



The **NATIONAL**
ARCHIVES
of **SCOTLAND**

Complying with the Records Management Code: Evaluation Workbook

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Introduction

The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act was implemented fully in January 2005. The Act introduces a general statutory right of access to all types of 'recorded' information of any age held by Scottish public authorities and places a duty on those authorities to publish information in accordance with "publication schemes". In addition, the Act encourages all Scottish public authorities to maintain their records in accordance with the provisions of a Code of Practice issued by Scottish Ministers under section 61 of the Act giving guidance on the practice which, in their opinion, it would be desirable for the authorities to follow in connection with the keeping, management and destruction of records (hereafter referred to as the Records Management Code).

Section 43(7) of the FOISA states that the Scottish Information Commissioner must from time to time consult the Keeper of Public Records about the promotion of the observance by Scottish public authorities of the provisions of the code of practice issued under section 61. To support this process, a Memorandum of Understanding between the Keeper of Records of Scotland and the Scottish Information Commissioner has been agreed which clarifies their relationship and establishes a working framework for the development of this relationship in practice.

In respect of monitoring conformance with the Records Management Code the Memorandum states:

- Public authorities are responsible for internally monitoring their compliance with the Records Management Code.
- The Keeper of the Records of Scotland will respond to requests from the Scottish Information Commissioner to carry out audits of the record keeping arrangements of public authorities.
- The Keeper of the Records of Scotland will also respond to requests from authorities for advice concerning their record keeping and their compliance with the Records Management Code, with the resources he has available; this may include directing authorities to alternative sources of advice.

This evaluation workbook has been developed by The National Archives of Scotland (NAS) to assist Scottish public authorities in assessing conformance of their record management systems to the Records Management Code. It does not cover the provision of public access to those records held in their records management systems. Those seeking advice on how to manage access to records under Freedom of Information should consult the Section 60 Code of Practice on the Discharge of Functions by Public Authorities.

The workbook focuses on the areas listed in Part I of the Records Management Code for action and is relevant for all Scottish public authorities subject to the FOISA. The action points are further defined in the generic model action plan which the Keeper of the Records

of Scotland has published to assist Scottish public authorities to develop records management arrangements which comply with the Records Management Code. These are:

- Placing of records management function within the authority
- Roles and responsibilities
- Records management strategy and policy
- Records creation and record keeping
- Records maintenance
- Records disposal
- Training and awareness
- Monitoring and review

Completing the questionnaire contained in this workbook will establish the degree to which an organisation complies with the Record Management Code. It should then be possible for an authority to evaluate the level of risk posed by records management that does not conform to the Records Management Code and consider appropriate mitigation strategies. It will also enable an historical audit trail of compliance to be maintained.

Audience

This workbook is aimed at organisations subject to the FOISA but may also be useful to other organisations. It is intended for use by those undertaking an assessment of their organisation's records management arrangements, who are expected to be records or information managers or internal or external auditors.

FOI Scottish public authorities include:

- Scottish Ministers, the Scottish Parliament and the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body
- local government authorities
- the National Health Service
- educational institutions
- police forces
- any other organisation listed under Schedule 1 to the FOISA

Other organisations not subject to the FOISA may also find the guidance useful when evaluating their own record management policies and procedures, although it should be noted that these organisations might have different needs that are not covered within this guidance.

The workbook is intended to be used irrespective of the size or complexity of the organisation being assessed. However, it is recognised that the relevance of some elements will depend on the role, complexity and size of a Scottish public authority.

The workbook is also intended to be used whether records are paper-based or in digital form including those held in an electronic document and records management system (EDRMS). It is assumed that organisations will increasingly rely on electronic information and the workbook has been developed to reflect the need to manage records in both physical and electronic form. However, it is still possible to use the workbook to assess the record management systems of Scottish public authorities who do not require or do not currently possess EDRMS.

It is expected that external auditors undertaking assessments of performance will use this workbook to determine the effectiveness of an authority's record management policies and procedures.

How to use this Workbook

The workbook is divided into 6 modules as follows:

1. Records management function
2. Records management policy statement
3. Roles, responsibilities, training and awareness
4. Active records management, record creation and record keeping
5. Records maintenance
6. Records disposal

Following on from the modules, it also includes general information about risk assessment and performance measurement and provides advice on legislation, standards and guidance for records managers.

Each of the six modules includes an introductory statement on its purpose, contextual information, and the workbook questions.

It is recommended that to gain the greatest value from the workbook the user works through each module in sequence and answers the questions in the order in which they

appear. This may also avoid duplication of effort as responses to questions posed in earlier chapters may assist in answering questions in later ones.

Each question requires an initial response of *yes*, *no* or *non applicable*. It is also possible to indicate partial compliance. Below each question a *reference* field has been provided to allow an explanatory statement or a cross reference to a relevant document or policy statement which can be examined by an independent assessor for compliance.

Once the questionnaire is complete an assessment can be undertaken to confirm the validity of the accompanying reference comments - the cited policies and procedural documents plus supporting performance measures etc. The aim of this workbook is not necessarily to achieve a complete series of *yes* responses as in certain circumstances that may not be relevant or applicable. However where the answer is a negative response or one of partial compliance, it is recommended that following completion of the module a risk assessment is undertaken to assess the level of risk and develop appropriate mitigation strategies. The outcome of this work should be validated and approved by senior management.

Worked examples

Here are worked examples for the following four scenarios:

- Positive (*yes*) responses
- Negative (*no*) responses
- Non-applicable (*N/A*) responses
- Partial compliance responses where a positive response (*yes?*) is appropriate for part of the organisation

Positive (*yes*) responses

The reference field must be completed in all cases unless the matter is self evident. Here is a worked example for question 1 in Module 1 to which a positive *yes* response has been given

1	<i>Is the records management function formally recognised within the organisation as a specific corporate programme?</i>	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i> This function was submitted to the Management Board on 20/07/2004 for formal endorsement ref MB paper 37/2004 and is detailed in the accompanying records management policy ref MP 101/2004.							

The comment inserted in the *reference* field permits an independent assessor to cross check the validity of the asserted answer.

Negative (no) responses

Where a negative response is given it is still possible in some cases to provide some supporting comment which may assist in mitigating the risk. As an illustration a worked example is provided below. This question appears as question 20 in Module 2 and is answered here with a negative *no* response

1	Are newly appointed personnel (including temporary staff and consultants) made formally aware of the policy?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Reference: It is proposed to introduce a new module to the induction training programme for new personnel with effect from 1 April 2005. Business unit managers have been required to ensure staff appointed before that date are fully briefed and provide confirmation to Human Resources that this has been completed.</p>				

Here the reference comment indicates the risk is small and has been adequately addressed and an independent assessor could confirm if this statement was valid.

