



Security in museums and galleries: the Security Audit

What is a Security Audit?

Security Auditing involves:

- Checking your security provision
- Identifying possible threats
- Assessing the risk of the threats occurring
- Identifying appropriate actions

This guide informs you about carrying out a Security Audit of your measures to *protect your collections against fire, theft, flood and damage*. It does not address wider security measures, such as safety of people. The Security Audit is carried out by the member of staff with overall responsibility for security, and a good knowledge of the security measures in place. Security Auditing should be carried out as part of a wider risk management approach to security, in a continuous cycle of review, planning and implementation which is described in the [Museum Security Toolkit](#). Security Auditing to protect your collections is informed by:

- Your Collections Care policy/policies
- Your knowledge of the collections, your museum location and current security provision
- The knowledge of your museum colleagues regarding collections security: this may be communicated to you as a result of an Environmental Assessment (EVA).

The **Security Checklist** in this Practical Guide will prompt you to check and record the findings from your audit in two areas:

- Physical security measures in place – such as cases, alarms, and locks
- Procedural security measures in place – such as alarm testing, staff training and collections inspections

Some security measures in the checklist are relevant to all museums. Others may not be relevant to you because of your situation and environment, for example you may have decided that it is not necessary for your museum to have CCTV because it is in one room, with invigilation and the financial value of your collections is low. If this is the case, questions about CCTV may not be relevant to you, however it is a good idea to revisit your decision not to have CCTV occasionally, and the reasons for it, as you carry out your audit.

You will probably fill out much of the Security Checklist at your desk, where you will need to refer to your museums housekeeping procedures, or revisit the service level agreement that you have with your alarm call out company. You will also need to go out into the museum, and surrounding grounds and outbuildings to check on the maintenance of physical security measures.

A completed Security Checklist might look like this (questions chosen at random):

Checklist questions	Answer from reviewer	Detail	Action/date
Are all outbuildings secure and locked?	YES		No further action
Is any glazing damaged?	YES	Glazing in windows XY and Z is cracked. A recent EVA noted that empty beer cans are frequently found by the entrance indicating that we may have a problem with anti-social behaviour	Request immediate action from building maintenance to replace the glass/DATE. Escalate to management team - possible risk from anti-social behaviour/DATE
Have you assessed and identified appropriate standards for CCTV provision inside your building?	NO	We do not have CCTV internally or externally	Escalate management team as possible risk for reconsideration in light of recent thefts from nearby community centre/DATE
Do you have regular and frequent building inspection schedules?	NO	Inspections are carried out, but they are irregular and not logged	Establish schedule and create log book/DATE
Are any display areas which contain vulnerable objects obscured from view?	YES	The painting in the new display area is obscured from receptionist's view by two display boards	Discuss with curator. If display boards/object cannot be moved, escalate to management team as possible risk/DATE

When you have completed your Security Checklist you will have a written digital document. This is likely to be a highly confidential document: it will not contain details, for example, of your key codes, but it may contain information that would be useful to a thief. For that reason it need to be treated as a confidential document and protected appropriately.

The Security Checklist

The *Security Checklist* is divided into three sections:

- A) Checks outside the museum building
- B) Checks inside the museum building
- c) Procedural checks

The Security Checklist is presented in a table in Microsoft Word, which gives you the opportunity to identify appropriate actions, and carry forward issues. We suggest that you save the Security Checklist to your laptop/PC and enter the findings from your audit straight into the digital document, and that you do not delete any questions which are not relevant to your museum, as they might be relevant in the future.

Read through the checklist before beginning your audit.

Section A - Checks outside the museum building

Checklist questions	Answer from reviewer	Detail	Action/date
Perimeter:			
Is the perimeter, including gates and fencing, damaged?			
Are all disused points of entry to the perimeter secured?			
Are all perimeter intruder detection systems functional?			
Are entrances, perimeters, sight lines, lighting, or CCTV obscured by trees, hedges or shrubs?			
Are there any signs of criminal reconnaissance or activity?			
Have you identified appropriate security measures for your perimeters and access points in perimeters?			

