

Courier Training Framework:

Example Scenarios

The following scenarios have been put together as examples to accompany the courier training framework. These give trainees an opportunity to explore the types of situation a courier can face and discuss possible approaches. These are fictional examples, based on general experiences of what types of situation can occur.

Scenario 1

Situation: You are at the venue, and it is the first time we have lent to this institution. You have two paintings to condition check and install, which you oversaw being unloaded last night and placed into storage. When you arrive for your unpacking appointment you bring the cased works through from storage into the gallery and there is a very strong smell of paint in the display space. You ask when the walls were painted and the technician say he thinks it was finished last night. You are due back on a flight in the afternoon and have an important meeting tomorrow. There are couriers from two other institutions present, one is already installing their works but the other seems hesitant and you overhear them asking about the paint as well. The staff from the venue are very keen to unpack as they say that there is a press event tomorrow so all works have to be in place.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 2

Situation: You are installing three artworks with three different curators (each with their own team of art handlers) within the same exhibition. You arrive at 9am and need to leave for the airport in the late afternoon so you should have plenty of time. The installation is moving very slowly and the curators are all keen to see how the works look in the spaces before committing to hanging them. After some hours, you realise time is becoming short and even though you point this out, nothing moves faster. Suddenly the museum director (also one of the curators) insists on taking everyone out to lunch. Everybody tells you to relax and that you have plenty of time. Lunch takes forever and time is running out as you feared. You manage to install one work, but have two more left and now it is the time you were meant to leave for the airport.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 3

Situation: You are installing a painting with a gilded frame at an overseas venue in a country where you don't speak the language. There is a translator helping interpret your instructions to the art handlers, all of whom seem very professional. The work is heavy and a load bearing plinth has been prepared by the venue to take the weight of the work. Your organisation has a policy requiring all loans to be handled with latex (or nitrile) gloves. When you mention this, it takes a long time for the team to find gloves and they seem unhappy to wear them, but they eventually do. The work has been lifted out of its case and transit frame, to be condition checked. At this point you notice that some of the art handlers seem to be complaining and gesturing toward the work and the gloves. When you ask the translator if there is a problem, she goes to speak to the head art handler and they discuss the issue (this seems quite heated). When the translator returns, they say 'there is no problem'.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 4

Situation: You are travelling with an exhibition and have just finished working with the team to load the crates on to a truck and trailer. The drivers suggest you have lunch at the museum restaurant before you take off as it is a long way.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 5

Situation:

You leave the borrowing museum early in the morning on schedule to accompany a crate to the airport for palletisation and onward transit home. There are no delays on the road and everything is going according to plan but when you arrive at the airport the agent tells you that you are very, very late and he appears to be incredibly stressed. He hurries the crate off the truck (which leaves) and then tells you that there is no time for loading onto a pallet. The only option is for the crate to be loaded directly into the aircraft. He reassures you he has done this many times before and can send you a picture of the crate after loading. He says that 'plenty of other international museums allow this' and that you have to decide immediately otherwise you (and the crate) will miss the flight.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 6

Situation:

You arrive at the borrowing museum to find that the case in which your objects are being displayed is empty, even though you know from drawings that there are other objects being displayed alongside yours. There are no captions in the case either. On further discussion, you discover that your objects are due to be placed towards the front of the case, in front of other objects, some belonging to the borrower, some from another lender. You ask about the captions and are told these will be placed in the case but won't be arriving until the next day.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 7

Situation:

When you arrive for unpacking and condition checking at the borrowing venue and bring out your condition report (on paper) the lender informs you that they have a condition checking software and intend to do all condition checking within their system using a computer/tablet.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 8

Situation:

You are at the airport and have just finished loading your crate on a container/pallet and you are about to be taken to your gate from the cargo area. The agent now tells you that they have changed type of aircraft and this new plane is too small for container/pallet loading.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 9

Situation:

You are at the borrowing venue and have completed condition checking. When the art handlers look at the back of your painting, they realize that there aren't enough fittings on the back of the frame to install the artwork in accordance with their insurance requirements. There are two fittings, but they need at least three and ask you if they can make a new hole.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 10

Situation:

You are traveling with a delicate collage on paper and the flight to your destination is delayed with many hours. You were supposed to unload at the museum at 1 PM today and then be there for unpacking and installation at 1 PM the following day after 24 hrs of acclimatization of the crate. When you finally take off your flight is delayed by ten hours and it is 10 PM when you land. The agent at the destination tells you that it is too late in the evening to go to the museum for unloading. Nobody will be there to let you in. You are still scheduled for unpacking and installation the following day at 1PM.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 11

Situation:

When you start the video call you notice that the borrower is using a laptop, positioned on a table. It is difficult to get an overview of the exhibition space and the condition check and installation of the object. How would you proceed?

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 12

Situation:

You are part way through your virtual courier appointment. After having condition checked the objects you are couriating virtually, the borrower lets you know that the showcase is not yet ready. They think it will take about 30 minutes and the borrower proposes to call you back later. The museum is in another country, and though you have been using English to communicate, and it has been a challenge to ensure you are understood.

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.

Scenario 13

Situation:

You are booked to undertake a virtual courier appointment – supervising installation of a complex sculpture at an overseas venue you have not lent to before. It is 12 noon at the venue, but 9pm your time. You log onto the call and the video is working but the audio is not. Despite everyone's best efforts, they cannot seem to get their audio working. They type into the chat function that they need to carry on with the installation as they are under pressure now to get this object installed as there are a lot of other dependencies. What are you going to do?

What would you do?

To be completed by trainees after discussion.