Durham University Museums
Object Identification Policy

Durham University Museum staff can provide a basic IDENTIFICATION of an object, to the best of our abilities and knowledge. We will not provide authentication or appraisal of an object's value or condition.

We only identify items in specific areas of staff expertise.

We may not always be able to identify an item, and reserve the right to refuse to accept or identify an object at any time at our discretion.

Objects may need to be left at the museum in order to be identified; curatorial staff cannot always identify objects in person in the galleries.

- You will be given a receipt that you must use to reclaim your object(s).
- Identifications take on average 2-6 weeks.
- You will receive a letter, phone call or email when your item(s) has been identified. You may then pick up your item. Please bring a copy of your paperwork with you.
- Items left over sixty (60) days after this notification has been sent may be thrown away unless other arrangements are made.

Donations of objects to the museum's collections are not automatically accepted.

- Objects offered for donation to the museum's collections must go through a separate evaluation process.
- Objects given to or left at the museum may be thrown away.
- There is a difference between donations to the museum's permanent collections and the Education Collection. Please ask for an explanation if you have questions about donations.

We do not mark, sample, destroy, or perform any other type of action beyond the normal handling required for visible observation of objects brought in for identification.

Objects will remain at the Museum of Archaeology or the Oriental Museum while they are being identified and will not be taken to any other part of the University for identification or work by others.

Disclaimer: While the museum makes every reasonable effort to ensure the safety of objects left for identification, the owner accepts full responsibility for the action of leaving the object(s) for identification and will hold the museum blameless in case of damage or loss. The owner is responsible for reclaiming the object within sixty (60) days of receiving notification of the results of the identification. The museum reserves the right to dispose of objects not claimed within sixty days following notification, unless other arrangements are made.

Neither Durham University or individual members of staff can accept liability for opinions given on objects submitted for examinations, or for information provided. We cannot give valuations and do not provide certificates of authenticity.

Last updated August 2013