

MANAGING PUBLIC
SECTOR RECORDS

A Training Programme

Glossary



INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



INTERNATIONAL RECORDS
MANAGEMENT TRUST

GLOSSARY

MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS

A STUDY PROGRAMME

General Editor, Michael Roper; Managing Editor, Laura Millar

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Glossary

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For information on Laura Millar, see her biography above as Managing Editor.

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INTRODUCTION TO *GLOSSARY*

The *Glossary* draws upon the work of the Project Group on Terminology of the International Council on Archives (ICA/DAT), which is preparing for publication a completely revised version of Walne, Peter (ed.). *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*. ICA Handbooks Series 7. 2d ed., München, Germany: KG Saur Verlag. This glossary also draws on terminology developed by the Information and Documentation Terminology Subcommittee of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/TC46/SC3), which is revising ISO 5127.

This glossary has also taken account of Australian and American terminologies as found in the following glossaries:

- US Environmental Protection Agency, *Glossary of Common Records Management Terms* (adapted from National Archives and Records Administration, *A Federal Records Management Glossary*, 1993) (Washington, DC, USEPA, October 1997)
- State Records Authority of New South Wales, *Government Recordkeeping Manual: Glossary of Recordkeeping Terms* (Sidney, AUS: State Records Authority of New South Wales, March 1999)
- Glenda I Acland, *Glossary of Australian Usage of Archival Terminology* (Dickson, ACT, AUS: Australian Council of Archives, 1993).

The glossary also includes terms drawn from various sources of legal, medical, financial and management terminology.

The terms as defined here and redefined in the texts of the relevant modules are intended to be understood in the specific context of the MPSR Study Programme. The glossary is not a complete and authoritative dictionary of professional terminology. Terms defined here may be defined differently in other contexts, even in other professional contexts.

Definitions are in alphabetical order in bold, italic type. Cross references are included for non-preferred terms to help direct people to the terms used in this study programme.

GLOSSARY

A

Access point: An element of a description made searchable with a view to its retrieval.

Accession: The primary unit of records formally received by an archival institution from a particular source on a particular occasion.

Accountability: The requirement to perform duties, including financial and operational responsibilities, in a manner that complies with legislation, policies, objectives and expected standards of conduct.

Accounting officer: The senior civil servant (such as the Permanent Secretary) of an agency that has its own vote who is responsible to parliament (through the Auditor General) for the 'propriety and regularity' of the expenditure of the agency's vote.

Accretion. *See Accrual.*

Accrual: An accession of records additional to series already held by an archival institution. Also known as an accretion.

Action date: The date when records are scheduled to be removed from a records centre and either destroyed, sent to an archival institution or reviewed for future action.

Action officer: An official engaged in the administration of an agency or in the implementation of its functions and activities. Also known as a desk officer.

Active records. *See Current records.*

Administrative records: Records relating to those general administrative activities common to all organisations, such as maintenance of resources, care of the physical plant or other routine office matters. Also known as housekeeping records.

Administrative value. *See Operational value.*

Admissibility: The quality of evidence that makes it relevant and acceptable to an issue before the court and does not infringe any exclusionary rule (a matter of law).

Affinity diagram: A tool used to represent pictorially the relationships between elements of a business system.

Agency: A generic title for any public sector institution forming part of the national or local executive, judiciary or legislature that creates records and has its own record-keeping system. In legislation the equivalent term may be public office.

Aims: Statements of the ongoing purposes of an organisation arising from its mandate.

Ambit: In a legal environment, the extent of coverage of legislation; in effect, which organisations are subject to an act.

Application (1): A set of related tasks supporting a work activity for which all or some of the tasks have been automated through the use of computer technology.

Application (2): In a legal environment, the records of those organisations that are covered by the provisions of an act.

Appointing authority: The person or body authorised by the constitution, statute or regulation to make the formal appointment of a person to a post of a particular grade within the public service.

Appraisal: The process of determining the value of records for further use, for whatever purpose, and the length of time for which that value will continue. Also known as evaluation, review or selection.

Appraisal interview: A structured interview between a line manager and a member of his or her staff to discuss the latter's performance over the past year and to agree a job plan for the next one. Also known as a job appraisal interview or job appraisal review.

Archival administration. *See: Archives management.*

Archival agency. *See Archival institution.*

Archival institution: The agency responsible for selecting, acquiring, preserving, and making available archives. Also known as an archival agency or archives. *Note:* To avoid confusion, the term archives is used to refer to an institution only in formal titles such as records and archives institution or National Archives.