Non-applicable (N/A) responses

Where a non-applicable response is given this may of itself be sufficient but again wherever possible an additional comment should be provided to explain why this question is not relevant in the context of other organisation's record management. As an illustration a worked example is provided below - the following question which appears as question 139 in Module 5, is answered here with a non applicable N/A response

1	Where applicable has a policy been implemented to ensure continued access to encrypted or password-protected records?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Reference: Current and past policy has been to disallow use of personal password protected files or encryption by reliance on the information security procedures outlined in the organisation's Information Security policy ref. IS 15/2001.</p>				

Here the reference comment explains why the response to this question has been provided and an independent assessor could confirm that the alternative arrangements mentioned exist and are adequate.

Partial compliance responses

In many instances it may not be appropriate to give a complete *yes* or *no* response as compliance is incomplete and varies across the organisation. In such cases a qualified "yes?" comment should be provided as illustrated below to highlight where the organisation currently complies and where it does not.

143 Does each business unit have selection and disposal policies and schedules?

Yes No N/A

Reference: Partial compliance - Finance, Purchasing, & Social Services have agreed schedules. Housing and Education have draft schedules the remaining six departments schedules will be developed and agreed by March 2006 as per project plan ref. RM 2A/2004.

Here the reference comment clarifies the extent of non-conformance and when conformance will be achieved, and will enable an independent assessor to determine the validity of the statement.

Realistically partial compliance will be the most appropriate response to some of the questions contained in this workbook but in such cases the explanatory comment needs to highlight the degree to which the organisation complies and where possible the timescale for addressing the remainder or alternatively the other measures or circumstances which mean extending compliance further is not appropriate to the organisation. The information needs to be sufficient to enable an assessor to validate the statement.

Module 1: Records management function

General

This module deals with the need to establish records management as a strategic corporate function within an organisation and to ensure it receives the necessary levels of organisational support. It also identifies the need to have organisational links or close liaison between records management and management of freedom of information, data protection and other information management functions.

Context and objectives

The Records Management Code states that:

*Records management should be recognised as a specific corporate function within the authority and should receive the necessary levels of organisational support to ensure effectiveness. It should bring together responsibilities for **all** records held by the authority, throughout their life cycle, from planning and creation through to ultimate disposition. It should have clearly defined responsibilities and objectives, and the resources to achieve them. It is desirable that the person, or persons, responsible for the records management function should also have either direct responsibility for, or a formal working relationship with, the person(s) responsible for: freedom of information, data protection and other information management issues.*

This text recognises that records and information are an asset that requires management on the same level as human resources, finances and property.

Evaluation of this module should enable the following activities:

- Review of the structure of the organisation to see what changes might be required to achieve this objective.
- Ensure that all information functions are part of the same command or, alternatively, working arrangements for close liaison have been established.
- Ensure that adequate resources to support the records management function are in place, working with those responsible for determining the level of resources and those responsible for assigning such resources.

Records Management Function

Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

<p>1. <i>Is the records management function formally recognised within the organisation as a specific corporate programme?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>2. <i>Does the record management function bring together responsibilities for records in all formats, including electronic records, throughout their life cycle, from planning and creation through to ultimate disposal?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>3. <i>Does the records management function have clearly defined objectives?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>4. <i>Has the structure of the organisation been reviewed to see what changes might be required to achieve these objectives?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

5. *Is the records management function formally resourced to achieve its responsibilities and objectives?*

Yes

No

N/A

(e.g. budgets, allocated staff etc)

Reference:

6. *Does the person responsible for the records management function have direct responsibility for, or an organisational connection with, those responsible for freedom of information, data protection and other information management issues?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

7. *Is there a mechanism to regularly review the records management function, together with its objectives and resources to ensure it continues to be effective?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

Module 2: Record Management policy statement

General

This module deals with the need to establish a records management policy supported and mandated by senior management across the whole organisation. The policy should be comprehensive and cover all activities falling within the records management function. There should be a mechanism for regular review of the policy's relevance.

Context and objectives

The Records Management Code states that:

An authority should have in place an overall policy statement on how it manages its records. This policy should be endorsed by senior management, who should also ensure that it is followed by staff at all levels within the organisation.

The policy statement should provide a mandate for the performance of all records and information management functions. In particular, it should set out the authority's commitment to create, keep and manage records which document its principal activities. The policy should also:

- *outline the role of records management and its relationship to the authority's overall strategy;*
- *define roles and responsibilities including:*
 - *the responsibility of individuals to document their actions and decisions in the authority's records as described in paragraph 8.2 of this Code;*
 - *and the responsibility of individuals to dispose of authority records, having regard to Section 9 of this Code;*
- *provide a framework for supporting standards, procedures and guidelines; and*
- *indicate the way in which compliance with the policy and its supporting standards, procedures and guidelines will be monitored.*

The policy statement should be reviewed at frequent, regular intervals (at least once every three years) and, if appropriate, amended to maintain its relevance. If between reviews it becomes apparent that an amendment is required, an authority should not necessarily wait for the next scheduled review to make that amendment.

The Code extends these principles to the management of electronic or digital records. Specifically it states that:

The principal issues for the management of electronic records are the same as those for the management of any record. They include, for example, the creation of authentic records, the tracking of records and final disposition arrangements. However, the means by which these issues are addressed in the electronic environment will be different. Effective electronic record keeping requires:

- *a clear understanding of the nature of electronic records;*
- *the creation of records and metadata necessary to document business processes- this should be part of the systems which hold the records;*
- *the maintenance of a structure (or structures) of folders to reflect logical groupings of records;*
- *the secure maintenance of the integrity of electronic records;*
- *the accessibility and use of electronic records for as long as required (which may include their migration across systems);*
- *the application of appropriate disposal procedures, including procedures for archiving; and*
- *the ability to cross reference electronic records to their paper counterparts in a mixed environment.*

A formally agreed records management policy is essential for directing how records will be managed in a Scottish public authority. The policy establishes how records are created, captured, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the legal, regulatory and business needs of the Scottish public authority. It informs everyone of the place of records management in the organisation, both strategically and operationally.

In this context a policy may consist of one document or a series of documents which taken together provide a comprehensive records management policy. The policy may be a records management specific policy document or it may emerge from policies for other organisational business activities which set out rules for recordkeeping. However whatever the preferred mechanism or form for developing or incorporating the policy within an organisation, records management must be directed by policy adopted at the corporate level.

The policy must direct that records are made, captured, maintained and disposed of in accordance with the legal, regulatory and business needs of the Scottish public authority and define the responsibilities of the personnel who manage records or carry out recordkeeping activities.

Many organisations may have a separate e-mail management policy which augments the record management policy.

