MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS

A Training Programme

Managing Archives

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

INTERNATIONAL RECORDS MANAGEMENT TRUST

MANAGING ARCHIVES

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A STUDY PROGRAMME

General Editor, Michael Roper; Managing Editor, Laura Millar

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Managing Archives

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INTRODUCTION TO *MANAGING ARCHIVES*

The purpose of a records management service is not to manage the creation of archives (important though this work is) but to exploit the information held in records efficiently. But while it is essential to manage records well for the benefit of the organisation, it is impossible to administer a fully functional records service unless it has an archival dimension, which safeguards and makes accessible those records to be permanently preserved. Records and archives are a research resource, and the archival institution is the specialist facility in which this kind of research is concentrated. It is the function of the archival institution to manage the raw material of history for the benefit of society as a whole.

The archival institution also ought to have a distinct character that marks it out from the management of current records and gives it a cultural dimension. The archival institution is staffed by archivists, that is by specialist professionals who possess and operate a professional ethic that requires that they should not be subservient to the interests or preoccupations of the government of the moment. This module addresses the task of reconciling a government's or organisation's own administrative requirements with the research and cultural needs of a society.

This module often discusses the work of a National Archives and the management of records in national government service. However, the same principles apply to the management of records and information in any significant institution and, indeed, to the records accumulated by individuals and families. These groups also need to manage their records while they are current, appraise them for continuing values and make provision for the preservation and use of the most valuable of them, as archives, over time.

The principles and procedures set out in this module generally apply both to government records systems, and to the records of non-governmental institutions and private individuals, but allowance must be made for the different situations encountered in these various cases. The associated manuals in this study programme offer more specific guidance.

As appropriate, general statements of theory and principle are distinguished from descriptions of specific practice. In situations where there is a variety of practice, the options are described, but usually one is presented as 'best practice'.

When working through this module, it is important for you to recognise that this module introduces important management issues and makes suggestions for 'best practice' or ideal care. It may not be possible to implement all of the recommendations outlined here, particularly with regard to public relations and outreach. However, it is possible to introduce you to key ideas and provide the important information you need to take steps to investigate new ways of managing archives and making them available for use. The module helps you understand those actions that could be undertaken and encourages you to seek improvements to existing processes whenever this is reasonable.

Some of the suggestions offered here, particularly with regard to outreach and public relations, may be beyond the current capacity of archival institutions in some areas. However, this information is included here in order to introduce valuable or interesting ideas that may be worth pursuing in the future.

Managing Archives consists of five lessons

Lesson 1:	Introduction to Archives Administration
Lesson 2:	Accessions Management
Lesson 3:	Arrangement and Description
Lesson 4:	Providing Reference Services and Planning Outreach Programmes
Lesson 5:	What to Do Next?

AIMS AND OUTCOMES

Aims

This module has five primary aims:

1. to explain the principles of administration of an archival institution
2. to outline the theories, principles and practices involved with accessioning records into the archival institution
3. to explain the theories, principles and practices of arrangement and description of archives
4. to outline the key issues involved in the provision of reference services and the development of outreach programmes in the archival institution
5. to identify resources for students and help them clarify priorities and next steps.

Outcomes

When you have completed this module, you will be able to

1. describe the administrative requirements of an archival institution
2. explain the steps involved with accessioning archives
3. explain the steps involved with arranging and describing archives

4. explain the principles and practices involved in providing reference to archival records and developing outreach programmes

5. know what steps to take next to manage archival materials more effectively.

METHOD OF STUDY AND ASSESSMENT

This module of five lessons should occupy about 80 hours of your time. You should plan to spend about

15 hours on Lesson 1

15 hours on Lesson 2

30 hours on Lesson 3

15 hours on Lesson 4

5 hours on Lesson 5.

At the end of each lesson there is a summary of the major points. A glossary of terms is provided at the end. Sources for additional information are provided in Lesson 5.

Throughout each lesson, activities have been included to help you think about the information provided. Each activity is a 'self-assessed' project; there is no 'right' or 'wrong' answer. Rather, the activity is designed to encourage you to explore the ideas presented and relate them to the environment in which you are studying or working. If you are studying these modules independently and are not part of a records or archives management organisation, you should try to complete the activities with a hypothetical situation if possible. If the activity suggests writing something, you should keep this brief and to the point; this is not a marked or graded exercise and you should only spend as much time on the activity as you feel necessary to understand the information being taught. At the end of each lesson are comments on the activities that will help you assess your work.

Following the summary at the end of each lesson are a number of self-study questions. Note that these self-study questions are designed to help you review the material in this module. They are not intended to be graded or marked exercises. You should complete as many of the questions as you feel will help you to understand the concepts presented. External assessments, such as assignments or exams, will be included separately when this module becomes part of a graded educational programme.

WHAT RESOURCES WILL YOU NEED?

This module assumes that you have access to a records office, records centre or archival institution or that you have some involvement with the management of archives. The various activities may ask you to draw on your own experiences and compare those with the information provided in the lessons. If you do not have access to such facilities, you may need to develop a fictitious scenario for your activities. Alternately, you may wish to discuss this module with friends or colleagues who work with records and archives so that you can discuss principles and concepts with them and compare your understanding with theirs.

Much of this module concentrates on work, such as arrangement and description, that are best taught by practice. Therefore, students are encouraged to seek out opportunities to work with actual archives, perhaps assisting with arrangement or description projects in their own institutions. Unfortunately, it is not possible to create a large number of fictitious activities within this module, but some useful exercises have been included. In these instances, students are encouraged to compare their findings with the principles outlined in the lessons and discuss the activity with colleagues to clarify their understanding.

Manuals

Associated with this module is the training manual *Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual.* Users interested in detailed descriptions of recommended procedures and practices are encouraged to review the procedures manual while they are studying this module.

Case Studies

The following case studies may be useful additions to this module:

5: Victoria Lemieux, Brian Speirs, Nicolas Maftei, Jamaica. 'Automating the Archives and Records Management Programme at the University of the West Indies'

6: Laura Millar, Canada. 'Systems Downfall or Organisational Shift? Automation at Andover University Archives'

24: Ann Pederson, Australia. 'Appraising the Records of the Australian Shipbuilding Engineers Association'

26: Ann Pederson, Australia. 'Planning Reference Facilities and Services for a Provincial Archives: A Case Study'

30: Ann Pederson and Trudy Peterson, Australia. Archival Control: Case Studies'

34: Ann Pederson, Australia. Acquiring the Papers of Mary Historian'

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION TO ARCHIVAL ADMINISTRATION

Lesson 1 examines the concept of archival records and the purpose of an archival institution . Topics discussed include

- what are archives?
- the role of the archivist
- the uses of archives
- the archival institution as part of the records administration
- developing an archival policy
- responsibilities under the law
- professional ethics
- internal structure and organisation
- procedures manuals, forms and registers.

WHAT ARE 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.
>
> ***Record:*** 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.

Archives are those records that are worthy of permanent retention because of their enduring value as evidence or for research. Archives are an elite body of records.

They provide a reliable and authentic knowledge base, enabling the past to be reconstructed and understood. Without archives, the past would remain largely unknown. By documenting the significant decisions, transactions and events of political, social and economic life, archives serve as the essential link in the chain of human history.

Archives are preserved in and managed by specialist archival institutions where they are safeguarded and made available for use.

> ***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 institutions are distinguished from other bodies concerned with the management of records at earlier stages of the records continuum, such as government agencies (current records) or records centres (semi-current records), which are the subject of other modules in this study programme.

THE VALUE OF ARCHIVES AND THE ROLE OF THE ARCHIVIST

Archival institutions cannot be passive recipients of records judged by others to be worthy of permanent preservation. As the professionally trained staff who work in the facility, archivists have a direct role to play in identifying and preserving the small percentage of records of enduring value found amid the mass of records generated in the course of daily affairs. To fulfil this role, archivists must be directly involved in the management of records throughout their life, as part of a continuum of care. As well as managing those records transferred to the archival repository for permanent retention, archivists must be involved in the design and implementation of record-keeping systems to ensure that cultural as well as business functions are satisfied.

Few creators of records will have any interest in their records as a potential cultural or research resource. Furthermore, as the usefulness of the records in the conduct of business diminishes, so does the willingness of the administration to pay for the maintenance and preservation of those records. If the identification of valuable materials were left to records creators, it is likely that few records would be kept.

Archivists are able to take a wider view. They look at the records of an organisation as a whole, considering both the information needs of the business and the research needs of the community at large. Thus archivists can systematically manage the processes involved in the retention and disposal of records. In doing so, archivists must balance three factors:

- the need for economy and efficiency in any organisation
- the management of risk arising from the destruction of, or loss of access to, records
- the duty of any responsible state or organisation to preserve a reliable record of the past.

The design of record-keeping systems is dealt with in Organising and Controlling Current Records. *See also* Managing Current Records: A Procedures Manual. *The principles of appraisal are covered in* Building Records Appraisal Systems.

THE USES OF ARCHIVES

Few records are recognised as having archival value at the point of their creation. The perceived value and use of the bulk of records change over time. A file created this week may have great archival value in twenty-five years, but it can be difficult to discern that value at this early stage in the record's life.

Furthermore, the value of records differs between the different communities of users. For the creator or original user, the usefulness of the records is likely to diminish once the record has fulfilled its initial purpose. Managers and auditors, for example, use records to assess performance and accountability. To them, the administrative value of records ends when regulatory requirements have been met. The majority of records will be destroyed once their business function has ended and there is no further need to retain the evidence they contain.

Academic communities value records as a source of information to be analysed and interpreted for research purposes. To many researchers, archival records are seen as another information resource, like published materials. The context or provenance of archives, while a vital concern to the archivist, is of lesser importance to the researcher, who is more concerned with accessing the information in the records and using that information for his or her own research purposes.

The wider community and the general public recognise the symbolic value inherent in archives; many people appreciate the vital connection between records and the past. Archival treasures, such as the original documents that enshrine a country's independence, have an immediate appeal, as do documents of intrinsic beauty such as illuminated charters. Citizens also revere archives associated with great events or persons in history. Some documents will have an enduring value to the citizen because they enshrine evidence of his or her legal rights or family history.

In spite of the different uses to which archives are put, all the different perceived values of archival materials rest upon a common foundation. In order for a record to provide valuable research information, its value as evidence and its integrity, authenticity and meaning must be retained intact. Organisations and individuals can be exposed to business and legal liability if they neglect essential record-keeping requirements. However, the long-term consequences of neglect can be even more serious. Unique and irreplaceable evidence of the past may be lost forever if bodies of records are destroyed without being appraised for their enduring value or when records are damaged through neglect or mishandling. Equally damaging is the break up of organic archival accumulations, with the preservation of only small unconnected fragments, rather than that portion of records that best represents the functions and activities of the creating agency.

Record keepers and archivists must be able to prove that the essential characteristics of records as evidence have been protected and preserved over time. The value of archives as authoritative evidence depends upon the quality of their custody and care from the time they were first created and used. The archivist is perfectly placed to understand this requirement. At any point in their life, whether in the custody of their creators or an archival institution, records are unusable or valueless if their context and authenticity has not been safeguarded. Without context and authenticity, the evidence contained in archives cannot be relied upon or fully understood.

Restoring the order and context of archives is also an important part of the work of archivists. Inevitably, accidents and mishaps occur, responsibilities change and organisations evolve. Sometimes records are partially or completely destroyed without regard to their enduring value. At other times, the original order of records is disturbed, making it difficult if not impossible to place the records into context. Private papers or the records of small or defunct organisations may also come to the archivist in a disorderly and incomplete state. Hence archivists and records professionals must sometimes reconstruct the past from surviving records and other materials.

The characteristics of records are explained in more detail in Organising and Controlling Current Records.

In order to ensure that all the needs for evidence – both business and cultural – are met, archivists and records managers must have the co-operation and support of everyone interested in using records, including the creators of records, researchers, historians and society at large.

The Archival Institution as part of the Records and Archives Institution

> *The archival institution is one of the essential institutions of a modern society.*

The traditional role of the archival institution is to be the custodian of those records set aside for permanent preservation. Around the world, much of what has survived from the nineteenth century or earlier is the result of luck. Until the second half of the twentieth century, archival repositories were still mainly the passive recipients of records judged worthy of retention for public (especially legal) use or determined to have no value to the creating agency. While archival institutions may have had some input into the selection process and exercised a supervisory function over the appraisal of records, decisions about what to preserve were left largely to chief clerks and office administrators, the majority of whom were untrained and who operated in ignorance of retention and disposal decisions being made in other agencies. In short, the management of records and the preservation of archives were seen as separate activities, the latter commencing when the former had ended.

In more recent years, the life-cycle and continuum concepts of records and archives management have been followed more widely. The perception that records and archives are two distinct entities with different characteristics and different management requirements has been replaced with a new integrated approach, and this change in perception has taken place in the context of a vast increased in the volume of records being generated. Records are managed continuously and coherently by records and archives professionals throughout their life. By controlling the processes of creation, use, maintenance and disposal, the requirements of all users can be met. By being involved in the record-keeping processes from the point of record creation, organisations can make coherent decisions about the retention and ultimate disposition of records. The increasing dependence on non-physical electronic records, and the ease with which electronic records can be changed, has emphasised this need for active involvement in the care of the record throughout its life.

Some archival institutions have yet to adopt the new approach; consequently, they still have little involvement in or influence over records management systems in the creating agencies. In some countries, the life-cycle approach must await the introduction of new records legislation, which should assign responsibility to a records and archives institution: a comprehensive records management entity that manages records throughout their life from their creation to their ultimate disposal.

Recognising that every organisation’s structure will be different, this module assumes that the archival institution is an integral part of a larger records and archives institution, which has responsibility for managing records and information throughout all stages of the life cycle. The archival institution is an essential part of this wider records service, the function of which is to ensure that from the moment of their creation, the organisation's records match information requirements, are managed efficiently and effectively and are used to the best advantage.

A typical records and archives institution may be divided broadly into three primary areas of responsibility:

- current records care, responsible for the management of records in active use, held by records offices to support current business activities in the creating agencies
- semi-current records care, responsible for records no longer in day-to-day use but that cannot yet be destroyed or transferred to the archival repository, held in a records centre
- archives care, responsible for those records selected for permanent preservation and transferred to the archival institution.

Whereas the records and archives institution as a whole provides leadership, guidance and expertise in all matters relating to records management, the archival institution provides a specific service to its sponsor (the government or corporation) and to the wider community. The archival institution is the base for the last phase in the life of records that have enduring value. This module focuses on this responsibility of the archival institution, to manage and make available those records selected for permanent preservation.

Archival repositories are major cultural institutions within society. They serve as centres of research, repositories of evidence, places where users can have access to records in pursuit of their interests and guardians of the documentary memory.

Relationship of the Archival Repositories to Other Institutions

At a national level, the National Archives, together with the National Library, the National Museum and any other national cultural institutions, is one of a country's core research resources. Users come to it from all sectors of society, including professional and academic researchers in many disciplines, researchers from government departments, amateur researchers or members of the public, people wishing to have some contact with the primary sources of the national culture and tradition and citizens with a problem that can only be solved by reference to the evidence preserved in archival institutions.

The links between these cultural and research institutions need not be formally expressed through their position in the structures of government. However, formal relationships, such as reporting to a common government agency or directorate, can sometimes be useful. In other situations, liaison can be established through professional channels.

The location within government of responsibility for records and archives services is discussed in more *detail in* Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services.

There is also international interest in the health and efficiency of a National Archives and other nationally significant archival institutions. Many research topics touch on matters of international concern. A significant number of users of any National Archives come from other countries. This international aspect of the use of archives grows in importance as international information networks develop and as the international community increasingly recognises its common interest in heritage and culture.

There need to be strong links between an archival institution and all other aspects of the work of controlling records and the information in them. The archival facility should be an integral part of a records and archives administration. The sponsor organisation should provide an adequate budget for the performance of archival duties.

The national archival institution is also part of an international network of similar institutions and has common interests with the archival repositories in other countries. The National Archives should be a member of the appropriate categories of the International Council on Archives and its regional branches, and its staff should be able to participate in the consultations and work of international bodies.

For more information on the International Council on Archives, see Lesson 5.

In many countries — perhaps in most — larger institutions such as the National Archives also have a role as the repository of valuable records that originated outside government service but are of interest to the nation. Therefore, national and other publicly provided archival services often acquire selected private or non-government archival materials. It is open to non-governmental institutions and individuals to make use of this service. However, there are often considerations of confidentiality or privacy that make it desirable for these organisations to provide their own archives service.

In general, private or non-governmental archival institutions should follow similar procedures and be subject to the same professional codes of ethics as public repositories. They should also conform to guidelines and standards laid down in national legislation or adopted by appropriate professional bodies. The archival institution should have a strong programme of outreach and development activities aimed at raising public awareness of its work.

It is also often necessary for a records and archives institution or an archival institution to establish and run regional or branch facilities. Under the general supervision of the central management of the records and archives institution or archival institution, these branch establishments perform the same function in relation to regional or local government agencies as the National Archives does to central government. The principles and practices described in this module should also apply to regional or branch archival establishments.

Activity 1

Identify four different cultural and heritage institutions in your jurisdiction (country, region, city or other). Indicate if they have formal or informal links with the archival institution. Then identify four other organisations in your jurisdiction with a strong interest in records held in or cared for by the archival institution. Indicate if they also have formal or informal links with the archival facility.

DEVELOPING AN ARCHIVES POLICY

The Mission Statement

The archival institution should have an agreed mission statement, approved by the government or creating organisation, by which the success of its programmes can be measured. A mission statement can be as short as one sentence. For example,

> The National Archives exists to preserve the documentary heritage of the nation, by preserving and making available for public use both public and private records of national significance.

The mission statement itself should be clear and concise, but it needs to be supported by a fuller policy document setting out the mandate, aims and objectives of the organisation in more detail.

For more information on developing a mission statement and its relationship to organisational planning, see Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services.

The mission statement should be determined and promulgated by the governing body of the archival institution, endorsed by that governing body and published widely. The archives staff should be consulted in drawing it up.

The mission statement should be reviewed regularly to ensure that it remains relevant. There should be a consultative body that revises the mission statement from time to time as part of its duties.

The mission statement of the archival repository should set out clearly the role of the institution in relation to the administration of organisational records and record keeping. As part of the records and archives institution, the archival institution is the place to which all the organisation's records that have passed the necessary appraisal tests will come and where the research values inherent in these records will be realised. A model mission statement is presented below.

The mission statement outlines the role of the archival institution.

Activity 2

Consider the following mission statement: ‘The National Archives ensures evidence for organisational and cultural effectiveness.’ Identify two strengths and two weaknesses of this statement as a mission statement. Then reword the statement as you see fit to strengthen it.

Activity 3

Before examining the following model mission statement, draft a one sentence mission statement for your organisation’s archival institution. Compare your statement with the key mission statement shown in this module and identify the similarities and differences. Write a few sentences explaining and justifying the choices you have made in the wording. Then identify three actions you would take to fulfil your institution’s mission statement as you have drafted it.

National Archives of the Republic of Erewhon

MISSION STATEMENT

The primary mission of the Erewhon National Archives is to care for and protect the archival materials entrusted to it and to seek to ensure that these materials are preserved for public use for the present and the future.

Within the terms of this overriding mission, the Erewhon National Archives aims to work with all branches of the national records and archives institution (particularly with the records centre), to ensure that all records originating in the public service are appraised and exploited to best advantage and that all public records of permanent or continuing long-term value to the nation are passed to the National Archives.

The mission of the National Archives is also to seek to identify all records originating outside the public service that, within the terms of the appropriate legislation, are deemed to form part of the national heritage, to take measures to bring these records into suitable custody and to exploit their value to the nation by appropriate means.

The Erewhon National Archives is a research institution that aims to realise the value of all its holdings in research and public reference. Its staff are specialists in this work, and it aims to carry out all practical operations in a manner that will result in the provision of a high-quality reference service, and an active programme of development and outreach activities. In these programmes the National Archives will seek to collaborate with other research institutions of the nation.

Figure 1: Model Mission Statement

RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE LAW

The following information relates specifically to public sector archival institutions, but the guidelines are applicable to archival facilities in the private sector as well.

An archival service should operate under the provisions of specific legislation or policies that validate its operations. The archives law should include the following provisions.

1. Establishment of the archival facility as a public institution. The law should grant it the necessary powers and duties. These include a definition of the jurisdiction of the institution over records generated in the government service and over any other records of importance that are included in the remit of the archival institution.

2. A public right of access to the holdings of the archival institution. This legislation will include a policy on the regular opening of government records under clear conditions, usually lapse of time, and a workable procedure for sensitivity review and declassification. Public rights of access should be clearly defined and, as far as possible, follow the best models for this kind of legislation. Where there is freedom of information legislation, this usually takes precedence, but efforts should be made to ensure that it is compatible with both the letter and the spirit of archival legislation.

3. Protection for the rights of individuals and organisations that may have provided information held in the records, under terms of confidentiality. These provisions should also conform to the best models. Again where there is privacy or data protection legislation, this usually takes precedence, but efforts should be made to ensure that it is compatible with both the letter and the spirit of archival legislation.

4. Provision for public scrutiny of the archival institution and its success in achieving its targets. This provision should ideally include the establishment of structures whereby advice, consultation and co-ordination with parallel services can be obtained in the formulation of policy and the execution of programmes and activities.

Archives legislation must protect records and ensure a right of public access.

Archival legislation is dealt with in more detail in Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services *and* A Model Records and Archives Law .

Activity 4

Does your archival institution operate under formal legislation? If so, determine if the law allows for each of the four provisions outlined above. For each provision covered by the legislation, find the appropriate clause and review it carefully.

Identify any changes that might be made to the clause to strengthen it. For each provision not covered by the legislation, draft a sample clause that might be included to ensure adequate coverage.

PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

The professional staff of the archival institution are archivists: that is, they belong to a professional group with an international identity and with an internationally recognised code of ethics.

Regardless of the scope of his or her responsibilities, the records manager or archivist in the public sector has an obligation to serve the public. Good information management is essential in a knowledge-based society. A public servant, records manager or archivist has a public obligation to conduct his or her job to the best of his or her abilities. Accountability, ethics, stewardship and commitment are essential qualities in a public servant. It is hoped that these qualities are found in archivists working in the private sector as well.

Archivists should individually and as a group subscribe to the code of ethics promulgated by the International Council on Archives, as well as to any similar code adopted by the appropriate professional body in their country or region.

Following are the key principles found in many codes of ethics adopted by records and archives professionals around the world.

- Records professionals manage, appraise, select, acquire, preserve and make available for use records and archives, ensuring their intellectual integrity and physical protection, for the benefit of users both in the present and future.
- Records professionals perform their tasks without discrimination on the basis of race, colour, religion, sex, age or national or ethnic origin.
- Records professionals encourage and promote the greatest possible use of the records in their care, giving due attention to confidentiality, personal privacy, physical preservation and legislative or policy requirements.
- Records professionals carry out their duties according to accepted records and archives principles and practices, to the highest standard of conduct.

- Records professionals contribute to the advancement of records and archives knowledge and skills by sharing their knowledge with other professionals and with the public in general, using their knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole.

The staff of any archival institution are professionals and should be free to participate in the work of the appropriate professional bodies within the country.

The issue of professionalism and ethics is discussed in more detail in The Management of Public Sector Records: Principles and Context *and* Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

Activity 5

Find out if archivists in your institution adhere to a national or international code of conduct for archival work. If so, identify the code and write a brief description of what it says and how it is applied. If there is no code in place, develop three recommendations for action for archivists in your institution to identify a suitable code and adopt it for use within the archival institution.

INTERNAL STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

Normally, an archival institution will divide its activities into four discrete groups, which can usefully be linked in the departmental structure. These are

1. Repository: activities connected with the reception of new archival material into custody; the preservation of this material in storage; provision of equipment for this purpose; maintenance of the storage areas (the repository itself); administrative control of materials, especially arrangement of the materials, movement of materials into and out of the repository and from place to place within it; security of the repository.

2. Search room or reference area: provision of facilities for users and maintenance of the search room as a suitable environment for the consultation of archival materials; control of registration and conduct of users; procedures for ordering, issue and return of archival materials; provision and management of copying facilities.

3. Finding aids and publications: intellectual control of the holdings; preparation and publication of a guide to the holdings; research and analysis; preparation of lists, indexes and other finding aids; other publications; exhibitions and outreach activities.

4. Preservation services: maintenance and monitoring of the environmental conditions in the repository; conservation and repair facilities and programmes; copying and photographic equipment and programmes.

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

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.

Management structures are described in more detail in Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services. *Preservation management is discussed in detail in* Preserving Records.

Activity 6

Prepare an organisational chart showing the existing structure of your archival institution. Identify the reporting relationships of the various people within the institution. Who is in charge of which departments or areas? Are there overlapping responsibilities or areas where responsibility seems to be unclear? Suggest three changes you might make to improve reporting relationships and lines of responsibility within the organisation.

Staffing

The chief resource of the archival institution is its staff.

Staff in archival repositories are usually well motivated and willing. To translate these assets into achievement, the management structure must allocate clear tasks to each staff member, with responsibility and a share in the development of policy. There must also be a reporting and assessment programme that recognises good work and sets out attractive and realistic programmes for the future.

All archivists on the staff should have a clearly defined set of duties. They should also have opportunities to contribute to the strategic planning of the service. Regular meetings of all professional and para-professional staff provide opportunities for them to make such contributions.

The external context of the management structure ensures that the director of the archival facility will report to the overall head of the records and archives institution. Internally, the heads of departments and heads of regional archival facilities will report to the archival director. The department heads within each regional office will report to the head of that regional office, and the rest of the staff will report to their department heads, unless there are other established lines of command.

Staff management is dealt with in more detail in Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

A typical staffing structure might include the following posts. These offered as a general model that may be adapted to particular cases.

- Head of the records and archives institution: the head of the whole service, including the records offices, records centre and archival agency.
- Heads of the records offices, records centres and archival institutions: the officers responsible for the management and direction of the records offices, records centres or archival agency.
- Head of regional archival agencies or records centre operations: the officer responsible for the management and direction of a particular regional archives or records centre.
- Department heads in the archival agency, such as head of preservation (the officer responsible for all preservation and conservation services); head of reference (the officer responsible for reference and outreach services); head of records services (the officer responsible for supervising and co-ordinating records work with creating agencies).
- Staff in records offices, such as: officers responsible for supervising and co-ordinating records work within the agency and liaising with others within the overall records and archives institution.

Note that throughout this module the term ‘director’ is used generically to mean someone who directs (that is, controls) the organisation referred to; it is not intended to relate to any particular civil service or management grade or status.

The following ‘best practice’ guidelines are recommended for managing staff effectively and developing short- and longer-term plans.