Do your perimeters and access points comply with the security measures you have identified?			
Buildings and Outbuildings:			
Are all outbuildings secure and locked?			
Is there any damage to the walls of buildings, either accidental or deliberate? Pay particular attention to any pre-fabricated sections or metal clad panels.			
Is the roof damaged, or is there any sign of metal theft? Check as far as possible.			
Are all doors, windows and any other openings secure? Pay particular attention to external screens, bars or grilles.			
Is any glazing damaged?			
Are all door and window hinges, frames and fixings secure and intact?			
Are there any signs of criminal reconnaissance or activity?			
Are all drains, drain gulleys and gutters free flowing?			
Are there any nearby watercourses which may be at risk of flooding?			
Have you identified appropriate security standards for external			

doors windows, skylights, grilles, bars, shutters and locks? For external doors and windows include including frames, glazing and locks. Include external doors that are fire escapes.			
Do your external doors, windows, skylights grilles, bars, shutters and locks comply with the security standards you have identified? Include external doors that are fire escapes.			
Is your security provision visible to someone outside your building? This may be in the form of signs, alarms, or security staff.			
Grounds:			
Are refuse containers secured to prevent them being used as climbing aids?			
Has all litter been cleared away?			
Are there items in the grounds, or outside the building that provide a fire risk, either from arson or accident?			
Are outside smoking areas clearly signed, and clear of rubbish?			
Are all items of equipment secured?			
Are there any heavy unsecured pieces of infrastructure, such as grates, which could be used to gain			

entrance?			
Are there any signs of criminal reconnaissance or activity?			

External lighting, alarms and CCTV:			
Is there any damage to external security lighting and cabling?			
Is all external security lighting working? Include all devices such as dusk to dawn sensors or Passive Infrared Devices (PIR) that are used to control lighting.			
Is there any damage to CCTV cameras and exposed cabling?			
Does external lighting (PIR or otherwise) illuminate all external doors, windows and entrances to the building?			
Does the CCTV system record good quality images taken in darkness?			
Are external intruder alarms visible?			
Are external intruder alarms working?			
Are external intruder alarms audible on site if activated?			
Are all external doors, windows and entrances to the building protected by intruder alarms?			

Are there any signs of criminal reconnaissance or activity?			
Have you identified appropriate security standards for external lighting, intruder alarms and CCTV?			
Do your external lighting, intruder alarms and CCTV comply with the security standards you have identified?			

B) Checks inside the museum building:

The internal element of the Security Audit should start at the main entrance, and work throughout the building, including public and non-public spaces, and museum stores.

Checklist questions	Answer from reviewer	Detail	Action/date
Reception area:			
Is the area well lit?			
Does the reception desk have full sight of the main entrance?			
Is there a remote locking function for the main entrance?			
Is there a panic alarm at the reception desk?			
Are there clear lines of sight from the reception desk to display areas?			
Inside the building:			

Have you identified appropriate security standards for internal doors, windows or skylights bars, shutters or grilles? Include frames, glazing hinges and locks. Include doors to collections stores.			
Do your internal doors, windows or skylights bars, shutters or grilles meet the standards you have identified?			
Are security doors managed by devices such as door chains/viewers when the museum is closed to the public?			
Are there any signs of criminal reconnaissance or activity?			
Is your security provision visible to someone inside your building? This may be in the form of signs, alarms, invigilation or security staff.			
Have you identified collections which are in areas which may be liable to flooding or water damage?			
Have you taken steps to minimise damage to the collections which may be liable to water damage or flooding?			
Have you assessed and implemented measures to prevent loss to the collections from fire? (fire extinguishers, fire alarms, fire escapes)			
Are all fire precautions, such as extinguishers, alarms, and exits in			

working order?			
Display areas:			
Have you identified appropriate specifications for all museum cabinets and cases? Include frames, glazing, locks, hinges and case construction.			
Do all of your display cabinets and cases comply with the security standards you have identified?			
Are all non-cased objects secured and protected?			
Are objects on open display secured so that they cannot be moved?			
Is there a visible staff presence in display areas, particularly those where vulnerable objects are displayed?			
Are any display areas which contain vulnerable objects obscured from view?			
Storage areas:			
Are storage containers identified by a numbering system which relates to your object records?			
Have you identified appropriate standards for containers for storage of high value objects, or objects which might be of interest			

to a thief? Include frames, glazing, locks, hinges and case construction.			
Do all of your containers for high value objects, or objects which might be of interest to a thief, comply with the security standards you have identified?			
CCTV:			
Have you assessed and identified appropriate standards for CCTV provision inside your building?			
Have you implemented the standards appropriate CCTV provision you have identified inside your building?			
Is the entrance to your museum covered by CCTV?			
Is signage clearly visible which advises of the presence of security systems and CCTV?			
Alarms			
Have you assessed and identified standards for appropriate intruder alarm provision inside your building? Include alarms for internal doors, and cases, and vibration sensors in cases.			
Have you implemented the standards for intruder alarms that you have identified?			

