

PROJECT INITIATION DOCUMENT

Project name *Appraisal, Selection and Freedom of Information (FOI) project*

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Author: Project Manager

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Document History

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9.5.05		Draft to update schedule and deliverables	
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Approvals This document requires the following approvals.
Signed approval forms are filed in the project files.

Name	Signature	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Project Manager				
Senior Responsible Owner (SRO)		Director of Government and Technology		

Distribution This document has been distributed to:

Name	Title	Date of Issue	Version
Programme Board			
Project (sub-group) team			

Purpose

To define the project, to form the basis for its management and the assessment of overall success.

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Background

1. A process to select digital records which are deemed worthy of long-term preservation for research and governmental purposes is a necessary precursor to processes which allow the transfer of such records. This is because:
 - The National Archives (TNA) needs to maintain a digital archive whose contents may be readily searched: the greater the quantity of records, and the greater proportion of those records of limited or tangential research or business value, the harder the initial research sift will be;
 - The continued maintenance of records in a form of use to TNA's users is not cost-free and should therefore be targeted as far as possible on records of known archival, historical and research value or of long-term business value to government.
 - The process of appraisal and selection creates information essential to the process of archival description.
 2. The Appraisal sub-group speedily took the view that appraisal itself cannot be automated but sets of procedures and rules can be devised for different types of digital records to enable the implementation of such decisions to be automated.
 3. This is a work stream within the Seamless Flow Programme.
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Project Definition

Project objectives

1. To manage a programme to develop procedures and selection criteria to guide the appraisal of digital records. These will contribute to enabling the automatic transfer of selected records to TNA. This will involve close liaison with government departments and involvement in departmental retention scheduling for records within an EDRMS.
2. To develop methods for departmental records staff to consider whether public access to the records identified for transfer to TNA using these procedures is limited under the Freedom of Information and the Data Protection Acts.

Defined method of approach

The methods adopted are to be in accordance with the principles established in published TNA policies, and especially the Appraisal, Acquisition and Disposition Policies and their supporting documentation. Because TNA is embarking on a modified approach to appraisal across records in all formats the development of procedures and rule-driven Operational Selection Policy (OSP) is part of a collective development within the client manager unit to develop procedures and selection criteria in keeping with the new policies.

Project scope

1. To develop procedures for types of digital records – those emanating from managed environments, from unmanaged environments, and datasets.
2. To make suggestions to the client manager unit on a programme to develop rule-driven selection criteria for types of records and types of government departments. This will be a longer-term project implemented through new-style Operational Selection Policies which will supplement and support the procedures described above;
3. To specify how selection decisions are to be recorded;
4. To identify key processes and rules for a product which enables the transfer process to harvest records that have been selected and verify that the correct selection has in fact been carried out;
5. To provide guidelines for departmental records staff to consider whether access to the records identified for transfer to TNA is limited under the Freedom of Information and the Data Protection Acts.

Project deliverables

1. A statement of principles which define the likely or proposed composition of the digital archive in terms of the following aspects:
 - Whether TNA will replicate what the business user saw and used or whether we will be capturing the ‘essentials’ of the records – the content, context and structure
 - How far and in what circumstances appraisal decisions will be modified by technical considerations relating to preservation of types of digital formats.
 - The likely impact of macro-appraisal techniques on the content of the archive. At first glance we can predict that some common government functions will be documented more centrally and with less granularity, while others may contain more detail than a researcher can utilise; there should be more consistent capture of key decisions and of key datasets.
2. A set of processes and rules for a product, which enables the transfer process to harvest what has been selected for the archive and which can verify that the correct items have been harvested.
3. Sets of procedures for appraising digital records. These procedures will be differentiated by type of department. The idea is to produce suites of procedures for (a) central policy-making departments and (b) agencies, Non Departmental Public Bodies etc. Within each suite there will be procedures to cover different types of electronic records according to the way they have been organised and managed, namely:
 - 3.1 Procedures and checklists to appraise Business Classification Schemes (BCS) and disposal schedules created to manage documents and folders in digital systems. This breaks down into a number of possible scenarios:
 - records born into an electronic records management system (ERMS) developed taking cognisance of appraisal and disposal;
 - records born into an ERMS developed taking no cognisance of appraisal and disposal;
 - records born into an environment where a BCS and disposal schedules exist but outside a standard ERM system.
 - 3.2 Procedures and checklists to appraise ‘databases’ for archival purposes. See Appendix 1 for a definition of the sort of material being referred to.

