

# Digital transfer step 4:

## Data transfer

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## 1. Introduction

This document forms part of a suite of guidance for staff in government departments intending to transfer digital records for permanent preservation to The National Archives.

The overview of this process is available in the [Digital Transfer Road Map](#)<sup>1</sup>.

This guidance describes the Data Transfer (Step 4 of the Road Map) and what you will need to do to ensure that your records are transferred securely, completely and correctly into The National Archives.

## 2. Purpose of Data Transfer Guidance

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure the transfer is completed in a managed, documented way that is cost-effective, efficient and maintains the security and authenticity of the record. Transferring the records in accordance with this guidance provides a clear, documented and transparent process, and following it will help us demonstrate the authenticity of the transferred records.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at [nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/digital-transfer-guidance.pdf](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/digital-transfer-guidance.pdf)

### 3. Requirements for Data Transfer

Before sending records and the final version of the metadata to The National Archives, ensure that:

- You have removed all the duplicate files from your system (including removing any digital files that will be transferred in their original paper format)
- You remove any and empty temporary (.tmp) files from your system
- You can open all the files and view them fully without entering a password or supplying a cryptographic key. If your files are password protected or encrypted you will need to remove this before transfer
- You have scanned the files for viruses and they are not infected
- You have sent and received acceptance of at least a sample of the metadata from The National Archives

### 4. Methods of Transfer

The specific method of transfer should be discussed and agreed at the Technical Assessment<sup>2</sup> meeting early on, once an estimate of the volume of data involved has been established. We will test the sample metadata and upload it into our Digital Repository System (DRS). Once we have successfully uploaded the sample metadata into our system, and all parties are confident that the sample is accurately displayed, we will ask you to send us the complete accession.

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<sup>2</sup> Described in Digital Transfers: Guidance for government departments: Step 3 - Technical assessment  
[nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/digital-transfer-step-3-technical-assessment.pdf](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/digital-transfer-step-3-technical-assessment.pdf)

The complete accession will comprise all of the selected digital records and the associated metadata. The accession can be transferred in a number of ways, depending on your access to the Government Secure intranet (GSI) and your IT environment, and we will advise you on the best way to do this.

The way that the data is transferred must be agreed beforehand with The National Archives.

#### **4.1 Using the GSI**

If you are on the GSI, you can package your data using our Packaging Utility which we can supply. This packaging process is required to ensure that The National Archives can relate the metadata and the files in a way consistent with how they were kept at the government department.

This software is part of our Digital Repository System and is within scope of our Corporate GSI System. As such it is covered by the latter's accreditation for use up to Impact Level 3, for confidentiality, integrity and availability. If your IT is outsourced you may need to speak to your supplier to arrange for the installation of the software. The Packaging Utility can be installed on a standalone PC or server (not necessarily on your general network). It will need to access the records wherever they are stored (for example the PC with the Packaging Utility could have the files on it or have direct access via a shared drive to the area where the files are held).

#### **4.2 Using Removable Media**

If you are not on the GSI, you can copy your encrypted files to DVD(s), which The National Archives will provide, or to a memory stick (sending us the key to decrypt the data separately). The exact method of transfer must be agreed prior to transfer. The removable media must be

sent with a printed copy of the Transfer Form<sup>3</sup> by secure courier to us<sup>4</sup> following Cabinet Office data handling guidelines<sup>5</sup>.

## 5. Next Steps

Once The National Archives has received your records and uploaded them into our Digital Repository System, you will receive a Stage 1 receipt email as proof that we have received the files and metadata.

In some cases this may take a period of weeks depending on the complexity and volume of the accession. If there are any problems we may need to request another export from your system. When the files are in our system, we will put them into quarantine for a period of 30 days while our virus software updates and scans the files for the latest viruses. In addition, we will carry out further checks to ensure all the data and metadata is present and correct.

After this you will receive a Stage 2 receipt email confirming the successful transfer, at which point The National Archives has legal custody of your records and the transfer is complete. You should now destroy your copies of the records. If the records were sent to us on DVD(s) or a memory stick, the media will be securely destroyed. An appropriate receipt can be provided for this if needed.

If you would like to discuss the Data Transfer step further please contact the Digital Transfer Manager or your Information Management Consultant (IMC).

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<sup>3</sup> Transfer form for digital records [nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/transfer-form-digital-records.pdf](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/information-management/transfer-form-digital-records.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Address the package to:

The National Archives, Government Remote Services, Richmond, Surrey, TW9 4DU

<sup>5</sup> [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/final-report.pdf](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/sites/default/files/resources/final-report.pdf)