Are all intruder alarms, include those inside cases, in working order?			
Are all fire alarms in working order?			
Do you have smoke detectors in place?			
Do you have a sprinkler system?			
Is the backup system for alarms, which will come on in the case of power failure, in working order?			
Security Staff			
Have you assessed the need for security staff at your museum, and acted on your assessment?			

C) Procedural Checks

Checklist questions	Answer from reviewer	Detail	Action/date
Mission and policy:			
Is security of the collections referenced in your museum's mission?			
Has your museum's mission been agreed and signed off by your governing body?			
Do you have a written policy, signed off by senior management,			

which covers security of the collections and buildings security? (Your security policy may be contained within other policies, such as a Collections Care policy)			
Has your museum agreed and signed off, at senior management level, a policy for the insurance of the collection?			
Have you identified who has ultimate responsibility for security in your museum at an operational level? (This may be the person completing this checklist).			
The collections:			
Do you maintain the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures for all objects owned by your museum, and for all objects on loan to you? (This is a Museum Accreditation requirement)			
Is information about your collections, and those on loan to you, stored in collections management systems which are safe from theft, fire and flood, and which are backed up?			
Have you identified all objects in your collections which are of high financial value, or particular historical value, and which may be of interest to a thief?			
Have you identified specific			

security measures to protect objects in your collections which may be of interest to a thief?			
Have you identified all objects in your collections which may present a fire hazard because of the material they are made from?			
Have you identified specific security measures to protect the collections from collections objects which may pose a fire hazard (such as nitrate film)?			
Movement of objects:			
Is responsibility for movement of objects assigned to named individuals , and supported by reference in job descriptions/volunteer agreements?			
Do you have Loans In and Loans Out policies procedures and agreements which address the security of loaned objects?			
Staff Security Training and Awareness:			
Do all staff take part in Environmental Visual Assessments?			
Do all staff take part in security awareness training?			

Is responsibility for the security of the collections reflected in all staff job descriptions and/or volunteer agreements?			
Is security regularly discussed at staff meetings?			
Is security a part of the induction process for all staff?			
Do staff have access to information about security issues from external sources?			
Staff and visitor access control:			
Do you have a pass system for all staff and visitors?			
Are all stores, and non-visitor areas behind locked doors?			
Are staff/visitors allowed into areas holding high value objects, or objects of interest to a thief, on their own?			
Are visitors with bags and coats screened on entry, and does your museum have a size of bags policy?			
Maintenance and Inspection Procedures:			
Do you have regular and frequent building inspection schedules?			
Are building inspections scheduled			

logged and recorded for audit?			
Do you have regular and frequent gallery and stores inspection schedules?			
Are gallery and stores inspection schedules logged and recorded for audit?			
Is all electrical wiring installed in accordance with the appropriate British Standard and statutory regulations?			
Is all electrical wiring maintained checked and logged regularly by a competent person?			
Is all electrical, gas and oil equipment installed in accordance with the appropriate British Standard and statutory regulations?			
Is all electrical, gas and oil equipment maintained checked and logged regularly by a competent person?			
Do you have regular and frequent housekeeping schedules?			
Are housekeeping schedules logged?			
Security contracts:			
Is any part of your security provision (such as out of hours call outs, alarm responses, after hours security presence) contracted out			

to another organisation, or the responsibility of another organisation?			
Do you have a Service Level agreement with that organisation?			
Is the SLA reviewed frequently and regularly, and informed by the results of EVAs and Security Checks?			
Alarm maintenance:			
Do you have regular and frequent tests of theft and fire alarms? Include sensor alarms in cases.			
Are tests of theft and fire alarms logged?			
CCTV maintenance:			
Do you have regular and frequent tests of CCTV equipment?			
Are tests of CCTV equipment logged and recorded for audit?			
Do you have a procedure for the checking of CCTV film?			
Key control:			
Do you have a key tracking system, which identifies at any time all individuals who are holding keys?			

Is key control the responsibility of named individuals?			
Are any keys, other than those needed to open the building ever removed from the building after closing?			
Are keys only issued to staff for museum related activity?			
Access to Security Advice:			
Have you identified individuals who can provide you with specialist advice about criminality, fire and flood?			
Procedures in the event of fire, theft and flood			
Do you have an Emergency Plan which enables staff to respond in the event of theft, fire and flood? (This is a Museum Accreditation requirement)			