- A formal written longer-term (strategic) plan for the archival institution should be drawn up.
- This strategy should be developed into formal written annual (business) plans or programmes for the institution and its departments and regional offices.
- These plans in turn should be converted into projects for departments, groups of staff or individual members of staff.
- These plans, programmes and projects should be developed on the basis of what is available as inputs (funds, staff resources, accommodation, equipment) and of what are agreed to be desirable outputs (what it is intended to achieve in the time allocated).

- All members of staff, whatever their seniority, should be given written job descriptions that show clearly their duties and responsibilities and written annual job plans that set out the specific tasks to be undertaken and the criteria for measuring their successful completion.
- All plans, programmes and projects should be monitored formally and informally on a regular basis.

For more information on strategic planning, see Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Training

Like all employers, the archival institution is responsible for recruiting and training its staff members.

Persons appointed to a post in the archival facility, whether or not they already possess a professional, paraprofessional or specialist qualification, must be trained in the specific policies and procedures of the archival institution. Such training programmes should be part of the overall management strategy, and they should contain elements to support professional or career development for all members of staff, whatever their grade.

All new members of staff in public-sector archival facilities who are also new recruits to the civil service should be given all necessary information concerning appointment, pay, promotion, leave, pension, discipline and so on.

All new members of archives staff should be given training on security, handling of documents and the use of the procedures manual. All training should emphasise the uniqueness and importance of the archives in their charge.

For more information on training, see Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

Performance Measurement

It is essential that the investment made in it by the country should be rewarded by effective performance and the provision of an excellent service. To achieve this, performance must be measured regularly.

The work of an archival institution should be subject to performance evaluations.

The most general method of performance measurement is by publishing an annual or other periodical report that contains statistics of the work done during the reporting period. The report should conform to the norms and rules current in government or corporate service, and it should be submitted to superior authority and to the public in accordance with those rules.

Statistics in the annual report should include

- new archival material received and accessioned
- items produced or issued for reference
- visits by users and enquiries received
- progress in the preservation plan
- outreach activities.

However, performance must not be judged purely in terms of statistical information. The value of an excellent service is also determined by its ability to ensure the quality of the services offered and to see that the overall plan (set out in the mission statement and in more detailed programmes) is being achieved within the time envisaged.

Performance should be judged on the basis of reliable external and internal information. Externally, the archival institution must be directly accountable to its sponsor agency, acting through the appropriate offices, generally those offices that exercise financial and audit control.

It is also a good practice to establish an advisory committee that has representatives of the main user bodies. This committee should be in a position to make informed judgements on the success or otherwise of the facility annually or from time to time and to make recommendations to government or to funding agencies.

Internally, the archives staff should themselves evaluate the success of their programmes, decide on the reasons for any shortcomings and take measures to improve performance.

For more information on performance measurement, see Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services. *See also* Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services.

Activity 7

Does your institution publish a report? How often? Explain the benefits of having a regular reporting programme. Then prepare a two-page outline proposal for a reporting programme for your institution. List the elements you would include as regular features within the report. Explain how often the report would be issued, what form it would take and to whom it would be distributed and why.

Activity 8

Does your institution use performance measurement tools to determine how staff are doing in their jobs? If so, describe the tools used. Next, devise your own performance measurement indicator for two of the following activities and explain why you chose the indicators you did.

- responding to reference enquiries
- appraising and disposing of records
- arranging and describing records
- storing and preserving records.

Income Generation

The basic services provided by any archival institution, particularly those in the public sector, should be free of charge to all users: this is a principle generally observed world wide. Income generation from peripheral or non-essential services should not compromise this central principle.

Like all other cultural institutions, it is normal for the archival institution to maximise the generation of income from its programmes and activities, provided that doing so supports and does not interfere with its work towards the achievement of its stated mission. Income generation is good only insofar as it furthers programmes directed towards the achievement of agreed aims. It is not appropriate for income generation to be regarded as an end in itself.

Suitable activities for income generation include the following:

- providing research services on behalf of the public (only done when the archival institution's basic work is not compromised), including the supply of photocopies of documents
- publishing texts of primary sources or facsimiles of attractive documents
- participating in marketing and publicity programmes, either independently or in conjunction with other cultural services
- providing specialist research under contract.

Activity 9

Identify up to four ways your institution currently generates income. Then identify at least two other ways your institution could generate additional income. Explain the potential advantages and disadvantages of each method of income generation.

Health and Safety

Every institution is responsible for safeguarding the health and safety of the people who use it, including staff, visitors and users. This task should be viewed in the general context of national legislation, government or corporate regulations and standard practice in the community.

For more information on health and safety concerns, see Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services.

PROCEDURES MANUALS

All procedures in the archival facility should be set out in a clearly worded manual that is, authoritative, available to all and regularly updated.

> *Procedures manuals define and describe the tasks undertaken by archives staff.*

One member of staff should be appointed editor of the manual and be in charge of the master text. There should be no change to the text of the manual except by specific authorisation of the director of the archival institution, and all changes that are duly made must be processed through the responsible staff member.

The manual should be loose-leaf, and all pages should be numbered and dated.

Copies of the manual should be controlled. These copies should be numbered and a register should be kept of those who hold copies. This is to ensure that all working copies are current, not to keep the contents confidential.

When updates are made to the manual, one member of staff will be given the task of preparing the updates, distributing them to the named holders of copies and seeing that the revised sections are inserted into the copies of the manual.

Updates or additions should be given the appropriate page number and dated. To facilitate changes, the manual pages are normally numbered according to their chapter and section, not serially from the beginning.

See Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual *for more guidance.*

FORMS AND REGISTERS

Specially designed forms are used to structure and document procedures in the archival institution. Examples are given throughout this module. The design of these forms should be controlled, and procedures for the disposition of completed forms must be covered. Of particular importance is the need to design forms and registers so that all essential information is captured but at the same time no unneeded information is gathered, so that time and resources are saved. Later lessons in this module introduce various forms to be considered as part of archival management.

Activity 10

Identify and, if possible, obtain copies of all the forms and registers used for archival processes within your institution. List each of them and indicate its purpose. Do any of them seem to repeat information or actions managed by other forms or registers? Examine their relevance for current operations and note any changes you would make to improve or alter them.

SUMMARY

Lesson 1 has examined the concept of archival records and the purpose of the archival institution. The following specific topics were discussed:

- what are archives?
- what is the archival institution?
- developing an archives policy
- responsibilities under the law
- professional ethics
- internal structure and organisation
- procedures manuals, registers and forms.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Define archives and records.

2. Why are archives kept in specialist archival institutions?

3. What is the role of the archival institution in its society?

4. What is the difference between an archival institution and a records office or records centre?

5. How is a National Archives related to other national cultural institutions?

6. What is the role of a public archival institution in ensuring accountability in government?

7. What is the purpose of an archival mission statement?

8. Why might public archival institutions preserve non-government records?

9. Name at least three provisions an archives law should include.

10. Explain the role of the archivist as a public servant.

11. Name at least three key principles found in many codes of ethics adopted by records and archives professionals.

12. Explain the four core groups of activities found within most archival institutions.

13. What is an archival repository?

14. Why do archives staff need clearly defined sets of duties?

15. Explain the concept of performance measurement.

16. What three types of statistics could be documented in an annual report?

17. Explain at least three ways an archival institution can generate income.

18. What is the purpose of a procedures manual?

19. Why should forms and registers be designed and their revision controlled?

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 1

Most countries will have national museums, art galleries, libraries, historic sites and research agencies. All of these agencies are interested in the preservation of society's culture. There are also other government bodies such as the treasury, auditor, attorney general or judiciary whose work depends upon good public record keeping. All of these organisations should understand each other's work, communicate and cooperate in promoting good records care so that valuable information is exchanged and duplication of effort is avoided.

Activity 2

This mission statement could be strengthened to clarify a number of concepts. Does the term 'ensures' allow for preservation and access? What do 'organisational and cultural effectiveness' mean and how can they be implemented?

Following are some additional mission statements that you could examine.

> The mission of the National Archives/Records Service is to establish and manage a recordkeeping regime that captures, documents, preserves and maintains access to the evidence the organisation requires to operate effectively and to understand its origins, development and continuing achievements.
>
> The mission of the National Archives/Records Service is to select, preserve and administer access to the records which best document the origins, development and continuing achievements of the organisation and to develop and implement standards for the creation, care and administration of future records of enduring value.

Activity 3

You should compare your mission statement with the examples above or with the one shown for the fictitious Erewhon National Archives.

Activity 4

Redrafting legislation is a time-consuming and complex process, requiring legal guidance and oversight from the highest possible level in the government. This exercise is intended to help you see how legislation can affect they organisation and operations of the archival institution. The exercise also shows you that it is not too difficult to identify important provisions and make sure the legislation covers them adequately.

For more information on the importance of legislation for archival institutions, see Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services. *See also* A Model Records and Archives Law.

Activity 5

As noted, the International Council on Archives' code of ethics is widely used around the world. For information on how to access the ICA code of ethics, see Lesson 5.

Activity 6

No organisational structure is perfect. Indeed, it can be argued that there is no 'ideal' staffing structure and that each organisation will need to establish its own systems to suit its needs and priorities. You will no doubt find several areas where your organisation could improve its structure and reporting relationships. In order to clarify the functions and activities of the different departments or offices, it can be useful to create some organisational charts that 'map out' the following:

- key functions and activities, organised to allow the most efficient workflow
- lines of authority that should be followed for good decision making
- any informal or 'de facto' work patterns people follow when actually carrying out their responsibilities.

Look back at the outline of possible staffing structures. By comparing the differences among the sample structure and the reality in your institution, you can see that there are many factors to consider in organising work effectively. Often it is a combination of organisational approaches, rather than a single one, that may work best; informal patterns are often the ones that count in 'getting the job done' and can be used well even if the formal structures are not ideal.

Activity 7

Reporting should always be useful and effective. Reports should not be prepared simply for the sake of preparing reports. Valuable reports link actual activities to intended goals and demonstrate what was completed, what is still outstanding, and what resources (time, money, facilities, equipment) were used to complete the functions in question.

Activity 8

One goal of performance measurement is to have indicators accurately reflect the amount of time and effort that goes into the activity and to show the programme in the most favourable light. For example, in choosing an indicator for new acquisitions, it may be better to select the number of individual consignments accessioned than the total volume of consignments. The rationale here is that each consignment, large or small, generates the same amount of record keeping and staff activity. You may have many small accessions amounting to a rather small volume, but each accession represents a great deal of work. Similarly in reference work, the number of requests actioned is not as good an indicator as the number of records retrieved and refiled.

Activity 9

When considering income generation, it is important to remember the following:

1. Revenue generation must comply not only with legal and regulatory requirements, but also with community expectations of what is appropriate and

dignified. For instance, in 1987 the National Archives of the US was profoundly embarrassed by the fact that it had accepted funding for an educational kit on the US Constitution from a major tobacco company. NARA was forced to destroy the kits because the name of the tobacco company as sponsor could indirectly encourage children to use tobacco.

2. Revenue schemes must also be cost effective, that is, they must yield much more than the administrative costs involved in running them.
3. Actual money is not the only 'revenue' an organisation can generate. There is much to be gained by encouraging regular donations of
    - *Personal time:* volunteers to help with cleaning documents, making boxes, re-foldering or reboxing records, making photocopies, providing research training to users and so on
    - *Services:* moving boxes, printing materials, photography and reproduction services
    - *Supplies*: paper, cartons, acid-free containers
    - *Facilities:* fumigation, cold storage.

However, it is important that that one-time or 'good will' contributions be seen as temporary arrangements to test out new initiatives or as supplements rather than replacements for core funded activities. Overdependence on 'soft' funding such as donations for core or basic services should be minimised, as the institution may not commit adequate funds in future, placing the programme in jeapardy.

Activity 10

Students will find a great degree of variation in the many forms used in most archival institutions. This exercise will help you begin to identify various forms used; throughout the module you should refer back to these forms and gradually form an opinion about how you might change them to suit the needs of your institution and streamline the documentation process in the archival institution.

The following forms and registers are commonly used in archival practices:

- accessions register
- accessions form
- archive series register.

One goal of efficient and effective archival management is to establish a systematic approach to capture essential information once and manage it for as long as needed, thus reducing the need to find the information again in future.

LESSON 2

ACCESSIONS MANAGEMENT

Lesson 2 discusses the process of transferring records into the custody of the archival institution from their initial identification until their final placement in the archival repository.

Topics discussed include

- the accessions system
- receiving archival material
- processing accessions
- accessioning material from non-government sources
- receiving records from non-government sources
- accessioning copies
- accessioning library materials.

All records should be appraised to determine the means and timing of their disposal. As a general principle, no materials should be accepted into the archival institution unless they have been appraised and selected for retention because of their enduring value. Although reappraisal of materials held in archival custody is sometimes done (and may be necessary where earlier materials were accepted without rigorous testing), in general it is not good practice and is costly.

Appraisal is one of the main functions of archival institution. Although the topic of appraisal is not dealt with directly in this module, it should be understood that the archival institution and its staff have an essential role in the appraisal process.

For information on appraisal, see Building Records Appraisal Systems.

Records that have been appraised and transferred to the archival institution become archives. This term should be used for them from this point onwards.

In this lesson, accessioning procedures are discussed in the logical order in which they would ideally occur. In real life, accessions sometimes arrive at intervals that are irregular or too frequent.

It is sometimes necessary to manage several separate accessions at the same time. The procedures set out in this lesson should give a good framework for controlling such situations.

However, it should be emphasised that

- there must be good co-ordination between the records centre and the archival institution
- the archivist responsible for managing holdings must keep constantly informed about what is happening
- each accession should have a file in which relevant correspondence and notes on its progress are documented.

THE ACCESSIONS SYSTEM

The government's ruling legislation or policy and the institution's mission statement will identify those archives that should be transferred to the archival institution. Materials will be transferred from records offices and records centres and, in appropriate cases, from outside sources. The institution, therefore, must have policies and procedures in place to acquire and process this material.

The transfer of public records from records offices and records centres should be governed by disposal schedules and records centre procedures. The plan for acquiring other materials should be drawn up as part of the overall programmes of the archival institution. It should specify what types of material are to be acquired and establish criteria for appraising such material.

Accessioning Records from Government Agencies

No materials should be accessioned into the archival institution unless they have been prepared in accordance with appropriate regulations or policies.

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

The preparation of materials for transfer is generally the responsibility of the records centre or the creating agency. Preparing archival materials for transfer involves the procedures outlined below.

1. Arranging them: putting files, volumes, bundles, papers and so on into an intelligible order that facilitates retrieval.

2. Physically protecting them: making sure that all components of the consignment are tidy and properly packed in their folders or containers. All ferrous clips and treasury tags should be removed and plastic or brass tags and clips used to replace them.

3. Describing them: transfers to the archival institution should be accompanied by their transfer lists, or they should be described on the accessions form. This description is necessarily brief but allows the material to be brought under control from the beginning.

In all cases, both the transferring agency or records centre and the archival institution must record exactly what has been transferred, and the archival institution must document what it does to the archives subsequent to their accession.

Accessioning is a physical transfer of records and a transfer of ownership or responsibility.

The archival institution must always be able to account for its actions, so repository staff must ensure that the archives are kept safe and secure during their transfer and accessioning and that the paperwork is accurate and current. (The process of documenting accessions is discussed below.) Since an accession may often be a collection of materials made up for convenience, it will not necessarily correspond with the whole of a regularly formed body of archival materials, such as a series.

Levels of Arrangement

When archives are received by the repository, their original order and origins should be identified. Archives are organised into levels according to the principles of provenance and original order. The levels of arrangement include the institution, the group, the subgroup, the series and the item.

The terms used to distinguish the different levels of records and archives can be confusing. For example, in addition to ‘item’, terms that have been used to refer to an assembly of related documents include file, unit, piece, file unit or unit of handling. And ‘item’ may also be used to refer to the single documents that make up such an assembly. For the purpose of clarity, the following terms, with their definitions, will be used in this study programme.

***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.

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.

***Series*:** The level of arrangement of the files 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.

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.

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

The term 'institution' is used as a level of description to refer to the institution holding the records being described, such as the National Archives or the Corporate Archives. The term 'item' is used most often in the archival environment, when discussing the physical units of arrangement and is the term used in this module to refer to basic physical units of arrangement and description. The term 'file' is often used in the records office or records centre, as that is the unit of management in those environments.

Figures 2 and 3 illustrate the levels of arrangement. Note that Figure 2 does not include the level of the institution, which is an administrative level, used to identify where the records are housed. Also, Figure 2 identifies the item, not the file, as the basic physical unit, although the records office or records centre may identify files on its list of records transferred.

More information about levels of arrangement is provided in Lesson 3.

Activity 11

Using examples from your own institution if possible, define the following terms and provide at least two examples:

1. group
2. subgroup
3. item

Then, using Figures 2 and 3 as examples, outline the levels of arrangement for each of the two examples to show visually the arrangement of the archives.

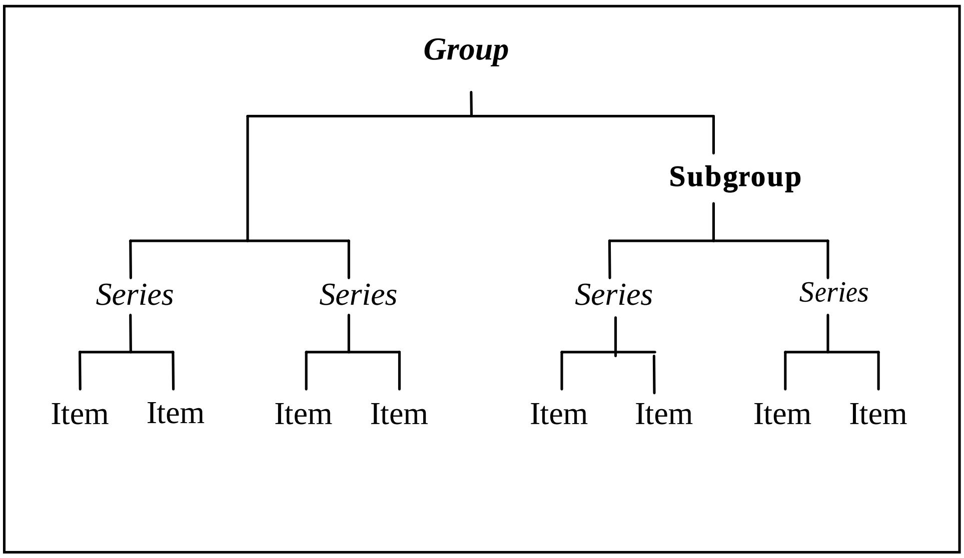

Figure 2: Levels of Arrangement

Levels	***Examples***	
	government	*corporate*
institution	National Archives of Erewhon	Jimtech Corporation, Erewhon
group	Ministry of Education	Jimtech Corporation, Erewhon
subgroup	Primary Schools Division	
series	school assessments	financial records
file unit	Primary Schools District A assessments, 1967	annual financial statements, 1996
item	Primary Schools District A assessment, January 1967	balance sheet, 2 April 1996

Figure 3: Levels of Arrangement and Description

Normally, an accession is a natural accumulation of record material built up in one of the creator agencies, that the agency wishes to transfer out of its own custody or that is scheduled for transfer from a records centre. The archives then reflect the order identified above; they belong to a particular group (and subgroup if appropriate) and can be divided into identifiable series, composed of items.

The archivist must assimilate the contents of each accession into the rest of the archives held in its repository. Depending on the contents of the accession, the archivist should treat the materials appropriately. Three particular situations are outlined here.

- An accession received from a records centre or directly from a creator agency may consist of consignments (accruals) of materials that belong to an existing series within the appropriate group or subgroup. When accruals come in, acquisition procedures must ensure that they are linked to their proper series, not treated as new series.

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

- An accession may be composed of archives that belong to groups, subgroups or series not already held. In this case, the archivist documents their receipt and identifies them as new groups, subgroups or series.
- Ideally, the accession will only consist of archives from one group or subgroup, but it may include materials that belong to more than one series. This situation results in considerable extra processing work for the archival repository. Procedures to eliminate such accessions should be instituted wherever possible. Methods of recording complicated accessions are dealt with below in the accessions form section.

Activity 12

Explain briefly the process used in your institution at present to accession records. Identify three steps you might take to improve the procedures.

The Accessions Form

All transfers of materials to the archival institution should be recorded. The essential parts of this record are the accessions form and the accessions register. These documents have legal value and must be kept securely as vital records. They should be preserved permanently for eventual transfer as archives themselves.

Each proposal to transfer records and all subsequent actions should be entered on an accessions form. An example of this form is shown in Figure 4.

As soon as the accessions form is signed by an authorised representative of the archival institution, that institution assumes responsibility for the custody, preservation and use of the materials, which must now be treated in accordance with the provisions of relevant archival legislation and the institution's regulations and procedures.

There should be an accessions form for each accession that comes into the archival institution, whether it comes from the records centre, direct from a government agency or from a non-government source.

There should be a separate accessions form for each accrual to a series and for each new series. If this method is followed, the file of accessions forms will then provide a complete list of series received.

It is good practice to keep accessions forms active until all the steps involved with accessioning new material have been completed. For example, the accessions form should include an entry indicating when the relevant guide entry and item list have been completed and distributed. If the accessions forms are not filed until all such tasks are completed, the danger of putting archival materials away without producing finding aids will be reduced.

The accessions form should not be used for material to be added to the repository's library or for equipment or consumable materials acquired by the archival institution. These materials are managed by separate procedures.

If materials are coming from the records centre or a creating agency, archives staff may be able to decide the series number and item numbers before the materials arrive. In that case, the full archival reference codes (series number and item numbers) can be entered on the accessions form immediately.

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

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

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

It sometimes happens that archives cannot be clearly identified as belonging to a series before they arrive. If this is so, the best way of proceeding is to treat them initially as a single accession with a covering accession form and then, after their transfer, separate them into their different original series. When that has been done, archival references can be added and a new accessions form completed for each series, cross-referenced to and from the initial accession form.

Similarly, if the archives arrive from an external source and the repository department staff cannot complete an analysis of their contents before accessioning, they should complete an accessions form for the whole consignment, giving enough information to identify the materials and distinguish them from others. The archival references can be added later.

This additional work can be time consuming, but failure to document the accessions properly will lead to difficulty when the archives are arranged and described.

The Accessions Register

The accessions register is a formal document that records the archival repository's acceptance of responsibility for the archives it documents and the transfer of custody of the archives to the archival institution. The accessions register contains the following information, recorded in columns:

- accession number
- date received
- details of archives (series number if known, title or description, covering dates, number of boxes or quantity)
- source, transferring agency or depositor
- archival references
- remarks (including variations to the statutory closed period)
- date action completed.

A sample page is shown in Figure 5.

The register is intended to be used as an internal control tool of the archival institution. Because it does not contain any classified information (such as storage location) it may be made available to researchers if necessary, as long as the materials in question are open to public inspection.

The accessions register must be labelled clearly and kept securely. It is a vital record of the archival institution. When an accessions register is full, it should be accessioned for permanent preservation as an archive itself.

A separate accession number should be allocated to each entry in the accessions register. It should be in the form year/number, starting again at '1' each January. For example, the first accession in 1998 would be 1998/1, the second would be 1998/2 and so on.

The initial entry in the accessions register must be made soon after the arrival of the archives – preferably on the same day, but certainly within five working days – so that formal transfer of custody of the materials is documented and any problems with them are identified and taken up with the body sending them. This is good archival practice.

It is important to enter the date when any action on an accession has been completed so that an accurate picture of outstanding work can be obtained at any time. It is very easy to overlook outstanding work, such as assigning archives to series or completing series lists, once the materials have been placed in the repository.

Once a month, repository staff should check the accessions register to monitor what accessions have work outstanding and plan completion by an agreed deadline.

Whenever possible, accessions should be fully processed and all outstanding work completed in less than one year from their receipt.

The 'action completed' column in the accessions register should not be signed off until all action on an accession, including assigning the materials to a series and the distribution of a final series list, has been done.

The accessions register is directly connected to the accessions form.

Activity 13

Before examining the sample accessions form or register, identify five pieces of information you think should be contained in an accessions register. Why are those pieces of information important?

Archives Accession Form

Accession Number:	Depositor:

Transferring Agency:

Is this a transfer from the records centre? Yes ☐ No ☐

Covering Dates:

Will more items be added to this series? Yes ☐ No ☐

Quantity (number of items or boxes):

Physical Type (files, volumes etc..):

Physical Condition (note any problems):

Can Records be Opened After [statutory closed period]? (Specify any items to be opened earlier or later)

Further Information (note any items missing or retained, or containing special materials such as photographs, maps, coins and so on. Note here any special conditions of transfer applying to records from external sources):

Proposed for transfer to Archival Institution by

Name:

Position (of representative of agency/depositor/records centre):

Date:

Accepted for transfer to Archival Institution by

Name:	*Position:*
Signature:	*Date:*

Figure 4: Archives Accession Form (page 1)

Checklist of Action to be Taken by Archives Staff

Action	Initials	Date
Archives checked		
Archives labelled		
Archives listed		
Archives boxed		
Boxes labelled		
Accession details entered in accessions register		
Entries made in index of closed documents (items subject to extended closure)		
Archives put in repository		
Location entered in location register		
Repository floor plan updated		
Item list distributed		
Guide updated		
Indexing done		
Action completed		

Figure 4: Archives Accession Form (page 2)

Archives Accession Register						
Accession Number	Date Received	Details of Records Received	Source or Depositor	Archival References	Remarks	Initials of Person Receiving and Date

Figure 5: Archives Accession Register

Relating the Accessions Form and Register

Before making an entry in the accessions register, repository staff must check that the accession is what the accessions form (and list, if prepared) says it is and that the accession is complete. If any items are missing and not accounted for, archives staff should get in touch with the records centre, creating agency or depositor immediately.

Repository staff must also make sure that all accessions are entered in the accessions register and that there is an entry in the register corresponding to each accessions form. The accession number should be entered on the accessions form when the accessions register entry has been made.

RECEIVING ARCHIVAL MATERIALS

Materials arriving from sources within the public sector should be prepared by the records centre or transferring agency in accordance with current standards.

If materials are coming from the records centre, the following preparatory work should be done on them by records centre staff:

- appraisal and selection for transfer according to the disposal schedule
- cleaning and tidying
- removal of ferrous pins, clips, staples, treasury tags, and so on, which might rust and damage the records, and their replacement by plastic or a non-ferrous metal such as brass
- insertion of dummies to replace materials that have been selected for transfer but are missing or have been lawfully retained by the transferring agency

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

- labelling items with necessary identifying information (labelling is discussed in more detail later)
- boxing
- listing (at least a summary list, giving the original agency file number and title and the covering dates)
- completion of the relevant parts of the accessions form.

The records centre supervisor should send the summary list, transfer list and accessions form to the repository ahead of the records and arrange a convenient date for delivery.

If the materials are coming directly from a creating agency, rather than the records centre, the same preparatory work should be done by records management staff. The officer organising the transfer should liaise with the repository about the date and time of delivery.

