	enquiry; commission; loan
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object entry information

Environmental condition note date

Definition	The date to which the environmental condition note applies.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	6/10/1996
Use	Record once only for an Environmental condition note.
Information group	Condition and technical assessment information

Environmental condition note

Definition	A record of the environmental conditions in which an object is kept
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Stored in plastic box in wooden shed with leaking roof, 1/3/1990 to 3/1/1992.
Use	As many times as required for an object. Use in association with Environmental condition date to maintain a log of the environmental conditions in which an object has been kept.
Information group	Condition and technical assessment information

Environmental recommendations

Definition	Specific recommendations for the environment in which an object is to be displayed or stored in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	30 lux maximum uv light exposure due to ink type.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object requirement information

Exhibition begin date

Definition	The opening date of an exhibition at a particular Venue.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Exhibition reference number.
Information group	Use of collections information

Exhibition end date

Definition	The closing date of an exhibition at a particular Venue.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Exhibition reference number.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Exhibition organiser

Definition	The name of the Person or Organisation organising an exhibition.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	As many as required for an object or group of objects for each exhibition.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Exhibition reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the exhibition of an object or group of objects under the auspices of the organisation. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of an exhibition.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	X1993.123
Use	The same Exhibition reference number should be used for one or more objects exhibited together, but an object should only have one Exhibition reference number for any one exhibition.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Exhibition title

Definition	The name of an exhibition or display.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Use capitalisation for proper names. If the working title of an exhibition changes, update the title as required.
Examples	The Art of Mexico; Dinosaurs!
Use	Record once only for an Exhibition reference number.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Exit date

Definition	The date on which an object or objects leaves the organisation.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for each exit.
Information group	Object exit information

Exit destination

Definition	The Person or Organisation to whom an object is being sent.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for an exit.
Information group	Object exit information

Exit method

Definition	The method by which an object or group of objects leaves the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	collected by shipper
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one method applies.
Information group	Object exit information

Exit note

Definition	Additional information relating to the exit of an object which cannot be recorded elsewhere.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Refer to exit file for courier information and destination maps.
Use	Record once only for a exit.
Information group	Object exit information

Exit reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for a exit. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a exit. The number may be assigned to a exit note or receipt.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	D1993.123
Use	The same Object exit reference number can be used for one or more objects sent together, but an object can only have one Exit reference number for any one exit.
Information group	Object exit information

Field collection date

Definition	The date an object is collected in the field
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once for an object where required.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection event name

Definition	The name of an event at which an object was collected.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the event name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Mission Dakar - Djibouti; East Rudolf 1973
Use	Record more than once only if more than Field collection event applies.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection event reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to a field collection event. The number should also refer to a file containing written documentation about the event.
How to record	Record as found.
Examples	Watching Brief No.242; Project 123
Use	The same Field collection event reference number can be used for one or more objects.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection method

Definition	The method used to excavate or collect an object in the field
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	netted; shot; trapped; salvaged; found dead; photographed; metal detector; borehole; purchased; commissioned; exchanged
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one method applies.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection note

Definition	Additional information about the place or method of field collection or excavation.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Site very wet following flooding.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection number

Definition	A number or code assigned to an object collected in the field before an Entry number or Object number is assigned.
How to record	Record precisely as assigned by field collector or excavator, using the same punctuation and capitalisation.
Examples	F345
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection place

Definition	The place where an object was excavated or collected in the field.
How to record	It may be necessary to record several units of information, including for example, a context, town or country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	As for Place.
Use	Record once only for an object where required.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collection source

Definition	The social, socio-professional, ethnic, etc., groups from which an object was collected or bought. May be different from the group of production and/or the group use.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object collection information

Field collector

Definition	The Person or Organisation responsible for collecting a specimen or object in the field.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an object or specimen.
Information group	Object collection information

Form

Definition	The method used to mount or preserve a specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	dry; thin section; pinned; wet
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one Form applies.
Information group	Object description information

Geological complex name

Definition	The name of a geological complex from which a geological specimen was collected.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Central ring complex; Dartmoor Granite
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object collection information

Group disposal price

Definition	The total price paid for a group of objects at disposal including taxes for which the purchase is liable. If individual prices are known for specific objects in the group, use Disposal price.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of disposal. Use Disposal note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	A Group disposal price can be used for a number of objects, but any object can only have a single Group disposal price.
Information group	Disposal information

Group purchase price

Definition	The total price paid for a group of objects at acquisition, including taxes for which the purchase is liable. If individual prices are known for specific objects in the group, use Object acquisition price.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Acquisition note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	A Group purchase price can be used for a number of objects, but any object can only have a single Group purchase price.
Information group	Acquisition information

Habitat

Definition	A term describing the surroundings and environment of the area where a specimen was collected in the field.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	dune; salt marsh; freshwater lake
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object collection information

Habitat note

Definition	Additional information about the habitat of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Dune facing north subject to high tides.
Use	Record once only for a Habitat.
Information group	Object collection information

Handling recommendations

Definition	Specific recommendations for handling an object in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Neck extremely fragile; handle at base only. Do not wear gloves to handle - friable paint surface.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object requirement information

Hazard

Definition	Details of potential hazards to people or other objects that the handling and storing of an object can present.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	poisonous; radioactive
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Condition and technical assessment information

Hazard date

Definition	The date on which a Hazard was identified.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Hazard.
Information group	Condition and technical assessment information

Hazards note

Definition	Details of potential hazards to people or other objects that the handling and storing of an object can present which are not recorded using controlled terminology in Hazard.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Explodes on sharp impact; always move with adequate packing.; Infested with woodworm.; Off-gases acetic acid.
Use	Record in association with Hazard.
Information group	<i>Condition and technical assessment information</i>

Indemnity confirmation date

Definition	The date confirmation of indemnity cover is received from the indemnifying body.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Indemnity reference number.
Information group	<i>Indemnity information</i>

Indemnity note

Definition	Additional information about the indemnity, including any special conditions which apply.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Not covered in transit; obtain additional insurance when moving.
Use	Record once only each time an object is part of an indemnity procedure.
Information group	<i>Indemnity information</i>

Indemnity reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number of the indemnity as assigned by the organisation. The number should be a reference to written documentation about the indemnity, which should include a copy of the indemnity.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	I1993.123
Use	The same Indemnity reference number can be used for one or more objects covered by the same indemnity agreement , but an object can only have one Indemnity reference number at any one time.
Information group	<i>Indemnity information</i>

Indemnity renewal date

Definition	The date when a Government Indemnity arrangement is due for renewal.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990
Use	Record once only each time an object is part of an indemnity procedure. Note that renewal will take place ahead of the end date of the indemnified period.
Information group	Indemnity information

Information source

Definition	The People, Person or Organisation providing information recorded.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	As many times as required each time information is added to the record.
Information group	Amendment history

Information source date

Definition	The date information is supplied to be added to the record.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a supply of information for the record.
Information group	Amendment history

Information usage

Definition	Information on the use made of the record and associated resources
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Used in multimedia essay on the Vikings.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Use and provision of information

Inscriber

Definition	The People, Person or Organisation responsible for inscribing an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content or Inscription description.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription content

Definition	The text inscribed as part of the decoration or construction of an object recorded in the original language.
How to record	Describe the inscriptions and marks on an object entering any inscribed text exactly as seen as regards spelling, punctuation and capitalisation. If inscription is on several lines, use SPACE/SPACE to indicate this. If the inscription or part of the inscription is illegible, put that part in square brackets.
Examples	Greetings from Cowes / Isle of Wight
Use	Record once only for each separate inscription on an object.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription date

Definition	The date on which an inscription was made.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the production stage which the date is related to. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to an object's production.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record as required when recording Inscription units of information
Information group	Object description information

Inscription description

Definition	A description of non-textual marks inscribed on an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Note its shape, size and content.
Examples	Triangle in circle, approximately half an inch in diameter.
Use	Record once only for an Inscription content.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription interpretation

Definition	The interpretation of an inscription or mark on an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The symbol of the 'fish' is derived from the scriptures as 'fishers of men' and from the Greek word for 'fish' and Jesus Christ both of which shared the same first two letters.
Use	Required in association with Inscription content and Inscription description.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription language

Definition	The language used in a textual inscription on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	French; Japanese
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content
Information group	Object description information

Inscription method

Definition	The method used to inscribe a mark or text on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	incised; painted
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content or Inscription description.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription position

Definition	A term describing the position of an inscription on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	base; inside; rim; back; left
Use	Record once only for each occurrence of the inscription on an object.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription script

Definition	The script used in a textual inscription on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and initial capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Cyrillic; Glagolitic
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription translation

Definition	A translation into the organisation's first language of a textual inscription on an object.
How to record	Use equivalent grammar and punctuation to that in the original language.
Examples	Cast in Italy.
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription transliteration

