

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE PROCESSING,  
RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION OF POST-  
ROMAN CERAMICS

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MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

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# PART 1: MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE PROCESSING, RECORDING, ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION OF POST-ROMAN CERAMICS

## SUMMARY

### 1. Aims of the Minimum Standards

- to provide a tool for planning and curatorial archaeologists, and others involved in the monitoring process, to assist in the monitoring of archaeological fieldwork, analysis and publication
- to act as a guide for the profession, and, by the application of agreed minimum procedural standards, to encourage good practice in ceramic research
- to help museum curators in the management of ceramic archives
- to establish minimum standards as a guide to students and new entrants into the profession

### 2. Project design

The use of any extant local, regional or national Ceramic Type Series (CTS), and the adherence to its identifications, nomenclature and codes, **must** be specified in the PPG16 project brief and specifications.

### 3. Fieldwork

#### 3.1 *On-site retrieval and sampling*

All ceramics from excavated contexts **must** be collected. Any sampling procedures **must** be undertaken in consultation with the ceramic specialist.

#### 3.2 *Processing*

All ceramics **must** be washed, marked, bagged and boxed using archivally stable materials.

#### 3.3 *Spotdating or scanning*

On-site spotdating or scanning **may** be carried out if it is decided at the outset that it is advantageous to the aims and objectives of the project.

### 4. Assessment

The assemblage **must** be assessed to determine its potential in achieving the project aims and objectives.

### 5. Analysis

#### 5.1 *The ceramic record*

The following **must** be recorded prior to any further analysis and/or archiving:

- fabric type (5.1.1)
- vessel form (5.1.2)
- quantity (5.1.3)
- attributes (5.1.4)

Unstratified material **must** be scanned (5.2).

The ceramic record **should** be computerised (5.3).

## **6. Dissemination**

The results of any research and analysis **must** be disseminated in such a way that the conclusions reached are capable of being challenged.

The ceramic report, whether published or archived, **must** comprise the following:

- method statement (6.1.1)
- description of ceramic types found (6.1.2)
- quantification (6.1.3)
- discussion of chronology, function, manufacture, distribution, relationship with other finds, sources and parallels (6.1.4)
- acknowledgements (6.1.5)

Illustrations **should** be integrated into published reports (6.2)

## **7. The project archive**

On completion of the project, both the site archive and the research archive **must** be made available for study. It **should** be accessioned to a registered local museum.

Samples of new or unrepresented types **must** be offered to local, regional and/or national Ceramic Type Series/reference collections.

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## M.P.R.G. Occasional Paper 2

# Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics

Our second Occasional Paper, published in 2001, is a detailed standards document which should form the baseline for all medieval pottery studies from this point forwards.

These standards will be of value to medieval pottery analysts, but are also aimed at curatorial and development control archaeologists. Their use as part of the planning process should ensure that medieval pottery recording for all sites will aspire to a minimum standard which has been agreed by members of the profession.

Part I is a summary, which will be distributed to planning archaeologists to encourage use of the standards. Part II is a detailed document covering the study of pottery at all levels of a project (project design, fieldwork, assessment, analysis, dissemination and archive), with guidance at every stage. The appendices cover special instances such as the treatment of whole pots, sampling for residue analysis, and a list of ceramic type series and reference collections.

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