NB Some of this work is being developed in Inspection and Client Management Unit (ICMU) through a series of training sessions. It is crucial because (a) it will constitute the largest category of records in the next couple of years and (b) if proper disposal metadata is attached to records in managed systems, transfer will be automatic.

A procedure exists (see

http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/selection/pdf/additional_procedures.pdf)

to assess the archival value of case files and datasets combining an understanding of cross-departmental functions to identify those datasets of potential archival value, and an assessment of actual archival value on the basis of research use. This procedure could be developed but the implementation would be automated more easily if TNA abandons any attempt at sampling for databases.

NB This is the second largest group of records that TNA is likely to consider of archival value

3.3 Procedures and checklists to appraise records from an unmanaged digital environment. This is the hardest challenge, but may represent that smallest group of digital records likely to be of archival value because policy development may have been captured through ‘print to paper policies’ while databases can be handled separately;

4. Complementing procedures will be the development of rule-driven, generic selection criteria in the form of OSPs which will cover broad types of records such as those produced by groups of organisations likely to have similar types of records (e.g. research councils, museums, regulatory bodies) or those which are produced across government in all bodies (e.g. scientific research projects, inspection reports). While these OSPs will complement the procedures developed as part of Seamless Flow, they represent the most intellectually demanding element of appraisal and will continue to be part of the work of the Client Manager Unit.

5. Complementing procedures and OSPs and undertaken as a preliminary stage in the development of procedures will be a map of government organisations based around their statutory remits. The purpose of this exercise is:

- to enable TNA to benchmark agencies on the basis of the likely archival importance of their records;
- to enable TNA to see where OSPs relating to many agencies with comparable functions would be most valuable;
- To enable TNA to identify areas of overlap – this may be between the work of an agency and its sponsoring department (e.g. the relationship between CAA and DfT) or between related agencies (e.g. Inland Revenue and HMT).

6. Advice to departments on how to structure their BCS to take account of appraisal. The process of developing procedures and operational selection policies will gradually create a set of instructions for departments on how to organise areas of their BCS so that records for permanent preservation may be automatically transferred.

7. Advice to departments on how to apply tests for FOI exemptions to records selected for permanent preservation.

8. Guidance on procedures for appraising hybrid records, where the records of some activities are held partly in paper and partly in electronic folders.

Exclusions It excludes all records held in paper format only.

Constraints The project is constrained by the newness of the macro-appraisal approach and by the fact that we need to develop the approach in an agreed and collegiate manner. In addition we need to carry our stakeholders (researchers and departmental records staff) with us in terms of understanding and acceptance of the processes and procedures and the impact of these on their work.

Interfaces

- Transfer to TNA Process project
- Cataloguing, archival description project
- Custodial policy from semi-current records project
- Management and security project
- Freedom of Information Act
- National Digital Archive of Datasets

Assumptions

There are no assumptions being made in relation to producing the products identified in terms of the need to think in a different way from that used for paper.

There are assumptions about resources (a) that there will be no extra client manager time, but (b) that the project manager will be spending most of her time on the project.

Project Organisation Structure

The project is managed by a sub-group as a work stream within the Seamless Flow Programme. Its work will effectively be monitored by a TNA Management Board sub-group on Records Selection and Appraisal. This has representation from a number of TNA departments, together with two academic historians, a representative from the Society of Archivists and a representative from government departments. It will also report up to the Seamless Flow Programme Board via the Programme Manager.

The project will work closely with the e-training programme for client managers.

Communication Plan

The products listed above will be communicated to and agreed by a variety of organizations and groups depending on the nature and detail of each. The possible groups include: the Project Board, the Programme Board, other Project Boards, TNA Management Board Records Selection and Appraisal sub-group, Departmental Records Officer Appraisal working group, Client Manager Unit, Records Management Department Records Review Panel, Records Management Advisory Group, and general public consultation through posting draft statements on the website.