Definition	The transliteration of a textual inscription on an object.
How to record	Record using the exact equivalent grammar and punctuation used in the original language.
Examples	Lusippos epoiese
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content or Inscription description.
Information group	Object description information

Inscription type

Definition	The form or function of the inscription.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. Note if the form or function of the mark or inscription is unclear.
Examples	brand; decoration; estate stamp; label; maker's mark; graffiti
Use	As many times as required for an Inscription content or Inscription description.
Information group	Object description information

Insurance note

Definition	Additional information about the insurance, including any special conditions which apply.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Not covered in transit; obtain additional insurance when moving.
Use	Record once only each time an object is part of an insurance procedure.
Information group	Insurance information

Insurance policy number

Definition	The number of the insurance policy as assigned by the Insurer.
How to record	Use the number exactly as provided by the Insurer.
Examples	GI86585700-1
Use	Record once only each time an object is part of an insurance procedure.
Information group	Insurance information

Insurance reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number of the insurance as assigned by the organisation. The number should be a reference to written documentation about the indemnity, which should include a copy of the indemnity.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	Ins1993.123
Use	The same Insurance reference number can be used for one or more objects covered by the same insurance policy, but an object can only have one Insurance reference number at any one time.
Information group	Insurance information

Insurance renewal date

Definition	The date when an insurance policy is due for renewal.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for an Insurance policy number. Note that renewal may take place ahead of the end date of the indemnified period.
Information group	Insurance information

Insurer

Definition	The name of the Person or Organisation responsible for insuring an object or group of objects.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	More than one Insurer can only be recorded for an object if it is jointly insured.
Information group	<i>Insurance information</i>

Label/raisonné text

Definition	The text used for an exhibition or display label or a handlist or catalogue.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. The organisation may have its own 'house style'.
Examples	COPPER KETTLE, 1860s This kettle was used in the main kitchen of Andale Hall. Donated by Mr. John Evans.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object use information</i>

Label text date

Definition	The date that a Label text used for an exhibition or display label or a handlist or catalogue was produced.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993; 12.3.1993
Use	Record once only for a Label/raisonné text.
Information group	<i>Object use information</i>

Legal/licence requirements

Definition	Details of any legislation (other than associated rights) which applies to an object while in the organisation's custody, whether acquired or not.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Refer to relevant acts of parliament as precisely as possible.
Examples	Current firearms certificate on file E.1234.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object requirement information</i>

Legal/licence requirements held

Definition	Details of any licences or certificates held (other than copyright or other rights of use or performance) which applies to an object while in the organisation's custody, whether acquired or not.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Associated documentation may be held in the file referred to by Entry or Acquisition reference numbers.
Examples	MOT certificate.; Fire arms certificate.
How to record	As many times as required for an object. Use with Legal/licence requirements held begin date, Legal/licence requirements held end date and Legal/licence requirements held renewal date to record the currency of the licence held.
Information group	Object requirement information

Legal/licence requirements held begin date

Definition	The first date on which a licence or certificate held by the organisation is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for each licence or certificate held. Use with Legal/licence requirements held.
Information group	Object requirement information

Legal/licence requirements held end date

Definition	The last date on which a licence or certificate held by the organisation is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for each licence or certificate held by the organisation. Use with Legal/licence requirements held.
Information group	Object requirement information

Legal/licence requirements held number

Definition	The unique number stated on the licence or certificate held by the organisation
How to record	Use the number exactly as it appears on the licence or certificate.
Examples	N1234
Use	Record once only for each Legal/licence requirements held.
Information group	Object requirement information

Legal/licence requirements held renewal date

Definition	The date when a licence or certificate held by the organisation is due for renewal. Use this unit where the renewal is to be applied for in advance of the Legal/licence requirements held end date).
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990
Use	Record once only for each licence or certificate held by the organisation.
Information group	Object requirement information

Lender

Definition	The details of a People, Person or Organisation lending an object to the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, for a Person, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	More than one Lender can be recorded for an object only if it is jointly owned.
Information group	Loan in information

Lender's authorisation date

Definition	The date on which the lender's authoriser gives approval for a loan in to proceed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a loan in.
Information group	Loan in information

Lender's authoriser

Definition	The name of a member of staff giving final approval for the loan in to proceed.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a loan in.
Information group	Loan in information

Lender's contact

Definition	The details of a Person designated by the lender of an object to be responsible for dealing with the loan on their behalf.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a Lender.
Information group	Loan in information

Loan in contact

Definition	The name of the Person assigned responsibility for managing a loan in on behalf of the own organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Loan in information

Loan in conditions

Definition	Conditions applying to objects as part of the loan in agreement, including conditions for deposition of archaeological archives
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Light levels to be restricted to 50 lux.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Loan in information

Loan in note

Definition	General information about a loan in.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Lender concerned about environmental conditions; refer to recent gallery monitoring project.
Use	Record once only for a Loan in reference number.
Information group	Loan in information

Loan in reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to the loan of objects from outside the organisation. The number should also refer to a file containing written documentation about the loan.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	L1993.123
Use	The same Loan in reference number can be used for one or more objects loaned together, but an loaned object can only have one Loan in reference number at any one time.
Information group	Loan in information

Loan out note

Definition	General information about a loan out.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Borrower funds limited - possible cost sharing required.
Use	Record once only for a Loan out reference number.
Information group	Loan out information

Loan out reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to the loan of objects to other organisations. The number should also refer to a file containing all written documentation about the loan out.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	LO 1993.123
Use	The same Loan out reference number can be used for one or more objects loaned together.
Information group	Loan out information

Loaned object status

Definition	The stage in the Loans out procedure which an individual object to be loaned out has reached.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	requested; authorised; agreed; conservation; requested; sent; photography requested; refused; returned
Use	Record once only at any time for any object. Previous Loaned object statuses may be retained, but should be associated with the Loaned object status date in order to identify the current
Information group	Loan out information

Loaned object status date

Definition	The date on which an Loaned object status was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Loaned object status.
Information group	Loan out information

Location access note

Definition	Information about the access to a specific Location.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Height of entrance to gallery 7 feet. Object hoist will not fit through the door and manual help will be required to move heavy objects.
Use	Record once only for any Location.
Information group	Location information

Location address

Definition	The address of a Location where it is not to be found on the main site of an organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a building name, street name and town/city. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Address heading.
Examples	See under Address.
Use	Record once only for any one Location.
Information group	Location information

Location condition note

Definition	Information about the condition of the location, including such as the environmental conditions or state of cleanliness.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. To record the suitability of an object to a location, use Current location fitness.
Examples	Walls damp, window broken.
Use	The Location condition note may be repeated in association with Location condition note to provide a history of conditions.
Information group	Location information

Location condition note date

Definition	The date on which Location condition note was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record in association with Location condition note to provide a history of the conditions in a location.
Information group	Location information

Location date

Definition	The date an object was place at the Current location.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Current location.
Information group	Object location information

Location identifier

Definition	A unique name, number, or identifier for a display or storage Location. It can also apply a Location on a computer system used for digital objects.
How to record	Must be of sufficient and appropriate detail to locate any object precisely and may be expressed as a hierarchy (e.g. building/room/case, etc.) or using a classification system if items are stored in strict classified order.
Examples	Annex 1 Store; G58; c:\objects\2005\
Use	Record once only for a Location.
Information group	Current location information

Location security note

Definition	Information about the security of a specific Location.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Case lock broken.
Use	Record once only for any Location.
Information group	Location information

Location type

Definition	The nature or category of a Location.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	display; storage; external
Use	Record once only at any time for any Location.
Information group	Location information

Loss/damage date

Definition	The date an object was first established as damaged or missing.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only each time an object is damaged or lost.
Information group	Loss information

Loss/damage method

Definition	The method by which an object or group of objects was lost to the collections.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	stolen; burnt; flood
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one Loss/damage method applies.
Information group	Loss information

Loss/damage note

Definition	Additional information about the loss of an object
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Warder reported the case broken and object found to be missing.
Use	Record once only each time an object is damaged or lost.
Information group	Loss information

Loss/damage reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to the record of the loss of an object or group of objects. The number should also refer to a file containing all written documentation about the loss of an object.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	Loss1993.1
Use	The same Loss/damage reference number can be used for one or more objects acquired together, but an object can only have one Loss/damage reference number.
Information group	Loss information

Loss/damage reporter

Definition	The person reporting the loss or damage to an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only each time an object is reported to have suffered damage or loss.
Information group	Loss information

Material

Definition	The basic materials and media from which an object is constructed.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. Describe the medium and support of '2 dimensional' works. Do not describe surface coatings (e.g. varnish on paintings) unless they are of special interest. Do not include brand names.
Examples	wood; tempered steel; canvas; ebony; oil
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Material component

