Shared courier checklist

A working group was established within the Dutch Registrars Group to develop a checklist to facilitate the sharing of couriers.

Courier sharing appears to be increasingly common, which is a positive development. When several lenders jointly send one courier, this not only benefits sustainability but also helps reduce workloads. It also lowers costs for the borrower.

First step is to determine whether a courier is necessary. This will depend on the type of object, the transport route, indemnity/insurance requirements, the location, etc.[1] Consider using a virtual courier. If it is decided that a physical courier is necessary, consider whether a courier from another institution could oversee your loan. Conversely, if your loan requires a physical courier from your own institution, consider whether that courier could also act on behalf of other loans.

The borrower and the transport agent can provide information about the other lenders and help establish contact between them. The lender can also enquire proactively. Coordinate courier sharing with the other institution. Communication is the most important aspect of courier sharing; use the checklist to support this. Discuss what type of object is being lent and what the object requires.

Clearly communicate your expectations to one another. A courier from another institution may work differently from your own courier, which can lead to confusion. Explain what you expect and, if desired, arrange an online meeting to brief the courier and discuss any special considerations concerning the object. Make clear which decisions the courier may take independently, when the courier must contact you, and what authority the courier will have. The checklist is a practical guide that can be used to share or request the necessary information.

Send all necessary information to the courier (or registrar) well in advance, at least two weeks beforehand. Packing photographs can be sent later. Provide clear and comprehensible information (in a language the borrower can also understand). A handwritten condition report containing notes from your conservator may not be legible to someone from another institution. Provide good detail photographs and clear packing, handling and installation instructions. Also agree on what you would like to receive from the courier after (de)installation: whether you require a report, how detailed it should be and, if you have a report template, ensure it is provided.

Ensure that a contact person is available while the courier is handling your loan, taking time zones into account.

[1] Several resources are available to help determine whether a courier is necessary:
- ARCS Courier Decision Tool and ARCS Technology for Remote Courier Practice
- Courier Principles
- Courier Training Framework
- Courier Handbook for the Virtual Courier