



Easy Read Code of Ethics



**YOUR VOICE
ADVOCACY &**
WEST GLAMORGAN PEOPLE FIRST



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Introduction



Ethics is about what is right and wrong.

This is important in museum work.



This Code of Ethics will help you make choices about what is right and wrong.



The code is for you, the people you work with and your communities.



It is a promise of trust between museums and the public.



It is important to be honest and open about how you work and how you choose what is right and wrong.



This Code of Ethics is a guide.
It does not have all the answers.



What is right depends on the situation
and may be different in each museum.



Each UK museum has different rules,
funds, and workers.



There are many types of worker:
Volunteers, Trustees, Self-Employed and
Staff. Some people have worked for a
long time and some are beginners.



This code was made thinking of these
differences and by listening to a wide
range of people and groups.

Aim for our best way to work



There are rules and laws that are mandatory, they are what museums must always do.



This code asks museums and workers to do more than the minimum.



We know this will take time, effort and working together.



Everyone will be at different stages in the journey.



We will support museums and workers with training and advice.



We know barriers can make finding the most ethical choice hard.



Museum workers should aim for ethics goals they can reach with their time and resources.



Museums should look after worker wellbeing to help them make the best ethics choices.



Museums can make their own ethics team to have clear talks about problems and make best choices.



Museums Association members should use and share the Code of Ethics.

Using the Code of Ethics



The Code of Ethics is made up of principles and practice.



Principles are ideas for good ethics.



Practice is work that fits those ideas.



We expect all our members to follow the Code of Ethics.

You can get confidential advice from the Ethics Committee.



For all ethics questions, please contact our policy and ethics lead India Divers:

india@museumsassociation.org

Ethics Principle 1. Fair and for everyone



Museums should be places where everyone is valued and treated fairly and with respect.

To do this Museums and workers should:



Give the public access to collections and support to experience them.



Build fair relationships with communities.



Think about different cultures and use respect with workers, communities and collections.



Value their workers.

Practice 1. Fair and for everyone



Museums and workers should:

Find ways to support everyone to take part in museums and work with many people for a range of views.



Work against prejudice.

Be aware of communities left out in the past.



Understand and help people work around barriers, like poverty, to get better results for everyone.



Help people who are different from each other and have different beliefs build good relationships.



Make a good place to work that looks after wellbeing with fair pay and support. Use our workforce guide.



Find workers from communities to make museums better for communities.



Respect beliefs, views and communities collections are about or from. This is vital with sacred items and bodies of people who died in the past.



When looking for information about collections remember there are many views and some have been left out.



Value different kinds of knowledge. Stories are understood many ways.

Ethics Principle 2. Open and honest



Museums and workers should be open, honest and responsible for their choices and actions.

Museums and workers should:



Make choices using work rules that are open, honest and for public good.



Build open and helpful relationships with communities, workers, partners, funders and stakeholders



Manage and care for collections in a responsible way.



Support freedom of speech, debate and expression.

Ethics practice 2. Open and honest



To follow the principle museums and workers should:

Be open, honest and responsible with communities and museum users.



Respect the right for anyone to say their views, unless the views are illegal, prejudiced or make the museum unsafe.



Think about a freedom of expression policy and how to avoid harm to staff and museum users.



Support people to understand complex ideas by sharing many views with evidence.



Share information with workers and communities about partnerships to build trust and work together better.



Resist corporations, funders and governments who try to change how you work to fit their own needs.



Be thoughtful about collections that represent the history of the British Empire.



Never do private activities that can be seen as trading cultural items.



Put information about pay and benefits in descriptions for paid roles.



Be responsible with AI. Be open and honest with the public about its use.



Work as a whole team to check the risks and rewards of new technology.



Be open and honest about how and why data is stored, be sure it is stored safely.



Help people have digital access.
Make sure it protects rights, dignity and choice.



Manage, care for and build collections with rules that are checked often.



Make information about collections and rules open to the public.



Make it clear that many people and groups give time, items and knowledge for the museum, collections and activities.



Check who owns items before you add to collections and that the holder is allowed to transfer or lend.



Respect the wishes of donors who give gifts and bequests.



Use the same rules and agree what will happen in writing for a transfer of title. This is when an item changes owners.



Balance public access to collections with the wishes of communities.



Know public access to the collection is less important than public safety.



Be open about why the museum may hold bodies of people who have died in the past.



Be open and positive about returning items to the people and places they came from.



Be thoughtful about responding when asked to return objects to communities.

Ethics Principle 3. Responsible and long-lasting



Museums should be responsible about money, environment and people for the future.

Museums and workers should:



Work for public trust and be honest in all museum activities.



Think about the climate and people in the future when making choices.



Treat collections as important for culture, science or history, not as ways to make money.



Manage collections for people now and in the future.

Ethics Practice 3. Responsible and long-lasting



To follow this principle museums and workers should:

Understand climate crisis is an issue for ethics, all people and the planet.



Museums should raise awareness and help communities make helpful change.



Use collections to inspire people and support good change for people and the planet.



Lower impacts to climate and people in all choices and activities.



Look after public trust, be honest in all activities, and make checks when finding partners, sponsors and funds.



Find funds that work for your communities and fit your values.
Say no to harmful funds and sponsors.



Make access to collections the best it can be for people now and the future.
Keep inventory up to date.



Make sure changes to collections are done right as part of everyday work.
Use our Off the Shelf toolkit as a guide.



Do not use collections as a way to get money from other sources.



Be sure funds the museum uses to run are not based on collection value.
Only put a value on collections if needed.



Never act like the collection is owned by one person or organisation.



Understand collections should not be seen as money and selling items for money can break public trust.



Never add items that may have been stolen to a collection.
Work with the law to find owners.



Only take on items that can be looked after long-term with public access.