Definition	The name of a significant component, inclusion or trace in the material of which an object or specimen is made. This could also include a patina or corrosion product which has developed on an object and is of sufficient significance to require documenting
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms. The organisation should decide whether to use chemical abbreviations or full names, e.g. Cu or copper
Examples	shell tempering; carbon; textile; mineralised
Use	One or more times depending on how many material components are needed to record an object. Only significant components of objects that have undergone scientific examination and analysis should be recorded.
Information group	Object description information

Material component note

Definition	To record further information about a material component
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Crushed shell, irregular, range 1 -2.5mm.; Carbon sooting on lower exterior surface.; Compound in patina suggestive of burial in dry conditions.
Use	Record if necessary for a Material component
Information group	Object description information

Material name

Definition	The name commonly used to designate a particular or characteristic material, and additional to or further defining the basic material itself. This may be the vernacular or generally used name for a certain type of material or a brand name.
How to record	As it is commonly used
Examples	St Neot's-type ware; latten; Cistercian ware
Use	Record where necessary for an object
Information group	Object description information

Material source

Definition	The geographical origin of naturally occurring vegetable, animal or geological materials which either have been used to form an object or form specimens or deposits in their own right e.g. a quarry source for stone, country of origin of timber, geological outcrop for imported stone or fossil. (Note that this is separate from Object Production Place which is where the original materials are modified by human intervention to form an object)
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a village name or a country name, as well as the production stage with which the Place is associated. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Use	As many times as required for a Material.
Examples	See under Place.
Information group	Object description information

Movement contact

Definition	The name of the member of staff responsible for an object during the move.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a move.
Information group	Movement information

Movement method

Definition	The method used in the movement of an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	handcarried; trolley
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one Movement method applies.
Information group	Movement information

Movement note

Definition	Additional information about the movement of an object or group of objects which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Movement route to take into account current construction work.
Use	Record once only for a movement.
Information group	Movement information

Movement reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the movement of an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a movement.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	M1993.123
Use	The same Movement reference number can be used for one or more objects moved together.
Information group	Movement information

Next condition check/assessment date

Definition	The date on which the next condition check or technical assessment is due.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972
Use	Record once only for a Condition check/assessment.
Information group	Condition and technical assessment information

Normal location

Definition	The place within the organisation where an object is normally located.
How to record	Use a single term or code. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes. Ensure that all locations can be specifically described with unique terms.
Examples	U.23.2.4a room 1, case 3, shelf 4
Use	Record once only for any object or uniquely numbered part of an object.
Information group	Object location information

Number of objects

Definition	A record of the number of objects at the next level down in an object record.
How to record	When the recording information relates to a set of objects, record the total number of whole objects included in the set. When the recording information relates to an individual object, record the total number of separated or separable parts which an object comprises. Record the total figure. Do not use punctuation.
Examples	24 [Indicating, for example, a tea service with 24 pieces] 2 [Indicating, for example, a teapot and its lid]
Use	Record once in any record.
Information group	Object identification information

Object audit category

Definition	A code indicating the priority of an object for auditing purposes.
How to record	Use a single term or code. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	2; High; A
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time.
Information group	Object audit information

Object audit date

Definition	The date an object was last checked in its location.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Each Object audit date will be associated with an Audit reference number identifying separate audits. Previous object audit dates may be retained.
Information group	Object audit information

Object audit note

Definition	Additional information about the result or circumstances of the audit of an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Not found; however Dr. Smith checking with departmental researchers.
Use	Record once only for an object at any time. Each object audit note will be associated with an Audit reference number identifying separate audits. Previous Object audit notes may be retained.
Information group	Object audit information

Object audit result

Definition	The result of an audit of an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	present; missing; lost
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Each Object audit result will be associated with an Audit reference number identifying separate audits. Previous object audit results may be retained.
Information group	Object audit information

Object audit type

Definition	The type of audit carried out on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	condition; information; location
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one Audit applies.
Information group	Object audit information

Object component information

Definition	The unit of information describing an Object component name.
How to record	Use single terms without punctuation to name the unit of information describing the Object component name. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Object production person; Material; Technique
Use	As many times as required for an Object component name. The system will need to link the unit of information specified with the Object component name.
Information group	Object description information

Object component name

Definition	The non-separable part or component of an object which is being described.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source. Use the same sources of terminology as for recording Object name.
Examples	sleeve; handle; blade; buttonhole
Use	Use Object component name to indicate which non-separable and therefore un-numbered part of an object is being described. When describing separable and separately numbered parts of an object, use Object number to record the number of the part and create a new record related to that number. Use Object component information to identify the unit of information describing the Object component name.
Information group	Object description information

Object display status

Definition	The stage in the <i>Use of collections</i> procedure which an individual object to be displayed, has reached.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	requested; authorised; agreed; conservation; requested; photography; requested
Use	Record once only for an object. Previous Object display statuses may be retained, but should be associated with the Object display status date in order to identify the current Object display status.
Information group	Object use information

Object display status date

Definition	The date on which an Object display status was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Object display status.
Information group	Object use information

Object history note

Definition	The history of an object, including its creation, owners, vendors and the circumstances surrounding such events. Record information here which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe information such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Why an object was produced;• Who produced it;• Who owned it, sold it and why;• Individuals who used an object and for what purpose ;• Where an object is known to have been.
Examples	<p>This female Bewick swan nested at Caerlaverock for six years with the same mate. It was spotted in 1986 at Martin Mere without a mate. A year later it had not bred and was found to be sick. It was shot by the warden.</p> <p>This cabinet relates to Elizabeth Dashwood, first daughter of Sir James Dashwood, 2nd Baronet, and builder of Kirklington Park, Oxon. who married George Montague.</p>
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object history and association information

Object minimum liability sum

Definition	The sum determined by Government Indemnity Scheme which the indemnified organisation is responsible.
How to record	Use sterling currency.
Examples	750.00
Use	Record once only for an indemnified object.
Information group	Indemnity information

Object name

Definition	A description of the form, function or type of object.
How to record	<p>Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.</p> <p>The Object name may be a common name or classification of an object in a textual or codified form. By using broader terms in a classification system, the object can be classified as belonging to a particular group or category of objects.</p> <p>An object can be named at a very specific or a very general level, e.g. mug/drinking vessel/container/domestic artefact. The same object could also be assigned different names depending on the context, e.g. mug/commemorative item/studio pot. For this reason it is often necessary to record more than one Object name.</p> <p>Use Brief description to record a sentence describing an object more fully. Use Title to record the name of a specific object or group of objects. Use the Content units of information to describe anything depicted or described by an object.</p>
Examples	jug; Windsor chair; palaeoniscum freieslebeni; fossil; rhenium; 1.56 tape recording interview; painting; model; penny; groat; coin
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name currency

Definition	A statement of the status of an Object name.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	current; archaic
Use	Record once only for an Object name.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name level

Definition	A statement of the position of the Object name in a classification scheme.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	level 1; genus; species; class; group; subgroup
Use	Record once only for an Object name.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name note

Definition	Additional information about the Object name.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. This can be a description of an object name used to explain further or avoid ambiguity.
Examples	Devices, including sticks or blocks, used to apply polishing material.
Use	Record once only for an Object name.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name system

Definition	The classification system from which the Object name is taken.
How to record	The title of the classification system from which the Object name is taken using punctuation and capitalisation as they appear.
Examples	Art & Architecture Thesaurus; Nomenclature
Use	Record once only for an Object name.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name type

Definition	The type of Object name recorded.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	typological; simple; classified; taxonomic; denomination
Use	Record once only for an Object name.
Information group	Object identification information

Object name/title language

Definition	The language used for the Object name, Other name or Title given to an object.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	French; German
Use	Record once only for an Object name, Other name and Title.
Information group	Object identification information

Object number

Definition	A unique number identifying an object or specimens, including any separated parts.
How to record	<p>The following points should be considered when assigning an Object number:</p> <p>Only use a single number to describe a group of objects if they are too numerous to number individually and either contained in a single container or separately accounted for, e.g. a box of sherds or an archaeological archive</p> <p>Do not include in the number any classificatory components as these may change</p> <p>Avoid alphabetical components</p>
Examples	1992.1234; 1992.12.1
Use	Assign a unique Object number to each separated or separable part of an object.
Information group	Object identification information

Object offer price

Definition	The price at which an object is offered for sale to the organisation.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Acquisition note to record details of non-sterling currency offered.
Examples	750.00
Use	An object can only have one Object offer price recorded at any one time.
Information group	Acquisition information

Object production date

Definition	The date when a stage in the design, creation or manufacture of an object took place.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the production stage which the date is related to. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to an object's production.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production note

