



## Documentation Policy

### 1 Introduction

This policy applies to the East Asian, Islamic, Western, Rare Books, and Archives collections. The Chester Beatty (CB) will ensure that these aims are met for all new acquisitions. With the exception of *Accession* and *Labelling and Marking*, this Policy also applies to every object or collection on loan to the CB. This policy should be read in conjunction with all other Collections Management Policies.

### 2 Principles of Collections Management

*'To maintain and preserve the collection of the Chester Beatty and to make them available in the most appropriate ways for the use and enjoyment of the public and for scholarly study and research'*

### 3 The Chester Beatty Documentation Policy

- a. The CB must have documentary proof of legal title for each object; this must meet International ethical standards.
- b. Each object must be recorded in the appropriate Accessions Register.
- c. Each object must be given a unique CB number.
- d. The CB number must be marked on or labelled with the object.
- e. The Accessions Register must be updated to record the CB number.
- f. Each object must have a corresponding catalogue record either on Adlib (East Asian, Islamic and Western Collections) or Libero (Rare Books Collection) with the 'minimum standard' cataloguing information (CB no, title or description, and location).
- g. The most current location for each object must be recorded on the appropriate database
- h. All documentation procedures must meet the accepted UK Museum Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums*.
- i. Each procedure is supported by the relevant forms as appearing in the appendices, which may be revised periodically. These should be completed by the relevant member of staff and given to the Registrar for filing. Forms can be found on the file server: \Policies and Procedures\Policies relating to the Collections\Collections Management \Forms.
- j. The CB has an initial Documentation Backlog Plan (2013-2015) to meet these aims for all objects acquired prior to this policy. This plan is incorporated into the CB's Strategic Plan and reviewed annually by the Collections Management Team.
- k. This policy will be reviewed annually, with a full review every five years.

## 4 Object Entry

See *Object Entry and Exit* form

\*Please note, except under rare circumstances, the CB does not take temporary deposits and these are only taken once approved by the Director, Head of Collections or Registrar, see *Acquisitions Policy*.

- a. Every object left in the care of the CB (either for consideration for donation or purchase, curatorial enquiry or conservation), is recorded on an *Object Entry and Exit* form, this excludes:
  1. Loan material (this is covered by the *Loans Policy*).
  2. New acquisitions purchased or donated prior to arrival (covered by the *Acquisitions Policy*).
- b. Forms must be signed by both the depositor, or their representative, and a designated member of staff – copies will be distributed as stated on the form.
- c. All objects received will be referred to Conservation for condition assessment and quarantine.
- d. All objects will be assigned a temporary deposit (TD) number and recorded on the collections management system (Adlib).
- e. Where practical each object will be digitally photographed.

## 5 Object Exit

See *Object Entry and Exit* form (conditions found on the reverse of the form).

- a. Objects can only be returned to a depositor, or acting representative, on presentation of Government ID such as a passport or Irish driver's licence along with their copy of the *Object Entry and Exit* form and subsequent signing of the appropriate section.
- b. The CB retains the right to dispose of any deposited, non-accessioned object after six months of the depositor being informed in writing that it is ready for collection; but only if depositor has made no attempt to collect the item or contact the CB to make other arrangements.
- c. The CB retains the right to dispose of any deposited object in the interests of conserving its own collections, for example from risk of infestation.

## 6 Accession Records – Transfer of Title

See *Transfer of Title* form (conditions are noted on the back of the form)

- a. Objects cannot be acquired without the minuted approval of the Board of Trustees, see *Acquisitions Policy*. This does not apply to Archival or Reference Library material.
- b. All new acquisitions must have a *Transfer of Title* form signed and dated by the rightful owner, or their representative.
- c. In the case of purchase from a dealer, saleroom, etc. a traceable receipt is acceptable in place of the *Transfer of Title* form.

## 7 Accessions Register

- a. Every new acquisition is recorded in the current *Accessions Register* at the CB, see *Acquisitions Policy*, and given a unique accession number.

- b. A full scan (pdf) of the *Accessions Register* is made in January to the end of the previous calendar year and saved on the CB's file server: Collections\Archives\CBL Acquisitions Registers.

## 8 De-accession Records

In the unlikely event that an accessioned object needs to be disposed, then the object must be de-accessioned. See *Disposal Policy*.

- a. The *Accessions Register* is amended to record the date and circumstance.
- b. The relevant record on Adlib is retired, not deleted, or on Libero the record is updated to record the disposal and removed from display on OPAC.
- c. If no record exists on Adlib/Libero, one will be created and subsequently 'retired'.

## 9 Conservation

- a. A conservation record will be made on Adlib/Libero for each object assessed, treated, examined, etc. in accordance with the *Caring for Collections Strategy*.

## 10 Labelling and Marking of Objects

- a. Each object is marked or otherwise labelled with its unique CB number.
- b. All labelling must follow the accepted standards as laid out in the CB's *Labelling and Marking Policy*.

