



Saddleworth Museum
Accreditation No. 191

The Museum Accreditation scheme is the UK industry standard for museums and galleries.

Galleries – Collections - Accession

One major aspect of our museum accreditation are the standards we use with the items entrusted to our care representing Saddleworth's history, peoples, and landscapes.

Just one of these standards is collection accession.

An accession number is the number given to the item in a museum's collection. This system has changed over time and we currently use a trinomial system, in which the first number is the year (major re-assignment from previous systems took place as we moved up the accreditation process, moved our record platforms and/or at the turn of the century), the second is the registration number based on how many artifacts came in the year and the third is the number of the object so if a donor gave more than one item they are all accounted for. So, you see accession numbers like 2015.23.03. Meaning that in 2015 the item came in (or was re-accessioned to the current system), it was the 23rd donation/purchase and the third artifact in a multiple donation. Therefore, every artifact, even related ones, gets a unique number which is also physically labelled on the item.

The artifact is then assigned to a location and to one of our collections (costume, pottery, etc.) and all changes (such as a move from a box in the store to a gallery display or on loan etc.) are recorded on the accession card and electronic record.

By 2020 we had recorded at least 16,000 accessions and some of the single accession numbers (for example 100 Edwardian sewing pins of the same type in the same donation or purchase) may be for more than one physical item.

We hope this explains some of the numbers you may see on the images and text within the museum and on this website. Saddleworth Museum and Gallery- January 2020



An example of one our accession cards