

1.6 Disposal Policy (Interim)

1.6 ■ Please submit a copy of the museum's Disposal Policy. If objects have been de-accessioned and/or disposed, please submit a fully completed sample of the records kept.

■ This is a Minimum Standard for Interim Accreditation.

Please enclose formally approved documents and fully completed sample records along with your Application Form

■ Requirements

- (i) Applicants must submit a Disposal Policy for the museum.
- (ii) Applicants must submit evidence to show that the governing body has formally approved the Disposal Policy. A signed and dated minute from the governing body will fulfil this requirement. It should clearly indicate the formal adoption of the Disposal Policy by the governing body.
- (iii) Applicants must ensure that actions pertaining to the disposal of objects are fully documented. Object records for disposal of items and/or de-accessioned items must be maintained.
- (iv) The Disposal Policy must be discussed annually by the governing body, with a detailed review of the Policy conducted every five years.

■ Guidelines

Disposal Policies vary for individual museums. It is recommended that applicants follow the proposed structure below, including all sections relevant to their institution.

- A. De-accessioning is the formal removal of an acquired object from the museum's Accession Register. Decisions to de-accession must be made exceptionally. Disposal may arise in instances when objects have never been accessioned. This may arise when an object is offered to a museum and found to be of little or no interest or value. In this instance de-accessioning does not arise. Objects may also be disposed to another accredited museum in instances when the objects may or may not have been already accessioned. Donors should be made aware of a museum's decision to de-accession or dispose of objects which they have donated to the museum's collections.
- B. Disposal and de-accessioning should be considered in limited circumstances only. A minimal statement might be considered to the effect that disposal is only undertaken in exceptional circumstances. These circumstances should be outlined in the Disposal Policy.
- C. The potential reasons for disposal and de-accessioning could be as follows:
 - (a) Lack of title or other legal reasons including Government decision to repatriate objects acquired illegally.
 - (b) More appropriate to another museum and transferred accordingly.
 - (c) Condition: lack of facilities or resources to carry out necessary level of remedial work. Responsible provision needs to be made for an object's transfer to some other public institution in such circumstances.
 - (d) Condition: damaged or deteriorated beyond use.
 - (e) New scientific information which lessens or negates the importance of a given object.
 - (f) Transfer to other section within museum or organisation because of new scientific information or requirements.
- D. All records of de-accessioning and/or disposal should be kept. The accessions register, original accession information and catalogue should be annotated to record the disposal.

The record of disposal should indicate:

- (a) Reason for disposal
- (b) That the object has been disposed
- (c) Method of disposal and new location of object, if relevant
- (d) Date of disposal
- (e) Signature of staff responsible

A photographic record of the disposed and/or de-accessioned object/s should be kept.

- E. Procedures in relation to the de-accessioning or disposal of any object must be formally discussed and approved by the museum's governing body. Individual curatorial decisions in this area should normally be approved in this way, except for minor instances involving, for example, non-artefact material.