Archival reference code: The combination of letters and numbers allocated to groups, series and items in order to identify and control the materials.

Archival repository: A building or part of a building in which archives are preserved and made available for consultation. Also known as an archives.

Archives: Records, usually but not necessarily non-current records, of enduring value selected for permanent preservation. Archives will normally be preserved in an archival repository. *See also Archival institution, Archival repository.*

Archives group. *See Group.*

Archives management: The area of management concerned with the maintenance and use of archives.

Archivist: A person professionally engaged in archival management.

Arrangement: The whole process of analysing the organisation of sets of archives, whereby their provenance and original order are understood and the archives are set into groups, series and items in an order that preserves and reflects that understanding.

Audit: The process of reviewing, verifying, evaluating and reporting by an independent person on the adequacy of a unit of analysis against a predetermined set of criteria. In the case of a business systems analysis project, the criteria for the audit derive from implementation objectives.

Audit trail: In computer environments, a record showing who has accessed a computer system and what operations he or she has performed during a given period of time.

Authority control: The process of verifying and authorising the choice of unique access points, such as names, subjects and forms, and ensuring that the access points are consistently applied and maintained in an information retrieval system.

Authority file. *See Authority list.*

Authority list: A list of standardised keywords, including names (personal, corporate and geographic), used as access points in retrieving information.

Automation: The use of machines or systems to perform tasks normally performed or controlled by people.

B

Back up: To copy a computer file or collection of files to a second medium, usually on a diskette or magnetic tape, so that the data are safe in case the original file is damaged or lost. Backups are usually copied to storage devices that can be removed from the computer and kept separately from the original.

Bar code: a type of code used on labels to be read by a scanner. Each bar code is unique and identifies a specific item, file, or box.

Batch: A group of jobs, data, or software programs treated as a unit for computer processing.

Best evidence rule: The legal rule that identifies two types of evidence: primary evidence, or that evidence that by its very nature is the best available, and secondary evidence, or that evidence that by its very nature suggests that better evidence may be available.

Binary code: A system of encoding data that uses binary digits, 0 and 1.

Binary digit (bit): A digit within the binary number system. A bit is the smallest unit of information held in a computer.

Binary number system: A numerical system wherein each digit stands for a power of two. The binary system uses only two symbols, 0 and 1, to represent values.

Bit. *See Binary digit.*

Browser. *See Web browser.*

Budget: A statement of a financial position for a specified period of time, based on estimates of expenditure and proposals for financing them.

Bus: The channel or path that lets the parts of a computer communicate with each other.

Business: The core functions of an organisation that contribute to the achievement of its mission.

Business process re-engineering (BPR): The fundamental rethinking and radical redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed.

Business resumption plan: *See Emergency plan.*

Business systems analysis (BSA): An analytical framework that involves analysing organisations as systems or the process of systematically and objectively gathering information about business systems and subjecting that information to formal analysis. This includes identifying broad organisational goals and supporting business areas and processes, and business process definition and decomposition.

Byte: A combination of bits that represent one character. A byte is usually composed of 8 bits.

C

Case papers/files: Papers or files relating to a specific action, event, person, place, project, or other subject. Also known as dossiers, dockets, particular instance papers, project files or transactional files.

Causal loop diagram: The graphical representation of the cyclical nature of cause and effect relationships.

Central processing unit (CPU): The chip or chips at the heart of a computer that enable it to process data. Also known as a processor.

Chip: A small piece of semi-conducting material (such as silicon) about 1 centimetre (¼ inch) square on which an integrated circuit is embedded. An integrated circuit is a number of electronic components joined together to form a path for electricity. Central processing unit chips contain the circuits representing the CPU.

Class. *See Series.*

Classification: The process of identifying and arranging records and archives in categories according to logically structured conventions, methods and procedural rules represented in a classification system.

Classified records: Records that are restricted in their circulation and access because they bear a security marking (such as 'Confidential', 'Secret', 'Top Secret').

Coding system: A representation of a classification scheme, in letters and/or numbers and in accordance with a pre-established set of rules.

Competencies: The levels of knowledge, skills and experience achieved by an individual in relation to the range of jobs he or she may be called upon to perform.

Competitor: Anyone outside an organisation, project or business process that competes for the same resources (inputs) or provides the same or similar products or services (outputs). Competitors may be external or internal.

Complementing: The determination of the numbers and grades of staff necessary for the cost-effective achievement of an organisation's aims and objectives.

Computer: A machine that can receive and store information and change or process it.

Computer network: A grouping of computers and peripherals connected together by telecommunications links to enable a group of users to share and exchange information.

