

Collections Security Policy

1. Introduction

The Library is strongly committed to protecting its collections and will ensure that all appropriate measures are in place to prevent loss of any collection items. The Library's collections are a significant national asset, and their preservation is required as one of the particular functions of the Library by the National Library of Scotland Act 2012.

The Library also exists to make the collections as widely accessible as possible, and this increases their vulnerability to loss by theft and vandalism. It is recognised that the Library has to find a workable balance for collections security that implements adequate security control measures while maintaining reasonable access levels for staff and collection users.

This Collections Security Policy outlines the strategic framework for managing the Library's response to threats to collections security. It covers collections in all material formats, including both physical and digital formats, and across all of the Library's locations and activities.

2. Guiding principles

The Library will operate an effective collections security framework by following five guiding principles:

1. Collections security is of fundamental significance to the operation of the Library, and senior management will ensure that there is an overall institutional commitment to maintaining effective collections security control.
2. Collections security measures will be allocated investment of staff and financial resources.
3. Collections security will always feature as part of the Library's risk management programme, which will be used to continually monitor threats and develop appropriate responses.
4. All members of Library staff must understand the importance of collections security and be encouraged to develop a culture which pro-actively protects the collections while being sensitive to the needs of collections users.
5. The Library will be open about losses to the collections, and will work with others to improve security for its own collections and for library and archive collections more generally.

3. Responsibility for collections security

Because collections security cuts across departmental boundaries, overall responsibility for collections security lies with the senior management team as a whole. The strategic and operational management of collections security will be led by the Collections Security Board and the Collections Security Working Group respectively. All NLS staff also have a key role in maintaining collections security.

3.1 Collections Security Board

The senior management team will delegate strategic leadership on collections security to a Collections Security Board. This Board will have overall responsibility for strategic management of the Library's response to collections security issues. It will be chaired by the most senior member of staff below the National Librarian and Chief Executive who has responsibility for the collections. Its membership will include heads of departments with responsibility for collections and for the security function.

The Collections Security Board will:

- report to the senior management team
- review and update this policy and ensure that it has the approval and support of the senior management team
- ensure that the Collections Security Plan is adequate for purpose, up to date, and being actively implemented
- ensure that collections security is embedded in all appropriate plans, procedures and activities
- give guidance and leadership to the Collections Security Working Group on security planning, security audits, and investigations into new collections security measures
- monitor the programme of work undertaken by the Collections Security Working Group and the implementation of agreed recommendations
- be responsible for managing responses to incidents and reporting on these to the senior management team

3.2 Collections Security Working Group

The operational response to collections security will be co-ordinated by the Collections Security Working Group. This will bring together staff from across departments to actively review collections security and guide implementation of control measures which will include procedures, working practices and equipment. It will be chaired by a member of the Collections Security Board.

The Collections Security Working Group will:

- report to Collections Security Board
- implement the guidelines and recommendations in the collections security plan at an operational level

- review operational effectiveness of collections security measures
- undertake or commission security audits and feasibility studies into new ways of improving collections security
- ensure that collections security measures are assessed and included in all appropriate policies and procedures across the Library

3.3 NLS staff

Ultimately all staff are themselves responsible for the day to day delivery of adequate security for the collections. There must be widespread understanding by staff across all departments in the Library of the importance of collections security. All managers and staff will seek to maintain an appropriate culture which supports security of the collections.

4. Security planning

The Library will maintain a Collections Security Plan and will use this as the key measure to manage the prevention of security incidents. It will cover all aspects of collections security and provide guidance to managers responsible for policies, procedures and working practices across the Library.

The plan will include guidance for

- measures to ensure security of Library buildings, collections storage, display and consultation areas
- staff pre-employment screening, access privileges, induction, training and awareness, and monitoring
- collections management activities including security marking, access and loan procedures, the creation of surrogates, collections documentation, circulation records, and insurance practices
- procedures for transport of collections items within the NLS estate and on loan elsewhere
- regulations for user registration and identity checks, and control and invigilation of consultation areas

Any Library policies and procedures which involve the use of collections must include a collections security impact assessment, and must adequately meet the requirements of the collections security plan.

As part of its security planning, the Library will actively network with other collecting institutions and interested bodies, including the police and library security networks, to share information and best practice.

5. Response procedures

The Library will respond pro-actively to any collections security incident and will investigate any reported loss of collection items. It will support any member of staff who raises a cause for concern. It will implement disciplinary procedures against any member of staff found to have maliciously damaged or stolen collection items. All attempts will be made to prosecute anyone suspected of stealing or damaging the collections, in conjunction with appropriate authorities.

6. Review

Collections security will be continually under review by those with responsibility outlined in section 3 above. Security audits will be undertaken as necessary. Incidents will be reviewed so that lessons learned can be implemented through collections security planning.

This policy will be reviewed every two years by the Collections Security Board, for approval by the Corporate Leadership Team.