Project Quality Plan

The project quality plan defines the quality techniques and standards to be applied to the work and the various responsibilities for achieving the required quality levels.

The project manager is responsible for ensuring the quality of the products produced.

All products will undergo formal review by peer review groups and formal sign-off.

Configuration management will be managed through use of the electronic records document management system (ERDMS) Objective.

All project documentation will reside at: Selection and Disposal – Projects - Seamless Flow.

A formal process for managing change will be identified so that interaction between projects can be monitored appropriately.

All changes will be raised as Request for Change (RFCs), reviewed by the originating project team and board where this exists. This will then be passed to the Programme Manager to assess for cross project impact and to take to the Programme Board for acceptance as necessary.

Project tolerances

This project (work stream) has no direct capital costs.

All products to be produced within a tolerance of 1 month

Project controls

Project will be managed using PRINCE2 project methodology

This project will not have a formal project board. It is deemed a work stream and will report directly to the Programme Board.

The project manager will hold checkpoint meetings with project team every three months.

A formal highlight report on progress will be produced for the Programme Manager each month.

The project manager will attend weekly meetings with the Programme Manager to report on progress to date, targets for next period, status of issues and risks.

Attachments

Initial Business Case – refer to Programme documentation

Initial Project Plan – see separate project plan

Initial Risk Log – refer to Programme documentation. This project will not have a separate risk or issues log

INITIAL PROJECT PLAN

Project deliverable	Task ID (Programme charts)	Task name	Person responsible	Start	Finish
	2.	Produce Project Initiation Document (PID)	PM	2/2/05	21/2/05
		Revise PID	PM		9/5/05
1	6	Approval of macro-appraisal paper			15/3/05
	7	Consultation with Custodial Policy	PM		30/6/05
	8	Reworking of statement of principles	PM		30/9/05
2.	11	Develop transfer process requirements	PM		30/6/05
	12	Present agreed transfer process requirements to Programme Board	PM		September 2005
3.	13 - 15	Develop appraisal procedures to point where first draft ready for discussion	PM/ ICMU	1/1/05	31/10/05
	16	Review procedures	PM/ICMU/ DROs	1/11/05	31/1/06
	17	Procedures ready for use	PM		31/3/06
	18	Develop template to record decisions and make ready for use	PM / ICMU / DROs	1/1/05	31/3/06
4.	19	Produce OSPs 1-6 (BP targets as pre usual ICMU processes)	ICMU	1/4/05	31/3/06
	20	Provide methodology for new-style OSPs	PM	10/5/05	31/5/05
5.	?	Map of government organisations based around their statutory	PM	10/5/05	30/6/06

		remits.			
6	23-25	Produce guidance for OGDs on best practice for the structuring of the business classification schemes	PM / ICMU	1/1/06	30/6/06
7	26	Advice to departments on how to apply tests for FOI exemptions to records selected for permanent preservation.		1/9/05	31/3/06
	27	1 st draft ready			31/12/05
	28	Internal review		1/1/06	28/2/06
	29	Guidance ready for use			31/3/06
8.		Prepare guidance for the appraisal of hybrid records	PM to co-ordinate	1/4/06	31/3/07

Main initial risks

Risk	Impact on programme	Likelihood	Risk	Mitigating action
Procedures will not be completed in time to allow the development of work in other projects	5	?	medium	Depends on timings agreed for programme as a whole. Review resource commitment to this element
The proposed new shape of the archive will encounter opposition from stakeholder groups	4	2	8	Ensure adequate consultation
OSPs will not be completed to enable the procedures to be applied smoothly	4	5	20	Review resource commitment to this element
FOI considerations will render the procedures unworkable	5	2	10	Ensure adequate consultation with departmental advisory bodies

Stakeholders

TNA researchers (Impact of Macro-appraisal statement, procedures and OSPs)

Other Government Departments (Impact of Macro-appraisal statement, procedures and OSPs)
