

Chain of Custody

Criminal Justice

The continuity record: who held an item, when, and in what condition.

Continuity is an evidential requirement, not paperwork.

What is recorded

Who recovered it, when and from where

Unique reference and seal numbers

Every transfer, with signature and time

Storage location and conditions

Any opening, sampling or resealing

Why it matters

An unbroken record supports authenticity

Gaps invite challenge to the whole exhibit

Contamination risk rises with each handling

Degradation depends on storage conditions

The record is disclosable to the defence

Educational reference. Continuity failures are a common ground of challenge and can exclude otherwise reliable evidence.