Computer program: A sequence of instructions that can be executed by a computer to carry out a process.

Confidential records. *See Classified records.*

Conservation: The intrusive protection of archival material, by the minimal physical and chemical treatments necessary to resist further deterioration, which will not adversely affect the integrity of the original.

Continuation file: A new file (1) opened when the old file on the subject has reached its cut-off date within a file cycle.

Continuing utility: The finite usefulness that records may have for the continuance of business or as evidence thereof.

Continuum concept: A consistent and coherent process of records management throughout the life of records, from the development of record-keeping systems through the creation and preservation of records, to their retention and use as archives.

Contract: An agreement entered into between two parties generally for one to receive payment in exchange for the supply to the other of goods or services. It is intended to be, and is, legally binding.

Control documentation: Recorded information that monitors and governs the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records. Also known as control records.

Control records. *See Control documentation.*

Copyright: A statutory right that grants creators (authors) certain exclusive rights in their creations for a legally established duration of time.

Corporate plan. *See Strategic plan.*

Cost effectiveness: The optimum balance between efficiency, economy and effectiveness. Also known as value for money.

CPU. *See Central processing unit.*

Current records: Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business of an organisation or individual. Also known as active records. Current records will normally be maintained in or near their place of origin or in a registry or records office.

Current system: An information systems application that is actively being used by an organisation.

Customer: Anyone who needs, uses or benefits from the output of a process.

D

Data (pl.): The representation of information in a formalised manner suitable for communication, interpretation and processing, generally by a computer system. *Note:* the term 'raw data' refers to unprocessed information.

Data field: A space allocated for a particular item of information. In a database, fields are the smallest units of information you can access.

Data file. *See Data set and File (2).*

Data set: A group of related electronic records that are organised and treated as a unit. The term is often used interchangeably with data file.

Data structure: A scheme for organising related pieces of information. The basic types of structures include: files, lists, arrays, records, trees, tables. Each of these basic structures has many variations and allows different operations to be performed on the data.

Database: A structured assembly of logically related data designed to meet various applications but managed independently of them.

Database record: A complete set of information in a database; records are composed of fields, each of which contains one item of information.

Delegation: The granting to staff of the authority and freedom to perform tasks normally carried out by the manager while he or she retains the accountability.

Department. *See Division.*

Deposit: (1) The process of placing documents in the custody of an archival institution without transfer of legal title; (2) the documents covered by a single such placement.

Description: The process of capturing, analyzing, organizing, and recording information that serves to identify, manage, locate and explain archives and the contexts and records systems that produced them.

Desk officer. *See Action officer.*

Destruction: The disposal of documents of no further value by incineration, maceration, pulping, shredding or another secure method.

Development plan. *See Strategic plan.*

Digitisation: The conversion of characters or images into binary digits.

Directorate. *See Division.*

Disaster: An unexpected event with seriously destructive consequences.

Discovery: The process whereby parties to court proceedings identify and disclose to each other *documents* relevant to the issues in the proceedings.

Diskette. A small, removable, flexible mylar plastic disk covered with a thin layer of a magnetisable substance, onto which digital data can be recorded and stored. Also known as a floppy disk. .

Disposal: The actions taken with regard to records as a consequence of their appraisal and the expiration of their retention periods. *Note:* Disposal is not synonymous with destruction, though that may be an option. Also known, especially in North America, as disposition.

Disposal date: The date on which actions specified in a disposal schedule should be initiated.

Disposal schedule: The control document recording appraisal decisions and prescribing disposal action. Also known as disposal list, disposition schedule, records schedule, retention schedule, retention and disposal (or disposition) schedule or transfer schedule.

Disposition. *See Disposal.*

Division: An upper-level administrative unit of an agency. In practice, the appropriate designation may be department or directorate.

Document: A unit of recorded information.

Document management: The application of records management principles and techniques to the systematic handling and control of correspondence and internally generated documents with a view to their continuing use.

Document management system: An (electronic) system used to manage different kinds of documents in an organisation using computer programs and storage.

Documentary evidence: Documents admitted as evidence under special rules of law.

Documentation: Information needed to develop, use or maintain computer hardware and software and to permit access and retrieval of the data.

Dossiers. *See Case papers/files.*

Dummy: A card, sheet or other indicator placed on or near the place where an item is normally stored to denote its removal.

E

E-mail. *See Electronic mail.*

Economy: A measure of the ability of a process to produce the same outputs from reduced inputs.

Effectiveness: A measure of the ability of a process to produce specified outputs.