Definition	Additional information about an object's production.
How to record	<p>Use normal grammar and punctuation. Record information in the following areas: Detailed descriptions of techniques and processes used in the production, construction or decoration of an object, e.g.</p> <p>'Recipes' for the manufacture of clays, paints, varnishes, glazes, lacquers, etc. used in the production of an object.</p> <p>Accounts of the designs, moulds, sketches, etc. which were used in the design/creation of an object.</p> <p>If more than one Object production people/person/organisation/place are recorded, the Object production note should be used to give further information about the relationship between the different stages in production.</p>
Examples	<p>Biscuit fired to 1060C then painted with copper oxide and salt solution and gas-raku fired to 1050C. Cobalt oxide and salt in solution, dark patches added and refined in electric kiln.</p> <p>An architectural design included among the Adam drawings in the Soane Museum, No. 218, shows a cabinet of closely though not precisely similar type; and with the date 1st June 1771.</p>
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production organisation

Definition	An Organisation involved in the design, creation or manufacture of the object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, the nature of its involvement with the production process. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Organisation heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production people

Definition	A People involved in the design, creation or manufacture of an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename as well as the nature of their involvement with the production process. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production person

Definition	A Person involved in the design, creation or manufacture of an object. This may include the commissioner of an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename as well as the nature of their involvement with the production process. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production place

Definition	A Place where the design, creation or manufacture of an object took place.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including for example, a village name or a country name, as well as the production stage with which the Place is associated. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object production reason

Definition	The reason why an object was produced.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The table was commissioned for an exhibition of avant garde domestic furniture.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Object purchase price

Definition	The total price paid for an object at acquisition, including taxes for which the purchase is liable. Associated with the Object number. If no individual prices are known for specific objects in the group (e.g. a lot bought at auction), use Group purchase price.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition.
Examples	750.00
Use	An object can only have one Object purchase price recorded.
Information group	Acquisition information

Object purchaser offer price

Definition	The price which the organisation offers for the purchase of an object.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Acquisition note to record details of non-sterling currency offered.
Examples	750.00
Use	An object can only have one Object purchase offer price recorded at any one time.
Information group	Acquisition information

Object status

Definition	A statement of the standing of a natural science specimen or other object in relation to others in existence.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	type; paratype; holotype; paralectotype; copy; forgery
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Object valuation

Definition	The current worth of an object as assigned by a Valuer.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of valuation. Use Valuation note to record any non-sterling currency valuation amount.
Examples	1050; 2.50
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object valuation information

Object valuation date

Definition	The date the valuation of an object is assigned.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Object valuation.
Information group	Object valuation information

Object valuation note

Definition	Additional information about the valuation of an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Include any non-sterling currency valuation amount as well as details of the basis for the assigning of a particular value, e.g. replacement value, reason for valuation.
Examples	Large increase in value due to new collectors' interest; recommend close monitoring of the market over the next year. Unconverted valuation by Sotheby's New York - \$645.00
Use	Record once only for an Object valuation.
Information group	Object valuation information

Object valuation renewal date

Definition	The date the valuation should be re-assessed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Object valuation.
Information group	Object valuation information

Object valuation type

Definition	The type of valuation carried out on an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	original value; replacement value; current value
Use	Record once only for an Object valuation.
Information group	Object valuation information

Organisation courier

Definition	The name of the person assigned the responsibility to accompany an object on an external move.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	Object exit information

Organisation's additions to name

Definition	Additional information about the identity of an Organisation.
How to record	This information is used to uniquely identify an Organisation in the event of duplicate names. Record any information which serves to differentiate between this Organisation and another with a similar name.
Examples	Oxford [In the case of the Museum of Modern Art]
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's address

Definition	The address where an Organisation can be contacted.
How to record	It will be necessary to record several units of information, including for example, a building name, street name and town/city. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Address heading.
Examples	See under Address.
Use	As many times as required for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's association

Definition	The way in which an Organisation is associated with an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	manufacturer; commissioner; builder; moneyer
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's contact name

Definition	The representative of an Organisation who is normally liaised with.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a forename and surname. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's dissolution date

Definition	The date on which an Organisation formally ceased to be. This may be the date on which it was taken over or wound up.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's foundation date

Definition	The date on which an Organisation formally came into being.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's foundation place

Definition	Information about the place where an Organisation came into being.
How to record	It may be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, village or a country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's function

Definition	The activities which make up the main business of an organisation.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	bank; charity; publishing house; footwear manufacturer
Use	As many times as required for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's group

Definition	The social, socio professional, ethnic, or culture group to which the Organisation belongs.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	Belgic; Wessex culture; Romanesque; Anglian; Clactonian
Use	As many times as required for an Organisation. Note that some terms in common archaeological use can have a range of connotations and could be recorded under different headings, e.g. 6ic might be recorded as Date-period (chronological), Object production people (ethnic) or Cultural affinity (having intrinsic features and/or contextual associations which link object with "Belgic" material culture)
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's history

Definition	Information about the history of the Organisation.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe the Organisation, or its work in general. Do not record information which is specific to an object; use instead Production note or Object history.
Examples	Underwent several changes of mission in the 1930s before establishing its current role in the market.
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's main body

Definition	The name of an Organisation.
How to record	Use the name exactly as given by the Organisation. Maintain a list of names of Organisations.
Examples	British Museum; National Motor Museum
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's MDA code

Definition	The MDA-assigned code uniquely identifying an Organisation.
How to record	Usually five capital letters. Use especially to identify objects coming from outside the organisation.
Examples	LEWSA
Use	Record once only for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's reference number

Definition	A code identifying an Organisation associated with an object.
How to record	Record a unique number or code uniquely identifying the Organisation where an Organisation's MDA code does not exist. Maintain a list of standard codes used.
Examples	FLG1992
Use	Record once only for an Organisation..
Information group	Organisation information

Organisation's sub-body

Definition	The name of the sub-body of an Organisation.
How to record	As many times as required. Sub-bodies usually have generic names implying they are part of a larger unit and cannot be recorded as a main body. Maintain a list of names of sub-bodies for each Organisation.
Examples	Collections Department; Art School
Use	As many times as required for an Organisation.
Information group	Organisation information

Original object purchase price

Definition	The price paid for an object in the original currency at the time of purchase.
How to record	The cost of an object in the original currency using punctuation as required within the figure recorded.
Examples	750.00
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Acquisition information

Original object purchase price denomination

Definition	The denomination or currency of the Original object purchase price.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the term and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	American dollars; French francs
Use	Record once only for an Original object purchase price.
Information group	Acquisition information

Other number

Definition	An alternative number for an object other than the Object number.
How to record	Exactly as described on an object or documentation from which the Other number is taken. The number may be a former Object number or the number assigned by a lender or a previous owner, for example.
Examples	8789 L68-1990
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object identification information

Other number type

Definition	A description of an Other number assigned to an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	serial; lender; obsolete; unknown; previous
Use	Record once only for an Other number.
Information group	Object identification information

Owner

Definition	Details of a People, Person or Organisation who owned an object before title was transferred to the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, for a Person, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object history and association information

Ownership access

Definition	Information about the access to an object before title was transferred to the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term or code, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	1; 2; A; B; restricted
Use	Record once only for an Owner at any one time.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Ownership category

Definition	A term defining the type of ownership existing for an object before title was transferred to the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	public; private; company
Use	Record once only for an Owner at any one time.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Ownership dates

Definition	The dates when a People, Person or Organisation owned the title to an object.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	As many times as required for each period of ownership.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Ownership exchange method

Definition	The means by which title to an object is transferred between two Owners, before title was transferred to the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	gift; purchase; sale at auction
Use	Record once for each ownership exchange. Use Acquisition method for the transfer of title which occurs when an object enters the organisation's ownership. Use Object history note to describe the full circumstances of the change in ownership.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Ownership exchange note

Definition	Additional information about the ownership exchange, before title was transferred to the organisation, which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The exchange was made as part of a larger arrangement between those involved.
Use	Record once only for an Ownership exchange.
Information group	Object history and association information

Ownership exchange price

Definition	The total price paid for an object at when the title passed between two owners, including taxes for which the transfer is liable.
How to record	Use sterling currency. Convert any non-sterling currency into sterling, using the exchange rate at date of acquisition. Use Object history note to record details of non-sterling currency paid.
Examples	750.00
Use	Record once only each time a new Owner is recorded for an object.
Information group	Object history and association information

Ownership place

Definition	The place where an object was owned before title was transferred to the organisation.
How to record	It may be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, village or a country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	Record once only for each place where an object has been owned.
Information group	Object history and association information

Packing recommendations

Definition	Specific recommendations for packing an object in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	To be packed and stored upright at all times.
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time.
Information group	Object requirement information

Packing note

Definition	Information about the packing of an object or group of objects at the time of deposit at the organisation.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Glass taped, bubblewrapped.
Use	Record once only for a deposit.
Information group	Object entry information

People's association

Definition	The way in which a People are associated with a particular object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	builder; moneyer; designer
Use	As many times as required for an object
Information group	People information

People's culture

Definition	An identifiable type of civilisation.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the term and initial capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Aztec; Olmec
Use	As many times as required for a People.
Information group	People information