Archives coming from an external source or private individual may not have been organised or listed prior to their receipt in the repository. In such a case, repository staff must make sure that the materials are appraised and the physical preparation is done before anything is placed in the repository.

> *New archival accessions should be documented and processed as soon as reasonably possible, to ensure their transfer is noted and their contents identified, if only briefly.*

As soon as any archives arrive at the archival institution, repository staff should take the following action:

- check the archives for signs of insect infestation or mould, and notify preservation department if they need treatment before coming into contact with other, unaffected, accessions
- check that the archives are properly labelled
- place the records in a secure temporary storage area set aside for new accessions
- check the records against the accessions form, transfer list or summary list to make sure that the paperwork does refer to these materials and that all items have been included
- open an accessions form, if one has not already been opened, and obtain a signature from a representative of the agency sending the archives
- make an entry in the accessions register identifying the new accession
- acknowledge receipt of the accession so that the transferring agency has a record of the transfer.

Activity 14

For each of the suggested steps above, describe whether this work is done in your institution and how. If it is not done, indicate whether you think this work should be initiated and why.

PROCESSING ACCESSIONS

The process of accessioning involves arranging the materials into the appropriate groups, subgroups (where appropriate) and series and allocating to them a reference code so they can be controlled at all stages.

> *Accessioning brings administrative and physical control to the records.*

When new materials are accessioned, they need to be sorted into their original subgroups and series if this has not already been done. A brief but comprehensive description of the records should be entered in the accessions register. This stage is known as 'processing.'

The concept of levels of arrangement was discussed earlier and is outlined in more detail in Lesson 3. Complete arrangement is not done during the accessioning process, but it is important to understand the levels of arrangement in order to ensure that provenance and original order are protected.

When materials are being accessioned, the repository will decide if they should be added to an existing series or placed in a new series. The group and series register is the master record of the groups, series and items of records held in the archival institution. This register should be updated with information about each new group or series of records received.

If an accession consists of a new series, the repository should allocate the next available series number within the group or subgroup and enter the details in the series register. If the series is the first in a new group, a new group identification code will also have to be allocated. Item numbers will also have to be allocated, starting at number '1'. The original file numbers, if any, should not be used for this purpose.

If the materials are being added to an existing series, the first item should be given the next available number. This number is obtained from the archives group and series register, which is then updated to show the new last number.

A list should be created for each series of archives in the archival institution. This list serves both as an inventory for repository control and as a tool to help users find the archival references for files or items they wish to see.

The group and series register is discussed in more detail in Lesson 3.

Ideally, the records centre or creating agency should have prepared a summary list of records, giving the original agency file number and title and the covering dates of each item, before the records were transferred. In this case, the staff at the archival institution should

- check the list to see if it serves as an adequate archival finding aid

- make any necessary improvements
- add archival reference codes
- label the items with their archival reference codes
- add the archival reference codes to the accessions form and register.

If no summary list has been prepared by the transferring agency, archives staff should

- prepare the archives physically
- list the archives with archival reference codes and agency file numbers
- label the materials with their archival reference codes and covering dates
- add the 'closed until' label if necessary (discussed below)
- box the items and label the boxes
- add the archival reference codes to the accessions form and register.

Staff should arrange for the final list to be typed, proof-read and corrected. The master copy should be kept securely. Copies should be made and distributed to

- the responsible creating agency
- the search room, for public reference (if the archives are open to public inspection)
- archives staff to serve as a working and reference copy.

Staff should update the group and series register as necessary. They will prepare a description of the series if it is a new one or amend the existing description if necessary. Any new information must be added to all copies in current use so they are up to date.

In exceptional circumstances, for example, if an accession is large and complex, it may not be possible to complete its arrangement and listing quickly. In that case, it should be boxed and labelled with the accession number, and all other action on the accession should take place. However, the accession should not be marked off as completed in the accessions register. Staff will then recognise that work remains to be done. The work should be included in work programmes as a special project.

Activity 15

On average, how quickly are new materials accessioned in your institution? Can you think of three ways you might speed up the process of accessioning and ensure the forms and registers are as up to date as possible?

Register of Groups and Series		
Group Code: Group Title:		
Series Number	**Series Title**	**Last Item Number and Quantity**

Figure 6: Group and Series Register

Storing New Accessions

It is fundamental to the care of archives that all materials accessioned should be moved into secure accommodation that supports their preservation and use as soon as possible.

Once the archives have been cleaned, labelled, listed, boxed and checked, they are ready to be moved to storage.

Most archives easily fit into standard storage containers. Boxing involves packing them, neither too tightly nor too loosely, and labelling the boxes with archival references.

Sometimes it is not possible to box the archives, either because they are an unusual size or shape or because no boxes are available. In this case, the archival institution should arrange for them to be packed into bundles and given an alternative protective covering. Usually the bundles are wrapped with good quality paper and secured with string or unbleached cotton tape. The bundles should be labelled with the archival reference codes in the same way as boxes so that it is clear what they contain.

Records are usually stored by series. Under this arrangement, the whole of one series should be stored together if possible. (It is rarely possible to store all the series from one group together.) Sometimes it is not practicable to store the whole of a series in one location. If it is not, the series may be split between more than one location.

However, if an accession contains items missing from earlier accessions as well as a new block of item numbers, the items formerly missing must be inserted in their correct place in the sequence of item numbers and the dummies removed. If gaps in the numeration have not been left and dummies provided, they should be given the next available item numbers in the series and cross-reference should be made from the appropriate points in the series list to those numbers.

Storage of Confidential Archives

Special arrangements should be made for archives that are to be kept confidential for longer than the usual statutory period. Wherever possible, such items should be kept in a specially secure area of the repository. It is best to treat items that contain pages or individual documents that are subject to extended closure as a whole and to keep the whole item closed.

Where access is allowed to some parts of an item but not to others, there should be an established procedure for providing consultation facilities. The confidential parts of the item may be temporarily removed and kept in a separate folder.

A special label should be added to each such item to specify the year it will be open, using the wording ‘Closed until’. An additional label should be fixed to the box or bundle to indicate that it contains items restricted for longer than the normal statutory period and how long the closure is.

Where special closure periods are concerned, it may be useful to use ‘Closed until’ labels of a different colour from those used for materials subject to the normal closure period (for example, thirty years).

Storage of Classified Archives

If the accession contains items that are classified or are particularly sensitive, they should be placed in a specially secure area in the repository. This area is usually designated the strongroom. In order to be able to find such items the archival institution should adopt the following methods.

- Make a separate entry for the items in the location register.
- Insert dummies in place of the items, directing staff towards their location within the secure storage area.

Identifying the Location of Records

When the materials have been placed in the repository for storage, their location should be entered in the location register and the repository floor plan should be updated to show that the shelves are no longer free.

For a sample of a repository floor plan, see Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual.

Once the materials have been placed in the repository and entered in the location register and a list has been completed, the main processing of the accession is complete.

Completing an Accession

The final action in the accessioning process is to ensure that all procedures have been carried out and that all documentation is complete.

When all of the above action has been completed, the accessions form should be signed by an authorised member of repository staff and filed by archival reference (series) number and then by accession number. This file constitutes a record of all materials held, in archival reference code order. The accessions register provides a record of materials held in chronological order of the date of receipt.

A copy of the accessions form should be put with the materials until they are placed in their final archival storage area, to ensure that they can be easily identified.

Repository staff should send a copy of the completed accessions form to the records centre and another to the originating office. If materials have come from external sources, that depositor should receive a copy of the form.

A copy of the final series list should also be sent to the originator of the records as soon as it is completed so that the agency or individual has full details of any archives relating to its functions and activities.

The originators of the archives should be able to rely on the security and discretion of the archival institution and its staff. The institution must ensure that accessions forms relating to materials which are not open to public inspection are not disclosed to the public. However, forms relating to open records may be disclosed.

RECEIVING RECORDS FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES

The archival institution's involvement with the acquisition of records from external bodies is dictated by the provisions of the relevant legislation or policies, the mission statement of the institution and any associated regulations.

The aim of the legislation and regulations is to ensure that archives of value to society are preserved and to ensure suitable research facilities are provided for their use.

The original creators or owners of non-government material also have an interest in it, and they do not necessarily have to relinquish all legal rights over its disposition and use. They must be consulted about the transfer of records to the archival institution and their treatment thereafter.

Creators of records may choose to deposit their records in the archival institution, which means they may retain ownership of the records or keep some control over their use.

> ***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.

In order to enable the archival institution to administer the materials in its custody, the director of the institution or his or her delegate needs to negotiate terms and conditions of deposit with depositors. These terms and conditions should be set out on the accessions form or in a separate agreement signed on behalf of the depositor and the archival institution.

These terms and conditions should address the following issues:

- Is ownership of the materials to remain with the depositor or is it to be transferred to the archival institution?
- Will appraisal be done before or after transfer; who has authority for the final appraisal decisions; and what will be done with materials not considered worthy of permanent preservation?
- What level of public access will be provided to the archival institution, and will any restrictions be imposed?
- May copies be provided for researchers; who retains copyright (copyright will not necessarily belong to the depositor) and who may authorise publication?

- Who will have authority over the use and publication of finding aids, including copyright?
- May the archives be used in exhibitions, and under what conditions?

The archival institution should also consider whether it is possible or necessary to make an arrangement with the depositor concerning compensation for processing costs should the depositor choose to withdraw the materials from the archival institution. After all, the institution will incur significant expenses for storage, preservation, arrangement and description of the records. In return, the director might agree to commit the necessary resources for processing and storage while the records are in the facility.

If the records being considered are actually copies of originals held by other repositories, the institution must also ensure that all the terms and conditions above are confirmed not only with the donor but also with the other repositories.

The work involved in negotiating a deposit, as opposed to a full and final transfer of records, is not always warranted. Archival institutions are encouraged to acquire full ownership of records whenever possible.

Consignments from non-government sources will usually comprise distinct groups, though a particular group may be received in more than one consignment.

There are two phases to the accession process when accessioning materials from external sources.

1. Identifying the nature and whereabouts of the materials. This phase may involve initial planning, followed by some research and a programme of surveys. It concludes with visits to the site and the negotiation of conditions for the transfer.

2. Preparing the materials for transfer. This phase may involve arranging and describing the materials, cleaning them and carrying out physical preparation, boxing or packing.

Since the creator of the records may not have followed a formal records management programme, the archival institution may have to omit some or all of the preparatory procedures and make other arrangements to handle the records when they arrive.

Activity 16

In your own words, explain six terms and conditions that need to be addressed when considering acquiring records from non-government sources.

ACCESSIONING COPIES

It is often part of the programme of an archival institution to acquire copies of original archival materials held elsewhere. Copies are usually sought where the materials contain significant information bearing on the nation that the archival institution seeks to document from original sources.

Microfilm and other copies of original archives held by other repositories should be accessioned in the same way as originals. Staff should set up a specific group to contain these copies. Series and item numbers can then be allocated within this group. Accruals to these groups and series can take place in the same way as accruals to groups and series of original archives. For example:

- AX1 Copies of archives from the Public Record Office, London
- AX2 Copies of archives from the Library of Congress, Washington

The materials should be listed and described in the guide to the archives, clearly identified as copies.

Microfilm and other copies of original archives held by the archival institution itself should not be accessioned as originals. They should be entered into the register of copies of records. The register of copies should contain the following details of copies made of archives in each group:

- archival reference (of the originals)
- film number (each reel should be given a simple running number within the series)
- type of copy (microfilm, photographic negative)
- location.

Activity 17

Does your archival institution presently receive copies of materials? Explain how these materials are received and accessioned into the institution. Identify three actions you might take to improve the process of accessioning copies.

Register of Copies of Archives			
Group:			
Reference Number of Originals	**Item Number**	**Type of Copy and Copy Number**	**Location**

Figure 7: Register of Copies of Archives

ACCESSIONING LIBRARY MATERIALS

In some countries, the archival institution, particularly the National Archives, is also a repository for published material, deposited in accordance with legislation or policy. In other cases, the institution regularly receives copies of government publications. These are both excellent practices and are to be recommended. However, such materials are managed separately from archives.

Printed or published material used as part of the records during their active and semi-active stages should be treated as part of the archives, if they are selected for permanent preservation. Similar material that is not part of the registry or records management arrangements, particularly series of publications not created by the government agency that holds the records but acquired from other sources, should be treated as library material.

It is common practice for record sets of annual reports and other regular series of printed materials issued by government agencies to be acquired by the archival institution and treated as archives, especially if they have not been published for sale. Users frequently consult these in conjunction archives during their research.

Activity 18

Does your archival institution presently receive library materials? Explain how these materials are received and accessioned into the institution. Identify three actions you might take to improve the process of accessioning library materials.

SUMMARY

Lesson 2 has discussed the process of transferring records into the custody of the archival institution, from their initial identification until their final storage. The following specific topics were discussed:

- the accessions system
- receiving archival material
- processing accessions
- accessioning material from non-government sources
- receiving records from non-government sources
- accessioning copies
- accessioning library materials.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. In your own words, define the following terms

    - group
    - subgroup
    - item
    - accrual.

2. Why is appraisal one of the key components of archival work?

3. For accessioning processes to be effective, what three conditions must be in place?

4. Why should an archival institution have an acquisition plan?

5. Explain the procedures involved in preparing archival materials for transfer.

6. In your own words, explain the different levels of arrangement and their relationship to each other.

7. Describe three different situations involving the accessioning of archival material and explain how each situation should be handled by the archivist.

8. Identify five pieces of information contained in the accessions register.

9. Identify five pieces of information contained in the accessions form, different from those you identified as contained in the accessions register.

10. Explain the difference between an accessions register and accessions form.

11. Why should staff review the accessions register at least once a month?

12. Outline the key steps involved with receiving an accession of archives.

13. How should accessions forms be maintained by the archival institution?

14. Describe at least three steps that should be followed when receiving materials in the archival institution. For each step, explain why it should be done.

15. Describe the key steps involved in accessioning materials into the archival institution.

16. How should new accessions be stored?

17. How should confidential archives be accessioned and stored?

18. How should classified archives be accessioned and stored?

19. How should the location of records in the archival repository be documented?

20. What is the last step in completing an accession?

21. Explain six terms and conditions that need to be addressed when considering acquiring records from external sources.

22. What are the procedures that should be followed for accessioning copies?

23. How should library materials be accessioned?

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 11

The examples you provide should include a group, or whole body of records generated by one individual or agency, and then subgroups, if applicable, series and items. Note that subgroups do not always appear in records; they are more applicable in complex bodies of records with subsidiary agencies responsible for certain portions of records. Equally, as noted in the text, the concept of ‘item’ varies. Items may include a whole file, a bound book, a single sheet of paper, one videotape or one collection of audiotapes and so on. The principles of arrangement are valuable for understanding how archives came to be and how to organise the information within them, but the levels of arrangement are not rigid prescriptions, only guidelines.

For more information on arrangement, see *The Management of Public Sector Records: Principles and Context.* These concepts are also discussed in more detail in Lesson 3 of this module; the information here is only to introduce you to the terminology as you proceed with the discussion of accessioning procedures.

Activity 12

Every institution will have developed its own procedures. It is important to work through the information provided in this lesson and see how the principles addressed here can be adapted to improve systems and operations in the institution itself.

Activity 13

The accessioning process can be used not only to capture information immediately useful as records are received; the process can also allow the institution to capture the core information elements needed to control archival record series from the beginning of formal management and on into the future. Basic control systems for records and archives always revolve around seven key information elements:

1. a unique identifier
2. the date the materials were received
3. the type(s) of record received
4. the geo-political location of the transaction that required the record
5. the names of actors/participants in the transaction
6. the name and type of function, activity or task associated with or leading to the transaction (such as a decision, act, event, operation or project) that generated the record
7. function/activity/tasks referred to as the ‘subject’ or business content or the record’s ‘message’.

The elements above are the important aspects to be identified and captured at accessioning. Indeed, in a well-managed internal records system, this information will be captured when records are created and will accompany the records over time.

Typically, accessions registers usually contain the following information:

- accession number
- date received
- details of archives (series number if known, title or description, including arrangement, covering dates, number of boxes or quantity)
- source, transferring agency or depositor
- archival references
- remarks (including variations to the statutory closed period)
- date action completed.

For more information on capturing information about records during creation, a process particularly important for managing electronic records, see *Managing Electronic Records.*

Activity 14

Again, every institution will manage its accession procedures differently, but the end result will be the same: efficient and effective documentation of the receipt and handling of incoming materials.

Activity 15

Even though every institution will have its own methods for processing new archives, every effort should be made to accession materials as quickly as possible, so that there are no questions about contents, ownership or transfer.

Activity 16

When acquiring non-governmental records, the following need to be considered:

- ownership of records
- appraisal criteria
- access conditions
- reproduction conditions
- availability finding aids
- use in exhibitions.

These issues are discussed in more detail in this lesson. They are also discussed in *Building Records Appraisal Systems.*

Activities 17-18

Consider the suggestions offered in this lesson when determining how to manage the accessioning of copied archival materials and library materials.

LESSON 3

ARRANGEMENT AND DESCRIPTION OF ARCHIVES

Lesson 3 examines the way in which the archival institution arranges and describes the materials in its custody. In arranging materials, the institution must follow the internationally accepted principles of respect for the provenance and original order of archives. Arrangement and description provide information about the content and context of archives.

Topics discussed include

- the concept of arrangement and description
- principles of arrangement
- principles of description
- arranging records into groups and series
- describing archives.

THE CONCEPT OF ARRANGEMENT AND DESCRIPTION

Arrangement and description achieve control over the holdings of the archival institution. This control is of two types, administrative and intellectual.

Administrative (or physical) control ensures that all series and items are accounted for in the repository and can be found and used.

Intellectual control identifies for users what materials are held, what subjects they deal with and where they are located.

Arrangement and description bring control to the holdings of the archival institution.

One of the essential professional tasks of archivists is to analyse sets of archival materials in order to obtain a clear understanding of how and why they were created and how they were originally arranged for use. The purpose of this analysis is to ensure that the final arrangement and description accurately reflects and demonstrates the provenance and original order of the materials.

This analysis is done before the tasks of arrangement and description are completed and requires the archivist to conduct what is called a 'retrospective functional analysis.'

In this lesson, it is assumed that the principles of functional analysis and their application when arranging and describing archives are understood.

The concept of functional analysis is discussed in Building Records Appraisal Systems *and* Analysing Business Systems.

Much of the information in this lesson relates directly to details provided in Lesson 2 because the processes undertaken during accessioning can overlap with those of arrangement and description.

As mentioned in Lesson 2, the terms used to distinguish the different levels of records and archives can be confusing. For example, in addition to 'item', terms that have been used to refer to an assembly of related documents include file, unit, piece, file unit or unit of handling. And 'item' may also be used to refer to the single documents that make up such an assembly. For the purpose of clarity, the following terms, with their definitions, will be used in this study programme.

***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.

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.*

***Series*:** The level of arrangement of the *files* 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.

File: 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.

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

The term 'institution' is used as a level of description to refer to the institution holding the records being described, such as the National Archives or the Corporate Archives. Note that the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)) uses the term '*fonds'* for the English-language term 'group', and the term 'file' for the English-language term 'item'. The term 'item' is used most often in the archival environment, when discussing the physical units of arrangement and is the term used in this module to refer to basic physical units of arrangement and description. The term 'file' is often used in the records office or records centre, as that is the unit of management in those environments.

In this module the English-language terms are preferred. Within each country, alternative terms may be chosen, but they should be exactly translatable into the ISAD(G) terms.

PRINCIPLES OF ARRANGEMENT

> ***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.

Archives, as records of enduring value, are a distinctive form of information that comprises evidence of actual events and processes. In order to serve as evidence, archives must be reliable, complete and accurate. Thus, as a rule, the arrangement of archives must faithfully reproduce and document the order and processes used to capture, create, organise and maintain the records during their primary use for the government, business, organisation or individual.

> *Arrangement reflects the way in which records were created and used.*

The arrangement of archives is governed by the key principle of *respect des fonds.* This principle requires that archives must be kept together according to the agency responsible for their creation or accumulation and in the original order established during their use as current records.

Originally a French term, *respect des fonds* is often defined simply as 'respect for the creator of the records.' The principle of *respect des fonds* consists of two related concepts: *provenance* and *original order*. Provenance refers to the 'office of origin' of the materials; original order refers to the order and organisation in which the documents were created or stored by that office of origin.

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

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

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

These principles require that archivists manage the records of separate agencies separately and maintain the original order of records received. The following principles apply.

1. Do not combine the archives of two agencies or organisations. The archives of separate agencies or organisations must be managed separately even if the agencies in question were involved with similar activities or had people in common. Similarly, the private archives of different individuals must not be integrated, even if the individuals were related or experienced the same events.
2. Do not rearrange archives that show a discernible original order. The original order in which archives were received must not be rearranged if that order clearly reflects the activities and functions of the creating agency. In particular, materials must not be ordered by subject, date or medium of material if that was not how they were organised when created.
3. Identify levels of archives according to the hierarchical levels of arrangement used in archival work, as outlined above and in Lesson 2.

However, if there is no way to discern any order in the archives, or if the records were accumulated haphazardly, the archivist may need to impose an order on them to present the material in a way that reflects the spirit and intent of the creator and to facilitate the use of the records for research. While the original order of records is often easily discernible, arrangement is not an exact science; archivists must simply do the best they can with the information in hand.

Activity 19

In order to understand the principle of arrangement and the levels of arrangement, consider each of the following categories and identify which of the hierarchical levels of arrangement applies to each:

Ministry of Public Works

Financial Reports, 1976

Reports

Erewhon National Archives

Commission's Financial Reports

National Museums Building Commission.

ARRANGING RECORDS INTO GROUPS AND SERIES

As soon as possible after archives are transferred, the archival institution should arrange them in proper order, following the universal principles of archival arrangement.

New materials may be in good order or they may be a confused mass of items. Normally, when consignments of archives are transferred from the records centre or from functioning administrative agencies, they will already be arranged in series that reflect their original order and use. In other cases, the materials may have been rescued from unsuitable storage and misuse or from non-government sources. These should be sorted into groups and series, to reflect the systems used when the records were originally created and kept while in active use. The terminology and the procedures described here are in accord with international standards and practice.

Identifying the Group

A group consists of all the archives arising from a distinct organisation or individual. Examples of groups include

- records of the Supreme Court
- records of the Colonial Secretary's Office
- records of the Civil Service Commission
- records of the Ministry of Justice.

The archival institution should have a clear and agreed policy on defining what is to be included in a group, and this should be set out in internal instructions in an unambiguous way.

The best way of proceeding is to compile a list of groups. In effect, this is a list of creating agencies: bodies that exist or have existed at any time in the past and that have been responsible for producing archives.

The list of creating agencies is more than just a list of names. Each creating agency should itself have a description consisting of one or more of the following data elements:

- the official or authorised name of the agency
- other names the agency has been known by at any time
- an administrative history, setting out the origins of the agency, the legislative or other authority under which it acted, its functions and how the agency evolved over time
- a list of other agencies that were at any time connected to the agency described, both those under the same jurisdiction and those whose functions overlapped or affected the work of the agency
- a list of archival series documenting the functions of the agency
- a list of (or reference to) archival series documenting similar or related functions that are or were at some time the responsibility of other agencies.

It is useful to maintain this list of creating agencies either as a card index or as a computer database. In either case, new entries would be listed under the main heading, the authorised name of the agency.

Reference codes are usually two or three letters, though some archival institutions may use numbers as codes. The use of three letters is preferred as this gives a greater range of options when creating new reference codes. Throughout this module, three letter codes are used.

There has been some debate about whether ‘meaningful’ or ‘non-meaningful’ codes should be used. ‘CSO’, representing ‘Chief Secretary’s Office’, is a meaningful code as it is clearly recognisable as the initials of the agency. ‘CAB’, representing ‘Cabinet Office’ is also a meaningful code. ‘BFN’, representing ‘Supreme Court’ is a non-meaningful code as the name of the agency cannot be deduced or guessed from the letters representing it.

Meaningful codes have the advantage of being easy to recognise and remember. On the other hand, the titles of agencies sometimes change with the result that the name of the agency cannot be deduced from the reference code. For example, ‘WOF’ is used to represent ‘War Office’; however, the title ‘War Office’ changes to ‘Ministry of Defence’, even though the functions of the agency remain exactly the same. The archives of the Ministry of Defence belong in the group ‘WOF’, but the reference code is not now indicative of the title of the agency.

Furthermore, different agencies can have similar names and similar or even identical initials, for example, Personnel Management Office and Prime Ministers Office. In this case, if meaningful reference codes are used, one of the agencies will have to be assigned a code that does not follow its initials. This also is a potential source of confusion for users of the archives when they search archival lists or cite reference numbers.

Using non-meaningful codes not only increases the number of possible codes to choose from, as all letters of the alphabet in any combination can be used, but it also avoids confusion when the titles of agencies change or different agencies have similar titles. In this module, non-meaningful reference codes are used to represent archival groups.

Examples of reference codes are:

BFG	Chief Secretary's Office
MYD 12	District Magistrate's office, Ulusuru

As a general rule, the information held in the index or database of creating agencies should be made available to users. Indeed, the index or database will form the basis of a guide to the institution's holdings, the top level finding aid. Users will find the administrative histories important for the interpretation of the archives they are consulting. Copies of the index entries, or appropriate printouts of the database, should be provided in binders on the search room shelves.

When archival materials are received, the archivists must decide to which group they belong. In straightforward cases, it will simply be the creating agency or other agency that transferred the records. However, there are usually many structural changes in organisations over time, and it is very likely that series or parts of series have been moved from one department to another on various occasions. In these instances, the archival institution should have an agreed procedure.

Following are two possible options for determining groups.

1. Adopt the name of the last transferring agency as the controlling group. This is a convenient method but it can cause confusion. For example, series may be listed as belonging to ministries that were not even in existence when the records were in current use.

    Example: A series of crop returns have been transferred by the Ministry of Agriculture. But these crop returns were actually made to the District Officer at a time when there was no specialised Ministry of Agriculture. At some time after their compilation, responsibility for the crop returns was passed from the District Office to the District Native Authority; later, it was passed to the Regional Local Government Commission and finally to the Ministry of Agriculture. Listing these archives under the last named may give a false impression about the nature of the records. It will be necessary to write an administrative history that indicates the relationship of this set of archives to all the earlier agencies that had some connection with it.

2. List the series as a separate distinct entity and set up linking references to all the agencies that might have had some relationship to it. This method is more accurate, but it may prove difficult to use. Users have to disentangle the sequence of agencies that had responsibility for the function recorded or for the records themselves at different times.

   Example: The crop returns would be identified as records of the particular District Officer. References would be made connecting those records to the other agencies involved with the same activity over time: the District Native Authority, the Regional Local Government Commission and finally the Ministry of Agriculture.

