

MANAGING PUBLIC
SECTOR RECORDS

A Training Programme

An Introduction
to The Management of
Public Sector Records
Study Programme



INTERNATIONAL
COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES



INTERNATIONAL RECORDS
MANAGEMENT TRUST

INTRODUCTION TO THE MANAGEMENT
OF PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS STUDY
PROGRAMME

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A STUDY PROGRAMME

General Editor, Michael Roper; Managing Editor, Laura Millar

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MANAGING PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS: A STUDY PROGRAMME

Introduction to the Management of Public Sector Records Study Programme

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Anne Thurston has been working to define international solutions for the management of public sector records for nearly three decades. Between 1970 and 1980 she lived in Kenya, initially conducting research and then as an employee of the Kenya National Archives. She joined the staff of the School of Library, Archive and Information Studies at University College London in 1980, where she developed the MA course in Records and Archives Management (International) and a post-graduate research programme. Between 1984 and 1988 she undertook an onsite survey of record-keeping systems in the Commonwealth. This study led to the foundation of the International Records Management Trust to support the development of records management through technical and capacity-building projects and through research and education projects.

General Editor

Michael Roper has had a wide range of experience in the management of records and archives. He served for thirty-three years in the Public Record Office of the United Kingdom, from which he retired as Keeper of Public Records in 1992. He has also taught on the archives courses at University College London and the University of British Columbia, Canada. From 1988 to 1992 he was Secretary General of the International Council on Archives and since 1996 he has been Honorary Secretary of the Association of Commonwealth Archivists and Records Managers (ACARM). He has undertaken consultancy missions and participated in the delivery of training programmes in many countries and has written extensively on all aspects of records and archives management.

Managing Editor

Laura Millar has worked extensively not only as a records and archives management consultant but also in publishing and distance education, as an editor, production manager and instructional designer. She received her MAS degree in archival studies from the University of British Columbia, Canada, in 1984 and her PhD in archival studies from the University of London in 1996. She has developed and taught archival education courses both in Canada and internationally, including at the University of British Columbia, Simon Fraser University and the University of Alberta. She is the author of a number of books and articles on various aspects of archival management, including *A Manual for Small Archives* (1988), *Archival Gold: Managing and Preserving Publishers' Records* (1989) and *A Handbook for Records Management and College Archives in British Columbia* (1989).

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INTRODUCTION TO THE MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME

The Management of Public Sector Records (MPSR) Study Programme was initiated in 1994 by the International Records Management Trust (IRMT). The programme seeks to define international solutions to the management of both paper and electronic records systems and to develop local mechanisms to implement these solutions. In 1997, it became a joint enterprise between the IRMT and the International Council on Archives (ICA).

The MPSR study modules are intended to address the needs of people who may not have access to training and education in records and archives management or who have limited access to publications, conferences, professional programmes or other educational opportunities. The goal has been to raise the standard of records and archives education and thus to improve the care of those information resources that comprise essential evidence of public accountability and that help society preserve its documentary heritage.

The Project's objectives include

- the development of an integrated series of educational modules on records and archives management, which may be used for self-study, as part of a distance education programme or as resource tools for face-to-face or workshop teaching
- the development of associated training tools, including case studies, manuals and resource kits for educators, to enhance the potential use of the modules
- the production of documentary and instructional video films illustrating issues of relevance to information and records management
- the delivery of seminars to raise awareness among archivists, senior managers and decision makers about the role of information and records to support accountability, transparency and efficiency in government, protect the rights and entitlements of citizens and enhance society's cultural memory.

THE NEED FOR SPECIALISED TRAINING IN RECORD KEEPING

In developing the MPSR Study Programme, the aim has been to draw on global best practice but to adapt it to the realities of countries that have limited resources to invest in records management systems. The modules have been developed with extensive international input, initially to address the concerns of records and archives personnel in English-language countries, particularly Commonwealth countries that have emerged from or adopted an English common law model of governmental and judicial administration.

