

Preparation of records: How to prepare



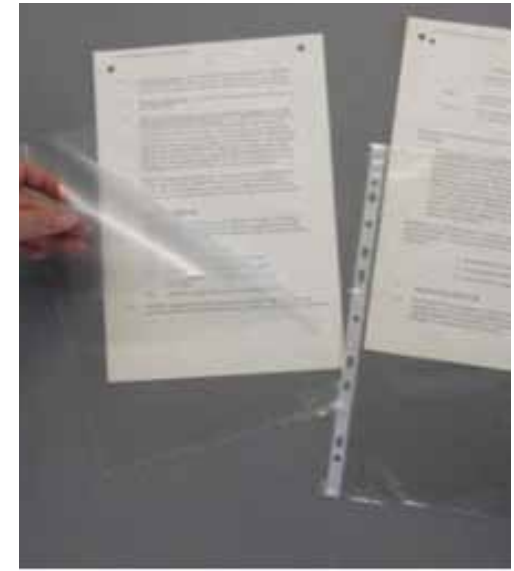
Ensure that any new materials used are approved by The National Archives as archival standard. If you are unsure, please check with The National Archives' Transfer and Metadata team.



Remove any metals from the documents.



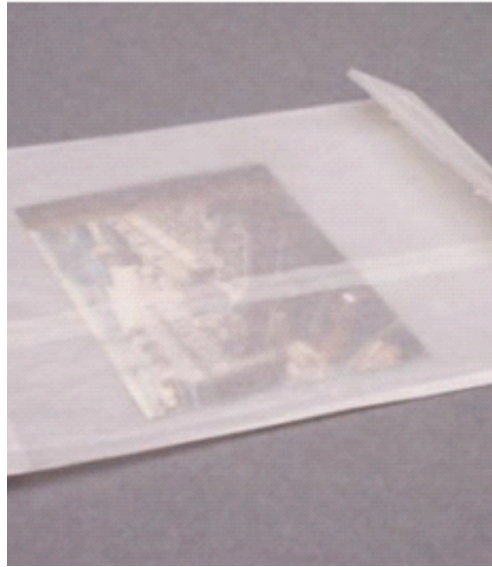
Remove any rubber items such as elastic bands as they will quickly become brittle and possibly stain documents.



Remove any plastic wallets or enclosures as they will not be of archival standard.



Remove metal staples by carefully prizing them open using a pallet knife.



Remove Glassine envelopes and replace with polyester enclosures.



Remove any plastic bindings and covers and tag through the holes already made for these. The plastic cover should only be kept if it is printed with unique information, such as a title that is not repeated on a paper/card cover sheet.



Use nylon treasury tags to replace any metal ones removed or to make new tagged files. **Ensure that the tags are long enough to allow the file to open fully and comfortably.**

Preparation of records: Dummy card and redactions

Extracting a whole piece

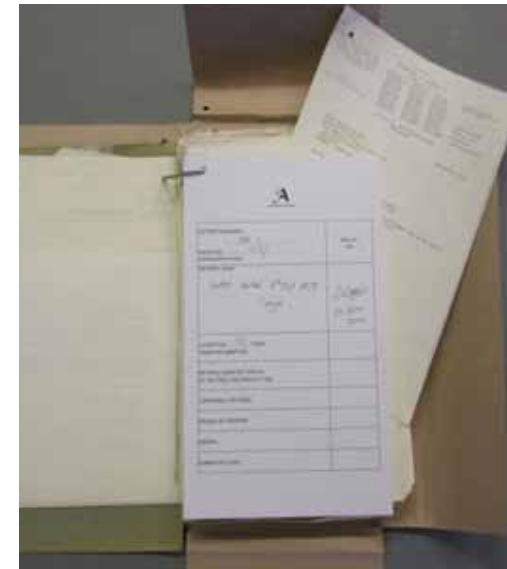


Fill the box then remove the piece and replace with a dummy card indicating why the piece has been extracted. If the piece is missing leave the depth of an average file in the box and insert a dummy card. If a number is not used insert a dummy card but do not leave a space. (The spaces left in the box enable the addition of pieces at a later time).