The first option is recommended as best practice at the present time, but it is likely that the development of standards for the description of creator agencies will eventually shift professional opinion towards the second. If the administrative histories of agencies are maintained in a good sequence and are available to users, the second option might then be a more desirable choice.

The second option is strongly advocated by some archivists, such as those in Australia, who have developed a sophisticated tracking system whereby administrative histories of creator (and related) agencies are recorded and comprehensive links established between these and each of the archival series held.

See Lesson 5 for publications on arrangement and description.

Identifying Subgroups

Subgroups may exist within a group where the originating organisation of the group has administrative or functional subdivisions, each of which created records that were managed separately. Series may or may not correspond precisely with administrative or functional subgroups. Where a new records system containing a number of series is created, the new system as a whole is usefully treated as a subgroup.

In general, if these functional divisions are sufficiently independent, it is best to treat their archives as distinct groups. But if the interpretation of the archives requires a knowledge of their connection with the overall originating body, then they should be retained as subgroups. This question is considered further below.

As a general principle, it is better to have a large number of simple groups than a smaller number of complex groups, each containing a number of subgroups. Changes in any organisation are a common feature, particularly in public administration, and they will doubtless continue in future. It is therefore better to keep the structure of archival arrangement as simple as possible.

Determining the Series

The term 'series' is used to refer to specific organised sets of records kept and used together as a system in the creator agency, and from which the archives have been selected.

Normally, a series documents a particular function or process in government or in the creator agency or in the activities of the person. Series should be kept together and in their original order or system. Files in a registered series will be kept together, as will be any other set of materials that share common features of function, system or form, which show that they were used as a system in the creating agency.

It is not always easy to decide what constitutes a series. The determination of series will usually depend on the size of the agency and the quantity of its records as well as the way in which they were kept.

For example, if an agency had several large and distinct series of registered files, each dealing with a particular function of the agency, each of these would be considered a separate series.

> *Example:* A large court of law might have kept sets of case papers, various registers, judgement books, order books and so on. Each of these different types of records would naturally be regarded as a separate series. On the other hand, a small court might not have kept separate records in this way, or very few of its records might have been selected for permanent preservation as archives. In the second case, it might be more practical to place all its records in one series. However, the general rule is that the original system should be preserved whenever possible.

When deciding on what materials should be regarded as making up a series, one factor to consider is whether further accessions are likely. Subsequent accessions (accruals) can cause confusion or result in the series losing its structure, for example, if the accession contains either a sequence of items for a number of years or annual blocks containing several sequences. It is worth considering right at the start if the series might become so unwieldy that it would be better split into several more narrowly defined series.

In some cases, older accessions may contain intermediate levels, or subseries. Subseries may also be common in, for example, hierarchical filing systems based on functions and activities, where particular areas of business are reflected in subseries. As far as possible these intermediate levels, when they are encountered, should be reflected in the arrangement and descriptions of the records and the formatting of the series list so that they are self-evident. Designing complex classification schemes to reflect multiple levels is not recommended. Arrangement should be kept as simple as possible; it is best to work with only the three main levels: group/subgroup, series and item.

Arranging Records within Series

The basic unit of control for all archives is the series. This is because the series usually represents how the records were originally created and used.

Determining the arrangement of items within the series is usually based on the nature of the series and the original order of the archives. The order is derived from the way in which records were created, used and kept by the creating agency or individual. Records are usually kept in files, with a number of materials in each file, according to a subject, a time frame, an issue and so on.

> *The series is the basic level of control of archives, since it reflects how records were originally created and used.*

Before any arrangement is decided on, it is essential that archivists should investigate the archives and their originating agencies thoroughly, including doing background reading, so that they understand the archives and their legislative, administrative and historical background This process is termed 'retrospective functional analysis'.

Activity 20

Before proceeding further, consider various ways you might arrange records within a series. Describe at least three different ways that records could be organised, giving an example from your own experience and explaining why that particular arrangement is suitable for those records.

Within series, records are often part of a discernible record-keeping system. For example, a series of financial records might be kept together because they all relate to 'accounts payable'. They are all filed appropriately within that series of accounts payable, which is a different series from the 'accounts receivable' series.

Alternately, records may have been kept together because they result from or support the same transaction, activity or function. For instance, all the records relating to organisation and conduct of an annual meeting will form part of an 'annual meeting series'.

Sometimes, records are found together in series because they are of similar format and relate to a particular function. Fifty photographs of a construction site may be filed in the series on 'Health Building, Construction: photographs.' Another fifty photographs of another construction site may be filed in the same series under 'Administrative Building, Construction: photographs.' However, the photographs of the administrative building and the health building should not be interfiled, as each belongs to a larger series relating to construction of two different buildings.

There are a number of ways of arranging records. The best way is to retain the relationships and systems established by the creating office or individual. The archivist should discern whether or not a system existed and then identify and use it as the organising principle for the surviving records. The original order may relate to how the creating office or individual generated, received and used the records or how the creating office or individual accumulated or collected the records as part of daily operations.

If the original order cannot be determined easily, then there are a number of other types of arrangement that the archivist can apply to make sense of the records.

Numerical order: This is the numerical or alphanumerical order of the original registry system or other numbering system used for the records when they were active. It is the commonest order and should always be considered first. If records do not fall into a numerical order then some other suitable arrangement should be devised, one which reflects the reason they were selected, or the way in which they are most likely to be researched.

Chronological order: This is the date order of the materials, arranged by year, month, or even day, if it is relevant. Chronological order may be based on the first date or last date of each item. One of these must be chosen and maintained consistently.

Alphabetical order: This order is often used for archives based on places or geographical divisions, such as regions, or on names, such as those of people or organisations. It is used also for series having no discernable numerical or other order and which contain a wide range of subjects, especially if there can be a further breakdown into subcategories of those subjects, such as Agriculture, with subheadings for buildings, crops, labour, livestock and so on. An artificial alphabetical order should not be created where an existing registry numerical or alphanumerical order, based upon a coherent subject/place structure, already exists.

Hierarchical order: This is the normal method of arrangement when a series consists of the archives of a body with a clearly defined structure reflecting levels of importance or activity: for example a committee followed by its subcommittees.

Geographical order: This arrangement is used for series of archives originally organised according to their geographical location, such as land records or records created within units of local administration such as school or hospital records.

Record type order: This tends to be used with collections that are artificial, archivally speaking, and that were never used together in an administrative structure during their active life. Materials are organised by type or medium, such as photographs or maps or posters. This method should be regarded as a last resort, used only when all other forms of arrangement are unsuitable.

Activity 21

For each of the types of arrangement described above, find at least one example in your institution where that type of arrangement has been used. Describe briefly the arrangement and indicate if you think this choice was suitable for these particular records.

The archivist should determine the type of arrangement that seems most suitable for the series. If necessary, more than one of the types may be chosen. For example, there may be chronological arrangement of records within a higher level of alphabetical arrangement. Also, once the various series are identified and a type of arrangement chosen, the archivist may then decide to place one series before or after another within the group. This is sometimes an arbitrary decision, as the original records would likely have been kept in different file cabinets or even different offices, and the idea that one came 'before' another did not occur to the creating office or individual.

Some widely established arrangement conventions include the following.

- Control records, such as indexes, could be placed before the records they control, such as minutes or proceedings of meetings.
- Summary or overview records could be placed before unaggregated or less concise records, such as institutional annual reports before departmental annual reports.
- More personal or revealing records might be kept before less revealing records, such as diaries before correspondence
- More authoritative records might come before less authoritative records, such as records of the annual general meeting before those of the executive board

As a rule, it is best when having to choose an artificial arrangement to choose the simplest, easiest system to understand, rather than one that requires complex explanations.

Activity 22

Explain two ways that records are presently arranged in your archival institution. Indicate three actions you would recommend to alter or improve the way records are arranged.

Assigning Archival Reference Codes

Archival codes can help the institution control and retrieve holdings.

To control and retrieve the archives it holds, the archival institution needs to develop and maintain a system for allocating reference codes to all materials in its care. These codes should be allocated and written on labels as early as possible in the process of accessioning. The definition of archival reference code included earlier in this module is repeated here.

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

In practice, all sorts of systems of reference coding are used. However, recommended practice is for full reference codes to consist of letters identifying the group, followed by a number identifying the series, followed by an oblique stroke (/) and ending with a number identifying the item, for example NPT 3/67. This method, which is described in detail below, results in reference codes with three main elements reflecting the three main levels of archival description: group, series, and file or item. Where subgroups exist, these are represented by a number added to the first element, that is letters representing the group, for example NPT 1/4/82.

Separating all reference code elements by an oblique stroke (/) is a commonly used alternative to the method described above: for example, NPT/3/67. Note that in both methods, it is not possible to tell whether the second element is a series or a sub-group without seeing the whole reference. Thus, 'NPT 1' is a series code in the first example below, and a subgroup code in the second example:

NPT 1/87	[group] [series]/[item]
NPT 1/2/56	[group] [subgroup]/[series]/[item]

To begin the coding process, groups representing central agencies are given letter codes. If subgroups exist, for example representing regional or local branches of a central agency, they are given the letter code appropriate to their agency plus a numerical code indicating which branch or locality the subgroup represents.

Group:	Supreme Court	GRS
Group:	Ministry of Justice	KDH
Group:	Civil Service Department	NPT

Each series within a group is given a number.

Series:	Policy Files	NPT 1
Series:	Staff Development and Training Files	NPT 2
Series	Personal Files	NPT 3
Series	Administration and Finance Files	NPT 4

If the group itself is divided into subgroups, the group and subgroup codes appear together before the first oblique stroke, '/'.

Subgroup:	Policy Development Division	NPT 1

Series:	Policy Formulation	NPT 1/1
Series:	Policy Implementation	NPT 1/2

Series numbers are always allocated as needed, using the next available number in the sequence. For example, if ARG 6 was the last series number allocated, then ARG 7 will be used for the next series, even if the records have no close connection with those in ARG 6. The idea of reserving particular series numbers for regularly recurring types of record leads to difficulties and is not recommended.

Within the series, each item or the unit of handling is allocated a number, ideally the next available number in sequence. These numbers appear after the oblique stroke.

Item:	volume 3 of the Supreme Court judgement books	GRS /1/3

The full archival reference for a particular file or item is made up of the name of the archives, the group (and subgroup code if one is used), the series number and item number. Together they provide a unique code for each record.

Archival reference:	National Archives of Erewhon	GRS 1/3

Once archives have been arranged into a series it is not good practice to move them to another series and give them a new archival reference. Moves should be made only when they are absolutely necessary to correct past mistakes in arrangement. When they occur, cross-references must be provided to relate the former and new reference.

Registering Series

The archival institution needs to keep a permanent record or register of all series that it has received or created. A group and series register may be combined. If such a register does not already exist, it should be created. If the register does not include all series, such as series accessioned before the register was developed, missing series should be added to it. Responsibility for maintaining the series register should be assigned to a senior member of the archives staff, for example the head of repository.

It is important that the archives staff update the group and series register whenever any new group/subgroup code and series and item numbers have been allocated so that it remains a reliable source.

Registering series helps identify like materials and categorise records according to their original order.

The purpose of the register is to identify series, track new accessions within them and provide general information about the physical extent of the series.

An example of a group and series register is shown in Lesson 2.

The archive series register may also be used to record how big the series is, that is, the linear amount of shelving it occupies, for purposes of management and control.

When a new group or series is identified, the repository should allocate the next available code letters and numbers and enter the details in the group and series register.

These details are

- group letters (and number if there is a subgroup)
- group/subgroup title (a brief description of who created the records in the group)
- series number
- series title (a brief statement of whose and what the archives are).

When new records are added to a series, the following information is added to the series register:

- the last item number
- the physical extent (linear metres shelving occupied).

The series title provides a brief indication of what archives are in the series. The series title is intended to help staff and researchers identify the broad contents of a series.

Administrative Arrangement versus Intellectual Arrangement

The principles of arrangement are 'intellectual' principles. Unless the order is clear and obvious, the best way to 'arrange' records is to begin by listing all the series on a sheet of paper or on cards and reordering the cards or the words on the sheet until a satisfactory order is identified. Only then should the actual records be organised.

In some instances, records may indeed be left as they were found and the 'intellectual' arrangement used to show how the records are 'put together' into series.

Even if all records are arranged according to an order identified or chosen, it may be necessary to separate some records physically, for preservation purposes. Often, oversize materials, non-textual or non-standard items and objects are stored separately to protect them.

Records may be arranged intellectually and stored in a different order, in order to protect fragile or non-standard materials.

Only one series should be included in a box or container, unless there are a large number of very small series and boxes are in short supply.

When deciding on the arrangement of a series it is important to think about whether further accessions of records to that series are likely to come in the future. When newly received archives are an accrual to a series already held, a new sequence of arrangement should be made for each accrual.

Sometimes additional items arrive in the archives much later than the material of which they are a part. Best practice is to 'interfile' a description of the new materials into finding aids, but not to attempt to 'interfile' the item physically if this will mean a reorganisation of the archives. The new item is likely to have a reference number much later in the sequence, which will distinguish it from the records previously arranged and described. Users will be made aware of the existence of the new item if a cross-reference is inserted in the series list at the point where the new item would logically be found.

If problems in arrangement are expected then it may be better to define the series more narrowly, and have more, smaller, series.

PRINCIPLES OF DESCRIPTION

> ***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.

Description mirrors the arrangement of the archives, providing a representation on paper of the provenance, original order and content of the archival material.

> *Description reflects the arrangement of records.*

The international standard used for description is the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD(G)), published by the International Council on Archives in 1994. While this standard was developed to apply to archival descriptions included in international data exchange systems, it is used here as the basic structure for a national archival description standard.

ISAD(G) is a set of general rules for archival description that will

- ensure the creation of consistent, appropriate and self-explanatory descriptions within individual archival institutions
- facilitate the retrieval and exchange of information about archival materials
- enable the sharing of authority data
- make possible the integration of descriptions from different archival institutions into a unified information system.

As general rules they are intended to be broadly applicable to descriptions of archival materials regardless of medium and format or of the level and size of the unit of description.

The rules are elaborated in the practical guidance on describing archives that follows.

DESCRIBING ARCHIVES

As noted above, description is the process of representing archival materials on paper, in order to facilitate their use by researchers.

Fundamental to archival arrangement and description, as set out in international standards, is the multi-level rule. This states that archives must be organised according to the recognised levels of arrangement and description. Archival descriptions will generally include linked descriptions between each of these levels.

> ***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.

Archives can be described in many ways and at many levels. In accordance with the international standard of the multi-level rule, archivists are urged to describe from the general to the specific. Thus a description of archival records would first be completed at the institutional level, then at the group level, then for subgroups and series and finally for item. Description is completed for the highest levels of arrangement first, such as the group, subgroup and series, and then for the lowest level, the item, only as time and resources permit.

> *The first description created of records is usually the group-level description, identifying in general the entire body of records and the various series within that group.*

Following this principle, the first description usually created is the group-level description, which is a brief description of the group and series. Often this description is followed by an item list of the contents of each series. If records have been managed throughout their life cycle, an item list may already exist in the form of a transfer list or summary list prepared when the items were transferred from the creating agency or records centre to the archival institution. However, such transfer lists will need to be checked carefully and, where necessary, amended, corrected or expanded so that they meet the standard of description required.

In many countries the group-level description is referred to as an 'inventory' and may be followed by the more detailed lists.

Very often, the group-level description is added to a cumulative guide to the holdings of the archival institution, a document that provides an overview of all materials held.

***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.

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

Creating a *Guide* to the Archives

The *Guide* is the overall finding aid to the contents of the archival institution. The *Guide* provides information about the archives at the group and series level. Information at the item level is provided by the item lists. The arrangement of descriptions should be compatible with international description standards. Sample guide entries are shown in Figure 8.

The *Guide* should be arranged in parts according to constituent parts of the archival institution. At headquarters and within each region the records of each group should be described, preferably in alphanumerical order: such as AMD 1 - 99, KFC 1 – 99 and so on.

Each regional office is responsible for keeping its part of the *Guide* up to date.

Before describing the archives of a group, or a range of series within a group, the *Guide* should outline the administrative history of the organisation, its major constituent bodies and its predecessors that together created the records. The processes from which the records resulted must also be explained. Any relevant legislation should be cited, and any administrative and organisational changes should also be mentioned, with their dates. If further information can be found in other sources, such as published books, articles or theses, these should be mentioned. Administrative histories and contextual information are included to help readers understand the significance of the archives. Anything relevant to an understanding of the archives and their content and arrangement should be included.

> *Example:* The records of the Ministry of Agriculture were kept in the registry at Circle House until 1958, when they were severely damaged by a fire. Those that survived, about 40 per cent, were transferred to the archival institution later that year. They were put in series AMD 4 - 6.

If different groups within the archival institution have a common provenance, this should be mentioned.

Any relevant information specific to a particular series should be put with the series description.

After the administrative history is completed, staff will compile descriptions for each series. This should be done briefly when the series is first received and more fully after the series has been listed or the transfer list has been checked and edited. Series descriptions should be made using the standard series description form (included as Figure 9).

Descriptions are not intended to be complex or lengthy histories. They are only snapshots of the records and their creators, in order to explain their origins, purpose and overall content, and to help users find the information they wish to use.

Each series description should ideally contain the following eleven elements:

1. group code
2. series number
3. series title
4. first date and last date for the archives
5. number of items
6. physical nature of the archives
7. description of the documents, including
    - subjects
    - functions
    - summary of the content of the archives
    - significant information from the custodial history
    - directly related series
8. provenance of the series, if not covered in the group administrative history
9. availability of a series list

10. availability of an index or other finding aids

11. any conditions on access to the documents.

If a series has been accessioned into the archival institution but has not been fully listed, it is helpful for searchers to know about its existence all the same. As many of the details as are known should be included, even if the series is not available for consultation because, for example, it is in the process of being sorted and listed.

Where series have been divided into sub-series, a further breakdown will be needed to show the contents and covering dates of each sub-series.

Several copies of the *Guide* should be available in the following areas:

- two copies at least in the reference area: one for research use and one for staff use
- one in the editorial area, for future revisions
- one in the storage area
- one in each regional office
- one with the director of the archival institution.

Other copies should be distributed to interested parties.

Regional offices should send copies of their parts of the *Guide* to other sub-regional offices, wherever possible, to ensure full information about archives is shared throughout the system.

The *Guide* must be kept up to date. When series are received, and when item lists are completed, a member of staff should be responsible for compiling entries and copying these for the various sets of the *Guide*. Heads of regional offices will be responsible for ensuring that the copies in their possession are also kept current, incorporating amendments and additions sent to them by Headquarters.

It is best to keep the master copy of the *Guide,* whether typed or word-processed, in loose-leaf binders or folders so that information can be added easily. If the *Guide* has been published, the working copies that need to be kept current should be unbound and then pasted on to pages in the loose-leaf folders. This will more easily allow regular updates.

Activity 23

Before proceeding further, compare the eleven key elements described above with the elements used to prepare descriptions in your archival institution. Identify those elements in the list that match those prepared by your institution, those that are not prepared by your institution and those that are prepared in addition by your institution.

On the next pages are sample extracts from a national archives guide, from the Public Record Office, UK.

Registered Files: Railway Inspectorate (Ri Series)
MT 114

The Railway Inspectorate administers safety provisions for railways. These fall into four distinct responsibilities: track inspection, accident investigation, staff health and safety, and operating system inspection.

The Railway Regulation Act of 1840 gave the Present of the Board of Trade powers to appoint an inspector general and two inspecting officers of railways. They reported on the construction and equipment of new railways and were empowered to postpone the opening of a railway until it satisfied their requirements. The Regulation of Railways Act of 1871 provided the inspectors with the statutory power to investigate accidents and hold public inquiries, which are still held under this authority.

Inquiries into accidents involving railway staff were held by the inspectors as early as 1858 but legislation was not brought in until the Railway Employment (Preservation of Accidents) Act of 1900, which authorised the Board of trade to appoint assistant inspecting officers (now called Railway Employment Inspectors) to investigate the more serious accidents to employees. The Health and Safety at Work Act, 1974 increased this aspect of the Inspectorate's work greatly, when it became an agency of the Health and Safety Commission, responsible for enforcing safety legislation on railway premises.

The other main function of the Railway Inspectorate is the inspection of new operating systems, especially with the introduction of electrification and schemes for automation. Under the Road and Rail Act of 1933, which codified the existing statutory functions, the secretary of state for Transport could order an inspection before granting his approval of new works. In addition, the Inspectorate is employed by the Department of Transport to provide expert advice on all railway matters.

This class contains files covering various aspects of railway safety, principally train accidents and new works. Files are usually listed in groups under headings of the main railway regions (Southern, Western, Eastern, North Eastern, Scottish, London Midland, and London Transport). There are files concerning the triple collision at Harrow in 1952 (MT 114/21-29) and the Hixon level crossing accident of 1968 (MT 114/1009-1020). Many files concern safety modifications to level crossings. The topic covered by each file is indicated by the first number of the former reference, which relates to a particular file out. A key to the file cuts follows this introductory note.

Railway Inspectorate inspector's reports on new works, 1840-1949 are in MT 29, with indexes in MT 30. Accident reports, 1854-1977 (along with earlier parliamentary returns) can be found in RAIL 1053. Original reports can be found on files in MT 6.

The Public Record Office Guide Part 2: Class Descriptions

MAF 256 Registered Files: Scientific Advisors Division (SA Series)

1936 to 1971 257 files

PRO, Kew

Papers of the Division re-established after the merger of the Ministry of Food and the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries in 1955. They relate to such matters as dietary planning for the civil population and the Services, the analysis and methods of control of food quality, the preparation of material for the National Food Survey and other dietary surveys, and the investigation of new sources of food. Many of these files were created by the earlier Scientific Adviser's Division and were re-registered in 1955; those files which were not taken over by the new Division are in MAF 98. Files relating to the defence aspects of the new Division's work are in MAF 291.

See PRO Guide Part 1: 501/2/9, 501/2/27, 501/6/5

MAF 257 Inquiry into Gassing of Badgers to Prevent Tuberculosis in Cattle

1974 to 1980 22 files and rolled map

PRO, Kew

Papers of the officers appointed by the Ministry to assist Lord Zuckerman with the inquiry. They include copies of the successive drafts of the reports.

Most pieces open early.

See PRO Guide Part 1: 501.2/2

MAF 258 Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food: Labour Divisions: Registered Files, Agricultural Wages and Working Conditions (WG Series)

1924 to 1982 69 files

PRO, Kew

These deal with the implementation of the Agricultural Wages Act 1948, with related earlier papers, and enforcement of orders of the Agricultural Wages Board made under the Act.

Some pieces closed for 50 or 75 years.

See PRO Guide Part 1: 501/2/14.

Figure 8: Sample Pages from Guide

CREATING ITEM LISTS

Once archives have been arranged in their groups and series and once group- and series-level descriptions have been completed, records can be listed. Full archival listing provides intellectual as well as administrative control over the materials. The descriptions of groups and series previously described consist mainly of administrative and custodial histories, though some note should be taken of size or bulk, physical nature and condition of the archives and the broad functions with which they deal. Item lists generally concentrate on describing the content of the archives in detail.

As already noted earlier in this lesson, the term ‘item’ refers to the physical unit of arrangement and description. The term ‘file’ is used in records offices and records centres as the unit of control, the file being an assembly of related documents held together for use. Frequently, the file is the unit of arrangement and description (and therefore control) in the archival sense, but this is not always the case. The contents of a file may be described, document by document, in which case the document becomes the unit of description though the unit of arrangement will still be the file. However, description at this level is beyond the resources of most archival institutions. More commonly, the unit of arrangement and description may be an individual document such as a map or a signed agreement or a report that never formed part of a larger assembly of documents such as a file. In this case, each may be described separately and given an individual reference number.

Note that lists should not be prepared until group- and series-level descriptions are completed, and it is wise to make sure there are general descriptions for all holdings in the archival institution before spending too much time on detailed listing of items. Otherwise the archival institution could have one or two very detailed descriptions for a select body of records and no descriptions at all for others, making them inaccessible for research use.

In well-structured record-keeping systems, basic item lists will already exist in the form of transfer lists. These may vary in quality and accuracy and will as already noted, need to be checked, edited and possibly expanded by archives staff as necessary.

Lists describe only the archives within any one series; they do not describe archives across different groups or series.

A list is a more detailed finding aid than a group- or series-level description or guide entry and should be prepared only once group- and series-level descriptions are completed.

A list has several purposes.

- Locating records: A list provides a full inventory of all materials transferred to the archival institution, within their groups and series, assigning to each item a unique reference code. This code enables any particular item to be identified and found.
- Identifying provenance: A list records essential information about the provenance (the context in which archives were created and used), making it possible to understand and interpret the archives. Cross-referencing the lists to the appropriate group and series descriptions is the best way to provide this information.
- Describing content: A list records essential information about the content (the subjects dealt with in the records), enabling users to decide which items to use.
- Identifying related material: A list provides information about parallel or related archival materials in the repository.
- Describing the physical condition of the archives: A list presents information about the physical character, format and condition of the items and any related issues that might affect their use.
- Explaining conditions of access: A list identifies any conditions of access that might govern the use of any materials.

General Content and Layout of the List

Lists always have two components: the introduction and the list proper.

The introduction provides the group/subgroup and series reference code and the series title. If necessary, the accession number may also be given. The remainder of the introduction provides contextual information and any other information (such as size or bulk, parallel or related materials, physical character and condition and access conditions) common to all items in the series. Many users also appreciate a statement in the introduction explaining the criteria used to appraise and select records in the series, if the series has not been preserved in its entirety. An example of an introduction to a series list is provided in Figure 9. When there are multiple accessions to a series, especially where their archival order has been disturbed, a key to the different accessions and their coverage should also be included in the introduction.

The list itself should conform to the following rules.

- The group/subgroup and series code should appear clearly at the top of each page.
- Each item in the list must be identified by its own unique reference number.
- The nature and content of each item should be clear.
- The information about each item should be clearly separated from the information about those before and after it.

- An extract from a typical list is given in Figure 10.

Home Office

Dangerous Drugs (DDA Symbol Series) and

Drugs Record Cases (DRC Symbol Series) Files

HO 319

This class contains selected files from the Home Office's DDA (Dangerous Drugs) series and the DRC (Drugs Record Cases) series which originated in 1949. The introductory note to HO 223 explains the introduction of the symbol series registration system and appendix 1 to that note contains a complete list of the symbols and their meaning.

The files in this class relate to the Home Office's responsibility for dangerous drugs and represented a part of the functions and responsibilities of the General Department.

The files reflect the Home Office's involvement in initiating changes in policy or legislation and relate specifically to legislation such as the Dangerous Drugs Act 1951, Dangerous Drugs Regulations 1953 and 1968, Dangerous Drugs Bill 1967 and the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971.