However, it is recognised that a clear understanding of record-keeping concepts, needs and problems is vital in all parts of the world; therefore, work has already begun on the task of adapting the materials to optimise use in other linguistic and cultural environments. Emphasis is being placed on translation and adaptation to meet the requirements of French- and Spanish-speaking countries as a first stage of this process.

The MPSR Study Programme has evolved to address specific issues such as

- the relationship between poor or collapsed record-keeping systems and political instability, economic decline, environmental degradation, poverty, human rights violations and threats of graft and corruption
- the absence of internationally accepted educational programmes in records and archives management
- the lack of adequate training materials and educational infrastructures for records and archives management in many countries of the world.

NATURE OF THE MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME

The organisers of the MPSR Study Programme recognised from the outset that no one learning approach will suit all the countries that require training and education in the field of records and archives management. Therefore, rather than develop a complex educational programme that might not be sustainable internationally, it was decided to create a 'building block' programme.

The modules endorse the model of an 'integrated records and archives management programme.' Such a programme advocates planning and managing a continuum of care that ensures that records are created efficiently, used effectively and protected for both organisational and cultural purposes. The modules cover the most important principles of records and archives management so that users may establish a clear understanding of the spectrum of records issues. They then guide users to other

valuable information, including references to books, journals, magazines and other educational and professional resources. The inclusion of diverse references allows users to move more easily beyond the modules to seek out and use supplementary information suitable to their own situation.

The modules are designed to be flexible, so that they may be used for self-study, in distance education, in short courses or workshops or in more extensive educational programmes. The actual application and adaptation of the modules will be determined at the national or regional level, taking into account existing educational opportunities and the professional needs of the records and archives community. The MPSR Study Programme team has worked extensively with educational institutions and professionals around the world to encourage the adoption and adaptation of the educational programme to regional and local needs. The modules offer the groundwork upon which educators can develop new courses and enhance existing programmes.

AUDIENCE FOR THE MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME

The primary client for the MPSR Study Programme's educational tools – the modules, case studies, manuals and associated training materials – is the record-keeping specialist, particularly but not exclusively the records manager or archivist working in the public sector. The materials are especially useful in helping to raise the level of expertise and competence amongst working professionals who may not have the opportunity to leave their positions for extended periods of study. Many elements in the study programme are also designed to be of value to officials and senior managers in central and local government who need to understand the critical role record keeping plays in assuring the quality of their operations. While the modules address many public sector record-keeping issues, they should also be useful for record keepers in the private sector.

USES OF THE MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME

SELF-STUDY

At its simplest, the MPSR Training Programme serves as a self-study programme for anyone interested in learning about records and archives management. The modules are organised to allow review and self-assessment by students. Each module includes a section on 'Method of Study and Assessment', indicating the number of lessons in

the module and the estimated amount of time the student should plan to spend on each.

Each module also includes a description of aims and outcomes. This section indicates what the module sets out to teach (the aims) and what the student should expect to learn (the outcomes). Students are advised to review these aims and outcomes before beginning and after completing the module, to ensure they are achieving the learning objectives.

Also included in the modules are self-assessed activities that allow the student to examine the ideas in the module in light of the realities of their own organisations. Suggested answers to the activities or tips for the student are included at the end of each lesson. A series of study questions help the student focus on key issues in each lesson and serve as valuable tools for ensuring the information in the lesson has been understood.

If students are following this programme without formal supervision, they may benefit from identifying a mentor within their organisation: someone who can answer questions, discuss study questions and help determine schedules and deadlines for completing modules.

DISTANCE EDUCATION

The training modules are ideally to be used within a formalised and accredited distance education programme, offered through a university, college, institute or other educational agency. To be used as a distance education programme, the modules would be supplemented with such local materials as examinations, assignments and regionally based case studies, videos or audiotapes.

Registration, marking and supervision systems would be required to ensure the viability of such a programme at a regional or national level. The developers of this study programme encourage educational institutions around the world to consider using these modules as part of a formalised distance education initiative.

FACE-TO-FACE INSTRUCTION

The modules may also be adapted to face-to-face instruction, either as part of a regular university or college course, or through short seminars or training sessions, such as those offered by professional associations. The modules may also be used for in-house training within archival institutions or government or corporate offices.