The records management policy statement will provide a mandate for the performance of all records and information management functions and the final records management policy, approved by senior management, should be made available to all staff.

Records Management Policy Statement

Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

<p>8. <i>Is there a policy statement on how the organisation manages its records?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>9. <i>Does the policy explicitly include records in electronic or digital form as well physical form (e.g. paper or microform)?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>10. <i>Does the policy make explicit that e-mails produced or received in the conduct of business are considered to be part of the corporate record?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>11. <i>Does the policy fully reflect the statutory and regulatory environment within which the organisation is required to operate?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>12. <i>Is the policy formally endorsed by senior management within the organisation?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

13. Does the policy define roles and responsibilities to support the record management function? Yes No N/A

Reference:

14. Does the policy define the responsibility of individuals to document their actions and decisions in the organisation's records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

15. Does the policy define criteria for disposing of obsolete records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

16. Has responsibility for identifying and disposing of obsolete records in an auditable manner been assigned to a role(s)? Yes No N/A

Reference:

17. Does the policy incorporate appropriate standards, procedures and guidelines? Yes No N/A

Reference:

18. Is the policy readily available to all staff at all levels of the organisation? Yes No N/A

Reference:

19. Are newly appointed personnel (including temporary staff and consultants) made formally aware of the policy? Yes No N/A

Reference:

20. Does the policy clearly indicate its place within the strategic and policy framework of the organisation and refer to data protection, freedom of information and information security policies? Yes No N/A

Reference:

21. Does the policy define the requirements that must be met for the records themselves to be considered as a proper record of the activity of the organisation? Yes No N/A

Reference:

22. Does the policy require that all record systems and processes incorporate measures to ensure the quality and reliability of records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

23. Does the policy provide for an implementation plan across the organisation? Yes No N/A

Reference:

24. Does the policy include a technical policy which defines criteria for adopting new technologies? Yes No N/A

Reference:

25. Does the policy include a preservation policy which ensures the maintenance of electronic records in an authentic state for as long as they are required? Yes No N/A

Reference:

26. Does the policy include provision for the preservation and secure storage of physical records for as long as they continue to be required? Yes No N/A

Reference:

27. Does the policy make provision for the registration of records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

28. Does the policy require that records should be registered and classified in a way which ensures that meaningful titles and consistent reference codes are adopted? Yes No N/A

Reference:

29. Does the policy require that audits be undertaken of the registration and classification references used by the organisation so that the registration system makes sense and records can be found in appropriate search sequences? Yes No N/A

Reference:

30. Does the policy require that where relationships exist between different sets of records and different types of records (e.g. electronic and paper) these relationships are documented by the allocation of meaningful references to ensure these links are readily apparent when undertaking appropriate search sequences? Yes No N/A

Reference:

31. Does the policy reference existing information security policy and procedures? Yes No N/A

Reference:

32. Does the policy establish how access to the records by personnel within the organisation is to be authorised and managed? Yes No N/A

Reference:

33. Does the policy include access principles to enable external requests for information or records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

34. Do these access principles relate to existing information disclosure policies? Yes No N/A

Reference:

35. Does the policy make it clear that the organisation must record the reasons why records were released or withheld in response to requests for information under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002; the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

36. Does the policy make it clear which part of the organization is responsible for recording reasons why records were released or withheld (eg is this information stored in the records management system, or the FOI enquiries system etc)?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

37. Does the policy make provision for the establishment of roles or bodies within the organisation, which will be able to make an accurate judgement on the sensitivity of records, identify any restrictions and determine who within the organisation should have access?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

38. Does the policy require that all reasonable steps be undertaken to ensure that the electronic records and processes dealing with them are secure and that they are to be safeguarded from alteration, misinterpretation or loss?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

39. Does the policy provide for the auditing of compliance with the policy and associated procedures and guidance?

Yes No N/A

Reference:

40. Does the policy provide for the concept of a trusted custodian to hold or be responsible for the management of inactive records (for records in electronic and physical form)?

Yes No N/A

Reference:

41. Does the policy provide for the development and implementation of disposal schedules and mechanisms to ensure records can be appropriately disposed of (including to an archives facility) in an accountable manner when they are no longer required?

Yes No N/A

Reference:

42. Does the policy require that business continuity plans include provisions for the maintenance of records and record management processes?

Yes No N/A

Reference:

43. Does the policy make provision for back-ups to be created to a corporately agreed standard and for these to include updates for new electronic records and metadata?

Yes No N/A

Reference:

44. Does the policy require that a robust back-up restoration regime is established to restore back-ups should they be required?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

45. Does the policy make provision for a disaster recovery plan in the event that electronic systems are compromised or physical records damaged?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

46. Does the policy define the principles to identify vital and/or emergency records in the event of a catastrophic event occurring?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

47. Does the policy require for the policy and the implementation plan to be regularly reviewed and assign responsibility for this?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

48. Does the policy set criteria for the conduct of a review of the records management policy and its implementation?

Yes

No

N/A

(Note:- this review should include any supporting standards, procedures and guidelines)

Reference:

49. *Has the responsibility for conducting periodic reviews of the policy been clearly assigned?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

50. *Does the policy include provision for preparation of an annual report and for its submission to senior management?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

Module 3: Roles, responsibilities, training and awareness

General

This chapter deals with the human resources required to undertake records management. It covers definition of roles, allocation of resources to undertake the roles, appointment of skilled records management staff and establishment of training programmes for their professional development, and making staff across the organisation aware of their contribution to effective corporate records management and giving them the training they need to follow records management procedures and guidance.

Context and objectives

The Records Management Code states that:

*A designated senior member of staff should have the lead management responsibility for records management within each authority. This lead role should be acknowledged formally and made known throughout the authority. It should also cover **all** of the records held by the authority.*

Staff with operational responsibility for records management should have the appropriate skills and knowledge needed to achieve the aims of the records management strategy (see Section 6 below). Responsibility for all aspects of record keeping should be defined specifically and incorporated in job descriptions or similar documents.

The human resource policies and practices of authorities should, of course, already address the need to recruit and retain good quality staff. These should, accordingly, support the records management function in the following areas:

the provision of appropriate resources to enable the records management function to be maintained across all of the authority's activities;

- *the establishment and maintenance of a scheme, such as a competency framework, to identify the knowledge and skills required by records and information management staff;*
- *the regular review of selection criteria for records management posts to ensure they are up to date and comply with best practice;*
- *the establishment of a professional development programme for records management staff;*
- *the regular analysis of training needs and ongoing provision of appropriate training for all staff;*

- *the inclusion, in induction training programmes for all new staff, of an awareness of records management issues and practices.*

Role of records managers

Records management responsibilities must be clearly defined and assigned, and made known throughout the organisation.