The DDA policy series reflects the department's wide-ranging responsibilities with regard to dangerous drugs including: manufacture, supply, stocks, control and disposal of both new and existing drugs; import and export, illicit traffic and smuggling; drugs branch inspectors; liaison with police; use by hospitals, chemists, doctors, dentists, nursing homes, health centres, first aid and emergency; and all aspects of addiction.

The DRC series consisted of case files on individual addicts: the three files included in this class (pieces 16-17) contain minor policy arising out of the case.

The inclusion of a date following a file number (eg DDA (1959)2/14/8) or following the DDA symbol series heading (eg DDA 67) indicates the year in which the file is supposed to have been created, but often it only indicates the year in which the first subfile was raised on a particular subject.

Some pieces are closed for 50 years and some are open early.

Earlier Home Office papers relating to dangerous drugs are in HO 45 and HO 144.

See also *PRO Current Guide part 1: 401/2/14*

Figure 9: Sample Series List

PREM 13	**DATE**	**DESCRIPTION**	**FORMER REFERENCE**
		SECURITY – continued	
1187	Mar 1966	Question of whether HM The Queen's Assistant Press office should be allowed access to contents of Cabinet boxes	
1188 +			
1189	May-June 1966	Budget secrecy: constitutional implications with regard to Cabinet collective responsibility	
1190	Sept 1965-Jan 1966	Bossard and Allen cases: report of board of inquiry appointed following report of security commission; part 3 *(See PREM 13/581)*	
1191 +			
1192 +			
1193	May 1965-July 1966	Press articles on defence matters: Paymaster General investigation of possible leaks; Minister of Defence, Royal Navy protested against suspicion falling on him as source	
1194	Sept-Oct 1966	Suggestion that responsibility for press leak about Clyde shipbuilding agreement lay with 10 Downing Street: correspondence with Paymaster General and Lord President of the Council	
1195	June-July 1966	Article in *Daily Express* on reorganisation of Ministry of Aviation: possible leak; investigation	
1196	Oct 1964-Mar 1966	Messages exchanges on Washington-London teleprinter link	
1197 +			
1198	Oct-Nov 1966	Press articles on honours systems, seamen's strike and Zambia: enquiries into possible leaks	
1199	Nov 1966	Exchange of messages between Prime Minister and South African Prime Minister: Reuters report; alleged government leak	
1200	June-July 1966	Setting up and functions of security commission: submission of memorandum by HM Treasury to Royal Commission on Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act 1921	

+ retained under Section 3(4)

Figure 10: Sample Series List with Multiple Entries

The column headed ‘description’ should contain information about the content of the item, together with any contextual information, parallel or related materials, information on physical character or condition or access conditions that do not apply to other items in the list or to the whole list.

Item lists are usually in tabular form and contain the following information:

- group/subgroup and series reference code at the head of each page
- item reference number
- any former reference code (the term ‘former reference’ refers to any reference number or code used to identify an item at an earlier stage in its current or semi-current life; this information helps determine the records systems used in agencies at different times and can also be useful in providing linkages between records)
- description (content information, including contextual information as needed)
- inclusive dates of the materials.

The same layout should be used for all item lists (unless there is a particular reason not to do so). Uniform presentation helps users to identify and request the items they require. It is good practice to provide standard printed listing forms. If computers are available, the standard format makes using the list easier. A template, held on computer is the recommended method of ensuring that lists are produced in standard format.

Completing Entries in the ‘Description’ Column

In general, descriptions should be concise, but accuracy is more important than brevity. If long descriptions are required in order to present an adequate picture of the contents, then they are appropriate. They should not, however, become narratives.

Normally, the description of the item begins with the original file title. However, the contents of a file can sometimes be quite different from what the title indicates. Therefore, file titles should never be automatically used as complete descriptions. Archives staff should establish the actual subjects in a file and ensure the list reflects them. This is equally important when transfer lists are being used as the basis for the archival list.

It is best to use clear, natural language. If it is necessary to use technical or specialist language, the terms used should be explained. If such terms recur in a list, they can be explained in a glossary in the introduction. Using key words at the start of a description can be helpful, provided that stilted language is avoided.

Frequently, the description of the item is the same as, or similar to, the original file title. In the case of a file, this will be the title on the cover of the file. However, the contents of a file can sometimes be quite different from what the title indicates. Therefore, file titles should never be automatically used as complete descriptions. Archives staff should establish the actual subjects in a file and ensure the list reflects them. This is equally important when transfer lists are being used as the basis for the archival list.

It is best to use clear, natural language. If it is necessary to use technical or specialist language, the terms used should be explained. If such terms recur in a list, they can be explained in a glossary in the introduction. Using key words at the start of a description can be helpful, provided that stilted language is avoided.

The names of people, corporate bodies (such as committees or departments), offices of state, acts and publications should be cited correctly and in sufficiently complete to enable accurate identification. It is good practice to have an agreed authority list of these and of place names.

If names are abbreviated, they should be written in full at the first reference, with the abbreviation in brackets. If a list is long and contains several abbreviations, it may be more helpful to include a list of abbreviations as part of the introduction.

International standard ISAD(G) cautions against repeating information. Data common to all or many items in a series is best put into the series description, so that it does not have to be repeated. However, if there are several items following each other that have the same description and if the data cannot be given in a description at a higher level (possibly as a subseries), it is usually best to repeat the information. Using 'ditto' or leaving a blank space may cause complications, especially if the lists are computerised at a later date.

If an item needs a note specific to itself on context, parallel or related materials, physical character or condition or access conditions, this information can be added on a new line after the main entry in the 'description' column, in brackets. Other information, such as the inclusion of maps and photographs or concerning any other important special feature of the archives, may be treated in the same way.

Standard Item Listing Form			
Group/series reference: ………………………………………………… Series title: ………………………………………………………………			
Item number	**Date range**	**Description**	**Any former reference**

Figure 11: Standard File/Item Listing Form

INDEXING DESCRIPTIONS

The finding aids prepared by archivists provide basic access to the records in the archival institution. From the finding aids, most users should be able to identify which series and items they need to consult.

However, many readers come to the archival institution in pursuit of a specific enquiry but do not know which group or series may contain the information they seek. To direct these users and to exploit the archival holdings fully, it is useful to construct an index that will highlight names, places, events and subjects.

An index is an important tool in pointing readers to relevant holdings. With a good index, the institution can make continuous use of the expertise of the staff who have helped compile it, and readers are able to make quick and accurate searches, thus saving everybody time.

Archival institutions with limited resources may find that providing indexes is a low priority. However, they may also find that users rely heavily on the staff to help them use the guide and lists and to identify information relevant to their enquiry. Indexing may therefore promote economical use of staff time as well as better use of the material.

Adding a comprehensive index to the finding aids system is a considerable task. An index can be created for archives at any of the levels of arrangement. It is common to begin with a series-level index, drawn from information in the guide. In this way, the index can be updated as new information is added to the guide. If a guide index does not exist, the indexing plan might start by compiling a series-level index, using the accessions register as a source for entries.

Once a guide and series-level index has been created and lists have been compiled, it may be useful to create an index from the lists. Such an index can provide valuable detailed information about the holdings of the repository at the file or item level, but compiling it can be highly time consuming. It is important to ensure that resources are available to maintain the index if it is begun.

Using a colour code is often the best way to ensure entries in the index are clear. For example, cards carrying file- or item-level entries might have a green border, series-level entries might have a blue border and so on. Index references should give the full archival reference code, which will also indicate the level being described.

In order to be effective, an index needs to be internally consistent. One member of staff should be in charge of the index. This archivist may have to undergo specialist training in indexing in order to devise appropriate rules and guidelines for the work.

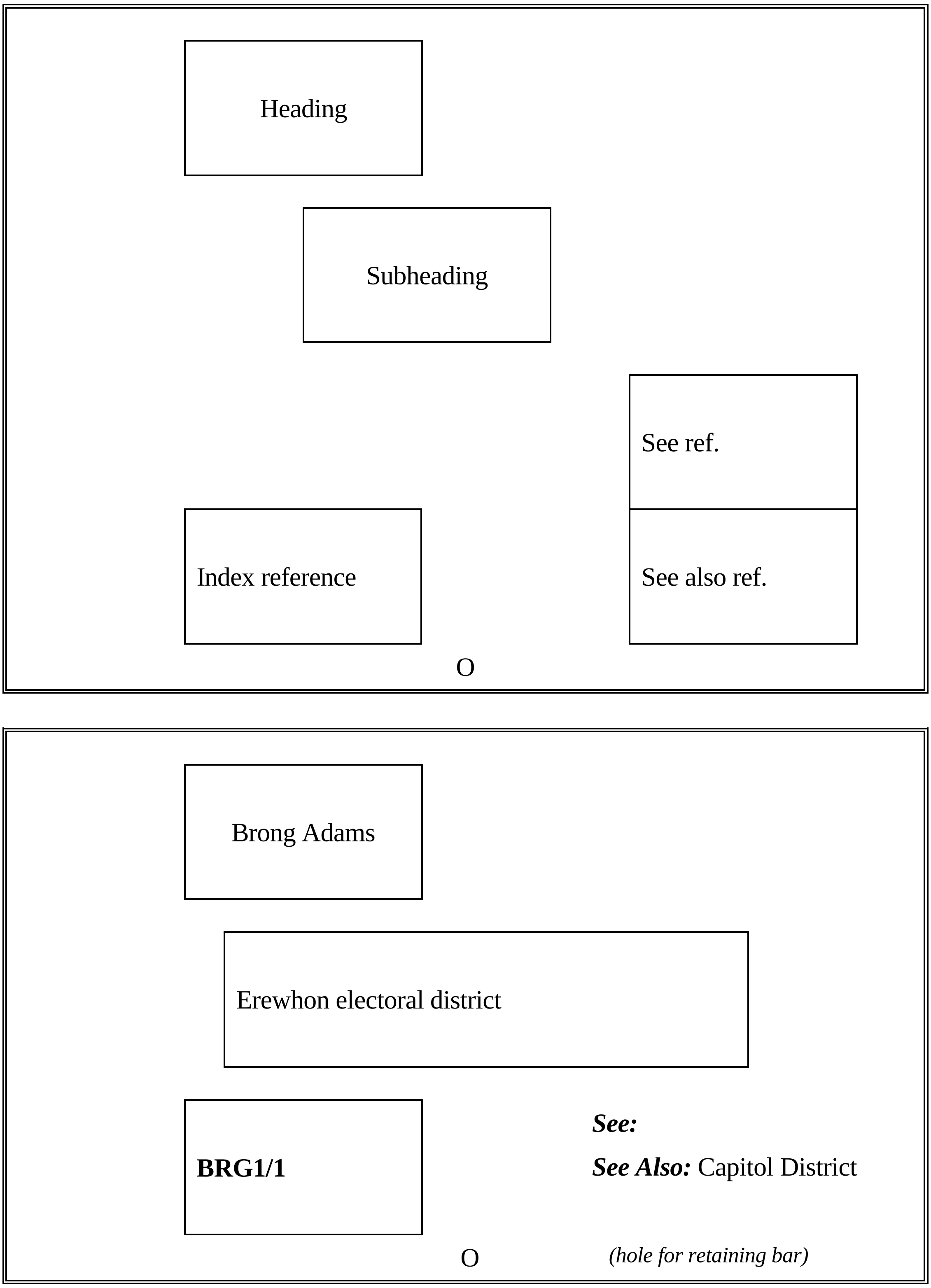

Figure 12: Sample Index Card

Rules, Guidelines and Standards for Indexing

Several general rules and standards apply to indexing. All large indexes require strict control, or their usefulness is much reduced by inconsistencies. Rules and standards must be enforced by the archivist in charge of the index, whose task will include constructing an authority list that must be used by everyone who adds entries to the index at any time.

> *Indexes must be created according to rules and guidelines, in order for them to be effective and consistent.*

To ensure consistency and accuracy, all staff must understand that entries in the index must conform to the standards and rules established by the institution.

Rules for establishing such authority control are provided in another international standard, International Standard Archival Authority Record for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (ISAAR(CPF)) issued by the International Council on Archives in 1996. An extract is provided in Figure 13.

***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.

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

Rules and standards include the following.

- **Standard spelling and style:** The rules should establish specified reference books as authoritative, such as a dictionary of English and other languages used to supply terms and a handbook of style and language usage.
- **Alphabetical order:** An established system should be used.
- **Authority lists of corporate names:** Specified reference documents may be used to standardise the spelling of corporate or government names, including the official government gazettes. However, many of the names may be drawn from archivists' analytical work on administrative histories and group descriptions. The authority list should also cover the list of groups and subgroups.
- **Authority lists of personal names:** Again, specified reference documents and rules for the form and order of names will ensure they are indexed accurately.
- **Authority lists of place names:** These are usually based on a commonly used gazetteer. Place names can usefully be structured into a hierarchy in which names of broad areas include names of specific places in accordance with a provincial or regional classification.

- **A thesaurus of subject terms:** The thesaurus is usually built up by archivists in the archival institution on the basis of their experience in description. However, some ready-made thesauri are available.

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

- **Rules for the use of cross-references:** These are 'see' and 'see also' references, and they require that decisions be made on the use of preferred terms, where words of similar meaning are in question. The rules will be closely linked with the thesaurus.

Structure of the Index

Entries in the index should be structured into four elements.

1. headings
2. subheadings
3. archival references for the material indexed
4. cross-references.

See Figure 12 for an example of an index in card form.

Headings can consist of

- corporate names (such as government departments, courts, commissions or businesses)
- personal names (such as names of colonial governors, chiefs, civil servants or missionaries)
- place names (such as countries, cities or towns)
- subjects/functions (such as schools and colleges, trade, inquests or land grants)
- record type (such as accounts, maps and plans or photographs).

These headings will be created in accordance with the authority lists devised by the archival institution.

Subheadings are terms that qualify the main heading by focusing on a particular aspect of it. Rules should exist in the authority system for establishing which terms are main headings and which are subheadings.

Subheadings are arranged in alphabetical order under their headings.

Cross-references can be of the following types:

- 'See' references refer the user to the word that has been selected as the preferred term.
- Cows. ***See***: Cattle

In this case, it is intended that all references to cows should be placed under cattle.

- 'See also' references refer the user to other entries in the index that have similar or related meanings but that have also been included in the thesaurus.
- Gold Coast. ***See also:*** Ghana

In this case, the index will contain references under both words, and users will have to search under both terms.

Each index entry should include as complete a reference as possible to the archives identified. The complete archival reference code should be cited in all index references.

Use of the Index

While the index is on cards, it should be kept in the search room in a secure container. Index cards should only be removed by authorised staff. The index should be available for all users, both staff and public.

The indexing project will inevitably visualise the future use of computers. If standards and guidelines have been developed and observed from the beginning, it should be relatively simple to transfer the index from manual to automated systems.

Indexing can help provide access to specific information in the holdings, but it is time consuming and can be a complex task.

2. INFORMATION AREA

Purpose:

To describe the corporate body, person, or family named in the authority entry.

Rule:

Record relevant information, as specified in the elements below, according to the national or international conventions or rules used by the agency that created the record. (Specify in 3.2 which rules have been used). These conventions or rules may specify the minimum elements required and how they may be structured.

2.1 Corporate Bodies

2.1.1 Legal number(s)

Any official number that serves to identify the corporate body in countries where legal numbers, (e.g., a company registration number) are assigned by public authorities. Indicate by a qualifier the nature of any number used.

2.1.2 Names

Names by which the corporate body may be known, other than that used in the authority entry a) other forms of the same name b) other names, for example, changes of names over time with their dates.

Examples

(a) Historical Manuscripts Commission

(For the UK entry Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts)

Clothworker's Company

(For the UK entry Worshipful Company of Clothworkers)

(b) Archives nationales (1790-1800)

Archives impériales (1800-1814)

Archives royales (1815-1848)

Archives impériales (1850-1870)

(For the French entry Archives nationales)

2.2 Persons

2.2.1 (Not used)

2.2.2 Names

Names by which the person may be known, other than that used in the authority entry a) other forms of the same name b) other names, for example, changes of names over time with their dates including pseudonyms, maiden names, etc. c) Names and pronominal and postnominal titles, e.g., titles of nobility, or titles of honour held by the individual.

Examples (a) Shakespear, Shakspere...

(For the UK entry Shakespeare, William)

(b) Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin... *(For the UK entry* Wollstonecraft, Mary)

(c) first Duke of Wellington *(For the UK entry* Wellesley, Arthur (1769-1852))

Figure 13: Examples of Authority Controls

Source: Extracts from ISAAR (CPF) website used with permission from ICA: http://www.archives.ca/ica/dds/isaar_e.html.

MAINTAINING DESCRIPTIONS

The archival institution must ensure quality control is maintained for all descriptive work. Descriptions must be up to date and accurate, and superseded descriptions should be removed as soon as possible to reduce confusion.

All descriptions must be kept up to date in order to be effective and reliable.

Copies of all descriptions prepared, whether group-level descriptions, inventories, guide entries, or series descriptions, should be distributed as follows:

- search department (for readers)
- search department (for staff)
- director's office
- editorial department
- records centre
- each of the regional archival institutions.

Staff must ensure that all copies of the guide in the archival institution are kept current.

Because the guide is constantly being updated as new materials are received or restricted materials become available, it is useful to develop a system for adding information that does not require reproducing the entire guide with each update.

Whether an automated or manual system is used, it is wise to keep internally used copies of the guide in loose-leaf folders so that new information can be added easily. If the guide has been published, copies should be unbound and pasted onto pages to add to folders.

It is common for guides to be published so that they may be distributed to other research institutions and made available to the public. The process of publishing guides is best done in conjunction with the government printing office to ensure their consistency with other government publications.

Maintaining the Lists

Lists must be accurate and conform with official standards. The director of the archival institution should arrange training programmes for archives staff responsible for listing work.

When an alteration or addition is made to a list, staff must arrange for copies to be made from the master. These copies should be filed in the sets in the office, making sure to remove any superseded pages.

The repository should also keep a master copy of all lists in a secure location. Staff should make regular checks of the office sets to ensure that they are complete and in good condition. If they are not, arrangements should be made for replacement pages to be supplied. Regional offices should send one copy of each of their own lists to headquarters for reference purposes.

EVALUATING DESCRIPTIONS AND APPRAISAL DECISIONS

The work of description sometimes leads to reconsideration of appraisal decisions.

As you have seen from your study of this module, it is important to prepare accurate and useful descriptions of archival records and their constituent series. It is also valuable to remember, when trying to make sense of records, particularly disorganised records, that much information may be missing or incomplete. When arranging and describing material retrospectively, the archivist may have the time and working environment in which to re-evaluate the records. For example, upon closer examination, some of items in a collection may be worthless or at least not worth the cost of permanent preservation. It may be that records produced by the same creator are held elsewhere in a different or more complete form. Issues of whether or not the creator had the right to possess some of the papers in the collection may arise. The following exercise is intended to help you consider issues of appraisal that arise when records are re-examined during description.

For more information on appraisal, see Building Records Appraisal Systems.

Activity 24

Attached you will find descriptions for three collections; these descriptions have been fictionalised from actual collection descriptions. Read them carefully and undertake the following tasks.

1. Comment on the accuracy and usefulness of the overall collection information. What information appears correct and useful; what information is questionable? Does the entry give clear descriptive information about the creator, about the nature of the records and about the relationship between the creator and the records?

2. Write a more accurate general collection description for each body of records, following the same format.

3. In each case, acting as if you are on the staff of the institution that owns the materials, you have been asked to review the appraisal decision to accept each collection. What recommendations will you make about the value of each of them? What considerations will affect your decision to keep all, some or none of the material?

NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS IN BERMAGUI	A-83
NAME	FRASER, Rt. Hon Peter, 1884 -1950
TYPE OF RECORD	Papers
INCLUSIVE DATES	1936 - 1950
QUANTITY	1.2 metres
LOCATION	National Archives, Bermagui
DESCRIPTION	Born in Scotland 1884, Fraser emigrated to Bermagui in 1911 and became active in left wing politics and trade unions. He took a prominent role in forming the Bermagui Labour Party in 1916,and was elected to Parliament in 1918, becoming secretary to the Parliamentary Labour Party. He became deputy leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party in 1933. In office 1938 he took the portfolios of Education, Health, Marine and Police, and later Aboriginal Affairs, becoming acting Prime Minister 1939 and Prime Minister in March 1940. He was defeated in the 1949 election, and died December 1950. The papers contain personal, political and official correspondence, memoranda and notes from Fraser's years in office. They are miscellaneous in nature and contain no substantial political or administrative documents. The letters are principally concerned with the exchange of courtesies associated with those in high office, but they do include correspondence on party political matters and minor official business. The papers also include speech notes and background memoranda associated with general election campaigns. There is a quantity of newspaper cuttings of general interest.
ACCESS CONDITIONS	Not Restricted
FORM IF NOT ORIGINAL	
LOCATION OF ORIGINAL	
NAME ENTRIES	Kemp, H.J.M.
FINDING AIDS	List

NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS IN AUSTRALIA	A 86
NAME	ROBERTS, James
TYPE OF RECORD	Papers
INCLUSIVE DATES	1891 - 1957
QUANTITY	11..2 m.
LOCATION	Victoria University Library Labour Archives
DESCRIPTION	Roberts was secretary of the Bermagui Waterside Workers' Federation from its revival in 1916 until his 1940 appointment to the wartime Waterfront Commission; he was also secretary of the Transport Workers' Advisory Board, and of the Antipodean Alliance of Labour from its 1919 establishment to its 1937 demise. He was a Sydney City Councillor from 1950 to 1959, and M.L.C. from 1947 The papers are chiefly the working records - minute books, correspondence files, financial records, clipping files - of the Waterside Workers' Federation(1891-1945), the Transport Workers' Advisory Board(1916-1922), and the Alliance of Labour (1919-1938), all with gaps. There are also isolated portions of the records of some other unions affiliated to the Alliance of Labour, some City Council papers of 1957, and some personal papers.
ACCESS CONDITIONS	RESTRICTED. Contact University Librarian for further information
FORM IF NOT ORIGINAL	
LOCATION OF ORIGINAL	Australian Waterside Workers' Federation
NAME ENTRIES	Antipodean Alliance of Workers, Australian Transport Workers' Advisory Board
FINDING AIDS	List

NATIONAL REGISTER OF ARCHIVES AND MANUSCRIPTS IN NEW ZEALAND	**A-79**
NAME	HAROLD LOGAN (Horse)
TYPE OF RECORD	**Papers**
INCLUSIVE DATES	**ca** 1900-1969
QUANTITY	**1 vol.** ~ 5 files
LOCATION	Canterbury Public Library, Christchurch
DESCRIPTION	Newspaper scrapbooks and cuttings, souvenir programmes and photographs of the Hinds family and 'Harold Logan', one of the greatest pacers to race in New Zealand and champion trotter, 1931 and 1932. An Australian by birth, Ernest Hinds was an early motor cycle champion of note in New Zealand. Harold Logan, born in Springfield in 1924, was an unsuccessful racer until he was bought by Hinds early in 1930 to be raced by Effie Hinds, his daughter, and trained by R.J. Humphreys. Harold Logan became a great favourite of the race-going public and in a seven year career until his official retirement in November 1936 won 11,255 UK pounds in stakes, the Metropolitan Trotting Club's New Zealand Cup twice, in 1931 and 1932, and at the age of fourteen the 1936 'Free-for-All' at his final appearance. He also held a world pacing record for two miles. During much of the Depression Harold Logan was stabled at New Brighton and was much loved for his exhibition races along New Brighton Peach to raise money for relief workers. In April 1948 he was destroyed because of advanced old age. Ernest Hinds died three months later on 19 July 1948. Effie Hinds was married twice and spent her later life in Dunedin and died in 1972. These records were deposited by Mrs Pleiades Clarke of Fendalton, a friend of Effie Hinds, 28 November 1977. Central feature of these papers And records is a newspaper scrapbook compiled probably by Effie Hinds, 10 April 1930-1934, a file of four race programmes which includes the 'Souvenir of Harold Logan, 1928-1936' produced for his Farewell race at Addington in November 1936, some 52 unmounted photographs of highlights of Harold Logan's career,1930-1936, and some 50 Hinds family photographs.
ACCESS CONDITIONS	Not restricted.
FORM IF NOT ORIGINAL	
LOCATION OF ORIGINAL	
NAME ENTRIES	Hinds Ernest Frederick Charles, 1884-1948 Jensen, Effie (Hinds), d.1972
FINDING AIDS	

SUMMARY

Lesson 3 has examined the practices of arrangement and description. It has explained the internationally accepted principles of respect for the provenance and original order of archives. It has discussed how arrangement and description provide information about the content and context of archives.

The following specific topics were discussed:

- the concept of arrangement and description
- principles of arrangement
- principles of description
- arranging records into groups and series
- describing archives.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Explain the concept of arrangement.
2. Explain the concept of description.
3. What is the meaning of ‘administrative control’?
4. What is the meaning of ‘intellectual control’?
5. Define arrangement.
6. Define *respect des fonds* and provenance.
7. Define original order and explain why it is an important principle.
8. To respect provenance and original order, what three points must archivists remember?
9. In your own words, explain the seven possible levels of arrangement and description.
10. Define description.
11. What is the purpose of description?
12. Explain the steps involved in identifying the records or archives group.
13. Explain the concept of the subgroup and how it can be identified.
14. Explain the concept of the series.
15. How is the series identified?
16. Why is the series a key level of archival arrangement?
17. What is the best way to arrange records within a series?
18. Explain six other ways to arrange records within a series and given an example of when each type of arrangement might be appropriate.
19. Explain three established arrangement conventions.
20. What is an archival reference code?
21. Why is a reference code used in archival institutions?

22. Why are series registered?
23. Explain the process of registering series.
24. Explain the difference between physical arrangement and intellectual arrangement.
25. Explain two ways that new additions can be added to an existing body of records.
26. What is the purpose of description?
27. What is the multi-level rule of archival description?
28. Why is the multi-level rule important to archival work?
29. Describe two types of finding aids that can be produced by archivists.
30. What is a group-level description?
31. What eleven elements should be included in a series description?
32. Describe at least three reasons to create an item list.
33. Explain how a list can be laid out.
34. Why should descriptions be indexed? How should an index be structured?
35. Name at least two drawbacks to indexing archival descriptions.
36. Define the concept of authority control.
37. Name at least three rules or standards that should be followed when indexing archival materials.
38. What is a thesaurus?
39. Who should keep copies of descriptions and lists?
40. Name three reasons that records might be removed from a group after they have been accessioned and description is under way.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 19

The records can be arranged in the following hierarchy:

Institution:	Erewhon National Archives
Group:	Ministry of Public Works
Subgroup:	National Museums Building Commission
Series:	Reports
Subseries:	Commission's Financial Reports
Item:	Financial Reports, 1976 (file unit)

Activity 20

Records may be arranged numerically, chronologically, alphabetically, geographically or by record type, as described later in this lesson.

