

Records Management Policy

1 Introduction

The British Library is dependent upon its records in order to operate efficiently and effectively, and within the requirements of the law. This Records Management Policy is based on ISO15489 (Information & Documentation: Records Management), and also takes into account the requirements of the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the management of records issued under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and other relevant standards and regulations. It defines a structure for the management of the Library's records to ensure that:

- records are managed and controlled effectively, commensurate with legal, financial, operational and information needs
- the British Library retains only those records which are required for the conduct of business, or that are of historical importance

2 Scope

This policy covers the management of records as defined in Section 3 of this policy. Wider aspects of information management may be covered by the Library's Information Risk or Information Security policies, or by other policies, procedures and guidelines where these are relevant.

The scope of this policy specifically excludes:

- the management of the Corporate Archive
- the management of the Library's Collections
- the management of transactional data held in structured electronic systems (for example, data stored in financial databases)
- Document Management processes (although these may be addressed in conjunction with Records Management issues at the implementation and guidance level)

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3 Definitions

Record

A collection of information, in any format or medium, created or received by the Library at designated points in specific business processes, and assembled or retained for one or more of the following purposes:

- Proper recording of activities undertaken by the Library
- Evidence of a transaction and its terms in the event of a dispute
- Audit
- Reference material that may be used to provide input into business decision making processes.
- Compliance with legislative or professional requirements concerning the retention of records

Documents created or in use for other purposes and transactional data held in structured electronic systems are not considered to be records for the purpose of this policy. *Documents* and transactional data may become records if they are subsequently retained in static format for one of the purposes stated above.

Document

A collection of information in either hardcopy or electronic format that can be treated as a discrete unit. A document may or may not be (or become) a *record* or part of a *record*.

Records Management

A series of integrated and embedded processes and procedures related to the filing, retrieval, storage and disposal of *records*. Records Management serves a compliance and risk management function, ensuring that records belonging to the Library are authentic, reliable and usable, and that their integrity can be proven by audit. Its primary purpose is compliance / risk management. Good Records Management also supports good *Document Management*.

Document Management

A series of integrated and embedded processes and procedures related to the provision, sharing and effective use of *documents*. Document Management serves a process function, and routes and stores information for the purpose of business efficiency.

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4 Aims & Objectives

The aim of this policy and its associated procedures and guidance is to define a framework for managing the Library's records in order to:

- support the effective and efficient running of the British Library by ensuring that business records are available, accessible, accurate, authentic and secure
- enable the Library to satisfy its obligations in terms of corporate accountability, statutory requirements, evidential admissibility and audit requirements
- to ensure that the Library's records are managed appropriately as a valuable corporate asset
- to implement sound management procedures and guidelines that can be applied to all records regardless of their format or storage medium

5. Roles and Responsibilities

The Executive Team has overall responsibility for Records Management in The British Library. Operational responsibility is delegated to the Strategic Planning Manager & Head of Corporate Information Management.

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6 Statement of Policy

The British Library intends to create and maintain the records required to adequately and appropriately record its activities. The Library will ensure that its records are managed and controlled effectively, commensurate with legal, financial, operational and information needs.

In applying this policy the British Library will:

- create authentic, reliable and usable *Records* as required to document its business or to meet statutory or other regulatory requirements.
- maintain the confidentiality, integrity and accessibility of its *Records*.
- maintain an accurate register of its *Records*.
- retain its *Records* only for as long as necessary to satisfy legal, regulatory and organisational requirements.
- dispose of *Records* in a way that preserves their confidentiality, and is, where practicable, environmentally friendly.
- maintain documentation of its *Records Management* processes in order to meet legal, technical and organisational requirements.
- regularly monitor its *Records Management* processes and procedures to ensure that they comply with this policy.
- provide adequate and ongoing training in its *Records Management* processes and procedures for all members of staff who create or use its records.

A summary of the specific practices that the Library will implement in order to apply this policy may be found in the British Library's Records Management Principles document.