7.5.4 Customer property

In some cases, the customer provides you with their own product which you then work on an sell back to them. This includes:

* Products installed, commissioned or repaired at the customer's site
* Products returned for repair
* Free-issue products to be included in manufacture

NB intellectual property also includes drawings or specifications supplied by the customer, links to [Document control 4.2.3](http://www.iso-9001-checklist.co.uk/tutorial/4.2.3-document-control-procedure.htm).

Identify, segregate and protect customer property from the time of receipt, during storage and throughout the product realization process. In the event that customer property is lost, damaged or otherwise identified as unsuitable for use, these conditions should be recorded and reported to the customer.

### Exclusions

Some organisations do not deal with customer property; if this is the case, you are free to exclude this requirement from your quality management system - so long as the excluded requirement does not:

* Affect the ability of the organisation to meet customer and regulatory requirements
* Affect the ability of the organisation to provide conforming products or services

### Should I document our customer property process?

It is not a mandatory requirement to document your customer property process. However, you should always look to adequately define and control any operational processes that directly impact upon product quality. Therefore, the implementation of a control of customer property procedure will be appropriate to most businesses where such activities are undertaken.

### How's best to document the process?

Develop and implement a procedure that defines how products are:

* Identified
* Verified
* Protected from use
* How defects are reported
* What records are kept

### Measuring customer property process effectiveness

 The effectiveness of the customer property process is often determined by the quantity and frequency of non-conformances that result in deviations from correct storage methods or issues resulting from misidentification.