Efficiency: A measure of the ability of a process to produce more outputs from the same inputs.

Electronic mail (e-mail): A way of sending messages between people anywhere within an organisation or in the world using a computer that can communicate with another computer through a computer network. The message or document can be viewed on a computer screen and printed out.

Electronic record: A digital record that can be manipulated, transmitted or processed by a computer.

Emergency: Any unexpected occurrence requiring immediate action.

Emergency plan: Policies and procedures developed by an organisation to be used during an emergency or disaster to prevent or minimise damage to an organisation, its people and its resources.

Enclosures: Storage container, specifically archival-quality containers such as acid-free envelopes, folders or boxes, used to hold records or archives and protect them from hazardous elements.

Enduring value: The indefinite value that records may have for any purpose and that justifies their preservation as archives.

Ephemera: Informal documents of transitory use and value (such as advertisements, calling cards, notices, brochures and tickets).

Essential records. *See Vital records.*

Estimates: A statement of how government proposes to spend the public funds that it seeks for the next financial year.

Ethernet: A local area network (LAN) protocol that supports data transfer.

Evaluation. *See Appraisal.*

Evidence: Information or proof admitted into judicial proceedings and relevant to a specific case to establish an alleged or disputed fact.

Evidential value: The secondary value of records or archives in providing information on the origins, structure, functions, procedures and significant transactions of the organisation that created them.

Examination: The preliminary procedure taken to determine the original materials and structure of an item and to determine the extent of its deterioration, alteration or loss.

F

Field. *See Data field.*

File (1): An organized physical assembly (usually within a folder) of documents grouped together for current use or in the process of archival arrangement because they relate to the same subject, activity or transaction. *Note:* A file is usually the basic unit within a record series.

File (2): A logical assembly of data stored within a computer system. *Note:* In word-processing systems it is the intellectual representation of a physical document.

File classification system: A predetermined logical scheme for the physical and intellectual arrangement, storage and retrieval of files (1).

File cycle: A specified period during which documents are added to files (1), at the end of which new files are opened if the subjects with which they deal continue to generate documents.

File plan: A detailed list or inventory of the individual files within a file classification system.

File series. *See Series.*

File server: A computer that serves or distributes application programs and data files to workstations within a computer network. The hard drive of the file server is shared by the workstations on the network.

Financial management: The planning, controlling, implementation and monitoring of fiscal policies and activities, including the accounting and audit of revenue, expenditure, assets and liabilities.

Financial (or fiscal) value: The primary value of records for the continuance of the financial or fiscal business of the creating agency or a successor in function or as evidence thereof (such as for audit).

Financial records: Records resulting from the conduct of business and activities relating to financial management.

Finding aid: A document, published or unpublished, listing or describing a body of records or archives.

Fiscal value: See *Financial value*.

Fishbone diagram: The graphical representation of the relationship between an effect and all possible causes of that effect.

Floppy disk: See *Diskette*.

Fonds. See *Group*.

Forward job plan. See *Job plan*.

Function: The means by which an organisation or system fulfils its purpose.

Functional appraisal: The process of assessing the enduring value of records by determining the functions of the body to be documented, identifying which offices or individuals created records in carrying out those functions and selecting the records that provide the most complete and concise documentation of the functions.

Functional records. See *Operational records*.

Functional requirements: The tasks a computer application must perform to carry out a process satisfactorily.

G

Gantt chart: A type of bar chart that graphically portrays the type and duration of activities and tasks that must be performed in order to complete a project.

General disposal schedule: A disposal schedule that applies to categories of administrative records throughout an organisation.

Grading: The placing of posts in a staffing structure at appropriate points in a predetermined classification scheme on the basis of the nature of the work and the level of responsibility.

Group: The primary division in the arrangement of records and archives at the level of the independent originating organisation. Also known as archives group, fonds, record group.

Groupware: Applications software that supports collaborative work between a group of users by managing schedules, sharing documents and undertaking intragroup communications.

Guide (1): A finding aid giving a general account of all or part of the holdings of one or several archival institutions, including administrative or other background history, usually arranged by groups and series.

Guide (2): A finding aid describing the holdings of one or more archival institutions relating to a particular subject, period, or geographical area or to specified types or categories of documents.

H

Hard disk. *See Hard drive.*

Hard drive: The storage area within the computer itself, where megabytes of space are available to store bits of information. Also known as a hard disk.

Hardware: The physical equipment required to create, use, manipulate and store electronic data.

Hearsay: A statement from a source other than the live witness.