REFERENCE TOOLS

The modules and related resources will also be useful reference tools, particularly for institutions with established archives or records training programmes, which can use the materials to supplement existing readings and activities.

MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME MATERIALS

The MPSR Study Programme includes eighteen self-study modules on records and archives issues, organised to address core, advanced and specialist topics. Each of the modules follows the same structure and format, with text; figures, charts and graphs; self-assessed activities; self-study questions; and summaries. In each module, the main text is divided into lessons, based on a logical division of subjects or issues.

In addition to the modules, there are seven associated training manuals, a series of 34 case studies, a glossary of terms, a guide to additional sources of information on records and archives issues and a resource tool for educators. The components of the MPSR Study Programme are listed below, followed by a brief description of each of the modules.

MODULES

The Management of Public Sector Records: Principles and Context
Organising and Controlling Current Records
Building Records Appraisal Systems
Managing Records in Records Centres
Managing Archives
Preserving Records
Emergency Planning for Records and Archives Services
Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services
Managing Resources for Records and Archives Services
Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services
Analysing Business Systems
Understanding Computers: An Overview for Records and Archives Staff
Automating Records Services
Managing Electronic Records
Managing Financial Records
Managing Hospital Records
Managing Legal Records
Managing Personnel Records

MANUALS

Managing Current Records: A Procedures Manual
Restructuring Current Records Systems: A Procedures Manual
Managing Records Centres: A Procedures Manual
Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual
Planning for Emergencies: A Procedures Manual
A Model Records and Archives Law
A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class

CASE STUDIES

The Management of Public Sector Records: Case Studies (3 volumes)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE TOOLS

Introduction to the MPSR Study Programme
Glossary of Terms
Additional Resources
Writing Case Studies: A Manual
Resources for Educators

MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS: PRINCIPLES AND CONTEXT

This overview module introduces key concepts and principles involved in effective record keeping. It provides a basic overview for the entire MPSR Study Programme, outlining the main concepts discussed in subsequent modules. The module also examines important principles, such as the life cycle and continuum concepts, and guides users to more extensive literature in those areas.

In particular, this module considers the following topics:

- the nature of records
- key terminology, principles and concepts in records and archives management
- the importance of managing recorded information as a strategic resource
- key record-keeping functions
- the requirements for developing and maintaining an integrated records management programme
- the actions required to restructure existing systems
- the means of sustaining an integrated records management programme.

ORGANISING AND CONTROLLING CURRENT RECORDS

Organising and Controlling Current Records discusses the care of records created as part of the current business activities of government offices or registries. It addresses the reality of developing and managing effective record-keeping systems, particularly in organisations based on an English tradition. It offers best practice solutions to such issues as creating, identifying, classifying, storing and retrieving records in centralised or decentralised regimes.

The module discusses

- developing a record-keeping programme within the organisation
- developing intellectual and physical controls for records
- creating, capturing and identifying records
- handling, processing, maintaining, moving and storing records
- developing and managing systems to regulate and administer access to and use of records.

BUILDING RECORDS APPRAISAL SYSTEMS

This module outlines the principles and practices involved with records appraisal: that is, the process of identifying those records with enduring value to be kept as archives, and those records that may be destroyed once business and statutory requirements are satisfied. Recognising that appraisal processes comprise one of the most complex aspects of record keeping, the module explains the nature of appraisal and discusses major appraisal theories. It then presents practical appraisal models,

which users of the module can consider in relation to the theories and principles presented.

Building Records Appraisal Systems includes discussion of

- understanding records appraisal and key appraisal theories and strategies
- managing appraisal processes and activities
- determining appraisal criteria
- developing and managing records retention and disposal schedules
- disposing of records.

MANAGING RECORDS IN RECORDS CENTRES

This module explores the role of record centres in providing effective, offsite management for records no longer needed regularly for the conduct of current business but that must be retained temporarily until all legal or administrative requirements for retention are satisfied. The module focuses on the key capacities and services provided by a records centre and on ways to optimise its management as a low-cost, high-service facility.