People's group

Definition	An identifiable community or division of a nation of People.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the term and initial capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Yoruba
Use	Record once only for a People.
Information group	People information

People's linguistic group

Definition	A broad grouping of People identifiable by common linguistic roots.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and initial capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Dravidian
Use	As many times as required for a People.
Information group	People information

Person's additions to name

Definition	Terms of honour used when the Person is referred to in relation to their position or work.
How to record	The formal form of reference preferred by a person or which is commonly used in reference sources. The information may include expressions denoting royal status, phrases consisting of the person's title and name of their state or people or professional qualifications. The organisation may have standard forms of reference.
Examples	Elizabeth I, Queen of England; DFC; BA; Equerry to George III
Use	As many times as required for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's address

Definition	The address where a Person can be contacted.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a building name, street name and town/city. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Address heading.
Examples	See under Address.
Use	As many times as required for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's association

Definition	The way in which a Person is associated with a particular object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	designer; painter; depicted in; criticised in; engraver; moneyer
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Person information

Person's biographical note

Definition	Information about the personal history of a Person.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe school and any further education, employment history, current post or professional history. Use also to indicate when the Person worked. Do not put here information which is specific to an object - this should go in an object-related field, such as Production note or Object history. Include information about any employment in an organisation if an employee.
Examples	Educated at Burston Village School, Suffolk. She was a carpentry apprentice and worked for 23 years at Wood's furniture makers, Bures.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's birth date

Definition	The date on which a Person was born.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the means by which the date was established. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to the Person's birth.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's death date

Definition	The date on which a Person died.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the means by which the date was established. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to the Person's death.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's forenames

Definition	A Person's given name.
How to record	Use the capitalisation and punctuation normally used by the Person. The organisation may have standard forms of name for use.
Examples	John J. G.; Anne S.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's gender

Definition	The sex of a Person.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	female; male
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's group

Definition	The group (social, ethnic, cultural) to which a person belongs or which he/she identifies him/herself.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	Belgic; Wessex culture; Romanesque; Anglian; Clactonian; Pre Raphaelite
Use	Use one or more times as required for each organisation. Note that some terms in common archaeological use can have a range of connotations and could be recorded under different headings, e.g. 6ic might be recorded as Date-period (chronological), Object production people (ethnic) or Cultural affinity (having intrinsic features and/or contextual associations which link object with "Belgic" material culture).
Information group	Person information

Person's initials

Definition	The initial letters of the Person's forenames and Person's surnames.
How to record	Record using capital letters.
Examples	J G; ASY
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's name notes

Definition	A note primarily for documentation purposes to explain why the particular form of name was chosen; notes to distinguish this Person from others with the same name.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	This spelling was used as the maker prefers the archaic form of the forename.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's nationality

Definition	A Person's official current nationality.
How to record	Do not use punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	British; Turkish
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's occupation

Definition	The occupation or employment of a Person.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	chief cashier; curator; museum director; farmer
Use	As many times as required for a Person
Information group	Person information

Person's place of birth

Definition	The Place where a Person was born.
How to record	It may be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, village or a country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's place of death

Definition	The Place where a Person died.
How to record	It may be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, village or a country. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Place heading.
Examples	See under Place.
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's reference number

Definition	A code identifying a Person associated with an object.
How to record	Use a unique number or code uniquely identifying the Person. Maintain a list of standard numbers or codes.
Examples	FLG1992
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's salutation

Definition	The form of greeting used in correspondence.
How to record	Use the form as it should appear at the beginning of a letter or other correspondence. The organisation may have standard forms of salutation.
Examples	Dear Jeff; Dear Lady Jean
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's school/style

Definition	The primary styles in which the Person worked.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation, only using capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	impressionist; neo-classical; surrealist
Use	As many times as required for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Person's surname

Definition	A Person's family name.
How to record	Use the capitalisation and punctuation used by the Person. The organisation may have standard forms of name for use.
Examples	See <i>SPECTRUM Terminology</i> pages on MDA website.
Use	Record once only a person. Cross references may be made between different forms of the Person's surname.
Information group	Person information

Person's title

Definition	The form of address used by a Person.
How to record	Use the title by which a Person is normally addressed in letters. If the title is normally abbreviated in common use, use the abbreviated form. Otherwise, spell out the title in full. Thee organisation may have standard forms of address used for a Person.
Examples	Mr; Ms; Sir; Reverend; Doctor
Use	Record once only for a Person.
Information group	Person information

Phase

Definition	A textual expression of the age or developmental phase of a natural science specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	adult; imago; larva; nymph; pupa
Use	Record once only for a specimen.
Information group	Object description information

Physical description

Definition	General visual appearance of an object.
How to record	<p>Use normal grammar and punctuation. Include a description of an object's completeness if appropriate (e.g. Lacks left arm). Comment on condition only as it affects completeness. Describe items which would be made using an object, e.g. clothing from paper patterns. The frame and mount should also be described if appropriate. The following issues might be addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What shape or form does it take?• Describe an object in reference to the direction the work faces (i.e. a sculpture's right side (proper right) not as the viewer). Do not use 'sinister' or 'dexter'.• Where and how is it decorated?• How is it mounted?• How is it constructed?• What colours have been used?• What scale is used?
Examples	<p>A draped figure of a woman stands with her arms out-stretched.</p> <p>Blue damask carpet of pomegranate pattern upon a ground of old cloth, with a broader border of purple velvet, at each corner of which are embroidered the arms of Pope Leo XI cut out of coloured silks, applied and outlined with gold thread stitched down.</p>
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Place association

Definition	The way in which a Place is associated with the object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Use past participle forms of verbs. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	manufactured; built; used
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Place information

Place context

Definition	A number, code or term identifying physical evidence of an archaeological event, such as a wall, pit or ditch.
How to record	Record precisely as used by the Field collector.
Examples	34; 56; XXI; kiln stoke-hole; North transept
Use	Record once only for an object if required.
Information group	Place information

Place context date

Definition	The date of a context.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	Record once only for a Place context or and Place context level.
Information group	Place information

Place context level

Definition	A level within a context.
How to record	Record precisely as used by the Field collector.
Examples	1; 5; B16; XB
Use	Record once only for an object if required.
Information group	Place information

Place coordinates

Definition	The precise location of a place expressed according to a chosen system.
How to record	Use the appropriate standard format.
Examples	AS 3192 6024
Use	Record once only for a Place name. Additional Place coordinates can be recorded if different Place coordinate types are used; for example a Latitude/longitude reference and a Grid reference may be recorded for the same location.
Information group	Place information

Place coordinates qualifier

Definition	The measurement of accuracy of a given for Place coordinates.
How to record	Use the standard statistical notation. If left blank, the assumption is that the Place coordinates accuracy recorded is thought to be correct. Do not use capitalisation or punctuation.
Examples	+ or - 10; approximate
Use	Record once only for Place coordinates, if there is any uncertainty.
Information group	Place information

Place coordinates type

Definition	The locating system used to describe the coordinates of a Place.
How to record	Use a single code or term, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard codes or terms.
Examples	LL (Latitude & longitude); NGR (National Grid reference); UTM (Universal Transverse Mercator); Altitude Depth
Use	Record once only for Place coordinates.
Information group	Place information

Place environmental details

Definition	Environmental information relevant to an object, such as details about preservation conditions of the surrounding matrix.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	waterlogged; carbonized bed
Use	Record for a Place name as required.
Information group	Place information

Place feature

Definition	The name by which a feature associated with an object is normally known.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation and capitalisation only where they form a part of the name. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	Ben Lawers; Beachy Head; Chun Castle
Use	As many times as required for a Place. Place feature can relate to Sites and Monuments details.
Information group	Place information

Place feature date

Definition	The date of the Place feature.
How to record	It may be necessary to use more than one unit of information to describe this date, e.g. a range of dates or a textual expression of the date as well as the production stage which the date is related to. Descriptions of these units of information are gathered together under the Date heading. Use Date - period to record non-numeric dates and eras relating to an object's production.
Examples	As for Date.
Use	As many times as required for a Place feature.
Information group	Place information

Place feature type

Definition	The nature or category of Place feature recorded.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	island; mountain; bay; valley; cliff; castle; tomb
Use	As many times as required for a Place feature.
Information group	Place information

Place name

Definition	The name or title by which the Place is normally known.
How to record	Use punctuation and capitalisation where integral to the name.
Examples	Shrewsbury; North Sea; West Yorkshire; Ambridge; 21; Haddon Hall; Asia; Australasia; Orkney; Manhattan; Stoke; Newington; Scotland; Hobbs End
Use	As many times as required for a Place.
Information group	Place information

Place name type

Definition	The nature or category of Place recorded.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	baths; chambered tomb; market square; town; city; village; continent; sub-continent; site; building number; field; vice county; county; country; building name; state
Use	As many times as required for a Place, to reflect different uses of a site.
Information group	Place information