Home page: The main page of a website. Typically, the home page serves as an index or table of contents to other documents stored at the site (that is, the address).

Hospital-based casenotes: Casenotes retained by the hospital in its own records registry or storage areas.

Housekeeping records. *See Administrative records.*

HTML. *See HyperText Markup Language.*

HyperText Markup Language (HTML): One of the main standards that controls how the World Wide Web works; it is an SGML document type definition that determines how web pages are formatted and displayed and thus enables information to be exchanged on the World Wide Web.

I

Inactive records. *See Non-current records.*

Indexing: The process of establishing and applying terms as access points to records. *Note:* The terms are usually organised in alphabetical order.

Information management: The planning, control and exploitation of the information resources of an organisation in support of its business. Also known as information resources management.

Information manager: A person professionally engaged in information management.

Information system: The combination of information, technology, processes and people brought together to support a given business objective.

Information technology: The infrastructure needed to move large quantities of information from one place to another efficiently and securely.

Information: Knowledge that is communicated.

Informational value: The secondary value of records or archives for reference and research deriving from the information contained in them and often incidental to their original purpose.

Input: Any resource required for the functioning of a process, in the course of which it will be transformed into one or more outputs.

Internet: A collection of local, regional and national computer networks that are linked together to exchange data and distribute processing tasks.

Intranet: An internal computer network that belongs to an organisation and is accessible only by that organisation's members.

Intrinsic value: The secondary value of records or archives by reason of their age, historical associations, physical form or features, aesthetic or artistic quality or monetary value.

Inventory: A basic archival finding aid whose unit of description is usually the series.

Invitation to tender: A formal document setting out the requirements for the supply of a product or service together with its conditions of purchase.

Item: The basic physical unit of arrangement and description within a series. Also known as a piece.

Item number: The number allocated to an item in order to identify and control it.

J

Job appraisal interview. *See Appraisal interview.*

Job appraisal review. *See Appraisal review.*

Job plan: A document, agreed between a manager and a member of staff, specifying the content of the job to be done and establishing criteria for judging performance in that job. Also known as a forward job plan.

K

Keyword: A term or combination of terms taken from the title or text of a document or file characterising its content and establishing an access point for its retrieval.

Keyword list: A controlled vocabulary that limits the choice of keywords when classifying or indexing files.

Keyword search engine: A program that allows a user to search a database by an index entry that identifies a specific record or document.

L

LAN. *See* Local area network.

Laser disk. *See* Optical disk.

Legacy system: An old application that an organisation continues to use, perhaps because the cost of replacement or redesign is high.

Legal value: The primary value of records for the continuance of the legal business of the creating organisation or a successor in function or the protection of its legal rights or those of its employees or third parties.

Life-cycle concept: A concept that draws an analogy between the life of a biological organism, which is born, lives and dies, and that of a record, which is created, is used for so long as it has continuing value and is then disposed of by destruction or by transfer to an archival institution.

Link: A reference to another document in an environment like the World Wide Web, that users can go to directly by clicking on the on-screen reference with the computer's mouse.

Local area network: A computer network located within a relatively limited area such as a building, agency or university campus. Also known as a LAN.

M

Magnetic tape: A continuous plastic strip covered with magnetic oxide; the tape is divided into parallel tracks onto which data may be recorded by selectively magnetising parts of the surface, or spots, in each of the tracks. The data can then be stored and reused.

Maintenance: The daily care of records and archives, particularly current records and semi-current records, when they are housed in records offices or records centres; maintenance ensures the general protection of records against environmental hazards or other physical dangers.

Mandate: The source of authority for an organisation's activities.

Memory: An area within a computer system that holds data waiting to be processed.

Menu: A collection of onscreen choices given to the user to help him or her interact with a computer system.

Metadata: The information about a record that explains the technical and administrative processes used to create, manipulate, use and store that record.

Microfilming: The photographic process of creating miniaturised images of records on high-resolution film.

Migration: The transfer of data in electronic form from one hardware or software configuration or generation to another.

Mission: The purpose for which an organisation exists.

Mission statement: A written articulation of an organisation's purpose or mission.

Mould: A woolly or furry growth consisting of minute fungi that forms on substances found in moist, warm air.

Multi-level rule: An internationally accepted rule, set out in ISAD(G), requiring that archival descriptions should be completed for each of the levels of arrangement and then linked together.

N

Network. *See Computer network.*

Network server: A computer that is connected to the network and that 'serves' or distributes resources to network users.

Node: A processing location on a network.

Non-current records: Records no longer needed for the conduct of current business. Also known as inactive records.

