

CoPat due diligence code for dealers

For Dealers Trading In Fine Art, Antiques, Antiquarian Books, Manuscripts And Collectors Items

In order to prevent the illicit trade in stolen art and antiques, CoPAT¹ recommends that dealers endeavour to:

1. Require a vendor to provide their name and address and to sign a form identifying the item for sale and confirming that it is the unencumbered property of the vendor and that they are authorised to sell it, and this form will be dated.
2. Verify the identity and address of new vendors and record the details.
3. Be suspicious of any item whose asking price does not equate to its market value.
4. If there is reason to believe an item may be stolen:
 - a. Attempt to retain the item while enquiries are made.
 - b. Contact the officer with responsibility for art and antiques within the local police force area, or in an emergency dial 999.
 - c. Check with relevant stolen property register(s).
 - d. Pass to the police any information which may help to identify the person(s) in possession of such items.
 - e. If still uncertain, refuse to buy, sell or value it.
5. If requested, submit catalogues to the officer with responsibility for art and antiques within the local police force area.
6. Look critically at any instance when requested to pay in cash and avoid doing so unless there is a strong and reputable reason to the contrary. In the absence of such a reason, pay by cheque or other method that provides an audit trail.
7. Be aware of money laundering regulations (see [legislation](#)).
8. Appoint a senior member of staff to whom employees can report suspicious activities.
9. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in respect of the above.

This code has been drawn up with the co-operation of:

Antiquarian Booksellers' Association
 British Antique Dealers' Association
 Library Association
 Rare Books Group
 Incorporated Society of Valuers and Auctioneers
 Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
 Society of Fine Art Auctioneers

¹ Council for the Prevention of Art Theft