

Object exit

Definition

Recording when objects leave the buildings you are responsible for and pass out of your direct care.

Scope

Use this procedure to recording when objects leave your museum for whatever reason. By 'museum' we include any off-site stores that are under your control. This can be as simple as an enquirer collecting an object they left for identification, in which case you might just need a further signature on the relevant object entry form to confirm safe handover. In more complex situations you will use **Object exit** as part of other procedures; in fact, any time objects leave your buildings, including objects you are disposing of.

This is a Spectrum primary procedure. UK museums must meet the standard set out below to fulfil the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Scheme.

The Spectrum standard

You should have a **policy** covering the exit of objects from your buildings. This could either be a standalone document or part of a wider collections management policy. Either way, in deciding your policy you will most likely need to consider these questions:

- In what circumstances might objects leave the museum?
- Who can authorise objects leaving the museum in each of these circumstances?
- What levels of condition checking are needed for each scenario?
- What signatures are required to prove that objects have left your care and someone else has taken responsibility for them?
- How will you make sure that relevant location and movement records are updated?

You should also have a written **procedure** that explains the steps to follow when an object leaves your museum. Spectrum's suggested procedure is a useful starting point, but however you do it, your own procedure should meet the following minimum requirements:

Minimum requirement	Why this is important
You can account for all objects that have left your museum for whatever reason.	The inventory of objects in your care is up to date and accurate.
All objects leave with appropriate authorisation.	Objects do not leave without the agreement of those who are responsible for their care.
You get appropriate signatures to prove that you have transferred objects into someone else's care.	You have proof that borrowed objects have been returned to their owners.
You keep up-to-date location and movement records for objects that belong to you even when they are away from the museum.	<p>You can account for all of your objects at all times.</p> <p>Objects do not become 'lost' when they leave your premises.</p>

Suggested procedure

Authorise the exit according to your policy and the linked procedure.

There are several linked procedures that might lead to **Object exit**. In all cases, the release of objects from your care should be authorised in writing (eg using an exit form or receipt). As well as your general policy, you should check relevant records to make sure there are no specific reasons why certain objects should not leave your care.

If the objects are being transported, go to **Location and movement control**.

If the objects are being collected directly from you by the owner, go on to the next step below. Otherwise go to **Location and movement control**.

Schedule collection of the objects.

Arrange for the objects to be at the agreed pick-up point at the agreed time.

Get a signature to confirm the safe handover of the objects.

This might be on an object exit form, or could be a further signature on the relevant object entry form. See **Note 1** for further guidance.

Update location records.

Record the following information to an object's location record as soon as possible:

Movement information

- New location - **Current location**. This should be a **Location reference name/number** (use a standard term source).
- Date of move - **Removal date** (use a standard format).
- Person moving the object - **Movement contact** (use a standard form of name).
- Signature of person accepting custody of the object.
- Reason for move - **Movement reason** (use a standard term source).
- Additional information about the move as required - **Movement note**.

If you wish to know where an object was in the past, for each old object location, record:

- **Previous location**. This should be a **Location reference name/number** (use a standard term source).
 - **Previous location begin date** (use a standard format).
 - **Previous location end date** (use a standard format).

Record information about the exit.

This may be done on a multi-copy paper form or in a computer system. If an object is on an entry form and is simply being returned to its owner, a separate exit form is not required if the entry form has space for the owner to acknowledge safe receipt. See **Note 1**.

Exit information that may need to be recorded includes:

Object identification information

- **Object number** (for objects belonging to you).
- **Brief description** (use a standard term source).

Object entry information

- **Entry number** (for objects belonging to others).

Object exit information

- **Exit reference number**.
- Person authorising the exit in your organisation - **Exit authoriser** (use a standard form of name).
 - **Exit authorisation date** (use a standard format).
- Signature of person receiving the exiting objects (or reference to signature, if a computer record see *Exit note* below).
- Name and details of the destination of the exit:
 - **Exit destination** (use a standard form of name).

- **Address.**
- Reason for exit - **Exit reason** (use a standard term source).
- How the exit was carried out - **Exit method** (use a standard term source).
- **Exit date** (use a standard format).
- When and how the objects will be returned to your premises (if relevant):
 - **Expected return date** (use a standard format).
 - **Expected return method** (use a standard term source).
- **Exit note**, giving:
 - Reference to appropriate file containing additional details (eg 'loans in' file if object was on loan and is being returned).
 - Reference to an authorising signature.
 - Any other information about the exit not recorded elsewhere.

Object valuation information

- **Object valuation**, if required for indemnity or insurance.

Object condition and technical assessment information

- **Condition.**

Update insurance and indemnity records as needed.

Go to **Insurance and indemnity** if you need to update your insurance or indemnity cover, particularly if high-value items have left your buildings and are no longer your responsibility.

Return to whichever linked procedure triggered the object exit.

Guidance notes

Note 1: Object exit records

To ensure survival of object exit records use good-quality, archival paper and permanent ink, and make backup copies. One set (preferably the originals) should be stored securely away from the set in use.

Object exit forms

Object exit forms are always used when objects from your collections leave the museum, for example as loans or for disposal. Object exit forms will vary from one museum to another, however many use the Collections Trust exit form.

Object entry forms

These can be used when an object, which has never become part of your collection, is returned to its owner. The object may have come to you for

identification or as a possible gift. When you return the object to its owner you can use the original object entry form, completed when the object was taken in, to obtain the owner's signature to acknowledge return. This constitutes proof of the object leaving your premises, and you do not fill out an object exit form. If you use the Collections Trust object entry form there is a section on the form which can be signed by the owner.

Object exit