O

Objective: The statement of a specific goal in support of an organisation's aims, which it is intended to achieve within a specified period of time.

Open: A computer format that is not owned by a company and so is freely available to use and to mix and match with other products.

Operating system: A collection of software that allows a computer to function.

Operational records: Records created for the purpose of carrying out the core functions of an organisation. Also known as functional records.

Operational value: The primary value of records for the continuance of the administration or operations of the creating agency or a successor in function or as evidence thereof. Also known as administrative value. Note: the term 'administrative' in this context refers not to 'housekeeping' records but to those records with operational or core value to the organisation; to avoid confusion in these modules, the term 'operational value' is used.

Optical disk: A storage device that uses reflecting surfaces and laser technology to read and write data on a disk. Also known as a laser disk.

Organisation chart: The diagrammatic representation of the structure of an organisation.

Original order: The order in which documents were created, arranged and maintained by the office of origin.

Output: The product of the transformation of inputs by a process.

Oxidation: The combination of oxygen with another element to promote deterioration, such as rusting of metal or disintegration of paper.

P

Parchment: The inner portion of the split skin of a sheep or goat, which is not tanned but cleaned of adhering flesh, hair, fat and muscle and preserved by soaking in a lime solution, then scraped and polished.

Part: One of a number of physical units to which a file (1) has been subdivided chronologically as it has increased in size. Also known as a volume or partfile.

Partfile. See Part.

Particular instance papers. See Case papers/files.

Patient-based casenotes: Casenotes given to the patients for safe keeping, not retained in the hospital.

Peer-to-peer network: A type of network in which each workstation has equivalent capabilities and responsibilities.

Performance indicator. See Performance measure.

Performance measure: An indicator of effectiveness based on a standard definition of a process and the units for its measurement. Also known as a performance indicator or target.

Peripheral device: Any piece of equipment in a computer system that is not actually inside the computer itself.

Piece. *See Item.*

Pixel: A 'dot' or mark of colour in the electronic representation of an image; the greater the number of pixels in a given space the higher the resolution or quality of the image produced.

Policy files: Operational files relating specifically to the creation of policies and procedures.

Preservation: A term referring to the passive protection of archival material in which no physical or chemical treatment to the item occurs.

Platform: The type of computer or operating system on which a software application runs. For example, some common platforms are PC (Windows), Macintosh, and Unix.

Primary value: The continuing utility of records or archives, by virtue of their contents, for the transaction of the business that gave rise to their creation.

Private records: Records created, received and maintained by non-governmental organisations, families or individuals relating to their private and public affairs.

Privilege: Exclusionary rules (such as professional privilege) that allow a party to refuse to reveal certain confidential communication to a court or person.

Process (1): The means whereby a system's functions are performed.

Process (2): The means whereby an organisation carries out any part its business.

Process (3): A systematic series of actions a computer uses to manipulate data.

Process map: A pictorial representation of the inputs, activities, tasks and outputs of a given process (1).

Processor. *See Central processing unit.*

Program. *See Computer program.*

Programming language: An artificial set of rules, vocabulary and syntax used to instruct the computer to execute certain tasks.

Project files. *See Case papers/files.*

Project: A formally established, single-time work effort with a well-defined beginning, scope and objectives, end product, completion and success criteria and end point.

Proprietary: A computer format that is privately owned and controlled (such as the Kodak photo CD, which is owned by the Kodak Corporation).

Provenance: The organisation or individual that created or received, maintained and used records while they were still current.

Public office. *See Agency.*

Public records: Records created or received and maintained in any public sector agency.

Q

Query language: A set of command words that can be used to direct a computer to create databases, locate information, sort records and change the data in those records.

R

RAM. *See Random access memory.*

Random access memory (RAM): An area in the computer system unit that temporarily holds a user's data, operating system instructions and program instructions.

Reading room. *See Search room.*

Real evidence: Material objects (things) produced for the inspection of the court.

Record (1): A document regardless of form or medium created, received, maintained and used by an organisation (public or private) or an individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business, of which it forms a part or provides evidence.

Record (2): A complete set of information in a database; records are composed of fields, each of which contains one item of information. *Note:* the term database record is used in this study programme as database record, to distinguish it from record (1).

Record group. *See Group.*

Record group. *See Group.*

Record keeping: The processes of creating and maintaining complete and accurate records of business activities.

Records centre: A building or part of a building designed or adapted for the low-cost storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their ultimate disposal.