Place note

Definition	Additional information about Place which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The site is four miles north of Ambleside.
Use	Record once only for a Place name.
Information group	Place information

Place owner

Definition	The name of the owner of a Place associated with an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	Record more than once for a Place if jointly owned.
Information group	Place information

Place position

Definition	A precise position in a Place, usually to record the finding of an object in field collection.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Under a stone at the bottom of the cliff.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Place information

Place reference number

Definition	A code describing a Place associated with an object, excavation or specimen.
How to record	Use a single term or code, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes. May include an abbreviation of the Place name together with the year an object or specimen was found.
Examples	FLG1992
Use	Record once only for a Place.
Information group	Place information

Place reference number type

Definition	The category of Place reference number recorded.
How to record	Use a single term, using capitalisation and punctuation only where integral to the term used. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	SMR number; Project number; Scheduled monument number; Watching brief number
Use	Record as required in association with Place reference number.
Information group	Place information

Place status

Definition	A formal administrative or scientific status assigned to a place.
How to record	Use a single term, using capitalisation and punctuation only where integral to the term used. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	National Trust Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
Use	As many times as required for a Place.
Information group	Place information

Place type system

Definition	The classification system from which the Place feature type is taken.
How to record	Use punctuation and capitalisation as they appear.
Examples	RCHME; CIDOC
Use	Record once only for a Place feature type.
Information group	Place information

Planned removal date

Definition	The date an object is due to be returned from a Current location which is not its Normal location.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Current location, if different from the Normal location. Do not record if the Current location and the Normal location are the same.
Information group	Movement information

Procedure begin date

Definition	The date on which a procedure is begun.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date a procedure began, e.g. (Loan out) date begun. Record to describe a procedure covering more than one object. The Procedure group of units is available to record information about a project which involves objects beyond those in the individual record. Record once only for each occurrence of a procedure. Note that this unit applies to procedures which begin and end in less than a day as well as those which take a longer period of time.
Information group	Common procedural units

Procedure end date

Definition	The date on which a procedure ended.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the end date of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Date ended. Record once only for each occurrence of a procedure. Record to describe a procedure covering more than one object. The Procedure group of units is available to record information about a project which involves objects beyond those in the individual record. Note that this unit applies to procedures which begin and end in less than a day as well as those which take a longer period of time.
Information group	Common procedural units

Procedure manager

Definition	The person or organisation responsible for carrying out a procedure.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several unit of information including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for a Procedure title. Record to describe a procedure covering more than one object. The Procedure group of units is available to record information about a project which involves objects beyond those in the individual record.
Information group	Common procedural units

Procedure note

Definition	Additional information about procedure which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	The audit was carried out in two stages, beginning in Room A, and prioritising all works pre 1850.
Use	Record once only for a Procedure title. Record to describe a procedure covering more than one object. The Procedure group of units is available to record information about a project which involves objects beyond those in the individual record.
Information group	Common procedural units

Procedure title

Definition	The name assigned to a procedure or project carried.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Audit of main store 1996
Use	Record once for a procedure carried out.
Information group	Common procedural units

Process date

Definition	The date on which a process is completed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Process.
Information group	Process information

Process method

Definition	The method used to carry out the process on an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	alteration; preparation
Use	Record more than once for an object only if more than one method applies.
Information group	Process information

Process note

Definition	Additional information about the process of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Framed for Francis Towne exhibition at the Tate Gallery.
Use	Record once only for a process event.
Information group	Process information

Process person/organisation

Definition	The Person or Organisation responsible for carrying out a process on an object.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, for a Person, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation headings as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation.
Use	As many times as required for a process event.
Information group	Process information

Process reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the process carried out on an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a process.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	P1993.123
Use	The same Process reference number can be used for one or more objects processed together.
Information group	Process information

Reason

Definition	The reason for the procedure taking place.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	conservation; sold; transferred; display; research; loan out
Use	As many times as required for a procedure. Use in association with Information group headings to record the reason for a procedure taking place. e.g. (Loan out) Reason. As many times as required for each occurrence of a procedure for an object or group of objects. Note that there are separate units of information for Acquisition reason, Entry reason, Disposal reason, Object production reason.
Information group	<i>Common procedural units</i>

Recall date

Definition	The date on which the next stage of a conservation process is due.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972
Use	Record once only for a conservation event.
Information group	<i>Object conservation and treatment information</i>

Record type

Definition	Describes the level of description which the record contains.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	collection; set; population; ensemble; archival piece; part
Use	Record once only for a record.
Information group	<i>Record information</i>

Recorder

Definition	The Person recording the information.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for each time information is added to the record.
Information group	<i>Amendment history</i>

Recording date

Definition	The date information is added to the record.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an addition to the record.
Information group	Amendment history

Recording progress

Definition	A description of the state of development of information about an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	in progress; altered draft; to be approved
Use	As many times as required for a recording event.
Information group	Amendment history

Reference

Definition	Details of a bibliographic or other reference to an object. The reference can be in any media e.g. published, unpublished, audio, video, computer record
How to record	Use a standard short description format agreed by the organisation. The organisation may record more detailed information in other Reference units.
Examples	<p>The citation order for books and journals in:</p> <p>BSI British Standard recommendations for reference to published materials. London: BSI, 1989 is as follows:</p> <p>Books: Surname, Forename. <i>Title</i>. Place of publication: Publisher, Date of publication. No. of pages p., illustrations. (Series title) ISBN.</p> <p>Journals: <i>Title</i> ISSN Year Date Location.</p>
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Reference information

Reference association

Definition	A single term describing the nature of the relationship between the Reference and an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	cited; figured; utilised; illustrated
Use	As many times as required for a Reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference author/editor

Definition	The Person or Organisation responsible for the intellectual content of a referenced work.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. Use the form as appears in the referenced work.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	As many times as required.
Information group	Reference information

Reference details

Definition	Details, pages, illustrations, etc. of a bibliographic reference.
How to record	Use the organisation's agreed form of recording.
Examples	pp200-204; fig.21; map 5
Use	Once only for a reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference note

Definition	Details of the specific nature of the relevance of the Reference to the object, including an abstract if required.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. The reference may be to such as a published, or unpublished film, sound or reproduction source.
Examples	Discusses the collection in the light of disputes on attribution recently raised in Holland.
Use	Record once only for a Reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference number

Definition	A number or identifier unique to a Reference.
How to record	Use any reference number providing access to the work either in the organisation, local library or other source. For reference only appearing on the world wide web use the URL.
Examples	93.AA.123; 0550102345; http://www.mda.org.uk/acc.htm
Use	Record once only for the reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference publication date

Definition	The Date when a referenced work was published.
How to record	Always give all four digits for the year. Use a standard form if more detail is recorded.
Examples	2005; 1984; 1715
Use	Record once only for the reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference publication place

Definition	The Place where a referenced work was published.
How to record	Use the name of the city or other locality.
Examples	New York; London; Cambridge
Use	As many as required by the reference.
Information group	Reference information

Reference publisher

Definition	The Organisation or Person responsible for the publication of a referenced work.
How to record	Use the form as appears on in the referenced work.
Examples	MDA; Oxford University Press
Use	Record as many times as required.
Information group	Reference information

Reference title

Definition	The title of a referenced work.
How to record	Use the form as appears in the referenced work.
Examples	SPECTRUM: The UK Museum Documentation Standard
Use	Record once only.
Information group	Reference information

Reference type

Definition	A term describing the nature of the Reference.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	film; sound recording; published book
Use	As many times as required for a Reference.
Information group	Reference information

Removal date

Definition	The date an object is actually removed from a Current location.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Current location.
Information group	Movement information

Request date

Definition	The date on which a requester makes a request for a procedure to occur.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	3/10/1996
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date a Request was made e.g. (Loan out) Request date, (Reproduction) Request date. Use Request date for each occurrence of Request.
Information group	Common procedural units

Requested action date

Definition	The date on which a requester wishes for a procedure to occur.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	3/10/1996
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date on which a requester wishes a procedure to take place, e.g. (Loan out) Requested action date, (Reproduction) Requested action date.
Information group	Common procedural units

Requester

Definition	The name of the person or organisation making a request for a procedure to occur.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person and Organisation.
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the name of the person who makes a request for a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Requester, (Reproduction) Requester. Use with Request date to record when the request was made.
Information group	Common procedural units

Research/use of object date

Definition	The date an object is researched or used.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a research or use of collections.
Information group	Use of collections information

Research/use of object method

Definition	The way in which an object is researched or used.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	examined; performed; demonstrated
Use	As many times as required for a research event.
Information group	Use of collections information

Research/use of object note

Definition	Additional information about the research or use of an object which has not been recorded elsewhere using controlled terminology. This could include an object's operations log.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Demonstrated at Bridlington Car Rally to mark 50th anniversary of its invention.
Use	As many times as required for a research event.
Information group	Use of collections information