Activity 21

There are many instances where a type of arrangement is ideal for a particular body of records. For example, minutes of meetings will usually be kept chronologically, to reflect the evolution of the meetings over time. Case files, such as employee or individual records, will be kept in alphabetical order for ease of retrieval. A district land office might keep series of records according to geography, whereas a research facility might have kept records in numerical order according to each research project. The arrangement used by the creating agency should almost always be used by the archival institution in order to reflect the original order of the records. Only in instances where the original order is completely undiscernable should the archival institution consider changing the arrangement.

Activity 22

Many methods of arrangement develop according to current needs or concerns, but these systems are not always suitable for the long-term functioning of the institution. It is always valuable to re-examine existing practices and determine ways to improve them. The information in this lesson should serve as a guide for improved operations.

Activity 23

As noted in the text, each series description should contain the following elements:

1. group code
2. series number
3. series title
4. first date and last date for the archives
5. number of items

6. physical nature of the archives
7. description of the records, including, types of records and types of information recorded in them, summary of matters of business dealt with therein, functions of creator represented in the records, significant information from the custodial history and directly related series
8. provenance of the series, if not covered in the group administrative history
9. availability of a series list
10. availability of an index or other finding aids
11. any conditions on access to the documents.

This information can be captured in a wide range of ways; ideally, the descriptions will all follow a consistent pattern so that researchers and users can understand clearly what information is available and what each element means.

Activity 24

Compare your answers with the information provided in this lesson and discuss this activity with colleagues to clarify if you have understood the principles addressed.

LESSON 4

PROVIDING REFERENCE SERVICES AND PLANNING OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

Lesson 4 examines providing reference services and planning outreach and public relations programmes. It discusses the importance of developing reference and outreach programmes that address the needs of the wide range of users of archives, from government employees to academic researchers and members of the general public.

Topics discussed include

- providing reference services
- managing the reference area
- processing researchers' applications and issuing readers' tickets
- managing the attendance register
- ordering and producing documents
- providing access to microfilm holdings
- processing written enquiries
- providing a reference library in the archives
- managing special reference projects
- managing an outreach programme.

Many of these outreach activities may be beyond the current scope of archival institutions in some areas, but you are encouraged to review these suggestions and consider them as resources allow.

PROVIDING REFERENCE SERVICES

An archival institution, whether public or private, must plan and maintain appropriate reference services for all users. This is especially important in the public sector because public funds are used for the preservation of the nation's archives. These archives are used for research or reference by a wide variety of users, from government officials to academic readers to members of the general public.

Archival institutions must provide good reference services in order to ensure all users can access archival materials.

The search department is the contact point for members of the public and agency officials who wish to find out about the holdings of the institution. Researchers may contact the institution by correspondence, by telephone or in person.

The standing and reputation of the archival institution will, to a very great extent, depend on the service that researchers receive. Search department staff should therefore ensure that they reply to correspondence accurately and promptly and that replies to telephone enquiries are polite and well informed. Researchers visiting the institution should feel welcome, receive good advice and courteous and speedy service and be able to work in quiet and pleasant surroundings.

While seeking to satisfy the legitimate needs of researchers, archives staff should always remember that the safety of the documents remains their paramount duty. Documents are particularly vulnerable when they are being handled by inexpert people. Staff must therefore be prepared to enforce the search room rules even if doing so means refusing access to certain archives or correcting the behaviour of researchers.

Strict enforcement of the rules protects archives and deters people from misusing, or even removing, documents. Sloppy enforcement has the opposite effect. It is important, therefore, that the archival institution maintain a strict, clear, legally enforceable and consistent policy for the implementation of the rules.

Activity 25

Does your institution have written policies for the provision of reference services? If so, obtain copies of the policy documents and review them. Before proceeding with this lesson, can you identify any areas in your written policies that might need to be amended in order to strengthen the archival institution's ability to provide reference services and protect the records?

If your institution does not have a written policy about reference, write a brief description of how reference services are provided. Again, can you identify any activities that could be amended to improve the institution's reference work?

MANAGING THE REFERENCE AREA

The reference area, often called the search room, is a controlled sector within the institution in which users can consult archival materials in an atmosphere conducive to study. Remember the definition offered earlier in this module.

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.

When researchers arrive at the archival institution, there should be clear signs directing them to the search room. Directions not only put them at their ease but also help prevent their straying into restricted, 'staff only' areas.

Activity 26

Before proceeding further with this lesson, draw a floor plan for your archival institution, indicating in particular the reference area or search room. Mark down all entrances and exits, seating areas and shelving and other furniture in the room.

Can you think of three changes you might make to the reference area to make it more accessible for researchers and to increase security and protection of archives?

The reference area should have the following features.

- The entrance door should be clearly labelled.
- Opening times should be shown on or near the entrance door.
- Reference staff should have their own desks, marked with labels such as 'Search Room Officer on Duty' or 'Enquiries'.
- The room should be clean, tidy and uncrowded, with furniture arranged so that staff can supervise the research area from a single point.
- Silence should be maintained by both researchers and staff. If possible, a separate reference area should be used for meetings or interviews.
- The location of lists and finding aids, including reference books, should be clearly marked.
- Archival documents should not be left in the research area, nor should they be left unattended on desks in the search room. If researchers have to leave the room they should advise the staff of their absence and ask them to watch the documents or return them to the document issue area for safekeeping.
- The area where requests for documents are submitted and the documents themselves are issued to and returned by researchers should be clearly marked.

The reference area should be a welcome and accessible environment.

During opening hours, it is the duty of the reference staff to see that the following steps are taken.

- The search room should be adequately staffed. This task involves setting up duty rotas, monitoring staff leave and making contingency plans if staff are off sick or arrive late.
- There should be a member of staff on duty at all times. If there is only a single member of staff available and this person has to leave the room, emergency relief from another department or branch of the archival institution should be obtained.
- Staff should explain search room procedures to all new researchers and make sure that they are familiar with the rules.
- Staff should keep restricted archival materials out of the search room whenever possible . If such materials are needed for a particular reason, they should be kept in locked drawers or cabinets.
- Staff should check regularly to see that finding aids are in good condition. At the end of each day, one member of staff should be responsible for seeing that the finding aids are in correct order and stored tidily.
- Officers on duty in the search room should walk down the aisles between the desks from time to time. Active supervision shows the researchers that staff are diligent in enforcing the rules.

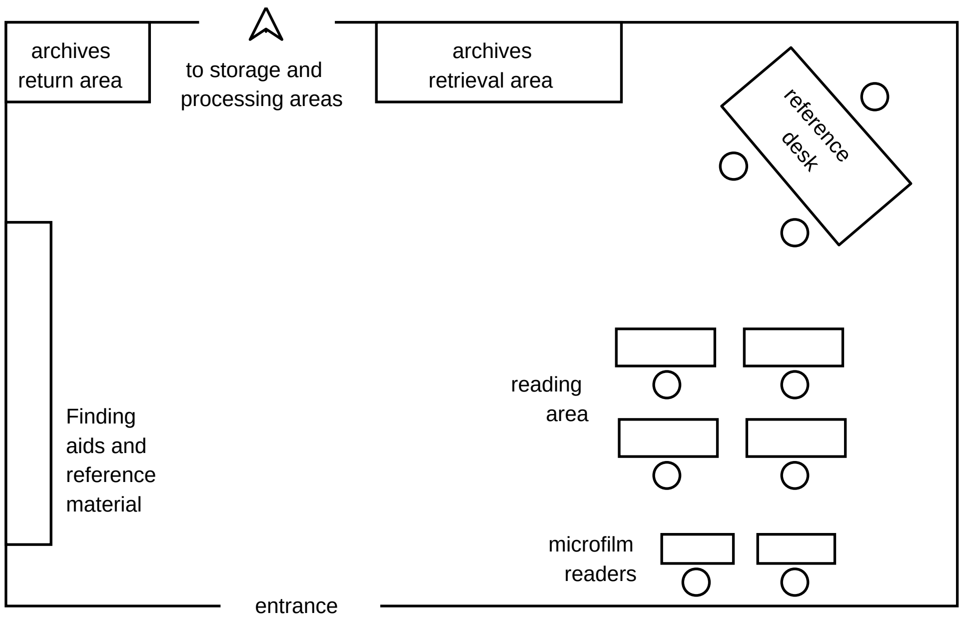

Figure 14: Floor Plan for Reference Area

Reference Rules

The conduct of everyone in the search room must be controlled by a set of rules based upon current legislation or policies. These rules must be agreed to by relevant authorities and explained to researchers. It is the responsibility of all staff of the archival institution to see that the rules are obeyed.

> *In order to protect the records, all users must abide by clear and documented reference rules.*

A copy of the rules should be sent or given to all who apply for a reader's ticket (discussed below). The rules should be prominently displayed in the search room, preferably on each desk. There should also be a copy next to the attendance register (discussed below). Researchers should not be allowed to use original materials before they have seen, reviewed and signed up to the reference rules.

Archives staff must enforce the rules and should report any violations to the senior officer on duty immediately. They must also maintain a log of all violations, documenting the researcher's name and reader's ticket number, the date and time of the event and a description of the action in question. This information should be maintained in a central file so staff can check it against new researcher applications.

If the infringement of the rules is serious, the individual's reader's ticket may have to be cancelled and the researcher banned from the search room. The archival institution must have a consistent policy about what constitutes a serious infringement of the rules. It is wise to obtain legal advice when establishing this policy.

National Archives of the Republic of Erewhon

Reference Rules

These rules are issued under s. 12 (2) (b) of the Erewhon National Records and Archives Act 1999.

The Search Room of the National Archives is open to researchers on normal working days from 9 AM to 4 PM. Holders of reader's tickets are welcome to attend during those hours.

It is advisable to contact the National Archives in advance of your intended visit, indicating the nature of the archives you wish to consult. This will reduce delays and inconvenience. Users will appreciate that archival documents are kept in controlled storage under secure conditions. It therefore takes a little time to produce them. Every effort is made to reduce this delay to a minimum, but users should be aware that it is necessary to allow for it.

Archival documents are produced subject to the following rules.

General

1. You must have a valid reader's ticket.

2. You must sign the attendance register every day you visit the search room, regardless of whether you consult any documents or not.

3. You must maintain silence in the search room.

4. You must not smoke, drink or eat anything (including sweets) in the search room.

5. No persons under 16 years of age shall enter the search room except with the permission of an officer on duty. Educational visits by school parties or individual school students must be arranged in advance.

6. You must leave briefcases and large bags with the officer on duty while in the search room.

Issue and return of archival documents

7. You must write out a separate production ticket for each item you require.

8. Except by special permission of the officer on duty, no more than three different items will be produced at the same time. Items are the standard unit of management within the National Archives; they may contain more than one document.

9. When you have finished with the items requested, you must return them immediately to the officer on duty. Until you have done this, you will be responsible for the items.

10. If you wish to continue work on items on the following days, you must complete a 'reservation' form.

11. Requests for archival documents must be handed in before 3 PM on the day of production. All archives must be returned to the officer on duty by 4 PM.

Handling archives

12. You must not write on or mark any original archival document in any way or take documents out of the search room.

13. You must not use liquid ink, fountain, ball-point or fibre tip pens, highlight pens, correcting fluid or India rubbers in the search room. To take your own notes, you should use pencils only, and these should be sharpened at the designated location in the search room.

14. You must be careful not to damage documents. You must not lean on them, fold them or place them with your own notes and papers.

15. You must keep unbound papers in the order in which they are delivered to you. If the papers are disordered, you should report this to the officer on duty immediately.

16. You must report to the officer on duty any defect in or accident to a document.

17. The officer on duty may require that certain fragile or especially valuable documents cannot be examined or must be examined under special conditions.

Copying documents

18. Tracing documents is not allowed.

19. You may not photocopy documents yourself. All requests for photocopies must be entered on the photocopying request form, which will be completed by an officer on duty. Requests may be refused if there is a risk of damage to the document.

20. Photographing documents is only permitted with the permission of the director.

Office equipment

21. The use of typewriters is not allowed.

22. The use of computers, including battery-operated computers, is permitted, with the permission of the officer on duty, providing they do not cause a disturbance in the search room.

Publication of material from the National Archives

23. Requests to publish copies of documents must be referred to the director.

24. When information or text derived from the holdings of the National Archives is published or cited in publications, users are requested to use the following form of acknowledgement:

    National Archives of Erewhon / [Group code] / [series numbers] / [item number(s)].

It is the duty of the staff of the National Archives to ensure compliance with these rules. Failure to observe the rules may result in the documents you are using being removed or, in extreme cases, the cancellation of your reader's ticket. Those found wilfully damaging the documents will be prosecuted.

Signed *[Director of National Archives]* Date

Figure 15: Model Reference Rules

PROCESSING RESEARCHERS' APPLICATIONS AND ISSUING READERS' TICKETS

By issuing readers' tickets and recording who has them, the archival institution is able to systematise the requirement that all users identify themselves when they attend at the search room.

> *Readers' tickets help the archival institution keep track of all users of archival materials.*

The archival institution can institute a policy that all users of the institution, whether they are officers of the government, members of the public or archives staff members, must have a reader's ticket, regardless of the length of the period of their research or its subject.

Officers of government agencies who requisition archives in the course of their duties for official or legal purposes should have a reader's tickets. They should be issued at the request of the agency concerned. Blocks of ticket numbers can be reserved for this use.

Archives staff who requisition archives in the course of their duties for description, reference or research should also have a reader's tickets, but they do not need to complete an application form. Blocks of ticket numbers can also be reserved for this use.

The bulk of readers' tickets will be issued to members of the general public. The best means of processing these readers' tickets are as follows.

An application form should be devised, asking researchers to identify the nature of their research and to provide sufficient personal information for identification. Such information includes their full name, permanent and local address and telephone number. A sample application form is shown in Figure 16.

Prospective researchers writing to the archival institution should be sent a copy of this application form along with a copy of the archival institution's rules and information about its services and holdings.

Researchers must visit the repository in person to obtain their readers' ticket. When they provide the completed application form along with proof of identity, staff may issue a ticket.

This ticket will be valid for a specific length of time, such as two years, and it may be renewable for a further set time. Researchers requiring additional time will need to apply for a new ticket.

The purpose of establishing an expiration date is to avoid an accumulation of valid but unused readers' tickets and to ensure that personal details, such as local addresses and telephone numbers, do not become obsolete.

Readers' tickets should be printed on durable card or plastic. They should show the reader's name, number, date of issue and date of expiry. See Figure 17 for an example. Details may be completed by hand or typed. The number is usually composed of the year and a consecutive number, such as 96/03, 96/04 and so on. Renewed tickets will be assigned a new number with an 'R' after it, to indicate it is a renewal, such as 97/05 R, 97/06 R and so on.

Tickets must be entered in the readers' ticket register as they are issued, noting name, number, permanent and local addresses, local telephone number, date of issue and date of expiry. If the ticket is a renewal, then a cross-reference should be entered pointing to the original issue. See Figure 18 for a sample page from a register.

Readers' tickets are not valid until they have been signed by the researcher. This signature indicates that the applicant has read the rules and agrees to abide by them. The back of the reader's ticket should have a statement to that effect. Before the applicant signs, staff must make sure that he or she has read and understood the rules.

If a reader loses his or her ticket, a new one may be issued on proof of identity. Staff should check the ticket register or original application form before issuing a duplicate ticket, and its replacement should be noted in the register. The duplicate reader's ticket should have a 'D' after the number, such as 95/05 D.

The original application forms should be filed in annual files, in alphabetical order of readers' names. The file thus serves as an index to the list of readers currently authorised. The forms should be kept for the time designated on the archives disposal schedule, which is normally two years from expiry (matching the two-year validity of the ticket).

Activity 27

Readers' tickets are a valuable tool for formalising reference procedures. Write down at least three advantages to issuing a reader's ticket.

Application for a Reader's Ticket

Please complete sections 1 and 2 and present this form to the search room staff together with proof of identity (passport, driving license, official invoice with postal address).

Section 1 [to be completed by the applicant]

Surname ____

Other Names ____

Nationality ____

Home Address ____

____

____

University/Official Address ________________________________

____

Occupation ____

Purpose of Research Academic/Official/Private

Please indicate and give details

____

____

Subject of Research ____________________________________

____

I have read and agree to abide by the Rules of the Archives

Signature ____

Date ____

Please turn over

Figure 16: Application Form (page 1)

Section 2 [to be completed by a referee]* (except when a Reader's Ticket is being renewed)

Surname ____

Other Names ____

Address ____

____

____

Occupation ____

I have known the applicant for ______________ [state length of time] and can vouch for his/her suitability as a reader in the National Archives

Signature:____

Date:____

OFFICIAL STAMP

**Referees should be resident in the country and identifiable from a professional directory (such as a solicitor, senior government official, foreign diplomatic staff, schoolmaster, tutor or director of studies. Foreign students should also present a letter of recommendation from their place of study).*

Section 3 [to be completed by the archival institution]

Reader's Ticket Number ________________________________

[if a renewal please note number of original ticket]

Signature of Issuing Officer: ___________________________

Name: [please print] __________________________________

Date: ____

Figure 16: Application Form (page 2)

[Ticket Front]

Erewhon National Archives

Reader's Ticket

Reader's Name:..

Ticket number:..

Date of issue:...

Date of expiry:...

[Ticket Back]

I agree to abide by the rules of the

Erewhon Archives

Signature:...

Date:..

Figure 17: Sample Reader's Ticket

Reader's Ticket Register					
Date	**Number**	**New or Renewal***	**Expiry Date**	**Name**	**Permanent Address**

**If renewal note original ticket number*

Figure 18: Reader's Ticket Register

MANAGING THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Professional archival practice world wide is that all users should identify themselves when they attend at the search room and that a permanent record should be kept of all users and of the materials consulted.

> *An attendance register documents all users of the archival institution's services on a given day.*

The daily attendance register should be displayed prominently and kept open. Each visitor should enter details in it. The register will include

- the serial number of the visit (visits should be recorded using the next occurring number, starting at 1 at the beginning of each year, such as 1995/123)
- the date of the visit
- the reader's ticket number
- the name (in block letters) and signature of the researcher.

The attendance register should be specially printed with the correct columns. See Figure 19. Serial numbers of visits may be printed in the first column. As all researchers must have a reader's ticket, there is no need for them to write down their permanent or local telephone numbers and addresses in the attendance register each day. However, the archival institution may wish to ask them to include a local contact address and telephone number.

All members of staff have a duty to see that everyone who visits the search room signs the attendance register every day. At the same time they should check readers' tickets to see that they are valid and that the correct number has been entered in the register.

The staff should make sure that there is a new attendance register to replace the current one when it is almost full. Completed attendance registers are official records of the archives and should be stored safely until their scheduled disposal time.

The reference rules should be displayed near the attendance register.

Activity 28

Just as readers' tickets are useful, so too are attendance registers. Write down at least three advantages to maintaining an attendance register.

Archives Daily Attendance Register						
Date	**Running Number**	**Ticket Number**	**Name [Please Print]**	**Telephone Number**	**Local Contact Address**	**Signature**

Figure 19: Daily Attendance Register

ORDERING AND PRODUCING DOCUMENTS

It is essential to keep track of any archival materials that have been requested by and issued to researchers. A tracking procedure makes it possible to protect archives at all times when they are out of storage. Such a procedure also facilitates their replacement in the correct location and provides a record of what documents have been seen and by whom.

> *To protect records, it is necessary to keep track of their removal from storage and their use by readers.*

When readers arrive in the search room, they must have ready access to the finding aids (guides, group-level descriptions, item lists and indexes). These may be kept in the search room itself or in a separate annex. There should be clear written instructions available for readers on how to request archival materials.

When readers have identified the materials they want to see, they should make out a production form (see Figure 20). These forms should be kept in a tray or other dispenser placed in an obvious place in the search room. When readers have filled out a form, they should hand it to a member of the search room staff. The production form is in duplicate, ideally on self-duplicating paper. In some systems, the production form is produced in triplicate: one copy of the ticket is placed on the shelf at the location of the removed item; one copy travels with the item; and one copy is kept in the search room while the item is in use and is given to the reader as a receipt when the item is returned after use. The following procedures are based on a duplicate production form system.

A separate production form must be completed for each item requested.

Staff must check the details on the production form to see that the reader has entered a valid reader's ticket number and to check whether the archival reference number seems correct. Staff can then retrieve the materials.

It is wise to limit the number of items produced for a researcher at any one time. Doing so minimises the danger that documents will be mislaid, misplaced or stolen. The number of items allowed should be clearly indicated in the reference rules. If a large number of items must be produced at one time, it is best to store them in an area close to the search room and provide only a small number for immediate use.

The archives should allow items to be ordered in advance to help researchers make the best use of their time. Staff should arrange for the items to be delivered to the search room on the morning of the designated day.

Archives staff wishing to see materials should also complete production forms. They may have access to stocks of production forms in their work areas or elsewhere in the archival institution. When they wish to order an item, they should complete a form and hand it to a member of the reference staff. A similar arrangement may be made for authorised officers of creating agencies who hold readers' tickets.

No item can be produced unless a production form has been completed and handed to the reference staff. This rule applies to all archival documents, no matter whether the production form has been completed by a member of the archives staff, a government official or a member of the public. No documents should be made available to anyone who does not have a valid reader's ticket.

Activity 29

How are archives made available to readers in your institution? Write a brief description of the processes followed. Are they documented? Can you suggest three actions that could be taken to improve the process, ensuring records are protected and that readers have the best access possible?

Producing Archives for the Transferring Agency

As an alternative to sending a member of staff to consult documents in the search room, records and archives legislation should provide for archival materials to be requisitioned for use by the agency that created or transferred them to the archival institution. Occasionally archives may also be requested by other agencies within the government or organisation. There should be a provision in the institution's regulations of the institution to allow ministers or senior officials to requisition items.

Archival items sent to creating or transferring agencies for use must be treated with the same care as if they were being consulted in the search room. To protect against the removal of documents from a file, or any change in the order of documents within a file, a statement of original order form may be inserted inside loaned items. See Figure 21 for a sample form. Figure 22 is a sample loans register, which tracks materials loaned from the archival institution to officers in the creating agency.

The archival institution should check the status of requisitioned items regularly. After an agreed period, such as one month, a reminder should be sent requesting the archives be returned. If they are not returned, further reminders should be sent when the next period has elapsed. After no more than three unsuccessful reminders, the director of the archival institution should be informed of the outstanding material so that steps may be taken to retrieve it. These procedures control and protect archival materials sent out from the repository and demonstrate to officials that care is being taken to preserve society's heritage.

Document Production Form

Serial No.______

Reader's Name:_________________________

Reader's Ticket Number:__________________

Document Reference:

Date of Production:_______________________

Initials of Search Room Officer:

Document Location:

Produced by:____________________________

Date of Return:___________________________

Top copy

Document Production Form

Serial No.______

Reader's Name:_________________________

Reader's Ticket Number:__________________

Document Reference:

Date of Production:_______________________

Initials of Search Room Officer:

Document Location:

Produced by:____________________________

Date of Return:___________________________

Bottom copy

Figure 20: Sample Production Form

Notice to Users

Keep in Original Order

This document is part of the National Archives. It is being preserved permanently as part of the national heritage under the terms of the National Archives and Records Act of 1996. It must not be added to, nothing must be removed from it, and it must not be damaged or defaced in any way.

It must be returned to the Archives by *[date]* .

Signed: ________________________________

[Authorised officer, Archives]

Date: ________________________________

Figure 21: Sample Statement of Original Order

Loans Register					
Serial Number of Requisition	**Archival Reference**	**Date Loaned Out**	**To Whom Loaned**	**Remarks**	**Date Returned**

Figure 22: Loans Register

Activity 30

How often are archival materials requested in your organisation in a month? How are those materials made available? Can you suggest three actions that could be taken to improve the process, ensuring records are protected and that members of staff have full access as needed?

Retrieving and Returning Archival Materials

When a reader has completed a production form, he or she hands it to the officer on duty in the search room. Staff collect production forms from the search room at agreed times. A record of items removed from storage for production to users should be maintained in a production register (Figure 23).

Staff should retrieve materials using the following procedures.

1. Check the production form against the location register to determine the location of the records. (Experienced repository staff will know the location system well and may not need to consult the register.)

2. Sort production forms into a convenient order for retrieval.

3. Locate the item.

4. Remove the item from the shelf.

5. Place the top copy of the production form with the item removed and leave the second copy in place of the item which has been removed. The second copy may be put in a special container placed either at the end of the row of shelves from which the item has been taken or on the shelf in place of the document itself. When documents are boxed, it may be placed in the box on top of the remaining documents.

6. Enter the transaction into the production register, noting the date, reference code and repository location of the item removed, the reader's ticket number and the initials of the staff member who has removed the item. The production register should be kept near the door to the repository.

7. Bring the items to the reference area.

Reference staff should then check the following:

- The production form should match the items to which it is attached.
- Access to the archival materials should not be restricted in any way (for example, because of extended closure).

More information about procedures relating to closed archives is given in Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual.

- The materials should be physically fit to be consulted.

If there are any doubts on these points, staff should bring the matter to the attention of the officer on duty before issuing the materials to the researcher. If the materials cannot be made available, staff should lots of present and future tenses to be replaced by conditional explain the situation to the researcher and see that the item is returned to storage.

If the materials can be issued, the search room staff will then follow these three steps.

1. Remove the production form from the materials.

2. Store the production form in a special container, in archival reference code order.

3. Deliver the materials to the reader, ideally to a maximum of three at a time.

Special arrangements must be made for issuing items that are fragile, bulky or otherwise at potential risk of damage. Staff may decide whether these materials should be issued one at a time or not at all. Items that may be at risk must be properly protected.

For more information on the physical care and handling of archives, see Preserving Records.

Readers should return all items when they have finished with them. An area should be set aside in the reference area where researchers may return them. Search room staff should then check that the documents have been returned in proper order and that nothing is missing. The items can then be returned to storage in accordance with the procedures outlined below.

1. At appointed times, collect materials that are no longer needed. Make sure the top copies of the production forms have been reattached to the items.

2. In the repository, check the production register to confirm the location of the archives. Indicate on the register the date of the material's return and the initials of the staff member returning them.

3. Return the materials to the shelves, removing the top copy of the production form from the shelf.

4. Match the top and second copies of the production forms and hand them to the officer on duty in the search room.

The top copy of the production form may be stamped 'returned' and passed to the researcher as his or her receipt.

The second copy of the production form must not be issued to the researcher with the archival material. It should remain confidential because the storage location of the record has been written on it. For security reasons, the public should not know where documents are stored. This part of the production form should be filed in reference-code order and be retained in accordance with the archival institution's disposal schedule.

The production register should be audited at regular intervals to see that all items removed have in fact been replaced after a reasonable time. The production register may also help if an item is lost. The most common cause of loss is misplacement, and by consulting the register it is possible to check which items were removed or replaced at the same time.