Records disposal schedule. *See Disposal schedule.*

Records management: That area of general administrative management concerned with achieving economy and efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of the records of an organisation throughout their entire life cycle and in making the information they contain available in support of the business of that organisation.

Records management unit: The administrative unit of an agency responsible for the life-cycle management of that agency's records.

Records manager: The person in charge of a records management unit.

Records office: The subunit of a records management unit responsible for the receipt, control and maintenance of current records. Also known as a registry.

Records retention schedule. *See Disposal schedule.*

Records schedule. *See Disposal schedule.*

Records series. *See Series.*

Records survey: The application of the techniques of business systems analysis to the gathering of basic information regarding the quantity, physical form and type, location, physical condition, storage facilities, rate of accumulation, uses and similar data about the records of an organisation.

Region: The highest level of local government. In practice the appropriate designation may be state, province, district or some other equivalent term.

Register: A document, often a bound volume, in which regular entry of data is made.

Registration: The process of recording standard information about a document so that it is captured in a record-keeping system.

Registry. *See Records office.*

Relational database: A database that spreads information across different tables while maintaining links between them.

Relative humidity: The ratio of the amount of water vapour in the air to the amount that would be present at the same temperature were the atmosphere to be fully saturated. Relative humidity is expressed as a percentage.

Relevance: The quality of evidence that makes it sufficiently relevant to the issue before the court to be considered acceptable. *Note:* Not all relevant evidence is admissible.

Repository. *See Archival repository.*

Requisition: A document completed by the demanding officer, specifying the goods or services required and, when duly authorised, serving as an order to the provider of those goods or services.

Respect des fonds: Respect for the creator of the records or archives, involving the maintenance of provenance and original order.

Restoration: The repair of an item when aesthetics and reproduction of the original appearance is more important than the preservation of the integrity of the item. Restoration is not generally viewed as an archival activity.

Retention period: The length of time, as provided for by legislation, regulation or administrative procedure or based upon an estimate of the frequency of continuing use, that records should be retained in an office or records centre before they are transferred to an archival institution or otherwise disposed of.

Retention schedule. *See Disposal schedule.*

Retention: The function of preserving and maintaining records for continuing use. This may be done in the agency of origin, in a records centre or in an archival institution.

Review. *See Appraisal.*

Running contract: A contract that provides for the supply over a period of time of goods or services that are called upon as and when required by means of warrants. Such contracts are used especially for maintenance and minor works and stationery supplies.

S

Sampling: The selection of items from a body of records made in such a way that, taken together, the items selected are representative of the whole.

Scanning: The process of converting an image into a form that a computer can use.

Scheme of service: A framework document that sets out the specific details of a particular occupational class in the civil service.

Seal (1): A die or matrix, usually of metal, engraved in intaglio with the device or design used to produce a seal (2) by the application of pressure.

Seal (2): A piece of wax, lead or other material, upon which an impression in relief from a seal (1) has been made, attached to or applied to the face of a document.

Search engine: A program that searches documents for specified keywords and returns a list of documents where the keywords were found.

Search room: The area in an archival repository open to users for the consultation of archives and the finding aids that relate to them. Also known as a reading room.

Secondary value: The enduring value that records or archives possess, by virtue of their contents, for purposes other than the transaction of the business for which they were created.

Secondment: An arrangement whereby an individual is loaned to another organisation with the intention that he or she will, at the end of the period of secondment, return to the parent organisation. In some systems there is a technical difference between 'secondment', in which the lending organisation pays the salary of the person loaned, and 'loan', in which the borrowing organisation pays the salary.

Secret records. *See Classified records.*

Selection. *See Appraisal.*

Selective preservation: The process of selecting and maintaining a specific portion of records or archives for continuing use. Also known as selective retention.

Selective retention. *See Selective preservation.*

Semi-active records. *See Semi-current records.*

Semi-current records: Records required only infrequently in the conduct of current business. Also known as semi-active records. Semi-current records will normally be maintained in a records centre or other offsite intermediate storage pending their ultimate disposal.

Series: The level of arrangement of the files (1) and other records of an organisation or individual that brings together those relating to the same function or activity or having a common form or some other relationship arising from their creation, receipt or use. Also known as a file series, records series or class.

Series number: The number allocated to a series in order to identify and control it.

Service: Any act offered or performed that is essentially intangible in nature and does not of itself result in the transfer of the ownership of an object. Its production may or may not be linked to a physical object or product.

Software: The computerised instructions that operate a computer, manipulate the data and execute particular functions or tasks.

Span of control: The number of directly subordinate staff managed by a post holder.