Specific topics include

- understanding the characteristics of a functional records centre
- developing an administrative structure for semi-current records management
- determining resource requirements
- evaluating quality and productivity of record centre services and operations.

MANAGING ARCHIVES

This module discusses the care of archives: those records that have been identified as having enduring value and thus must be protected within an archival environment. It examines the role of archives in society, the importance of developing appropriate policies and procedures and the legal responsibilities of archival regimes, particularly those serving the public sector.

Offering both theoretical analysis and best practice examples, *Managing Archives* considers the principles and practices involved with

- administering the archives repository
- developing and maintaining an accessions system
- arranging and describing archives
- providing reference services
- developing outreach programmes.

PRESERVING RECORDS

This module examines the steps required to ensure that records and archives are physically protected. Recognising that the level of care provided for records varies depending on their continuing utility and enduring value, the module considers the principles of preservation and their application across the records continuum. In particular, it addresses the management concerns involved with developing a preservation programme.

Preserving Records examines

- the causes of deterioration and damage in records
- the requirements for security and adequate protection of records and archives
- preservation issues related to specific media
- the components of a comprehensive records preservation programme.

EMERGENCY PLANNING FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

This module outlines the steps involved in establishing and maintaining emergency planning programmes and protecting vital records. No organisation is totally immune from emergencies or disasters, either from natural causes or human action. In order to protect themselves and their assets, including records and archives, many organisations develop emergency plans. This module examines the process of developing an emergency plan to protect people and property and ensure that, in the event of an emergency, action is taken immediately to reduce the damage incurred and institute recovery procedures. Because not all records can be protected equally in an emergency, this module also examines the task of identifying vital records – those records essential to the organisation’s business – and ensuring those records are protected first.

The module discusses

- identifying risks to records and archives
- preparing an emergency plan
- identifying and protecting vital records.

DEVELOPING INFRASTRUCTURES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

The core modules of the MPSR Study Programme describe the professional concepts and activities involved in managing records to fulfil the business, regulatory and cultural responsibilities of government. This module concentrates on equipping managers with the additional knowledge and skills needed to establish and maintain the legal, regulatory and operational framework necessary to provide essential record-keeping services.

Developing Infrastructures for Records and Archives Services discusses

- the need for comprehensive and robust systems to manage public sector records in order to maximise government service quality and delivery, ensure client satisfaction and protect citizens' rights, as well as to ensure accountability and transparency within the organisation
- the importance of examining the legal, regulatory and organisational context within which the organisation operates, particularly with regard to records care
- the task of examining staffing structures and ensuring they are adequate to fulfil central records and archives management tasks.

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

This module discusses the knowledge and skills needed by managers to plan and maintain the organisation's records and archives services. In particular, it focuses on techniques and principles involved with strategic management and organisational change.

Strategic Planning for Records and Archives Services examines

- concepts and techniques for planning, particularly strategic thinking and planning
- the process of planning and establishing an integrated records and archives management programme
- the role of project management in record keeping
- the importance of promoting records and archives services within the government or organisation
- concepts and techniques for the evaluation of management systems.

MANAGING RESOURCES FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES SERVICES

Effective resource management is the backbone of an effective record-keeping system. This module discusses the design and management of resource management programmes, particularly for the public sector. It focuses on equipping managers with the additional knowledge and skills needed to identify, secure and deploy the resources necessary for success.

Topics discussed include

- managing human resources, including obtaining staff and developing their skills and abilities
- managing financial resources
- managing physical resources.

ANALYSING BUSINESS SYSTEMS

Business systems analysis is fast becoming a critical component of effective records management; this module introduces key concepts, theories, tools and practices of business systems analysis. The information provided is applicable in both the public and private sector. *Analysing Business Systems* also examines the steps involved with analysing organisational practices and restructuring them to improve efficiency and accountability.

In particular, the module outlines

- the methodology and techniques of business systems analysis
- business system management tools and activities
- the application of business systems analysis to record-keeping work.