Research/use of object provisos

Definition	Restrictions applying to the research or use of an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Use	Record once only for each occurrence or research or use.
Examples	Manuscript not to be fully transcribed without Trustees permission.
Information group	Use of collections information

Research/use of object reference number

Definition	The unique number assigned to the research or use of an object or group of objects. The number should also refer to a file containing all written documentation about the disposal.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	RES1993.123
Use	The same Research/use of object reference number can be used for one or more objects disposed of together. There may be a separate Research/use of object reference number for each occurrence of research or use of an object.
Information group	Use of collections information

Research/use of object result

Definition	Information about the outcome of the research or use of object(s).
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	dated; identified; exhibited
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Each Research/use of object result will be associated with an Research/use of object reference number identifying separate researches or uses. Previous Research/use of object results may be retained.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Researcher/user

Definition	The Person or Organisation researching or using an object or group of objects.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation heading as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Use of collections information</i>

Responsible department

Definition	The name of a department or section of the organisation charged with the responsibility for an object and maintaining its documentation.
How to record	Use a single term or code. Use capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	geology; ceramics and glass; invertebrates; fine art
Use	Record once only for an Object number
Information group	<i>Object identification information</i>

Return date

Definition	The date an object is due to be returned to or collected by the Current owner or Depositor.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for an Entry number.
Information group	<i>Object entry information</i>

Right begin date

Definition	The first date on which a right is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a right.
Information group	Object rights information

Right end date

Definition	The last date on which a right is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a right.
Information group	Object rights information

Right holder

Definition	The holder of the right associated with an object or any other work (e.g. personal information held by an organisation.)
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the People, Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under People, Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	More than one Rights holder can be recorded, if the rights are jointly held.
Information group	Object rights information

Right note

Definition	Any details of the rights not covered elsewhere.
How to record	Use normal spelling and punctuation. Record, for example, the copyright status of the original painting, where the organisation holds copyright of a photograph of it.
Examples	Organisation holds right to use the photograph for its internal purposes only. Copyright for the original painting belongs to artist.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object rights information

Right reference number

Definition	A unique number identifying a right.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	R1993.123
Use	Record once only for a right.
Information group	Object rights information

Right type

Definition	The specific type of right being recorded in relation to an object, document, photograph or work of art, record, etc.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	copyright; publication rights; data protection right
Use	Record once only for each type of right residing in an item.
Information group	Object rights information

Rights in begin date

Definition	The first date on which a rights in licence is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	Object rights in information

Rights in consent status

Definition	The status of the process of obtaining a licence to use rights not held by the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	applied for; granted; refused
Use	Record once only for a request for a licence.
Information group	Object rights in information

Rights in consent status date

Definition	The date on which an Rights in consent status was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate a component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Rights in consent status.
Information group	Object rights in information

Rights in end date

Definition	The last date on which a rights is licence is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	Object rights in information

Rights in holder

Definition	The primary Person or Organisation holding the rights the organisation is receiving a licence to use.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation heading as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	Record only for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights in information</i>

Rights in note

Definition	Any details of the rights in licence, not recorded elsewhere
How to record	Use normal spelling and punctuation. Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact details of any subsequent rights holders or second contact details of the Rights in holder;• Copyright status of the original work, where the organisation is being granted a licence for the use of the rights of a copy of it;• Sub-licences to third parties;• Warranty/indemnity clauses;• Comments on past history, date previous rights granted, etc;• Any restrictions (e.g. if any modifications are permitted).
Examples	Any publication must be accompanied with the a credit line for the copyright holder.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	<i>Object rights in information</i>

Rights in reference number

Definition	A unique number identifying the grant of a licence to use rights not held by the organisation.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	RI1993.123
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights in information</i>

Rights in type

Definition	The specific type of right being granted in the licence by the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	copyright; publication right
Use	Record as many times as required for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights in information</i>

Rights out authorisation date

Definition	The date on which the Rights out authoriser gives final approval for a licence to use the organisation's rights.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a grant of a licence.
Information group	Object rights out information

Rights out authoriser

Definition	The person giving final approval for a licence to use the organisation's rights.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a grant of a licence.
Information group	Object rights out information

Rights out begin date

Definition	The first date on which a rights out licence is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	Object rights out information

Rights out consent status

Definition	The status of the process of applying for a licence to use the organisations rights.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	applied for; granted; refused
Use	Record once only for a request for a licence.
Information group	Object rights out information

Rights out consent status date

Definition	The date on which an Rights out consent status was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate a component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Rights out consent status.
Information group	Object rights out information

Rights out end date

Definition	The last date on which a rights out licence is current.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights out information</i>

Rights out note

Definition	Any details of the rights out licence, not recorded elsewhere
How to record	Use normal spelling and punctuation. Record: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact details of any other Person or Organisation who holds the rights being granted;• Copyright status of the original work, where the organisation is granting a licence for the use of the rights of a copy of it;• Sub-licences to third parties;• Warranty/indemnity clauses;• Comments on past history, etc;• Any restrictions (e.g. if any modifications are permitted).
Examples	Any publication must be accompanied with the standard credit line.
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights out information</i>

Rights out reference number

Definition	A unique number identifying the grant of a licence to use the organisation's rights.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	RO1993.123
Use	Record once only for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights out information</i>

Rights out requester

Definition	The Person or Organisation requesting a licence to use rights held by the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person or Organisation heading as appropriate. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation.
Use	Record as many times as required for a licence.
Information group	<i>Object rights out information</i>

Rights out type

Definition	The specific type of right being granted in the licence by the organisation.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	copyright; publication right
Use	Record as many times as required for a licence.
Information group	Object rights out information

Salvage priority code

Definition	A record of the salvage priority assigned to an object or group of objects.
How to record	Use a single term or code, without punctuation. Maintain a list of standard terms or codes.
Examples	1; 2; A; B
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Previous Salvage priority codes may be retained, but should be associated with the Salvage priority code date in order to identify the current Salvage priority code.
Information group	Object requirement information

Salvage priority code date

Definition	The date on which a Salvage priority code was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Salvage priority code.
Information group	Object requirement information

Scheduled begin date

Definition	The date on which a procedure is scheduled to begin.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the scheduled start of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Scheduled begin date, (Reproduction) Scheduled begin date. Record once only for each procedural reference number e.g. Reproduction reference number. Note that this unit applies to procedures which begin and end in less than a day as well as those which take a longer period of time.
Information group	Common procedural units

Scheduled end date

Definition	The date on which a procedure is scheduled to end.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the scheduled end of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Scheduled end date, (Reproduction) Scheduled end date. Record once only for each procedural reference number e.g. Reproduction reference number. Note that this unit applies to procedures which begin and end in less than a day as well as those which take a longer period of time.
Information group	Common procedural units

Security recommendations

Definition	Specific recommendations for the security of an object in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Alarmed showcase.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object requirement information

Sex

Definition	The gender of an animal specimen.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	male; female; hermaphrodite; androgynous; unknown
Use	Record once only for a specimen.
Information group	Object description information

Shipper

Definition	The name of the Person or Organisation assigned responsibility for removing object(s) from the organisation's premises.
How to record	It will be necessary to units several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	As many times as required for an object or group of objects for each exit event.
Information group	Object exit information

Shipper's contact

Definition	The name of the person assigned responsibility for a exit by an approved Shipper.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a Shipper.
Information group	Object exit information

Shipping note

Definition	Additional information about shipping an object, including details of the transit requirements.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Keep upright - needs air-ride suspension.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object exit information

Special conditions of loan

Definition	A statement of conditions on the loan of an object from an organisation in addition to those normally laid down.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Collection must always have an attendant in the same room.
Use	Record once only for a Loan out reference number.
Information group	Loan out information

Special requirements

Definition	Requirements that may be unique or special to a particular object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Cannot be fumigated - sacred object.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object requirement information

Status

Definition	The stage in the procedure which an individual object has reached.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	planned; authorised; agreed; closed; cancelled; refused; requested; to be reviewed; conservation; requested; photography requested
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the status of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Status, (Reproduction) Status Record once only for each procedure. Previous statuses may be retained, but should be associated with the appropriate Status date in order to identify the current status.
Information group	Common procedural units

Status date

Definition	The date on which the status of a procedure was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date of the status of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Status date, (Reproduction) Status date. Record once only for Status.
Information group	Common procedural units

Status review date

Definition	The date on which the status of a procedure will next be reviewed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Use in association with Information group headings to record the date of the status of a procedure, e.g. (Loan out) Status review date, (Reproduction) Status review date. Record once only for Status.
Information group	Common procedural units

Storage requirements

Definition	Specific recommendations for the storage of an object in addition to the measures which would normally be taken for that type of object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Keep at lower than usual relative humidity.
Use	Record once only for an object.
Information group	Object requirement information