Specimens: Representative examples of records kept to illustrate particular forms, styles or processes rather than for their information content.

Staff report: A document prepared at specified intervals (usually annually) as part of a formalised system for the assessment by managers of the performance and potential of individual members of their staff.

Stakeholder: Any person, group or other organisation that has a claim on an organisation's attention, resources or output or is affected by that output.

Standard: A definition, format or specification that has been approved by a recognised standards organisation or is accepted as a de facto standard by an industry.

Standardised General Mark-up Language (SGML): A metalanguage that can be applied to documents in order to maintain their structure and context.

Steering committee: A senior management group that approves the commitment of resources to, oversees the general direction of and monitors the progress of a project.

Storage: The area within a computer system where data can be left on a longer term basis while it is not needed for processing.

Storage device: The place where a computer puts data.

Strategic plan: A formal statement of an organisation's intended outputs over a specified period of time and of the inputs required to produce those outputs. Also known as a corporate plan or development plan.

Strategic planning: The process of identifying an organisation's mission, aims and objectives, determining its needs, capabilities and resources, and then developing strategies to achieve those goals.

Stripping: The removal of individual documents lacking continuing value from a file (1). Note: The term 'stripping' is preferred to the obsolete term 'weeding'.

Subfile: A separate file (1) dealing with a discrete aspect of the subject of a more general file.

Subgroup: A discrete subdivision in the arrangement of archives below the level of the group, usually the archives of a subordinate administrative unit with its own record-keeping system.

Subpoena: A court order requiring the giving of evidence or the production to the court of documents or both.

Supplier: Anyone who supplies inputs required for the functioning of a business process.

SWOT analysis: The systematic assessment of an organisation's internal strengths (S) and weaknesses (W) and external opportunities (O) and threats (T).

System: A perceived whole whose elements 'hang together' because they continually affect each other over time and operate toward a common purpose. Systems consist of sub-systems or functions, processes, activities and tasks.

T

Tape. *See Magnetic tape.*

Target. *See Performance measure.*

TCP/IP. *See Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol.*

Technical requirements: The specifications a computer must have to carry out the functional requirements.

Temperature: The level of heat or cold in a substance, body or environment.

Tender: An offer by a potential supplier to supply a specified product or service at a specified cost.

Testimony: The evidence of facts provided by a witness, when the witness has personal knowledge of the facts or events.

Thesaurus (*pl. thesauri*): A controlled and structured vocabulary of keywords showing synonymous, hierarchical and other relationships and dependencies.

Total quality management: A management philosophy that focuses on customer satisfaction, commitment to quality, continuous process improvement, employee involvement and statistical process control to solve organisational problems.

Tracking: The process of documenting the movements and use of records so that their whereabouts are known at all times.

Transactional files. *See Case papers/files.*

Transfer schedule. *See records schedule.*

Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP): The de facto standard used by the Internet for transmitting data over networks.

U

Uniform Resource Locator (URL): The global address of documents and other resources on the World Wide Web. URLs can point to executable files that can be fetched using FTP (file transfer protocol, ftp://) or a web page that can be retrieved using HTTP (hypertext transfer protocol, http://).

URL. *See Uniform Resource Locator.*

User friendly: Computer software or hardware that is simple to set up, run and use.

V

Value for money. *See Cost effectiveness.*

Values-based appraisal: The assessment of the worth of records based on specific criteria, such as the historical evidence they provide; the information they convey about events, trends, activities or functions; or their potential use.

Vellum: The skin of a calf, usually not over six weeks old, cleaned of adhering flesh hair, fat and muscle, and preserved by soaking in a lime solution, then carefully dried, stretched, scraped, and polished.

Virus: A computer program that is planted in one computer and then transferred, hidden in useful information, to one or more other computers with the intention of corrupting or wiping out information in the recipient computer.

Vital records: Records considered critical to the ongoing operations of an organisation or the re-establishment of operations after an emergency or disaster. Also known as essential records.

Vital records programme: A systematic approach to identifying, protecting and having available the vital records of an organisation, especially in the aftermath of an emergency or disaster.

Volume. See Part.

W

WAN. See Wide area network.

Web browser: A software application that enables a user to locate and view pages on a Web site. Also known as a browser.

Website: A location on the World Wide Web.

Weeding. See Stripping.

Weight: The degree of relevance or importance of evidence.

Wide area network (WAN): A computer network that covers a large geographical area.

Workflow software: Software that automates the process of electronically routing documents from one person to another in a specified sequence and time.

World Wide Web: A computer network system that allows users to browse through information available on computers round the world.