UNDERSTANDING COMPUTERS: AN OVERVIEW FOR RECORDS AND ARCHIVES STAFF

The people using the MPSR Study Programme will inevitably have different experiences with automation in their organisations. Some may be highly familiar with computerisation; others may not have the opportunity to access and use computer technologies. This introductory module aims to familiarise users with some of the basic concepts of using computers. In particular, it seeks to help people understand the two other computer-related modules in this programme: *Automating Records Services* and *Managing Electronic Records*.

This overview module explains

- the components of a computer system
- how computers work
- the different storage media that are commonly associated with a computer
- ways in which computers support organisational and business activities.

AUTOMATING RECORDS SERVICES

This module considers the role computers and information technologies play in the management of information and record-keeping systems. Many offices, registries and archival institutions are computerising their administrative systems by automating such functions as record creation, file management and retrieval, accessioning, description and so on. This module addresses possible computer applications, first introducing important principles and practices involved with automation.

Automating Records Services discusses

- using computers for recorded information systems management
- considering key information technology applications to enhance record-keeping effectiveness
- identifying the decisions and steps involved with developing an automation plan

- choosing or developing appropriate software and hardware
- evaluating the effectiveness of automated systems
- automating or upgrading records and archives functions.

MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

This module examines the management of records and archives created using digital technologies. Recognising that the management of electronic records is a complex and rapidly changing subject, this module focuses on core principles and best practices and then directs users to the extensive and growing body of literature emerging around the world on more advanced electronic records issues.

Managing Electronic Records outlines:

- basic concepts of electronic record keeping
- the nature of an electronic records programme
- issues involved with creating, using and preserving electronic records
- management and programme-level issues involved with the care of electronic records.

MANAGING FINANCIAL RECORDS

This module outlines the concepts, processes and tools used to achieve effective management of the organisation's financial records. It does not repeat information about core records management practices addressed in other modules. Rather, it focuses on the specific issues related to key records generated by fiscal activity.

Key issues covered include

- identifying stakeholders in the financial management process
- analysing financial management functions, processes and outcomes
- analysing financial management information systems and records
- the concept of an integrated financial management system.

MANAGING HOSPITAL RECORDS

This module focuses on the specifics of managing the administrative and patient case files generated in a hospital environment. Particular topics addressed are

- understanding the nature and value of hospital records
- developing a programme for the management of hospital records
- managing administrative records and case files in hospitals
- understanding information technology applications and issues for hospital record keeping.

MANAGING LEGAL RECORDS

This module considers developing a system for the effective management of legal and judicial records. The module examines the specific issues related to legal and judicial records care. It discusses

- keeping records in a legal environment
- developing a legal/judicial records management programme
- managing court, police and prosecution records
- considering information technology applications and issues for legal record keeping.

MANAGING PERSONNEL RECORDS

This module discusses the management of personnel records from creation to disposition. It examines

- understanding personnel management business processes and records
- identifying stakeholders in the personnel management process
- managing personnel records in a manual form
- managing personnel records in a mixed paper/electronic environment.

OTHER ELEMENTS IN THE MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME

MANUALS

Accompanying the MPSR Study Programme modules are a series of best practice and training manuals, complete with forms, charts and checklists, designed to demonstrate at least one practical application of the concepts, theories and principles addressed in the modules.

The manuals will be particularly useful for in-house educational programmes in governments, where adaptation of the content of the manuals can serve as part of the educational exercise and result not only in enhanced understanding but also improved systems.

The following specific manuals have been developed:

- Managing Current Records: A Procedures Manual

- Restructuring Current Records Systems: A Procedures Manual
- Managing Records Centres: A Procedures Manual
- Managing Archives: A Procedures Manual
- Planning for Emergencies: A Procedures Manual
- A Model Records and Archives Law
- A Model Scheme of Service for a Records and Archives Class.

CASE STUDIES

The modules in the MPSR Study Programme are supplemented by a series of case studies, intended to illustrate key issues of theory and practice through real-life examples from around the world. A total of 34 case studies have been developed, illustrating situations in such countries as Australia, Canada, Fiji, Ghana, Jamaica, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. The case studies are designed to relate directly to specific modules, so that they may be easily used as supplementary teaching materials.