The information in the register also supplies data for the archival institution's annual report and can help staff learn which groups and series are used most often. These can then be reshelved for greater convenience.

If items are still needed the next day, they should be placed on shelves specially designated as 'reserved item' shelves. These shelves will be in the 'staff only' area of the search room, not in public areas. Researchers should complete a 'reservation' form requesting that the materials not be reshelved. The form will identify the researcher's name, reader's ticket number and date of request. A sample is shown in Figure 24.

Production Register					
Date of Production	**Production Serial Number**	**Archival Reference**	**Searcher's Name**	**Reader's Ticket Number**	**Date of Return**

Figure 23: Production Register

Reservation Form

Name:

Ticket No:

Date:

Item reference:

Date of production:

Item location:

This material is to be reserved for use on *[date]*

Note that material can only be kept out for the next working day. Only one item to be identified on each slip.

Please write legibly.

Figure 24: Sample Reservation Form

PROVIDING ACCESS TO MICROFORMS

Many archival sources might be available in microform.

Many archival sources are held in the form of microform (microfilm and microfiche). The following principles should be observed.

- Original (first-generation) microforms should never be used for consultation. These should be retained in good storage conditions for the sole purpose of making further second-generation copies as needed.
- Second-generation copies of microforms of archival material held elsewhere, and of which the archival institution does not hold the first-generation copy, should be treated like archives. Consequently, they also must never be used for consultation but must be duplicated first.
- Where the original materials and the first-generation copy are held by the archival institution, second-generation copies that were produced as a way of preserving items or in order to disseminate materials may be used for consultation.

There needs to be a policy governing the manner in which microforms are made available for use in the search room. It is best to have a system in which requests to see microforms are processed in the same way as requests to see original archives.

- A production form is completed by the researcher.
- Staff deliver microforms to the search room with the top copy of the production form.
- The microform is loaded by search room staff.

However, this process uses valuable staff time and resources. Many archival institutions now keep microforms on shelves or in containers in the search room, allowing users to load them on to the reading machines themselves. This method is particularly suitable if the microforms are reference copies. Microforms should not be kept in the reference area unless the environmental conditions there are suitable.

For more information on environmental conditions for microform storage, see Preserving Records.

Activity 31

Does your archival institution have microform holdings? If so, explain how microforms are made available to readers. Can you suggest three actions that could be taken to improve the process, ensuring ensure microforms are handled properly and that staff time is kept to a minimum?

PROCESSING WRITTEN ENQUIRIES

When processing written enquiries to the archives, staff should apply three principles of archival practice.

1. An archives service has a duty to explain to users or potential users the nature and extent of its holdings in sufficient detail to allow the users to decide whether or not a visit is likely to be productive.

2. While archivists have a duty to explain the nature of their holdings, it is not their function to undertake research into topics contained in the archives. Any policy on replying to enquiries should observe this distinction.

3. Information that is supplied by a staff member of an archives service should be based upon knowledge of the holdings and of the finding aids available and it should indicate to the correspondent the degree of authority that the information supplied might have. Archivists replying to queries should cite the sources (original archives or finding aids) they have used and indicate the degree of reliability that might be expected from those sources.

Activity 32

Does your institution have a formalised policy or procedure for answering written enquiries? If so, describe it briefly. If not, write a brief description of how written enquiries are handled.

Can you identify three advantages and three disadvantages to the process followed at present, whether formal or informal? Then, suggest three actions that could be taken to improve the process of answering written enquiries.

Answering written enquiries can be onerous; it places heavy demands on the time and resources of the archives service. The first task of the staff is to develop a policy on how much time should be devoted to individual written enquiries and what form the replies should take.

Factors to consider when developing a policy include

- the extent of staff resources
- the needs of on-site researchers
- the urgency and nature of the written enquiries
- the location of the correspondent
- the level of service the archival institution wishes to provide.

The policy will establish such standards as

- the target times for answering enquiries
- the amount of research that will be done by staff
- whether copies of material will be produced and at what cost
- what other charges may be made for the work performed.

A policy for providing written replies to research questions can help the archival institution provide equal service without overburdening staff.

Target times establish good discipline and are also an effective way of judging performance. For example, it could be advertised that correspondents will be guaranteed a reply within, say, fourteen days. Once a general policy has been agreed, it must be implemented. A sample enquiries policy is shown in Figure 25.

If this target cannot be met in a particular case, then the archives staff may send an acknowledgement of the enquiry, saying that the research will take longer. To maintain good public relations, it is important to see that such delays do not become common.

It is usually regarded as good practice to keep an indexed register of enquiries and to file the correspondence. Subsequent enquiries often cover the same ground. Rapid and accurate replies can be made by referring to earlier ones. The files help the staff identify frequent queries that may require the development of a standard reply form. Figure 25 illustrates areas where standard replies can be developed. The indexed register of enquiries may also provide a useful source of information to staff, for example when preparing finding aids and publications.

All written enquiries should be allocated to appropriate members of staff. Before distributing the letters, a member of staff should enter details of the enquiry into the enquiry correspondence register. This entry should show

- serial number
- the date the letter was received
- the name of the correspondent
- the subject of the enquiry
- the person dealing with it
- the date the reply was sent.

An example of an enquiry correspondence register is shown in Figure 26.

Draft letters should be checked before they are typed and mailed, to avoid factual or grammatical errors. A member of staff should check the correspondence register at the end of every week to monitor any outstanding replies and take appropriate action.

Note that in a file-based record-keeping system, the incoming enquiry is placed immediately on an appropriate file and sent to the officer responsible for replying. Once the outgoing reply has been prepared and signed, a copy of the reply is placed on the file and the file is returned to the records office.

However, most archival institutions will find that the bulk of the letters of enquiry received are of a general and routine nature and do not merit opening a registered file. Such enquiries and copies of the replies to them may best be dealt with by placing them in temporary folders, stored in annual series in alphabetical order of correspondents' names. Such folders should be covered by the institution's disposal schedule, but the retention period specified is unlikely to need to be a long one.

The distinction between document-based and file-based record-keeping systems is explained in more detail in Organising and Controlling Current Records.

National Archives of the Republic of Erewhon

Enquiries Policy

Because of the many varied and competing demands placed upon staff at the National Archives of Erewhon, the Reference Department must define priorities clearly within the context of its overall work and wider aims. The main emphasis is placed on helping researchers who visit the institution in person. Beyond that, reference staff are directed to carry out work that benefits many researchers rather than individual enquirers. Attention, therefore, focuses on ensuring that letters of enquiry are handled efficiently and effectively, to allow staff sufficient time to carry out other work of lasting value, such as the preparation of finding aids, guides and leaflets.

The Reference Department will produce the following standard forms of reply:

> a standard letter and information leaflet, if applicable, or a list of the names of researchers who may conduct work on behalf of the enquirer
>
> general guidance on likely or possible sources in the National Archives or elsewhere
>
> specific replies to enquiries about National Archives procedures
>
> standard letters and leaflets relating to common areas of enquiry and research.

Replies involving detailed research will be conducted at the National Archives' discretion in the following circumstances:

> when the enquiry is from an official source, for official purposes and provides sufficiently precise details for the required information to be readily identified
>
> for training new members of the reference staff
>
> to extend the expertise of existing staff
>
> to augment the body of knowledge about the records held in the National Archives in order to be able to advise enquirers
>
> where an enquiry may be answered so quickly and easily that no time or resources will be saved by sending a stock reply.

The reference service will prepare documents for photocopying on behalf of an enquirer only when full and complete references are supplied and no more than three individual items are involved. If those conditions are not met, the staff will send the enquirer a stock letter with information about researchers who might conduct such work for a fee.

Figure 25: Sample Enquiries Policy

Enquiry Correspondence Register					
Serial Number	**Date Received**	**Name of Correspondent**	**Subject**	**Allocated to**	**Date of Reply**

Figure 26: Enquiry Correspondence Register

DELEGATING WORK TO AN INDEPENDENT RESEARCH SERVICE

In some cases, it may be possible to establish an independent research service for answering enquiries, thus removing this duty from the responsibilities of the reference staff. But it will generally only be possible where the volume and frequency of enquiries is great enough to generate sufficient income. If the establishment of an independent research service is considered, the basic principles set out above should be observed and implemented as follows.

1. It must remain the duty of the archival institution itself to give a preliminary reply free of charge to any correspondent. If possible, this reply will indicate the nature and extent of the original source materials held and the finding aids to them. It should be sufficient to allow the correspondent to make a judgement about whether a visit would be likely to be productive. The reply will also indicate the availability of the independent research service and the conditions of its use.

2. The independent research service will be responsible for any further enquiries from the correspondent, who must undertake to pay the appropriate charges. The independent research service may, of course, contract to undertake research into original materials or other sources.

3. The independent research service should be legally independent of the archival institution, which should accept no responsibility for the quality of service and information provided by it. Statements making this separation clear should appear on all the letterheads and information leaflets produced for the service. However, the archival institution may choose to vet and approve independent researchers to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of the holdings and finding aids to offer an adequate service.

Developing Standard Replies

Archivists find that many requests can be answered by a standard letter or information leaflet. For frequent questions, a summary of the information needed to give a satisfactory reply can be printed or duplicated, and it can then be sent to any enquirer.

Many requests can be answered by a standard letter.

It is often necessary to enclose a short letter with the leaflet. In this letter, the archivist should acknowledge the request and supply any information that the leaflet does not cover. Good customer relations are important to the archival institution, and the letter should be friendly and helpful in tone.

Over time, a considerable number of standard replies or information leaflets can be compiled, and these can be used from stock. In many cases, archival institution make them available freely to actual or potential users or distribute them to parallel or related services, such as museums or libraries.

Activity 33

For this activity, imagine that you are the reference archivist responsible for answering written enquiries. You receive the following letter. Explain how you would respond and why and then draft a reply to the researcher.

Dear Archivist,

I am presently conducting an extensive research study of the geology of Erewhon, and I would like to receive copies of all public documents referring to geological expeditions, any time from 1860 to the present day. I would also like to receive copies of any private records relating to geology, including papers from explorers or scientists who might have had an interest in geological activities.

I can pay photocopy costs up to 200 pages.

Thank you,

Dr. Adam Researcher

PROVIDING A REFERENCE LIBRARY IN THE ARCHIVAL INSTITUTION

It is useful for the archival institution to maintain a small reference library. The staff will use it to support them in their professional duties, and readers will use it to aid them while they are researching in the archives.

A reference library can help both archivists and readers.

If the archival institution is the legal deposit library for the country or region, materials received on legal deposit should be administered separately from an internal reference library, in accordance with legal provisions.

The management of the library should be the responsibility of a nominated member of staff.

It is advisable to have an acquisitions policy governing the selection of books for the library. Books should be selected because they deal with one of the following topics:

- archival methodology and standards
- the interpretation or elucidation of the context, content or significance of archival holdings, for example relevant works of historical scholarship
- the existence or significance of, and guidance to, complementary sources.

The institutional library is a tool to assist those working in the building. It is not an alternative to the relevant sections of the library or library collections within universities or other research facilities.

Books obtained for this library should not be accessioned with the archives nor with any legal deposit material. These should be entered into a separate archives library accession register.

In setting up the library, it may be helpful to obtain professional advice from a library service.

A simple classification system should be devised or adopted to suit the collection. It should be straightforward and easy to maintain. Books should be stored on the shelf in classification order and should be catalogued by both author and subject. The library catalogue should be made available for consultation in the search room. If it is on cards, they should be secured by a rod through the card drawer.

Books may be stored in the reference area, or they may be kept in a secure area within the repository. They should not be removed from the reference area except by staff who wish to take them to their work areas within the building.

The retrieval and return system used for books can be the same as that used for archival materials. If books are in the search room, researchers should be requested to return used books to a central area, not to reshelve them.

It is good practice to buy multiple copies of frequently used books. One copy can be made available in the reference area and others in work areas as convenient.

Books that were received as part of an archival consignment and that belong to an archive because they formed part of the original transactions recorded in it should also be included in the library catalogue, but with their archival reference. Because they are archives, they should be stored in the repository, in the location indicated by the reference. They should not be stored in the reference area with the reference books. However, there is no reason they should not be used by staff or (under the normal rules for access) by researchers.

The staff member in charge of the library should have a budget for purchasing books. He or she should develop a list of desired titles so that decisions can be made in a planned fashion. Otherwise, the library may have more than enough information about some subjects and not enough about others.

Researchers in the archives should be encouraged to present to the library a copy of any publication that results from their research.

Activity 34

For this activity, imagine that you are the archivist responsible for maintaining the reference library. Your country has both a National Archives, where you work, and a National Library, maintained separately. You receive the following letter. Explain how you would respond and why and then draft a reply.

Dear Archivist,

I am cleaning out my personal library and would like to donate some very valuable publications to your archival institution, in order to help promote research about the country. I am able to give you the following publications; all I ask for is a document stating their commercial worth so that I can claim the donation in case the tax department has any enquiries.

- *8 world atlases, dating from 1965 to 1988*
- *54 issues of the local museum journal, various years*
- *first edition of Albert Explorer's 1922 published diary of explorations in the country*
- *10 years of the national newspaper, complete set, in excellent condition, from 1987 to 1997*

Please let me know where I should send the materials.

Thank you,

Dr. Adam Researcher

MANAGING SPECIAL REFERENCE PROJECTS

The reference department is responsible for all procedures involved in producing archival materials to users. The central task is the management of the reference area, including provision of a suitable environment for study, for the protection of the items used and for the careful operation of the procedures for ordering and returning archival materials. However, reference staff may choose to undertake special projects beyond these core duties, in order to provide further guidance to users on the nature and extent of the archives held and the finding aids available.

Reference work is led by demand. Though there will be times when all staff available will be needed to help the researchers and to answer written enquiries, on other occasions staff may have time to spare.

Special reference projects should suit the needs and priorities of the institution.

Managers will decide what special projects could be undertaken and will allocate them to individuals according to their abilities. These projects will be pursued when the staff are not needed to help the researchers. They will be designed to develop the staff's own knowledge of the archives and to improve public access to the holdings.

Projects may relate to

- improving the finding aids to the archives, such as indexing particular series
- providing pamphlets or publicity material to aid researchers
- cataloguing books in the library
- carrying out research on particular archives
- planning internal exhibitions.

Activity 35

Has your institution undertaken any special reference projects in the last two years or so? Describe what was done and write a brief analysis of how successful you feel the project was. What three actions might you take in future to improve the success and usefulness of special reference projects?

MANAGING AN OUTREACH PROGRAMME

Beyond the development of reference-related projects, the archival institution may wish to develop an outreach programme to demonstrate its importance in the cultural heritage of the country and to enable a wider public to benefit from its services. An outreach programme may include publications, exhibitions, talks to the general public, educational establishments and special interest groups, or radio and television broadcasts.

An outreach programme can demonstrate the archival institution's importance to the culture of the country.

An outreach programme should be the responsibility of a designated officer of the archival institution. Before embarking on any particular project, the officer should carry out research to discover whether the proposed programme is likely to be appreciated or effective.

If the project seems feasible, detailed research should be carried out on the best way to present it. For example, a project aimed at school children will need to be presented differently from one aimed at academics or at the general public. It may be decided that expertise from outside the archival institution should be called in.

Detailed costings should be carried out before the archival institution commits to any major project. Outreach projects can provide publicity and revenue, but they can also incur considerable financial loss.

As well as any material costs, calculations should also include the cost of staff time. Exhibitions and publications can absorb a large amount of time and, unless the staff complement is increased, they will take staff away from their routine duties The value of any project will need to be assessed in the light of its benefits and drawbacks.

The consequences of any outreach programme need also to be considered. Any large publicity programme could result in a dramatic increase in researchers, written enquiries or school projects. Such an increase would be in accord with the fundamental mission of the service, but if the archival institution is unable to cope with the increase, the overall effect may be detrimental.

Projects should not be left to one person alone. They should be controlled by a project board to which the project organiser will report. The board will establish a timetable and a budget and will monitor progress.

At the end of a project, the project board should submit a report to the director of the archival institution, noting any particular successes or failures, to establish a precedent.

The planning and management of projects is dealt with in more detail in Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services.

Following is a brief discussion of various outreach projects the institution may choose to conduct.

Activity 36

Before proceeding further, write down three outreach projects that have been undertaken by your institution. Describe what was done and write a brief analysis of how successful you feel the project was. What three actions might you take in future to improve the success and usefulness of outreach projects?

Publications

There are many kinds of archival publications. They can range from free pamphlets providing basic information and postcards for purchase by the public to scholarly books involving much research. The appearance and content of such publications will convey an image of the archival institution. It is important, therefore, that they be attractive in appearance, accurate in content and thoroughly checked.

It is important to calculate the print run needed with care. Pamphlets and books describing the contents of the archival institution will quickly go out of date. A large quantity of redundant stock is not an asset.

Pamphlets or leaflets giving information about the archival institution should be clear, concise and easily updatable. A pamphlet giving basic information that a potential researcher needs, such as address, opening hours, copying facilities and a very brief outline of holdings, can save considerable time in replying to written enquiries.

If a reasonable proportion of researchers come with similar types of enquiry, you may wish to consider writing a pamphlet on that topic, pointing out the archives that need to be consulted. Draw on the expertise already in the archival institution, or appoint a member of staff to research the subject as a development project. Once such a pamphlet is available, researchers have access to expert advice whatever the knowledge of the member of staff who happens to be on duty in the search room.

With more scholarly publications, which require considerable staff time, the institution must also consider the medium of the publication. Paper publishing is convenient but expensive. Potential researchers may prefer to pay less and to buy a copy of a microfiche, floppy disc or CD-ROM, as equipment to read these formats becomes more widely available.

Make sure that all text is thoroughly proof-read before it is printed or exhibited. Typographical errors detract greatly from the professional appearance of a publication.

Exhibitions

There is a general principle that archival materials may not be taken out of the precincts of the archival institution. This rule supports the overriding principle that archives are to be preserved permanently. However, there may be circumstances in which items may be removed for limited periods for the purpose of exhibition.

Exhibitions are often an effective way of arousing interest in the archives and in creating favourable publicity, but the exhibition of original documents necessarily implies some risk to them. Wherever possible, copies should be used instead of original documents.

Today it is generally necessary to engage specialist help in the design and presentation of exhibitions. The general public is now accustomed (through television and advertising) to a highly finished and professionally designed display. This expertise may sometimes be obtained by making the exhibition project a joint enterprise with one or more of the other cultural institutions or by obtaining sponsorship from the private sector.

Whenever possible, choose documents that are interesting or attractive to look at as well as interesting in content and relevant to the chosen theme. It is very difficult for an exhibition to be successful if it does not contain strong visual images. The use of enlarged copies of documents or copies on coloured paper can be effective. Photographs of people, events and places and three-dimensional objects also help to enliven archival documents.

Exhibits should be numbered and captioned. Make sure that the captions can be read easily from a reasonable distance and at a convenient height above the floor. Make the captions short and snappy. If a more discursive description is needed, it should be put in a catalogue.

Decide whether a catalogue to the exhibition is appropriate. For small, short-term exhibitions, you may decide a catalogue is not appropriate. For others, a duplicated typescript may be good enough, though in general the standard of presentation should be as high as possible.

For larger exhibitions, consider whether postcards or other souvenir items should be made and sold. Visitors to an exhibition are often ready to buy interesting keepsakes.

Make sure you have advertised the exhibition adequately. Your work is wasted if people do not know about the exhibition and, therefore, do not come to see it. Make use of fliers in appropriate publications. Put up a lot of posters. Inform the local radio and television stations and offer to give an interview on the exhibition. Also inform universities, schools and other interest groups. An official opening by a senior functionary or VIP will help to attract publicity and raise the profile of the archival institution.

If documents from the archival institution are lent to other organisations to be included in their exhibitions, the director of the archival institution must be assured that rigorous conditions will be met. A sample loan conditions form and register is included in Figure 27.

Exhibitions of documents within the archival institution should conform to the physical conditions required for loan exhibitions. No document should be left on display permanently in a position that causes physical stress or that is exposed to light. Documents should never be exposed to direct sunlight, and artificial light levels should be kept low.

It is not advisable to display documents for longer than a year, even where there is no additional exposure to adverse influences.

Loan Conditions Acceptance Form

Please return this form after signing; retain a copy for your own records.

Name and address of the institution where the exhibition is to be held:___________________

____

Name, and address if different from above, of the official to whom correspondence should be sent:____

____

Title of the exhibition:____

Covering dates of the exhibition:____

Full National Archives references and descriptions of documents requested, including individual page or item numbers to be displayed (continue on extra pages if necessary):

____

____

Conservation and security information:

What are the variations in temperature and humidity in the exhibition area?_______________

____

Is the exhibit area lit by natural or artificial light?___________________________________

What is the level of light to which the exhibits will be exposed?________________________

Are the display cases locked?____

Will there be 24-hour security control over the exhibition?____________________________

Is there an emergency plan in operation in the institution?____________________________

I have read and agree to the accompanying conditions for the loan of original archival material from the National Archives of Erewhon and accept the financial and curatorial implications of the loan.

Signed:______________________________Date:___________________________________

Name (please print):___________________Position:_________________________________

Figure 27: Sample Loans Conditions Form and Register

National Archives of the Republic of Erewhon

Loan of Archival Documents for Exhibition

Under current legislation, the director of the National Archives is empowered to lend documents for display in exhibitions and for other appropriate purposes. Applicants for the loan of documents from the National Archives must meet the conditions set out below and sign the accompanying loan conditions acceptance form. These conditions have been established by the director of the National Archives.

General conditions

1. Applications for loans must be received not less than three months before the opening date of the proposed exhibition, in order to allow sufficient time for the necessary condition checks, conservation, photography and mounting.
2. The items requested will be accompanied to and from the exhibition by a senior member of the archives staff, who is given absolute discretion to withdraw the documents on loan if dissatisfied with the conditions at the place of exhibition.
3. The borrower will be responsible for all expenses incurred by the National Archives in making a loan. These will include the following:

   the cost of security negatives or microfilms

   insurance, where required

   the cost of handling, mounting and packing exhibition items

   travel and subsistence expenses of the Archives officer accompanying the items in transit.
4. Items are lent for the purpose of public exhibition only and may not be made available for study or other purposes outside their showcases without the written consent of the director of the Archives. After they have been mounted in the showcases for exhibition they must be left undisturbed, except in the case of any emergency, until the exhibition is dismantled.
5. No mark in pencil, ink, paint or any other material may be made on any item lent, nor may any such existing mark be obliterated. No adhesives of any kind may be applied to the items. All materials used to hold or display the items must be acid free.
6. Any caption used for display purposes and any description given in a catalogue or notice must state that the item is on loan from the National Archives of Erewhon, with its full archival reference code.
7. One copy of the exhibition catalogue must be sent to the National Archives of Erewhon free of charge.
8. Notwithstanding any terms in the loan agreement, the borrowing authority shall return any or all of the items at the written request of the director of the National Archives.
9. The director of the National Archives reserves the right at any time not to proceed with the loan.

Security

10. Exhibition premises shall in all respects be safe and secure; adequate safeguards must be available before any items are borrowed.
11. All items must be displayed in locked showcases. Any other method of display, particularly wall-mounted, must be discussed beforehand with Archives staff.
12. Items must be placed in their showcases by the accompanying officer of the National Archives, who will supervise the locking of the cases. After this, the exhibits and their mounts must remain undisturbed. The National Archives reserves the right to specify that alarms must be fitted to certain showcases.
13. No conservation work will be done other than as agreed with the National Archives.

Environment

14. The temperature of the exhibition area should not exceed 20 degrees Celsius. The relative humidity should be 55 percent plus or minus 5 percent. The lighting should not exceed 50 lux.
15. No smoking is to be allowed in the exhibition area.

Insurance against damage

16. The Archives will determine the insurance coverage required in all cases.

Packing and display

17. The National Archives will pack all items for transport to and from the exhibition.
18. The packaging must be stored safely by the borrower during the exhibition so that it can be used again for the return of the exhibit.
19. The Archives will carry out any mounting operations as agreed with the exhibitors. No mounts or supports are to be removed or changed during the exhibition.

Travel

20. Items should travel shortly before the exhibition opens, to minimise risk and to avoid inconvenience to researchers at the National Archives.
21. The National Archives will decide the form of transport to be used. The transfer of items must be under the supervision of a member of the archives staff.
22. Items must not be stored anywhere other than the stated place of exhibition.

Reproduction

23. Photography is only allowed with the written consent of the director of the National Archives or the accompanying archives officer, who has discretion to decide on the appropriate level of lighting.
24. Security copies will be made of all items before they leave the National Archives.

Figure 27: Sample Loans Conditions Form and Register (cont.)

Using Archives in Education

In many countries, the national or regional archival institutions have educational programmes in which, under suitable safeguards, archival materials are used in the course of school or university teaching and examinations.

School projects should be planned with the assistance of professional educators and they should have defined educational objectives. These objectives may be wide, such as to encourage the growth of independent enquiry and the use of primary sources. Or, they may be more specific, such as to assist with the preparation for examinations.

There are three common options for using archives for educational work.

1. The archival institution can bring students into the repository and search room for tours and demonstrations.

2. The archival institution can bring materials into the schools for discussions or displays.

3. The archival institution can publish reproductions or facsimiles of documents.

A common way of making archival and other primary source material easily available for students and teachers is to publish educational packs. There is a good deal of expertise on this subject. The packs should be based on items in the archival institution that have broad outside appeal and they should, if possible, be based on documents that are attractive and readable or have striking content.

Packs might contain

- an introduction explaining the choice of documents and the purpose of the pack
- a set of facsimiles of selected documents
- transcriptions, explanatory notes, exercises and activities to help interpret and use the facsimiles.

Another common practice among archival institutions is to hold open house days, workshops or seminars on aspects of the archives or particular areas of the institution's work. A regular programme of such activities is desirable.

It might include regular participation in induction courses for new teachers or lecturers, regular consultation seminars for new research projects or students or seminars involving invited lecturers in related subjects to examine new lines of research.

Where members of the staff have developed a special interest in this type of exploitation of the archival holdings, they should be supported in setting up organised programmes of teaching of the relevant subjects.

Regular visits and talks from archivists could form part of the teaching programme of appropriate educational institutions. This kind of participation can sometimes be usefully extended to the public media.

Talks about the archives in general, about particular categories of archives or about sources in the archives relating to specific subjects may also be regarded as part of the educational programme. These can be in response to requests from special interest groups, such as historical associations, genealogists and learned societies, and higher educational bodies such as colleges and universities. Talks to the general public, open days and tours of the archives are helpful in drawing attention to the role and work of the archival institution and raising awareness of its services. Outreach activities of this sort may also provide leads to potential depositors and sources of external support.