The records management programme has to be staffed by skilled people and access to skilled people is critical to the success of records management.

Organisations should be able to access records management skills internally through recruitment, training and development or, if not, externally through appropriately qualified consultants. In a medium to large organisation, this will require skilled records management position/s, in a smaller organisation, this may be a role with other responsibilities. The role should have a clear connection with related activities and obligations in respect of freedom of information and data protection compliance.

Priorities for the Records Manager will be to assess the need for records management support staff and to establish a competency framework to identify the skills and knowledge required by records management staff.

Where the need for additional resources has been identified, measures should be implemented to ensure that the records management support staff are in place and that the responsibilities of each person undertaking records management roles are set out in a performance agreement, role description or similar document, within one month of appointment.

In a large organisation where responsibilities are devolved or distributed, the organisation may require each business unit to manage its own record from within its own resources. In this environment there will still be a need to coordinate best practice across the organisation and the senior records manager charged with that responsibility will need to be empowered to set minimum standards and resource requirements which will be mandated across the organisation.

The identification of professional skills and knowledge will enable departments to recruit and train staff at a level which will ensure that the records management function acquires the appropriate professional standing.

Professional development training and competencies

Training in records management policies and procedures takes place at two levels:

- professional development for records management staff
- awareness of records issues and practices by all members of staff

The skills required will vary according to the nature and complexity of the public office. Skill levels should be appropriate to the complexity of the records management tasks for which staff are responsible. However staff undertaking records management should

possess appropriate skills for their positions and responsibilities and these should be kept up to date. Appendix A of the generic Model Action Plan for developing records management arrangements compliant with the Records Management Code gives a list of competencies which a properly trained records manager should possess. This can be used to help assess what extra training existing staff may require, or to assist with recruitment. It is available on the NAS website, www.nas.gov.uk.

All organisations will need to develop a programme of professional training for records staff. This will involve the Records Manager working with training and development staff. The programme should identify particular records management training needs in the light of the competency framework and arrange for those needs to be met, using internal and external training as appropriate.

It is also necessary to ensure that all induction training programmes, as well as FOI and other related training programmes, include awareness sessions on record keeping issues.

The professional training of records staff and the awareness by all staff of records management issues will ensure that the records management function receives the appropriate quality of support.

Roles, Responsibilities, Training and Awareness

Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

51. <i>Is there a designated individual with responsibility for record management throughout the organisation?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
52. <i>Is the individual a senior manager?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
53. <i>Do the terms of this appointment conform to the provisions of BS ISO 15489 Information and Documentation – Records Management Standard?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
54. <i>Is this individual conversant with the requirements of the Records Management Code?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
55. <i>Have the required resources for the effective implementation of records management been assessed and allocated?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			

56. *Has a dedicated team been established to carry out the record management roles and duties identified in the records management policy?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

57. *Has senior management's role in supporting effective records management across the organisation been defined including provision of resource?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

58. *Have sufficient resources been allocated to implement the records management programme?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

59. *Where authority has been distributed or delegated across an organisation have local record managers been appointed for each area of the business?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

60. *Where local record managers have been appointed, is their work and training coordinated and reviewed centrally by a senior records manager?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

61. Where local record managers have been appointed, are their job descriptions reviewed centrally to ensure they are appropriate? Yes No N/A

Reference:

62. Where local record managers have been appointed, have communication channels been established for liaison between the record managers across the organisation? Yes No N/A

Reference:

63. Where applicable, has responsibility been assigned for a trusted custodian for the management of inactive records (both electronic and physical)? Yes No N/A

Reference:

64. Have the knowledge, skills and corporate competencies required by records management staff been identified (i.e. has a competency framework been produced)?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

65. Has the competency framework been compared or validated against the records manager competency framework in Appendix A of the generic Model Action Plan for developing records management arrangements compliant with the Code of Practice on Records Management, or other external guidance produced by recognised centres of record management expertise?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

66. Do job descriptions of records management staff list the duties and skills required for records management work?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

67. Does the record management team possess the skills set out in the competency framework?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

68. Are records management staff given opportunities to acquire professional or para-professional qualifications in records and information management?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

69. *Is there provision for the regular review of training needs in records and information management?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

70. *Are selection criteria for posts with records management duties reviewed regularly?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

71. *Have senior managers been provided with the appropriate level of records management training to enable them to fulfill the role allocated to them by the organisation?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

72. *Does induction training for new staff include awareness of records issues and practices?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

73. *Have existing staff across the organisation been made aware of records issues and practices?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

74. Do job descriptions across the organisation include relevant references to record keeping duties? Yes No N/A

Reference:

75. Is there a mechanism to regularly review job descriptions to ensure they remain apposite and relevant? Yes No N/A

Reference:

76. Is there a process for the regular review of selection criteria for posts with records management duties to ensure currency and compliance with best practice? Yes No N/A

Reference:

77. Do human resource policies and practices address the need to recruit and retain good quality staff for the records management function? Yes No N/A

Reference:

Module 4: Active records management - records creation and record keeping

General

This chapter deals with the need to establish a records management system within an organisation which will ensure that authentic, reliable and usable records are created and maintained for as long as they are needed.

The international standard for records management - *BS ISO 15489 Information and documentation. Records management*. defines reliability as one of the four key characteristics which have to be present in order for a record to exist. It states that a reliable record is one “*whose contents can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities*”. Records should be created at the time of the transaction or incident to which they relate, or soon afterwards, by individuals who have direct knowledge of the facts or by instruments routinely used within the business to conduct the transaction.

BS ISO 15489 further states that “*any system deployed to manage records should be capable of continuous and regular operation in accordance with responsible procedures. A records system should*

- *routinely capture all records within the scope of the business activities it covers;*
- *organise the records in a way that reflects the business processes of the record's creator;*
- *protect the records from unauthorised alteration or disposition,*
- *routinely function as the primary source of information about actions that are documented in the records; and*
- *provide ready access to all relevant records and related metadata”*

Reliability therefore will be apparent if there is evidence that the records were:

- created and captured as part of a legitimate business process;
- assigned to a logical and appropriate location within the authority's own business classification schema or file-plan; and
- subject to corporate management of their disposal.

The identity and where possible the specific role of everyone involved in the creation and capture of the record should be clearly apparent. The operational context or business process within which a record has been generated or managed should also be visible.

A records management system must be capable of managing all the records generated or held by the authority irrespective of form. It should extend to the management of physical records (e.g. paper files, microfilm etc) and electronic records including, where appropriate, e-mail.

Context

Section 8 of the Records Management Code lists the key features and activities required to establish the processes, rules and mechanisms required for the effective management of existing and newly created records. For record creation it states that:

Each business area of the authority should have in place adequate arrangements for documenting its activities. These arrangements should take into account the legislative and regulatory environments in which the authority operates.