## 11 Object Movements

- a. Every object must have its current/normal location recorded on Adlib/Libero.
- b. Any object leaving its current location must have that change recorded in Adlib/Libero.
- c. A movement is recorded in the appropriate Log Book or movement form EVERY time an object is removed from the Strong Room and the Book Store.
- d. For objects moving to and from other locations in the museum, a movement sheet must be completed and submitted to the Registrar at the end of the day.
- e. All location changes must be recorded in Adlib/Libero.
- f. Any object leaving the premises for any period must have that change recorded on Adlib. Objects on loan will have their location changed to 'Loan out' and the object record linked to the appropriate Loan record (see *Outgoing Loans*).
- g. From June 2019, a full scan (pdf) of both Movement Logs are made continuously throughout the year and are saved on the CB's file server: Collections\Registration Office\Location Updates.

Prior to this date, a full scan (pdf) of both Movement Logs have been saved on the CB's file server: Collections\Archives\Movement logs.

## 12 Exhibitions/Display

- a. All exhibitions, both internal and external, will have an *Exhibition* record on Adlib/Libero, see *Exhibitions Policy*; all objects in that display will be linked to that record.
- b. All objects, whether collections objects or loan objects, must be recorded on Adlib/Libero BEFORE they are put on display.

- c. When possible, all objects will have a security image taken prior to display, otherwise a photograph *in situ* will suffice.

## 13 Incoming Loans

- a. All Incoming loans are accompanied by a loan contract signed by the Director, see *Loans Policy*.
- b. All condition reports associated with incoming loans are held in the Registration Office
- c. All incoming loans are recorded on Adlib.

Each loan object is recorded on the internal *object catalogue* with a unique object number and is linked with that loan (and exhibition record where applicable).

## 14 Outgoing Loans

- a. All outgoing loans are accompanied by a loan agreement signed by the Director, see *Loans Policy*.
- b. For outgoing loans, an *Outgoing Loan* record is created; all objects are linked to that record; any objects also recorded on Libero are recorded in a notes field.
- c. At least one photograph will be taken prior to an object leaving the Library to be used for Condition Reports generated by the CB and for security reasons.

## 15 Photography

The CB is committed over time to the full professional digitisation of its collections. See *CB Imaging Prioritisation Policy*.

- a. All objects should have at least one digital photograph.
- b. Photographs of all new acquisitions will be taken by CB photographers. Photographs of all other objects will be taken by either conservation or curatorial staff unless professional photography can be organised.

## 16 Archives

The archives contain documentation relating to biographical information of Chester Beatty, the formation of his collection and general operations of the museum.

- a. While the archives are in the process of being arranged and catalogued each file will be given an appropriate unique number.
- b. Archive material is held in the Archive Room and will only be viewed in the Reading Room.
- c. When the reorganisation and numbering of archive files is complete, movements will be recorded in the Archive Room movement log.

## 17 Definitions and Abbreviations

<b>Acquisition</b>	the process by which the Library acquires legal title to an object.
<b>Accessions Register</b>	the log books that record all acquisitions into the Chester Beatty collections.
<b>Adlib</b>	a database that contains all records of the East Asian, Islamic, Western and Rare Book collections of the Chester Beatty and any loan objects and Conservation Treatment records.
<b>Catalogue</b>	the databases that contain all records of the CB collections
<b>Catalogue Record</b>	the minimum standard required using Adlib/Libero. For Adlib the required fields are: Administrative name, Collection, Object Number, Title and Current Location. For Libero the required fields are: Title, Object number and Current Location.
<b>CBL number</b>	is the unique number assigned to an accessioned object recorded on Adlib or Libero
<b>Collection</b>	an assemblage of acquired objects held and safeguarded by the Trustees of the Library.
<b>De-accession</b>	the process, including documentation that accompanies the disposal of an object from the CB's Collections.
<b>Disposal</b>	the act of the CB's formally relinquishing possession of an object in the Collections. For objects in the collections this will be carried out in accordance with the CB's <i>Acquisition</i> and <i>Disposal</i> Policies.
<b>Object</b>	a material thing, which has been selected because of its historic, artistic or other cultural significance, together with its associated documentation.
<b>Libero</b>	a database that contains all records of the CB Rare Books collection and reference material.

## 18 Approval/Revision History

This Documentation Policy is version 2, issued in January 2021 and formally approved by the Collections Management Team on the 20 January on the condition that required edits were made. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Collections Management Team, while a full revision will take place every five years.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Revision Description</b>	<b>Rev. Change</b>
5 June 2013	Draft policy submitted to the Collections Management Team for review.	0.1
28 August 2013	Policy discussed at CMT meeting and formally approved in principle subject to a number of agreed revisions being made.	0.2
23 September 2013	Agreed revisions made and final approval given by Collections Management Team.	1.0
** November 2014	Annual review of policy completed and backlog plan for 2015 agreed by Collections Management Team, in consultation with Sinéad Ward, Rights and Reproductions Officer.	1.1
January 2021	Amended policy submitted to the Collections Management Team for review.	2.0