SUMMARY

Lesson 4 has examined the provision of reference services for researchers and the concept of planning and developing outreach and public relations programmes. It has discussed the importance of developing reference and outreach programmes that address the needs of the wide range of users of the archival institution's holdings, from government employees to academic researchers and members of the general public.

The following specific topics were discussed:

- providing reference services
- managing the reference area
- processing researchers' applications and issuing readers' tickets
- managing the attendance register
- ordering and producing documents
- retrieving and returning archival materials
- providing access to microfilm holdings
- processing written enquiries
- providing a reference library in the archives
- managing special reference projects
- managing an outreach programme.

It is recognised that many of these outreach activities may be beyond the current resources of archival institutions in some areas, but you are encouraged to review these suggestions and consider them as time and resources allow, according to the needs and priorities of your own institution.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why must an archival institution provide reference services?

2. Why should reference policies be documented and formally approved?

3. Define the term ‘search room’.

4. Identify four features any reference area should have.

5. Identify three actions reference staff should undertake while monitoring the reference area.

6. What action should be taken if a reader is found to be violating the reference rules?

7. Explain the value of issuing readers’ tickets.

8. Explain the key steps involved with issuing readers’ tickets.

9. Why should government or organisational staff and archives staff have readers’ tickets?

10. Explain the purpose of registering researchers in the archival institution.

11. Explain the purpose of an attendance register.

12. Explain the process of ordering and producing documents.

13. Why should production forms be used when making items available to readers?

14. Why should archival institution limit the number of items produced for a researcher at any one time?

15. Why should items be returned as soon as possible after use?

16. Why should the production register be audited periodically?

17. What benefits and drawbacks are there to making microfilm holdings available to readers on a self-service basis?

18. Explain the three duties of archives staff when processing written enquiries.

19. What factors should be considered when developing a policy about written enquiries?

20. What is the concept of ‘target times’?

21. When can standard replies be used?

22. Why should a register or written enquiries be maintained?

23. What types of publications could be kept in an archival institution’s reference library?

24. Identify three special projects that can be undertaken by an archival institution to improve reference services.

25. Identify three outreach programmes that can be undertaken by an archival institution to attract researchers and the public.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 25

The information you gather in this activity will serve as a useful basis as you work through this lesson. It is important to compare the ideal situations discussed in this module with the reality of your own institution, so that you can consider carefully the best course of action for your own work.

Activity 26

Compare your suggestions with the information provided in this lesson and think about simple changes that could be made to increase security and protection of archives while making readers comfortable and welcome in your search room.

Activities 27-28

This lesson outlines various advantages to issuing a reader's ticket and maintaining attendance registers. Formalised processes are very beneficial to the organisation, as they provide complete documentation of activities and ensures the organisation maintains fair and consistent practices.

Activity 29

Any process for making archives available should protect the records first and foremost. For example, it may be convenient to allow readers to retrieve items themselves, but it is not at all safe and should never be allowed. Therefore, registers and forms help the institution by documenting the use and handling of materials.

Activity 30

The systems chosen to make archives available to members of the organisation will depend in part on the demands made by the organisation, and on the nature of the materials. Highly sensitive items must be well protected; records kept in offsite locations will need to be transported in on a regular basis. Such factors must be taken into account when developing or improving processes for making records available within the organisation.

Activity 31

As long as copies of films are used, it is always easiest to make microform access as much 'self-service' as possible. However, decisions about how to provide access to microforms will depend in part on the number and condition of microform readers, the public's level of comfort and understanding of such equipment and the resources and time available to the reference staff.

Activity 32

It is important to have a written and formalised policy for answering written enquiries. Otherwise, some archivists may spend considerable time on one question – perhaps one that interests them personally – and little time on another. This is not a good use of staff time and can be considered discriminatory to readers, who ought to receive equal treatment.

Activity 33

A number of issues arise in this letter. It is not possible for the archivist to conduct the research necessary, even if he or she wanted to. The question is far too vague to allow for any kind of interpretation by the archivist. What if he or she did not find all appropriate materials? What if he or she found too much and the researcher complained that the items were not what he wanted?

It is advisable in this situation to reply that the archival institution cannot undertake such research but that the researcher will have to do the work himself. If the archival institution has access to the names of independent researchers, you could offer to forward this information along. It may be useful to send along a copy of reference rules and regulations and, if possible, any printed guides that can be distributed free of charge to let the researcher know in general what items are held in the archival institution.

Activity 34

If there is a National Library in your country, as assumed in this activity, then few of the materials indicated below would be of clear value for the archival institution. Most could go to the library, although it may not wish to have all the items in question. If the archival institution has extensive geographic materials, such as information about exploration, the atlases might be of value as historical reference tools. The local museum journal may be readily available elsewhere and may not have great value to the archival institution, though they can prove useful in a library for general reference and public use. The first edition of the published diary might also be a valuable addition, if the archival institution does not have a copy yet. If the archival institution does not have copies of the national newspaper and the library does not retain copies, one or the other institution should consider acquiring these items and, if possible, microfilming them for preservation and access.

Also note that it is not wise to provide a monetary appraisal for any materials that the archival institution has not received and been able to examine closely. It would be wise to decide if the archival institution or the library should follow up with this potential donor and then meet with him to discuss the situation and examine the items before agreeing to any transfer.

Activity 35

Reference projects can be stimulating and can raise public awareness, but they can also be expensive and time consuming. It is important to examine the purposes and scope of any such project before committing funds or time.

Activity 36

Again, outreach projects can be also be exciting and stimulating but equally costly and time consuming. It is important to examine the purposes and scope of any such project before committing funds or time.

LESSON 5

WHAT TO DO NEXT?

Managing Archives has outlined the professional activities undertaken by archivists to ensure the care, custody, description and retrieval of records once they have been transferred to the archival institution.

Managing Archives has achieved the following primary aims.

- It has explained the principles of administration of an archival institution.
- It has outlined the theories, principles and practices involved with accessioning records into the archival institution.
- It has explained the theories, principles and practices of arrangement and description of archives.
- It has outlined the key issues involved in the provision of reference services and the development of outreach programmes in the archival institution.

ESTABLISHING PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

Once you understand these principles, concepts and practices, the next step is for you to consider what to do next. It is necessary to establish priorities for archival management and to know where to go to find out more archival practice. This module has introduced key activities in archival work. But which tasks should you undertake first? Which are high priority and which are low?

Activity 37

Before proceeding with this lesson, consider the situation in your institution and the information provided in this module and then identify three priorities you would establish for review and improvement of an archival programme.

Each institution will make different decisions based on its present processes, staffing and resource levels, needs and short- and long-term plans. However, it is possible to offer some recommendations for action, to help the institution manage its archival holdings in a planned fashion. Consider the following as suggestions only.

Priority 1: Review and Improve Conditions of Storage and Access

In order to ensure their permanent preservation, archives must be kept and used in conditions that will not result in their damage or deterioration. All other functions and services in the archival institution will be impaired unless the archives are properly protected. There is always a conflict between preservation and use, but wherever possible, archives should never be subjected to treatment that will threaten their survival. Storage conditions and conditions of access and use should be reviewed to determine whether improvements can be made.

Priority 2: Establish or Improve Accessioning Procedures

It is always advisable to ensure that accessioning procedures are as complete and appropriate as possible. Thus, regardless of how long it takes to arrange and describe records, the archival institution will know that it has documented the transfer of materials and prepared at least a preliminary description through the accession records. Thus administrative control is gained at the beginning.

Priority 3: Review and Improve Descriptive Systems

The archival institution’s finding aids are critical to allowing readers and researchers best access to the institution’s holdings. Whenever possible, it is wise to assess the present quality of the descriptive processes used and alter systems as possible to improve access to information about archives.

Priority 4: Review Other Procedures in the Archival Institution

Other archival activities should also be reviewed, to ensure they are operating at the best level possible. Does the archival institution produce annual reports? Are they as comprehensive as possible? Does the archival institution undertake performance measurements or reviews of systems and processes? It is valuable to review all work in the institution regularly, but it is particularly important to conduct at least one major reassessment every few years to make sure all processes are efficient and effective.

GETTING HELP

Many institutions, particularly in developing countries, have limited access to sophisticated archival resources, such as the newest publications or the most experienced consultants. However, there are places you can go to get more information or to obtain assistance. Following are names and addresses of agencies specifically involved with archival issues; these agencies could be contacted for assistance. This list focuses solely on the archival sphere.

See the Additional Resources *document for information on other organisations and associations involved with records and archives management generally.*

Professional Associations and Organisations

Association of Canadian Archivists

PO Box 2596, Station D
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1P 5W6
Tel: +1 613 445 4564
Fax: +1 613 445 4565
Email: aca@magmacom.com

Website: http://www.archives.ca/aca/

The Association of Canadian Archivists is the national archival organisation in Canada. The Association publishes a journal and newsletter, organises annual conference and participates in a variety of educational opportunities for archivists in Canada.

Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM)

12 John Street
London WC1N 2EB, UK
Tel: +44 171 831 4101
Fax: +44 171 831 7404

Website: http://www.acarm.org

ACARM provides a network of professional information and advice for records managers and archivists in countries of the Commonwealth.

Australian Society of Archivists Inc.

PO Box 83
O'Connor ACT
Australia 2601
Website: http://www.archivenet.gov.au/asa

The Australian Society of Archivists (ASA) is the professional body for archivists in Australia. It was formed in 1975 in response to the growing number of archivists in Australia and to the increasing demand for archival skills. The Society is administered on a national basis by an elected Council, Branches and Special Interest Groups are active in the states and territories.

The Australian Society of Archivists aims to

- promote a professional identity amongst archivists
- promote the keeping care and use of archives and encourage research and development in all areas of archival practice
- establish and maintain standards of archival practice and professional conduct amongst archivists, including standards of archival qualifications and professional training
- encourage the responsible use of archives including cooperating with other organisations and groups with common interests and concerns
- encourage communication and cooperation amongst archivists, their institutions and the users of archives
- publish and disseminate information relevant to the archival profession.

International Council on Archives (ICA)

60, rue des Francs-Bourgeois
75003 Paris, France
Tel: +33 0 1 40 27 63 06
Fax: +33 0 1 42 72 20 65
Email: 100640@compuserve.com
Website: http://www.archives.ca/ICA/

The ICA is the professional organisation for the world archival community, dedicated to the preservation, development and use of the world's archival heritage. The International Council on Archives brings together national archival institutions, professional associations of archivists, regional, local and other archival facilities and individual archivists. The ICA has more than 1,450 members in 170 countries and territories. It is a non-governmental organisation, and it works in close co-operation with inter-governmental organisations like UNESCO and the Council of Europe. It also maintains close links with other non-governmental organisations.

ICA's wide-ranging international activities include

- a general programme of publications and conferences
- a development programme, promoting co-operation within and between regional branches
- a European programme promoting archival co-operation in Europe
- a professional programme carried out by the sections and committees
- a series of special projects, many in conjunction with UNESCO and other international organisations.

The ICA has a full-time Secretariat of five people, based in the Paris headquarters, which undertakes the general administration of the organisation. The professional output of the ICA comes from its network of members and contacts throughout the world who give their time and their professional expertise on a voluntary basis. The ICA publishes a number of valuable works including *Janus*, *Archivum* and the *ICA Bulletin* as well as proceedings of various conferences and a regularly updated *ICA Directory*. The ICA includes regional branches, sections, committees and project groups involved with a range of records and archives issues. These various groups are listed below.

The International Council on Archives is the professional, international, non-governmental organisation representing the interests of archives and archivists world wide. Is aims are to promote the preservation, development and use of the world's archival heritage. The ICA brings together national archive administrations, professional associations of archivists, regional, local and other archives and individual archivists.

Regional Branches

- ALA: Asociacion latinoamericana de archivos
- ARBICA: Arab Regional Branch
- CARBICA: Caribbean Regional Branch
- CENARBICA: Regional Branch for Central Africa
- EASTICA: East Asian Regional Branch
- ESARBICA: Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Branch
- PARBICA: Pacific Regional Branch
- SARBICA: Southeast Asian Regional Branch
- SWARBICA: South and West Asian Regional Branch
- WARBICA: West African Regional Branch

Sections

- ICA/SAE: Section for Archival Education and Training
- ICA/SBL: Section of Business and Labour Archives
- ICA/SIO: Section of Archivists of International Organizations
- ICA/SKR: Section of Archives of Churches and Religious Denominations
- ICA/SMA: Section of Municipal Archives
- ICA/SML: Provisional Section on Military Archives
- ICA/SPA: Section of Professional Archival Associations
- ICA/SPP: Section of Archives of Parliaments and Political Parties

- ICA/SUV: Section of University and Research Institution Archives

Instructors in records and archives management are specifically directed to information about the ICA Section on Archival Education and Training (ICA/SAE). This ICA/SAE is involved in records and archives education and training around the world; it hosts a website that includes a bibliography of readings used by teachers of records and archives management courses. The website developers plan to host databases with lists of educators, educational programmes, research and publication projects. For information on the ICA/SAE, see http://www.gslis.utexas.edu/~issa/.

COMMITTEES

- Committee on Archival Buildings and Equipment
- Committee on Descriptive Standards
- Committee on Electronic and Other Current Records
- Committee on Information Technology
- Committee on Archival Legal Matters
- Committee on Preservation of Archival Materials
- Committee on Sigillography

PROJECT GROUPS

- Project Group on Terminology
- Project Group on Architectural Records
- Project Group on Audio-Visual Records
- Project Group on Protection of Archives in the Event of Armed Conflict or Other Disasters
- Project Group on Literature and Art Archives.

International Records Management Trust (IRMT)

12 John Street
London WC1N 2EB, UK
Tel: +44 171 831 4101
Fax: +44 171 831 7404
Email: info@irmt.org
Website: http://www.irmt.org

The Trust was established in 1989 in order to support developing country requirements for managing official government records. As technology began to have a rapidly escalating impact on the way records were created, used and stored, it became clear that there was a pressing need for innovative and strategic solutions. The Trust was established to support this need. As a charity dedicated to education, research and practical technical assistance, it set out to undertake a range of project work. Projects evolved and grew in three areas, as summarised below:

- ***Country Projects*** were introduced to support local officials and professionals in managing official records. This includes defining legal and regulatory frameworks; developing organisational structures, including strengthening the national archives' capacity to regulate the continuum of records management functions and developing and introducing new systems and procedures for managing records and developing professional capacity.
- ***Education Projects*** were conceived as a vehicle for introducing greater awareness of the importance of records and for developing educational modules and materials which could be shared between English speaking countries. It was intended that where desirable, these materials could be adapted to meet the requirements of developing countries with different administrative traditions. The aim in all cases was to ensure that the material was in line with global theory and best practice but relevant to local realities where there were severe constraints on funding and a limited technical and institutional infrastructure.
- ***Research Projects*** were introduced to study the requirements for well-managed records in key areas, such as financial and personnel management, particularly in an environment of rapid technological change. The Trust's research projects have focussed on real problems and the practical solutions required to solve them.

The range and complexity of Trust's programme areas and project work has expanded in parallel with the growth and spread of technological applications and with global development concerns, such as good governance, accountability, human rights, economic reform, transparency and accountability and cultural heritage for sustainable development. Its work has demonstrated repeatedly that neither technology nor global development agendas can be successfully addressed in the absence of effective control of official records. The Trust is therefore committed to providing an expanded level of services and support for developing countries as they make the transition to the electronic age.

Society of Archivists

40 Northampton Road
London EC1R 0HB, UK
Tel: +44 171 278 8630
Fax: +44 171 278 2107
Website: http://www.archives.org.uk

The Society of Archivists is a professional society for archivists, archive conservators and records managers in the United Kingdom and Ireland. It aims to promote the care and preservation of archives, the better administration of record repositories, and to advance the training of its members. Membership, which consists of registered members, members, student members and institutional affiliates, is open to all those involved or qualified in archive administration, conservation and records management or in related areas, as well as full time students. Membership in the society carries with it a mandatory adhesion to a professional code of conduct.

Society of American Archivists

527 S. Wells Street 5th Floor
Chicago, IL
60607-3922 US
Tel: +1 312 922 0140
Fax: +1 312 347 1452
Email: info@archivists.org
Website: http://www.archivists.org

The Society of American Archivists is the oldest and largest national archival professional association in North America, established in 1936. The Society provides communication services through scholarly journals and newsletters; it also offers continuing education courses and career opportunities, particularly for archivists in the United States.

The website has useful contacts and links and especially an extensive list of publications which can be ordered by mail or electronically.

United Nations Educational. Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

7 place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris, France
Tel: +33 1 45 68 10 00

Website http://www.unesco.org/webworld

The Division of the General Information Programme (PGI) of publishes RAMP studies on records and archives management issues; some of these studies are available online at the website listed above. The website also contains information about other UNESCO initiatives in information, library and archival issues, including announcements about forthcoming conferences, new activities around the world and information about community and cultural activities in developing countries.

ARCHIVAL INSTITUTIONS

Many national and state or provincial archives in the metropolitan English-speaking countries have excellent leaflets and publications that can be adapted to smaller or different contexts. Many of the institutions also provide useful information on their websites. This list only highlights some key institutions; note that many of their websites include links to other national or state repositories and related agencies.

Library of Congress

110 First Street, SE
Washington, DC, 20540, US
Tel: +1 202 426 5213
Email: lcweb@loc.gov
Website: http://lcweb.loc.gov

The Library of Congress is involved with extensive research into the management and preservation of records and archives. Much information is available online and publications can be ordered.

National Archives of Australia

PO Box 34
Dickson
Canberra, ACT 2602 Australia
Fax: +61 6 257 7564
Website: http://www.naa.gov.au

The National Archives of Australia offers a number of publications free, including information about various archival issues. The NAA also participates in international activities and makes many of its resources available on its website.

National Archives of Canada

395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0N3, Canada
Tel: +1 613 996 7430 (Library)
Fax: +1 613 995 6274 (Library)
Website: http://www.archives.ca

The National Archives of Canada is an active partner in international archival projects, including hosting the International Council on Archives website and participating in a range of ICA activities. The National Archives' website includes valuable information about archival policies and procedures, examples of on-line research tools and finding aids and information about exhibitions and publications.

National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

700 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC
20408, US
Fax: +1 202 208 5248
Website: http://www.nara.gov/

The National Archives and Records Administration is an independent federal agency of the United States government, responsible for preserving the nation's history and managing its federal records. NARA has a wide range of publications available on archives management issues; the website provides details. People can also view NARA's general disposal schedules online through the website.

Public Record Office (PRO)

Kew, Richmond
Surrey TW9 4DU, UK
Tel: +44 208 876 3444
Fax: +44 208 878 8905
Website: http://www.pro.gov/uk

The Public Record Office in the United Kingdom seeks to ensure that public records are preserved for present and future access and to raise awareness of the importance of caring for records and archives.

The PRO conducts a variety of preservation-related activities, including preservation coordination and training, preservation copying, preservation cataloguing, and conservation and restoration work.

State Records Authority of New South Wales

Level 3, 66 Harrington Street
The Rocks
Sidney, NSW 2000
Australia
Tel: +61 2 9237 0200
Fax: +61 2 9237 0142
Email: srecords@records.nsw.gov.au
Website: http://www.records.nsw.gov.au

The State Records Authority of New South Wales was previously known as the Archives Authority of New South Wales. The State Records' website offers valuable information on record keeping, including on-line finding aids to holdings, updates on programmes and services, and online versions of various publications including the *Government Recordkeeping Manual.*

Activity 38

Find out if your institution has any information about any of the agencies listed above. Does your organisation receive publications, participate in conferences or meetings or otherwise work with any of these groups?

In your opinion, which groups should your institution consider communicating with first, if any, and what would you expect to achieve by doing so? How would you go about building a productive relationship?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

There are many publications available about archives management. The *Additional Resources* tool lists a wide range of publications; this bibliography includes key works that might be of value, particularly in your institution's resource centre or library. Some are more easily obtained than others, and some more up-to-date than others. However, older publications also contain valuable information and may be more easily found in libraries in your particular country or region than very new publications that have not yet circulated around the world. Core publications are identified with an asterisk (*).

Core publications are also identified in the Additional Resources *document; refer to that document for information on more general publications on records and archives management.*

Textbooks on Archival Management

Bradsher, J G (ed). *Managing Archives and Archival Institutions.* Chicago, US: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

This publication has been issued in segments according to the type of record, such as manuscripts, visual materials, maps and so on.

Cook, Michael. *Information Management and Archival Data.* London, UK: Library Association Publishing, 1993.

* Cook, Michael. *Archives Administration: A Manual for Intermediate and Smaller Organizations and for Local Government.* Folkestone, UK: Dawson, 1977.

* Cox, RJ. *Managing Institutional Archives: Foundational Principles.* New York, NY: Greenwood Press, 1992.

Ellis, Judith (ed). *Keeping Archives*. 2d edition. Sydney, AU: Thorpe, in association with the Australian Society of Archivists Inc, 1993.

Jenkinson, CH. *A Manual For Archives Administration.* London, UK: Lund Humphries, 1965.

Maher, William. *Managing College and University Archives.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1996.

O'Toole, James. *Understanding Archives and Manuscripts.* Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 1990.

Pennsylvania State University Archives. *Procedures Manual: A Guide to Managing an Institutional Archive Utilizing Flow Charts.* Rev ed. Philadelphia, PA: University Libraries, Pennsylvania State University, 1996.

Schellenberg, T R. *Modern Archives, Principles and Techniques.* Chicago, US: University of Chicago Press, 1956 (reprint).

Turton, A, ed. *Managing Business Archives.* London, UK: Butterworth-Heinemann, in association with the Business Archives Council, 1991.

* Wilsted, Thomas and William Nolte. *Managing Archival and Manuscript Repositories.* Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 1991.

* Yakel, Elizabeth. *Starting an Archives.* Metuchen, NJ: Society of American Archivists and Scarecrow Press, 1994.

General Archival Management

Bowden, Russell. *Guidelines for the Management of Professional Associations in the Fields of Archives, Library and Information Work.* (RAMP Study PGI-89/WS/11). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1989. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Childs, R J. *Health and Safety: A Guide to Good Health and Safety Practice in the Record Office.* London, UK: Society of Archivists, Best Practice Guidelines 3, 1996.

Fontaine, France, and Pauline Bernhard. *Guidelines for Writing Learning Objectives in Librarianship, Information Science and Archives Administration.* (RAMP Study PGI-88/WS/10). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1988. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Harrison, Helen P, ed. *Audiovisual Archive Literature. Select Bibliography.* (RAMP Study PGI-92/WS/2). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1992.

* Ketelaar, Eric. *Archival and Records Management Legislation and Regulations: A RAMP Study with Guidelines.* (RAMP Study PGI-85/WS/9). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1985. 121 p.

Marcoux, Y, ed. *Standards and Guidelines Applied to Archival Institutions, Archival Education Programs and Ethics.* Ottawa, ON: National Archives Library, CCIDA Bibliographies 50, 1990.

McCarthy, PH, ed. *Archives Assessment and Planning Workbook.* Chicago, IL: Society of American Archivists, 1989.

Methven, Patricia, et al. *Measuring Performance*. Best Practice Guide 1. London, UK: Society of Archivists, 1993.

Moss, William W and Peter C Mazikana. *Archives. Oral History and Oral Tradition: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-86/WS/2). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1986.

* Rhoads, James B. *The Role of Archives and Records Management in National Information Systems: A RAMP Study*. (RAMP Study PGI-89/WS/6). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1989. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Seton, Rosemary E. *The Preservation and Administration of Private Archives: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-84/WS/6). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1984.

Sigmond, J P. ‘The Role of Associations of Archivists in Continuing Training’. Bonn, GER: Proceedings of X International Congress on Archives, 1984.

Stielow, Frederick J., *The Management of Oral History Sound Archives.* New York, NY: Greenwood, 1986.

Walne, Peter, comp. *Modern Archives Administration and Records Management: A RAMP Reader*. (RAMP Study PGI-85/WS/32). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1985. Available electronically through the UNESCO website.

Acquisitions and Accessioning

Raspin, GEA. *The Transfer of Private Papers to Repositories.* London, UK: Society of Archivists, Information Leaflets No.5, 1988.

Seton, Rosemary E. *The Preservation and Administration of Private Archives: A RAMP Study.* (RAMP Study PGI-84/WS/6). Paris, FR: UNESCO, 1984.

Arrangement and Description

Bureau of Canadian Archivists. *Toward Descriptive Standards: A Report and Recommendations of the Canadian Working Group on Archival Descriptive Standards.* Ottawa, ON: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1985.

Bureau of Canadian Archivists. Planning Committee on Descriptive Standards. *Rules for Archival Description (RAD).* Ottawa, ON: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, l990–.

Cook, Michael and Procter, Margaret. *MAD User Guide: How to Set about Listing Archives. A Short Explanatory Guide to the Rules and Recommendations of the Manual of Archival Description*. Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1989.

Cook, Michael; Margaret Procter. *Manual of Archival Description*. 2d ed. Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1989.

Eastwood, T, ed. *The Archival Fonds: From Theory to Practice.* Ottawa, ON: Bureau of Canadian Archivists, 1992.

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Activity 39

Check your institution’s library or resource centre. What books or other resources do you have about archival management? Are any of the publications listed above available in your institution? If so, examine two or three of them and assess their currency and value to your institution. If not, identify two or three publications you think would be most useful to help develop or expand your library. Devise a plan outlining how you could realistically obtain copies of these.

SUMMARY

This lesson has provided an overview of the entire module, *Managing Archives.* This lesson has then discussed how to establish priorities for action and suggested that priorities for action may be as follows:

- Priority 1: review and improve conditions of storage and access
- Priority 2: establish or improve accessioning procedures
- Priority 3: review and improve descriptive systems
- Priority 4: review other procedures in the archival institution

The lesson then outlined ways to find out more information or get help with archival issues. The lesson concluded with a discussion of valuable information resources relevant to archival management.

STUDY QUESTIONS

- In your own words, explain the reason why the priorities proposed in this lesson are offered in the order they are in.
- Indicate two of the organisations listed in this lesson that you would choose to contact first and explain why.
- Indicate two of the publications listed in this lesson that you would choose to purchase first and explain why.

ACTIVITIES: COMMENTS

Activity 37

Every institution will find itself at a different stage of development in terms of archival management. The priorities established will have to take into account the particular needs of that institution, the region and the country. However, it is always wise to focus on general control measures first, then to consider planning and management, and only then turning to specific processes or functions. In particular, it is important to consider all the issues outlined in this module, from administrative and intellectual control, to the provision of reference services or the acquisition of materials, before determining which course of action is best for your institution.

Activity 38

If resources are limited, it is wise to communicate with international organisations first, as they often obtain and filter information from national or regional associations. Thus valuable information is passed on to your organisation through the international group, which can save resources for all. It is also advisable to focus on general information before obtaining specialised publications or information.

Activity 39

As mentioned in relation to the activity above, it is important to begin with general information and ensure you have a good resource library of introductory and overview publications before developing a more specialised library.