Records of a business activity should be complete and accurate enough to allow current employees and their successors to fulfil their responsibilities to:

- *facilitate an audit or examination of the business by anyone so authorised;*
- *protect the legal and other rights of the authority, its clients and any other person affected by its actions;*
- *provide proof of the authenticity of the records so that the evidence derived from them is shown to be credible and authoritative; and*
- *provide a true and accurate record of the principal policies and activities of the authority for ongoing public accountability and interest, as well as for the historical interest of future generations, including historians.*

Records created by the authority should be arranged in a record keeping structure (or structures) that will enable it to obtain the maximum benefit from the quick and easy retrieval of information.

The Code provides the following statement in respect of record keeping or records management:

A prerequisite for achieving effective record keeping arrangements is the information survey (sometimes known as a record audit). This gives an objective view of the authority's records and their relationships to organisational functions, it helps to determine what is required to install and maintain a records management strategy (the main elements of which are set out in Section 6 of this Code), and promotes control of the records.

All record keeping arrangements should provide metadata to enable the arrangements and the records to be understood and to be operated efficiently, and to provide an administrative context for effective management of the records.

All record-keeping arrangements should include a set of rules for referencing, titling, indexing and security marking of records. These should be easily understood and should enable the efficient retrieval of information.

The need to locate and retrieve information takes on added importance under FOI. The requirements of both sections 1 and 15 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and Scottish Ministers's *Code of Practice on the Discharge of the Functions by Public Authorities* issued under section 60 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act cannot be met unless adequate record keeping systems are in place.

Active Records Management – Records Creation and Record Keeping

Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

78. <i>Is there guidance on what constitutes a record?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
79. <i>Is there guidance on safeguarding records and making them accessible?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
80. <i>Is there a process to check that all staff in each business unit have received this guidance?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
81. <i>Are spot checks undertaken within each business unit to confirm if recently filed records are an adequate reflection of what has been created or received and are sufficient for business purposes?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			
82. <i>Where evidence of non-compliance is identified, is the guidance and training offered to end users adequate to ensure appropriate records are filed?</i>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Reference:</i>			

83. Does the record keeping or records management system take into account the legislative and regulatory environments within which the organisation operates? Yes No N/A

Reference:

84. Has each business unit defined what records need to be kept to enable the organisation to undertake all necessary and appropriate actions? Yes No N/A

Reference:

85. Where business units have defined their requirement for records, has this been independently assessed by an auditor? Yes No N/A

Reference:

86. Are there mechanisms in place to authenticate records so that they constitute credible and authoritative evidence in order to protect the rights of the organisation and any person affected by its actions? Yes No N/A

Reference:

87. *Is there specific provision within the guidance for the capture, management and secure storage of electronic information (e.g. e-mails and other digital record objects) where corporate controls and shared access permissions are applied?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

88. *Has the organisation undertaken an information audit or survey to identify all the records (physical and electronic) it holds relating to each business function, with their covering dates and location?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

89. *Does the inventory resulting from this audit, record the business groups responsible for the creation, use and management of each collection and, if different, the data owner?* Yes No N/A

(note this may cover more than one business group as creators and custodians can vary and may be in addition to the "data owner")

Reference:

90. *Has the organisation established a record keeping system (e.g. an electronic records management system) to manage its records?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

91. *Is there formal training to enable personnel to adopt the required record titling or naming conventions?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

92. *Is the record keeping or records management system used for the management of current and newly created electronic records (including e-mail) as well as physical records?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

93. *When filing electronic records is there guidance on what needs to be incorporated into the title description to ensure accurate retrieval by third parties within the organisation?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

94. *When filing email records is there guidance on how to determine the appropriate title when more than one instance of an ongoing communication is to be filed?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

95. *Has guidance been provided for end users to indicate which party in an email exchange is responsible for filing that exchange?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

96. *Are spot checks undertaken to ascertain the quality of record titling or naming for both physical and electronic records?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

97. *Is there a corporate business classification scheme or file-plan for the storage and retrieval of existing and new records?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

98. *Where there is a business classification scheme or file plan, has it been validated by end users within each business activity covered?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

99. *Is there a mechanism for end users and managers to lodge suggestions for improvement to the file plan or business classification scheme?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

100. *Where suggestions for improvement or change to the file plan or business classification scheme are made, are these acted upon or where it is not appropriate is this communicated to the relevant users?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

101. *Does the record keeping or records management system provide for roles and groups with appropriate access permissions to be established to ensure that data privacy is safe-guarded?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

102 Does the record keeping or records management system record the date on which a set of records was opened, or, if applicable, the creation date of the earliest record the set contains in order to determine its date range?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

103 Does the record keeping or records management system record the dates on which a set of records was closed, or, if applicable, the date of the latest record it contains, in order to determine its date range?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

104 Where a set of records is dormant (i.e. closed or inactive), is this recorded in the record keeping or records management system?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

105 *If regular cut-off dates (e.g. quarterly, monthly) are used to identify records due for processing or disposal, are these dates recorded?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

106 *Does the records management system establish links between associated records which are not part of the same business function?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

107 *Does the record management system establish links between records which are stored in different electronic formats?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

108 *Where a set of records is held in physical form (e.g. paper, microform) have relationships to other physical records, or to electronic records and systems, been recorded?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

109 Does the record keeping or records management system record the physical location of each record set?

Yes

No

N/A

(Note - in addition to recording the location of physical records this should also extend to where electronic or digital records are held, i.e. the computer system, data archive storage and network location and should extend to the location of back-up/security copies)

Reference:

110 Does the record keeping or records management system record the physical hardware and software formats or application types in which electronic record collections are created and held?

Yes

No

N/A

(note this may be recorded directly by an end-user or by extraction from a larger set of electronic information)

Reference:

111 Does the record management system enable protective security markings to be applied to records?)¹

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

¹ This requirement will normally be confined to central government departments and agencies

112 Does the records management system record the access constraints applying to each record?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

Module 5: Records maintenance

General

This module deals with the need to establish a records maintenance regime which will sustain or preserve records, along with the means to identify and retrieve them easily, for as long as they are required. The objective should be to maintain authentic, reliable and usable records, as defined in the previous chapter, that conform to the BS ISO 15489 requirement for the maintenance of record integrity.

Given that most current information is now generated in electronic form (e.g. databases, documents generated on office systems and e-mail) and continues to be held in digital form, the maintenance regime should deal with sustaining records held electronically as well as those in physical form.