Stratigraphic unit name

Definition	The stratigraphic unit from which a field collection was made.
How to record	Use a single term. Maintain a list of standard terms, based on a recognised terminology source.
Examples	lower Jurassic; bathonian; Devonian
Use	May only be recorded more than once for an object or group of objects if it is associated with a different Stratigraphic unit type.
Information group	Object collection information

Stratigraphic unit note

Definition	Additional information about a Stratigraphic unit name.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Formerly an estuarine series.
Use	Record once only for a Stratigraphic unit name.
Information group	Object collection information

Stratigraphic unit type

Definition	The nature of the Stratigraphic unit name from which a field collection was made.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	biostratigraphic; lithostratigraphic; chronostratigraphic; era; stage; system formation; bed; zone; host rock type; age
Use	As many times as required for a Stratigraphic unit name.
Information group	Object collection information

Style

Definition	Styles or schools relating to an object.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms. Styles can be based on historical or geographical grounds, among others.
Examples	Fauve; Gothic; Maruyama School; Staffordshire; Romanesque
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Technical assessment

Definition	Detailed assessment of the condition of an object and the required treatment.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	Badly infected with woodworm. Requires emergency treatment. See Report: GCM 0573
Use	Record once only for an object at any one time. Use previous Technical assessments to record changes in the condition of an object.
Information group	Object condition and technical assessment information

Technical assessment date

Definition	The date on which a Technical assessment of an object was recorded.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Technical assessment.
Information group	Object condition and technical assessment information

Technical attribute

Definition	The name of a technical attribute possessed by an object which can be described and quantified.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	magnetic tape type; record speed
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object description information

Technical attribute measurement

Definition	The measurement of a named Technical attribute.
How to record	Use a number or term, using punctuation and capitalisation only where integral. Maintain a standard set of terms.
Examples	metal; 78
Use	Record once only for a Technical attribute.
Information group	Object description information

Technical attribute measurement unit

Definition	The unit of measurement used when measuring a Technical attribute.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation, or use a standard abbreviation. Maintain a list of standard terms. The organisation should decide which are the standard units for different attributes and types of object.
Examples	rpm
Use	Record once only for a Technical attribute measurement if required.
Information group	Object description information

Technique

Definition	Processes, methods, techniques or tools used to fabricate or decorate an object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	carved; painted; etched; pencil
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	Object production information

Technique type

Definition	A term describing the nature of the Technique.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	decoration; woodwork
Use	As many times as required for a Technique.
Information group	Object production information

Title

Definition	The name assigned to an object or group of objects by the artist/creator or collector at the time of origin or subsequent titles either specifically assigned or generally understood to refer to it.
How to record	Always record the Title with punctuation and capitalisation exactly as given. If an object is titled 'Untitled' record this as the title. Model names and numbers can be regarded as titles. Record the capitalisation as used by the artist or manufacturer.
Examples	Silver Shadow; Barbie; Virgin and child
Use	The same Title can be assigned to one or more objects. An object can have more than one Title. A Title can be used for a named collection where the Record type indicates that the record is describing a collection.
Information group	Object identification information

Title translation

Definition	A translation into the organisation's first language of a title as recorded.
How to record	Use equivalent grammar and punctuation to that in the original language.
Examples	The robbers
Use	As many times as required for a Title. Use Title to record named collections of objects.
Information group	Object identification information

Title type

Definition	The nature of the Title recorded.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	assigned by artist; series; generic; collection; popular; trade
Use	As many times as required for a Title.
Information group	Object identification information

Transfer of title number

Definition	A unique identifying number for a transfer of title or acquisition event. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a transfer of title or acquisition process. The number may be assigned to a transfer of title form.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	T1993.123
Use	The same Transfer of title number can be used for one or more objects acquired together, but an object can only have one Transfer of title number.
Information group	Acquisition information

Treatment date

Definition	The date on which conservation treatment is completed.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Record all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1990; 06/1972; 1899
Use	Record once only for a Treatment report.
Information group	Object conservation and treatment information

Treatment report

Definition	Detailed description of the conservation treatment undergone by an object.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation.
Examples	X-rayed. Treated with a solution of tannic acid, distilled water and ethanol. For a full details see Report no: RLS - 1244
Use	Record once only for a single Conservation reference number.
Information group	Object conservation and treatment information

Unit of information added

Definition	The name of the unit of information added to the record or updated.
How to record	Use the name the unit of information as in SPECTRUM.
Examples	Title; Brief description; Comments
Use	Record each time a Unit of information is added to the record or updated. Associate with a Recorder, Recording date, Information source and Information source date. Systems will implement the recording of this information in different ways.
Information group	Amendment history

Unit of information scheme

Definition	Information recording the classification system, thesaurus or termlist from which a recorded term is taken.
How to record	Use a single term, using punctuation only where it forms a part of the name and capitalisation for proper names. Maintain a list of standard terms. Use only where there are not specific associated system units e.g. for Object name use Object name system to record the termlist or class system used.
Examples	in house termlist
Use	The unit should be associated with units of information where termlists or classification systems are required, such as Material, Content activity.
Information group	Amendment history

Usage

Definition	A single term describing the use of a particular kind of object.
How to record	Use a single term, without punctuation or capitalisation. Maintain a list of standard terms.
Examples	magic; religious
Use	As many times as required for an object.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Usage note

Definition	The use of a kind of object by the original or subsequent owners.
How to record	Use normal grammar and punctuation. Describe the functional or decorative use of an object at different stages in its history. Indicate whether the use was widespread and traditional or specific to an individual or organisation. For the use of specific objects, use Object history note.
Examples	Used in the Japanese tea ceremony. Used for filling paper bags with pharmaceutical pills.
Use	Record once only for an object or group of objects.
Information group	<i>Object history and association information</i>

Valuation reference number

Definition	A unique identifying number for the valuation of an object or group of objects. It should serve as the reference to written documentation of a valuation.
How to record	May include: a prefix to distinguish it from other reference numbers; the year; and a running number.
Examples	V1993.123
Use	The same Valuation reference number can be used for one or more objects valued together.
Information group	<i>Valuation information</i>

Valuer

Definition	The Person or Organisation responsible for valuing an object on behalf of the organisation.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname, a forename and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person and Organisation headings as appropriate.
Examples	See under Person or Organisation as appropriate.
Use	Record once only for a Valuation reference number.
Information group	<i>Valuation information</i>

Venue

Definition	The Organisation responsible for the venue where an exhibition is to be held.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a name and an address. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Organisation heading.
Examples	See under Organisation.
Use	More than one Venue can be recorded for an object if an exhibition is touring.
Information group	Use of collections information

Venue authorisation date

Definition	The date on which the Venue authoriser gives final approval for a Venue to take a loan out.
How to record	Always record the day, month and year in the same order. Always use the same character to separate each component. Be as specific as possible and indicate if the date is not known. Always give all four digits for the year.
Examples	8/10/1993
Use	Record once only for a Venue.
Information group	Use of collections information

Venue authoriser

Definition	The name of a member of staff at a lending organisation giving final approval for a Venue to take a loan out.
How to record	It will be necessary to use several units of information, including, for example, a surname and a forename. The descriptions for these information units are gathered together under the Person heading. The organisation may have standard forms of names for use.
Examples	See under Person.
Use	Record once only for a Venue.
Information group	Use of collections information

Afterword

On the shoulders of giants

Just a final personal word of thanks to all those who have helped me in the editing of SPECTRUM, without you it would not have happened!

Don't Panic!

Now you have read, or at least skimmed through, *SPECTRUM* where do you go from here? What you do next depends on what your aim was in looking at the standard. Here are a few suggestions:

- **General museum practitioner, looking to set up a documentation system** - Have a look at MDA's fact sheets, they provide bite-sized introductions to the major procedures, See: <<http://www.mda.org.uk/facts.htm>>
- **Preparing your organisation for Museum Accreditation in the UK** - have a look MDA's *Museum Accreditation Pack* on our website. See: <<http://www.mda.org.uk/accreditation/>>
- **You are a commercial collections management vendor and want to be able to say that your system is SPECTRUM compatible** - in parallel with the launch of SPECTRUM MDA has launched a Partner's Scheme, one benefit of which is that MDA will accredit your system. See: <<http://www.mda.org.uk/memp.htm>>
- **Want to use SPECTRUM in your country but find parts of it not relevant** - MDA welcomes the use of SPECTRUM by organisations outside the UK. If you want to discuss your needs contact us at: spectrum@mda.org.uk

The road goes on and on

This revised version of SPECTRUM is the first which appears only in electronic form – either as a PDF or as HTML on the MDA website. The great advantage of this is that MDA will be able to constantly update and quickly publish it to the users of the standard. The downside is that we have no excuse in keeping it up-to-date!

As part of that process I invite you to become engaged in the, now continuous, updating process. If you want to take part, or have just noticed a difficulty with SPECTRUM, contact:

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[PS. A drink to the first person to tell me where the three subtitles in the section come from – MDA staff excluded!]

Afterword