THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM’S POLICY FOR ENTRY OF OBJECTS TO THE MUSEUM

Name of museum: Royal Air Force Museum

Name of governing body: Trustees of the Royal Air Force Museum

Delegated authority given to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) by the Board of trustees for Collections related Policies and Procedures

Date on which this policy was approved via SLT delegation: 20 February 2017

Date at which this policy is due for review: 2 years after approval

INTRODUCTION

1. This document sets out the Royal Air Force Museum’s overall policy concerning the entry to the Museum of objects of all kinds. It describes the circumstances when entry will be permitted and when it will not, and sets out how different categories of entry will be treated. Authority requirements and arrangements, special conditions applying and insurance/indemnity responsibilities are specified. The final section describes the policy on documenting entry transactions. All objects will be subject to full entry documentation as described at paragraph 21.

2. In order to better inform prospective donations the Royal Air Force Museum operates an online donations system. All proposed donations are encouraged to come through this system in line with the SPECTRUM pre-entry procedure. Any object proposed for inward loan to the Museum will be subject to approval by the Collections Development Committee prior to entry.

CIRCUMSTANCES WHEN OBJECTS WILL OR WILL NOT BE PERMITTED ENTRY

3. An object will be accepted into the Museum if:-

a) it is returned from outward loan;

b) it has been acquired by gift, bequest, purchase or exchange and falls within the Collections Development Policy;

c) it is on inward loan for exhibition or research;

d) a depositor requires an object to be examined and identified and has made prior arrangements with a curator of the relevant collection;

e) it is to be held temporarily for copying;

f) it is a Royal Air Force Museum object being returned from contractors;

g) it has been sent anonymously and is to be held pending action under the Collections Development policy.
Entry Policy

RAFM/DCM/2/6/4/1

4. An object will not be accepted if:-
   a) it is evidently in a hazardous or unstable condition;
   b) the depositor simply requires a valuation of the object;
   c) it is brought to the Museum for identification without prior arrangement;
   d) it is an unsolicited deposit of a firearm, ammunition or explosive;
   e) it falls outside the Collecting Policy.

5. An object may be accepted subject to special handling procedures if:-
   a) it is believed that it contains asbestos;
   b) it is believed that it contains a radioactive source (e.g. luminous paint).

Objects of this type will only be accepted into the Museum by previous agreement with the relevant curator / radiological officer / Collections Care and Conservation member of staff and Head of Collections.

6. Any incoming object showing signs of pest infestation, dampness or mould will be isolated from other collections.

DUE DILIGENCE

7. Except in the case of anonymous donations, it is the responsibility of the curator accepting objects for acquisition or loan-in to have carried out the necessary due diligence checks. No object can be formally accepted into the collection until these checks have been performed satisfactorily with the support of the Department of Collections Services where required.

TREATMENT OF OBJECTS ON ENTERING THE MUSEUM

8. Objects accepted for entry will fall into one of five categories. These five and the treatments appropriate to each, are as follows:

Temporary Deposits

9. The following paragraphs define circumstances when deposits will be regarded as temporary:
   a) Objects deposited for copying (for example log books or photographs). The maximum deposit period is two months;
   b) Books borrowed through the Inter-Library loan scheme;
   c) Objects brought in in lieu of online object donations system, with prior approval from the curator of the relevant collection;
   d) Objects deposited for identification.
Any object considered to have a value in excess of £1,000 will only be accepted as a temporary deposit providing the prior approval of the Head of Collections, on the behalf of the CEO, has been obtained. In their absence, the approval of the Director of Public Programmes will be obtained.

Loans-In

10. For objects deposited with the Museum on loan, which are not covered by the temporary deposit category, refer to the Loans In policy (RAFM/DCM/2/6/7/1).

Acquisitions

11. For objects deposited with a view to the Museum acquiring them, which are not covered by the definitions above, refer to the Collections Development policy (RAFM/DCM/2/6/3/1).

Objects Being Returned from Contractors

12. For objects processed by contractors, refer to the appropriate entry procedure.

Objects Being Returned from Loan-Out

13. For objects returned from outward loan, refer to the Loans-Out Procedure (RAFM/DCM/2/6/8/2)

Deposits from MOD sources

14. Occasionally MoD personnel arrive at the Museum without prior notification wishing to deposit large quantities of material from disbanded RAF units or stations. Potential acquisitions such as this must be assessed in accordance with the Museum’s collecting policies, and it is therefore important for the Museum to gain an appraisal of the material in advance. Deposits from MoD sources should therefore only be accepted by prior arrangements.