Context

Sections 8.7 – 8.9 of the Records Management Code describes the key criteria required to establish an appropriate maintenance regime. It states that:

A tracking arrangement should be used to monitor the movement and location of records. This should be sufficient to ensure that:

- *information can be easily retrieved from a record at any time;*
- *any outstanding issues can be dealt with; and*
- *there is an auditable trail of record transactions.*

Storage accommodation for current records should be clean and tidy, and it should prevent damage to the records. Equipment used for current records should provide storage which is safe from unauthorised access, and which meets fire regulations and health & safety legislation, but which allows maximum accessibility to the information commensurate with its frequency of use. When records are no longer required for the conduct of current business, it is normally more economical and efficient to store them in a designated records centre rather than in offices. Procedures for handling records should take full account of the need to preserve important information.

It is essential to provide protection for records which are vital to the continued functioning of the authority, so authorities should put in place a business continuity plan which covers this matter.

The record management system referred to in Module 4 should include:

- adequate storage accommodation for the records
- a tracking system that controls the movement and location of records so that they can be easily retrieved

- access controls
- a business recovery plan that provides for the protection of vital records

The storage requirements for electronic records will be substantially different to those required for physical records although the same principles apply. The measures adopted must be appropriate for the format of the records.

Section 10 of the Records Management Code provides specific guidance on the management of electronic records and in respect of records maintenance it states that:

Effective electronic recordkeeping requires:

- *The secure maintenance of the integrity of electronic records*
- *The accessibility and use of electronic records for as long as required (which may include their migration across systems)*
- *The ability to cross reference electronic records to their paper counterparts in a mixed environment*

The Code goes on to require the maintenance of audit information. It states that:

Audit trails should be provided for all electronic information and documents. They should be kept securely and should be available for inspection by authorised personnel. The BSI document Principles of Good Practice for Information Management (PD0010) recommends audits at predetermined intervals for particular aspects of electronic records management

The international records management standard - *BS ISO 15489* states that “*the integrity of a record refers to its being complete and unaltered*”. It is necessary that a record be protected against unauthorised alteration. Records management policies and procedures should specify what additions or annotations may be made to a record after it is created, under what circumstances additions or annotations may be authorized, and who is authorized to make them. Any authorized annotation, addition or deletion to a record should be explicitly indicated and traceable.

BS ISO 15489 provides the following clarification: “*Control measures such as access monitoring, user verification, authorised destruction and security controls should be implemented to prevent unauthorised access, destruction, alteration or removal of records. These controls may reside within a records system or be external to the specific system. For electronic records the organisation may need to provide that any system malfunction, upgrade or regular maintenance does not affect the records*”.

To sustain a presumption of authenticity it is necessary to identify the procedural controls over the records that provide a circumstantial probability of their integrity. For paper records this is often achieved entirely through the application of business rules and physical security measures (e.g. a secure room or cabinet). For electronic records which are far more mutable these business rules have to be supported, where

appropriate, by functional systems which will enforce and document their application. The controls that define integrity and thereby generate an effective record maintenance regime include:

- access privileges over the creation, modification, annotation, relocation, and destruction of records;
- procedures to prevent, discover, and correct loss or corruption of records;
- measures to guarantee the continuing identity and integrity of records against media deterioration and across technological change;
- where multiple copies of records exist, formally identifying the authoritative record; and
- clearly identifying and maintaining, along with the records, all the documentation necessary to understand their statutory, administrative and technical context.

The efficient maintenance of records will ensure that they receive adequate protection from fire, flood, theft, and other forms of catastrophic loss so the records irrespective of format are neither lost, corrupted or subjected to unauthorised alteration and can easily be located and retrieved when required.

Records Maintenance Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

<p>113 <i>Is there a corporate strategy to ensure records in both physical and electronic form are maintained for long as they are needed?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>114 <i>Does the organisation record the business reason for the maintenance of each record?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>115 <i>Have mechanisms been established to prevent unauthorised modification of electronic records whilst providing for the addition of authorised annotations where required?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>116 <i>Does the organisation have a record of the specific format in which the records are held and, where electronic formats are involved, the software format?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

117 Are there agreed triggers to review existing software formats to ensure usability and to avoid obsolescence or degradation? Yes No N/A

Reference:

118 Do all the records (electronic & physical) possess a unique identifier or call reference? Yes No N/A

Reference:

119 Is there a comprehensive index or indexes to locate and retrieve records upon demand? Yes No N/A

Reference:

120 Is there a process for choosing the most appropriate method for storing records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

121 Does the organisation's business continuity or disaster management programme include records maintenance? Yes No N/A

Reference:

122 Have the resource requirements for records maintenance been identified for disaster management and recovery? Yes No N/A

Reference:

123 *Has there been an assessment of the risk to the organisation where records are incomplete or have limited auditable functionality?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

124 *When storing or transporting records in electronic form have the appropriate environmental storage conditions and methods of carriage been adhered to? (e.g. BS 4783 Storage, transportation and maintenance of media for use in data processing and information storage).*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

125 *Are there triggers to identify when migration of electronic records is needed to avoid obsolescence or degradation?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

126 *Are there monitoring or other measures to assess whether electronic records are still readable?*
(Note - this question should be extended to include back-up copies as part of business continuity planning)

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

127 *Have minimum information levels been defined within the management audit trail for each maintenance process to ensure the continuing reliability of electronic records?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

128 Are the storage areas allocated to hold physical records adequate to accommodate anticipated accruals?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

129 When storing or transporting records have the appropriate environmental storage conditions and methods of carriage been adhered to? (e.g. BS 5454:2000 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents)

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

130 Are the storage areas set aside for physical records regularly inspected?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

131 Have access controls been established to provide and record authorised access to records and prevent unauthorized access?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

132 Have procedures been implemented to allow for authorised changes in access permissions over time?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

133 *Have safeguards been implemented to prevent and, where feasible, record unauthorised access to electronic records?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

134 *Where applicable, has a policy been implemented to ensure continued access to encrypted or password-protected records?*

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

Module 6: Records disposal

General

This module deals with the records disposal regime. It is particularly important under FOI that there are clearly defined policies and procedures for identifying how long records should be kept, for disposing of those no longer required for business purposes, (either by destruction or transfer to an archive) and for documenting decisions and their implementation. This will provide evidence that records have not been destroyed in order to avoid responding to a request for information. Authorities must therefore have in place clearly defined arrangements for the appraisal and selection of records, and for documenting such work.

Context

Section 9 of the Records Management Code lists the key elements and activities needed to establish the required processes and mechanisms for effective disposal arrangements. It states that:

It is particularly important under Freedom of Information that the disposal, or final disposition, of records is undertaken in accordance with clearly established policies which have been formally adopted by authorities and which are enforced by properly authorised staff. It is also important that disposition decisions and actions are documented.