The case studies address relevant issues, such as

- automating records and archives management systems
- managing electronic records with limited resources
- migrating electronic records from old or obsolete computer systems to current systems
- preparing disaster plans in archives and in office environments
- managing preservation and restoration services in areas with extreme climates
- managing centralised versus decentralised records management
- revising archives legislation to serve accountability and transparency in government
- managing limited resources effectively in both the public and private sector
- managing hospital, personnel and legal case files.

INTRODUCTION TO THE MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC SECTOR RECORDS STUDY PROGRAMME

This document is included with the other MPSR Study Programme materials to provide an overview of the programme and indicate where people may go to obtain more information.

GLOSSARY

The *Glossary* draws upon the work of the Project Group on Terminology of the International Council on Archives (ICA/DAT), which is preparing for publication a completely revised version of Walne, Peter (ed.). *Dictionary of Archival Terminology*. ICA Handbooks Series 7. 2d ed., München, GER: KG Saur Verlag. This glossary also draws on terminology developed by the Information and Documentation Terminology Subcommittee of the International Organization for Standardization (ISO/TC46/SC3), which is revising ISO 5127. This glossary has also taken account of Australian and American terminologies as found in the selected sources identified in the introduction to the *Glossary*.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

This resource tool lists valuable books and journals on all the issues discussed in the modules. It also includes the names and addresses of key associations and groups involved with records and archives management, such as professional associations, international organisations, national archival institutions and regional or national groups. The tool also identifies useful Internet-based information and video productions of interest to records and archives managers.

WRITING CASE STUDIES: A MANUAL

This short manual offers guidance on how to write useful case studies in records and archives management. The manual examines the structure and elements of a case study and the structure and elements of the related teaching notes. It then follows the construction of a sample case study from beginning to end, providing both examples and commentary on the nature of the various elements included. A similar construction is provided for the teaching notes. The manual concludes with a discussion of the importance of evaluating case studies for their continued relevance and suitability.

RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

This resource tool is particularly designed to help instructors determine the most appropriate way to use the various tools in this programme. Instructors may include individuals in educational institutions; they may include representatives of national institutions or organisations who wish to develop educational and training initiatives. The resource tool includes sample exercises and assignments and bibliographic and contact information for valuable educational resources.

VIDEOS

The MPSR Study Programme has been enhanced by the development of a series of video films aimed at creating a greater awareness of records and information issues. The videos highlight the importance of managing records and archives as strategic information resources. They deal with such topics as the importance of efficient records management for citizens' rights, good government, accountability and the management of records in the transition to an era of electronic government. For more information about these videos, contact the International Records Management Trust.

MPSR STUDY PROGRAMME PERSONNEL

Information and records professionals from around the world have contributed to the development of the Management of Public Sector Records Study Programme. Each of the authors and contributors is identified in the particular modules to which he or she has contributed. Participants in the programme include internationally recognised archival educators, records management consultants, former and current national archivists and specialists in specific aspects of records care such as business systems analysis, emergency planning, financial records management and electronic records management.

OUTCOMES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

It is hoped that students will derive many benefits from completing the MPSR Study Programme. The outcomes of their studies will range from an improved understanding of records and archive management issues to an increased professional status within their own organisation.

However, in addition to the personal achievements derived by students, there are wider outcomes beneficial to the organisation and the community as a whole. These include

- a greater understanding of records and archives management by records professionals
- improved records and archives management systems within government
- greater accountability within government
- the integration of information systems throughout government
- an increased professional profile for records managers and archivists.

It is hoped that, ultimately, the implementation of the MPSR Study Programme in countries around the world will lead to the growth and advancement of the records management profession and, consequently, the improved care of records, both public and private, world wide.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

The products and training materials of the MPSR Study Programme – the modules, case studies, manuals, videos and associated resources – are available from the International Records Management Trust. For more information on the MPSR Study Programme, contact

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