AUTHORISATION FOR ENTRY

15. The Entry form must be completed and signed by (in order of preference):

a) a member of the curatorial department, authorised by the Head of Collections;

b) a member of the Department of Collections Services, authorised by the Head of Collections Services;

16. If none of those listed in Section 13 is available, entry will not be permitted.

17. Firearms and/or ammunition will be permitted entry only if approval for a specific object (or objects) has been given by the Director of Public Programmes.

RETURN OF DEPOSITS

18. Where an object entered the Museum at the Museum’s instigation, for whatever reason, the responsibility and cost of return will be borne by the Museum.
19. Where the object entered the Museum other than at the Museum’s instigation it will be considered to be unsolicited. The Museum cannot be held accountable for any costs incurred in the event that unsolicited objects are not required by the Museum.

20. Unsolicited deposits should be collected within a specified time period according to the reason for the deposit, as described below:

a) An unsolicited deposit brought in for *identification* should be collected by the Depositor within six weeks of the entry date;

b) If the Museum declines to acquire an unsolicited deposit offered for *acquisition* it will notify the Depositor, by recorded delivery, within six weeks of the entry date. This notification shall stipulate that the Depositor then has six weeks from the date of the notification to collect the object/s.

In both cases, in the event of object(s) not being collected by the specified date, the Museum reserves the right to either pass the objects to the Auxiliary Collection, a suitable museum, along with all related documentation or, where appropriate, to destroy them. In such cases the relevant curator will need to submit a *Justification for Disposal/Dispersal* form to the Collections Development Committee.

21. Un-accessioned anonymous donations will be submitted to the Director of Public Programmes for permission to dispose after six weeks has elapsed from arrival into the Museum. Disposal method will be in accordance with section 16 of the Collections Development Policy (RAFM/DCM/2/6/3/1).

**INSURANCE/INDEMNITY**

22. The Museum is currently unable to carry responsibility for indemnity for temporary deposits, as defined at paragraph 9. The Depositor is responsible for any insurance and this will be made clear to the Depositor, in writing, at the time of deposit. For insurance/indemnity of loans-in see Loans-In policy. (RAFM/DCM/2/6/7/1).

*NB This section is to be revised once the policy on Indemnity is developed.*

**DOCUMENTATION**

23. Except for certain exclusions agreed in advance through the Museum Registrar, the Museum will maintain an entry record, on a prescribed entry form, of every object entering any of the Museum’s premises under this policy, for whatever length of time and for whatever purpose (*including* loans-in and the return of loans-out). The entry documentation must be completed and authorised as set out above under Authorisation for Entry.

24. Full details of the Deposit will be recorded including, where applicable:

a) full name/address/telephone number/email address of the current Owner and Depositor;

b) the date of the deposit;
c) which member of Museum staff completed the form;

d) the quantity and description of the objects concerned;

e) the condition of the object(s);

f) the purpose of the deposit (copying, studying, etc);

g) method of entry;

h) valuation (if known);

i) a declaration establishing ownership of the object(s) being deposited;

j) requirements of the owner/depositor including return details and confidentiality of information provided to the Museum;

k) agreed return date in the case of unsolicited donations;

l) the Depositor’s signature signifying their agreement to the Museum’s conditions of acceptance;

m) the curator to record the location of the deposited materials on the Entry Form.

25. Other information may be recorded where relevant such as:

a) Insurance details (in the case of loans-in);

b) note of packing materials (where they are an integral part of the object);

c) hazards note (e.g. chemical, radioactive where previously approved);

d) legal/licence requirements (e.g. firearms licence);

e) any associated rights (e.g. copyright);

26. Curators and other persons authorised in Section 13 to take entry of objects must draw the depositor’s attention to the Museum’s terms and conditions for accepting deposits, as printed on the back of the Entry Form.

27. Except for certain exclusions agreed in advance through the Museum Registrar, all persons depositing objects with the Museum will be issued with a receipt setting out terms and conditions, in the form of a copy of the completed entry documentation.

28. Except for certain exclusions agreed in advance through the Museum Registrar, when objects are sent via post the Depositor will be sent an Entry Form to be signed and returned, thus acknowledging the Museum’s conditions of receipt/acceptance. If the signed entry form is not returned within eight weeks the Museum will return the object(s) to the Depositor. If the Depositor has not provided an address and it is not possible to return the object(s) by any other means the Museum
will seek to establish whether it is legally able to acquire or dispose of the object(s). All such cases will be referred to the Collections Development Committee for a decision.

29. When objects arrive anonymously an entry form will be completed by the curator of the relevant collection including as many details as possible and noting that it is an anonymous deposit.

30. Entry Forms will be numbered uniquely, in the manner set out in the Entry Procedure.

31. A permanent record will be kept of all objects entering the Museum, in bound volumes of the original entry form. These will be kept in the files of the curatorial department(s) concerned.

32. Copies of any correspondence concerning entry of an object will be filed with the relevant entry documentation and on departmental correspondence files.

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