Each Scottish public authority should establish a system for documenting appraisal decisions. This should include information on records selected for permanent preservation, destroyed or retained by the authority. Disposal schedules may form part of this documentation. Disposal schedules are timetables that set out when individual/groups of records are due for review, transfer to an archive and/or destruction. They make it easy to establish whether or not a record exists if a request is received and give the public confidence that a Scottish public authority has adequate procedures for identifying the appropriate disposal action for records, together with the appropriate time-scale for its implementation.

The main benefits of robust and comprehensive records scheduling are:

- to maximise the retention and ready availability of highly relevant information for the conduct of effective public business, maintain the corporate memory and avoid needless repetition;
- to comply with specific legal and regulatory requirements including the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 and its Records Management Code, the Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004, and the Data Protection Act 1998;
- to support accountability through the retention of records (including archival records of genuine historical value);

- to demonstrate that the disposal of information assets has been carried out according to an agreed policy;
- to apply the authority's records management policy to categories or series of records and to allow disposal decisions to be made with proper authority and auditability;
- to avoid the costs and potential liabilities of retaining information the organisation does not really need and which is likely to result in legal discovery actions and possible involvement in third party disputes (risk management); and
- to minimise the administrative overhead of storing and reviewing records.

Records Disposal

Evaluation Questionnaire

To assess whether the required elements are in place, use the questions in the table below:

<p>135. <i>Is there a method to assess retention periods for all records, including electronic records, identified and held in the record management system?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>136. <i>Where a system to assess retention periods has not been established, is there a plan and a timetable for the introduction of such a system?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>137. <i>Does each business unit have selection and disposal policies and schedules?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>138. <i>Are the end users made aware of the authority's disposal policies?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>139. <i>If disposal schedules for each business unit are not comprehensive, is there a programme to produce them, with deadlines?</i></p> <p><i>Reference:</i></p>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	N/A <input type="checkbox"/>

140. Are disposal schedules subject to validation by the senior records manager?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

141. Where disposal schedules exist, have the records been assessed and disposed of appropriately and in a timely manner?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

142. Are there mechanisms in place to validate disposal schedules to ensure they are apposite and that material required for business purposes has not been lost?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

143. Is there a plan to assess and evaluate records each year with specific targets and timescales for implementation?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

144. Have criteria been established and applied to determine when records become inactive (i.e. closed) to enable disposal schedules to be applied?

Yes

No

N/A

Reference:

145. Are there disposal schedules for records common to several business units? Yes No N/A

(e.g. financial records, human resources, health and safety and project records)

Reference:

146. Do the criteria for appraisal explicitly cover whether or not the information is needed for current and future business purposes? Yes No N/A

Reference:

147. Do the criteria for appraisal include the identification of records required to meet legal, regulatory or audit requirements? Yes No N/A

Reference:

148. Do the criteria for appraisal recognise the value of records which support the interpretation of other records? Yes No N/A

Reference:

149. Where records contain personal data does the criteria for continued retention include whether use of them complies with the Data Protection Act? Yes No N/A

Reference:

150. *Has the records disposal policy been incorporated within the organisation's risk management strategy to ensure timely destruction of records when they are no longer required and continued safeguarding of those which merit continued retention?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

151. *Where records merit permanent preservation for historical reasons, are there processes to identify them as such and ensure their transfer to a permanent archival facility?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

152. *In the event of a disaster necessitating restoration of electronic records from older back-up copies, are there mechanisms to re-run any disposal schedules which were invoked after the backed-up copy was taken?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

153. *Is an annual report on the management and implementation of the disposal policy highlighting risks and providing recommendations for remedial action submitted to senior management for consideration and approval?* Yes No N/A

Reference:

Evaluating Risk and developing solutions

It must be stressed that meaningful evaluation is not purely about the presence or omission of a mechanistic quantitative measurement (e.g. is there a records management policy?); there must also be an appropriate qualitative measures (e.g. is the policy appropriate, comprehensive and its implications understood and acted upon?) and a fitness for purpose (is it realistic for end users to work in the manner prescribed?). There should also be a compliance testing and inspection regime to ensure that policies and procedures are being routinely applied across the organisation.

Once the workbook questions have been completed, an assessment can be undertaken to confirm the validity of the accompanying comments and any documents they cite. Where partial or non-compliance is identified this should undergo a full risk assessment to establish how critical the risk is, the relevance of any proposed mitigation strategy and to determine a timeline for undertaking the required remedial work. The outcome of this work should be validated and approved by senior management.

Most organisations will be familiar with risk assessment and different sectors will have their own guidelines and rules on how to undertake such work. For those without any such guidance, it is suggested that they consult the toolkit published by the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) entitled the Successful Delivery Toolkit. This provides comprehensive and authoritative guidance on the subject of risk management. It is available on the OGC web-site (<http://www.ogc.gov.uk>).

The main issue to bear in mind is that some instances of non-compliance may, given the operating environment, be of no significance but where a large number of non-compliances are apparent the risk to the authority could be very real. This is especially true if the non compliance is high in respect of the records management function, inadequate policy statement, a limited records management or record keeping system and a deficit of defined roles and training mechanisms.

Developing solutions

This workbook will not of itself provide all the answers - it is intended to be a tool which will help records and information managers identify what has been achieved what has not and what are the consequences that flow from both.

In all cases a degree of subjectivity will be involved depending on the nature, size and infrastructure of the organisation.

One method of testing if a proposed solution is adequate is to undertake test searches for information where the results are already known. Those involved in the assessment work should consider undertaking test scenarios of the record management system using an agreed script to confirm the information provided from the questionnaires actually works in reality.

Electronic records

Ultimately many organisations will need to introduce a measure of electronic records management to increase their level of compliance but such compliance only works if the technical solutions are underpinned by effective policies, training and processes.

Scottish public authorities which have invested in electronic record management systems will need to ensure the benefits identified in the original business case are real and are achieved and where they are not to identify why these anticipated benefits did not emerge as expected.

The general move within all organisations from an assumption that their paper documents and print-outs are the true indicators of evidential records to an increasing dependence upon the creation and receipt of electronic records which continue to be held in a digital form presents an opportunity and a challenge.

In theory access and retrieval of electronic information should be far easier and the system access controls for sensitive information can be very robust. Against this can be set a wide perception that much information is “personal” and is therefore held in private locations on networks (e.g. e-mail held in personal mailboxes or documents held on personal drives) where the “owner” can delete at will and where they are invisible to other authorised users who may need to access them in the conduct of business. Managers have to grasp the information management challenge to educate and motivate personnel to identify what records are pertinent to the business and to put them into the record management systems established by the authority. There is some evidence that many end users in most organisations are unclear on this point especially where e-mail communications are involved and high level strategic guidance does not usually provide the detailed guidance the end users need.

The following is therefore recommended especially where organisations are implementing EDRM systems:

- Users in each business unit need clear unambiguous guidance of what information is critical to that business activity and this should extend to the type and nature of communication that should be captured or filed;
- The file-plan or business classification system for each business activity needs to be usable and easily understood by the personnel who are to store and retrieve records located within that portion of the file-plan. The design has to serve the business activity as well as wider corporate needs;
- Where something new or unusual needs to be captured guidance has to be provided for end users on whom to approach for advice or to resolve the matter;
- When filing electronic records it is critical that the descriptive title actually reflects the subject so it is readily apparent to other users what that record represents (N/B e-mail is especially problematic as the original subject lines are often ambiguous if not meaningless).

Each business unit should establish clearly understood rules where it is important to limit access to certain records or cases on grounds of privacy or sensitivity. An access

model needs to be defined to prevent unauthorised access but simplify the initial capture.

Performance measurement

Having identified an issue of non-compliance or partial compliance and then assessed the risk there needs to be an ongoing management process where these risks are regularly reassessed to see if they remain valid or whether a variation is required or indeed whether the risk has ultimately proved groundless and can be formally removed from the register.

Each Scottish public authority should also ensure it has a scheme that will monitor the performance of its records management system generally. In particular the need to ensure end users are capturing or filing relevant records, locating them within appropriate files or, in the case of electronic records, associating them with relevant folders in the business classification scheme is critical if the authority is going to ensure that its record management system is actually working in accordance with the design criteria approved by senior management. A further critical consideration is that accurate retrieval is possible in response to searches for information contained in the records.

Performance measurement is therefore necessary to relate records activities to needs, to assess the efficiency or effectiveness of records activities, and to demonstrate value and accountability.

Many of the questions in the earlier chapters have identified a number of measures for assessing the effectiveness of an authority's records management system. In addition the model action plan which the NAS has published notes that performance indicators in the following areas should be developed:

- volumes of records created, appraised destroyed, etc (for example, in linear metres or megabytes)
- security
- data quality
- access to information and records
- response times
- effects on business and service delivery
- user satisfaction.

Guidance on developing performance measures

Each sector may have its own sector specific rules and guidance on developing performance measures and readers of this workbook should refer to such guidance when establishing a record keeping or records management system.

In addition the British Standards Institute (BSI) have issued *BIP 0025-3 Effective records management. Performance management for BS ISO 15489-1* to supplement the main records management standard, BS ISO 15489.

The guide discusses how to review and monitor the performance of a records management programme once it has been implemented. It covers the following topics:

- What is performance measurement?
- Why measure performance?
- Records management as an integrated business strategy
- Efficiency versus effectiveness
- Developing performance measures
- Implementing performance measures
- Using the results
- Quality regimes
- Preliminary questions
- Metrics for measuring performance.

The National Archives, London (TNA) has also issued *Guidelines on the Realisation of benefits from Electronic Records Management* which is available in the *Services to Professionals* webpages of its website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Legislation, standards and guidance for records managers

For an up to date list of the legislation, standards and guidance affecting records managers, please visit the recordkeeping pages of the NAS website and consult any relevant professional and/or sectoral bodies relevant to your authority.

Legislation

The main non-sector specific legislation and regulations to be aware of are:

- Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
 - *Code of Practice on Records Management* available on the Freedom of Information pages of the Scottish Executive website - www.scotland.gov.uk.
 - *Code of Practice on the Discharge of Functions by Public Authorities* available on the Freedom of Information pages of the Scottish Executive website - www.scotland.gov.uk.
- Data Protection Act 1998 available on Office of Public Sector Information website – www.opsi.gov.uk.
- Environmental Information (Scotland) Regulations 2004 available on Office of Public Sector Information website - www.opsi.gov.uk.

Additional guidance on the record management implications arising from the implementation of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 is provided by:

- *Generic Model Action Plan* to assist authorities to comply with the Records Management Code available on the National Archives of Scotland website - www.nas.gov.uk.
- *Open Learning Workbook* (Modules 5 and 6) available on the Scottish Executive website's Freedom of Information pages - www.scotland.gov.uk.

International and national standards and codes of practice

Standards and codes of practice are still evolving and where these do exist are often the subject of revision and care must be taken to ensure that the latest version is used. For a full list of relevant standards, visit the Recordkeeping pages of the NAS website at www.nas.gov.uk.

The current international and British standard for records management is *BS ISO 15489-1:2001 Information and documentation. Records management. General*

To obtain a copy of this standard contact the British Standards Institution (BSI) at:

BSI Group HQ
389 Chiswick High Road
London
W4 4AL
United Kingdom

Alternatively a copy can be purchased on-line from their web-site at <http://www.bsi-global.com>.

There are other British standards, which may be relevant for assessing the effectiveness of an organisation's record management storage facilities. These are:

- *BS ISO/IEC 17799:2000 Information technology. Code of practice for information security management*
- *BS 4783-1:1988 Storage, transportation and maintenance of media for use in data processing and information storage*
- *BS 5454:2000 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival Documents*

The BSI has also published other relevant guidance and codes of practice. The following are pertinent:

- *PD ISO/TR 15489-2:2001 Information and documentation. Records management Guidelines*
- *BIP 0025-1 Effective records management. A management guide to the value of BS ISO 15489-1*
- *BIP 0025-2 Effective records management. Practical implementation of BS ISO 15489-1*
- *BIP 0025-3 Effective records management. Performance management for BS ISO 15489-1*
- *BIP 0001-2:2003 Freedom of information. A practical guide. Using records management techniques to simplify compliance*
- *BIP 0008:2004 Code of practice for legal admissibility and evidential weight of information stored electronically*
- *BIP 0009:2004 Legal admissibility and evidential weight of information stored electronically. Compliance workbook*

- *PD 0010:1997 The principles of good practice for information management*
- *PD 0016:2001 Document scanning. Guide to scanning business documents*

Guidance

Each sector may have its own sector specific rules, regulations and guidance and readers of this workbook should refer to such guidance when establishing a record keeping or records management system.

Basic guidance on records management, electronic records management, record keeping and information legislation in Scotland, is available in the *Recordkeeping* webpages of The National Archives of Scotland's website (www.nas.gov.uk).

The National Archives, London (TNA) have produced quite detailed guidance which, although it is designed for UK organisations and often has a central government slant, the general principles they contain are broadly relevant to any Scottish public authority requiring to manage its records in conformance with Scottish Ministers' Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued under section 61 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The guidance can be found in the *Services to Professionals* webpages of TNA's website (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk). They cover topics such as:

- Model retention and disposal schedules
- Electronic records management
- Appraisal of electronic records
- Maintaining and preserving electronic records
- Managing email
- Managing web resources
- Skills required by records managers
- Framework for strategic planning and implementation
- Business classification scheme design.