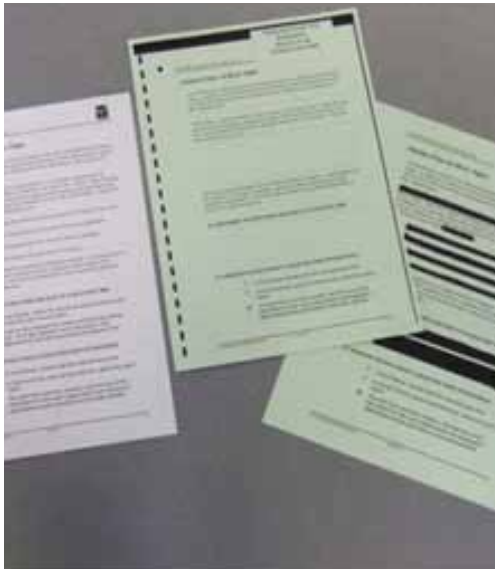
The space in the box can be filled temporarily with corrugated card or paper spacers but use of these materials must be highlighted on the transfer form (these will need to be removed once at The National Archives)

Extracting pages

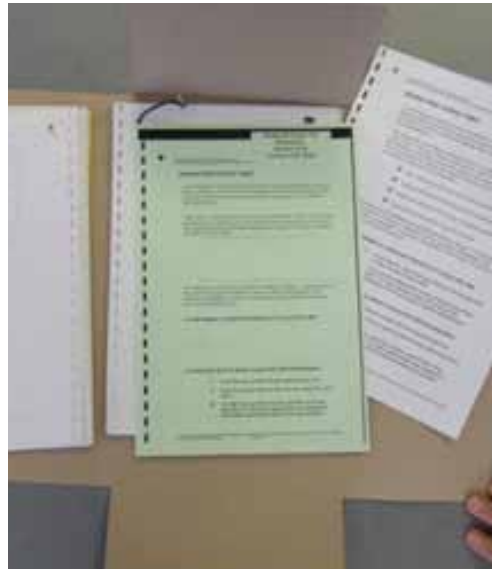


Removal of whole page/pages within a file: replace with a dummy card in each location indicating how many pages and details of the extraction. Number pages being extracted in HB pencil as this will assist with reuniting later.

Extracting information from a page

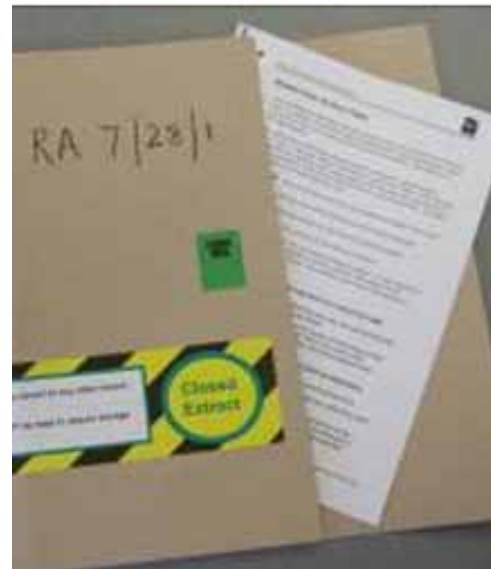


Redacted pages need to be stamped/endorsed with FOI information and closed until date.

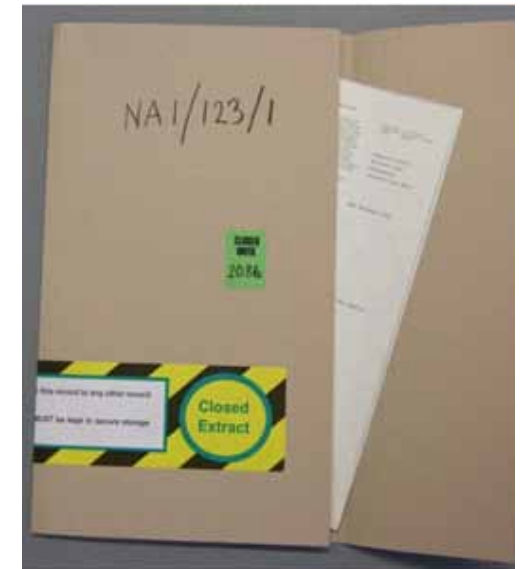


The redacted copy will replace original pages.

Closed extracts

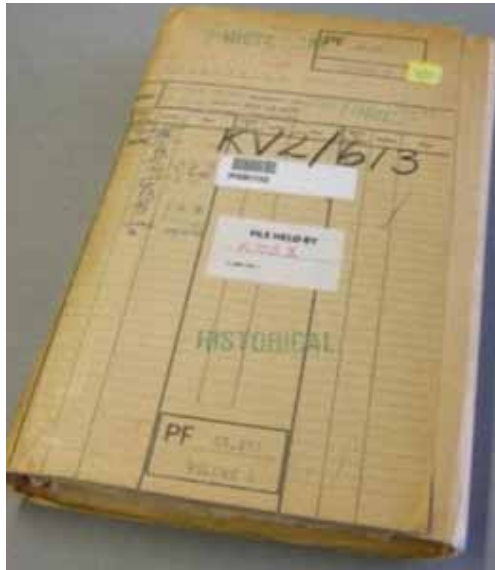


The original unredacted sheets need to be enclosed in a new file cover; this is now an 'item'. A 'closed until' label and 'closed extract label' need to be applied.

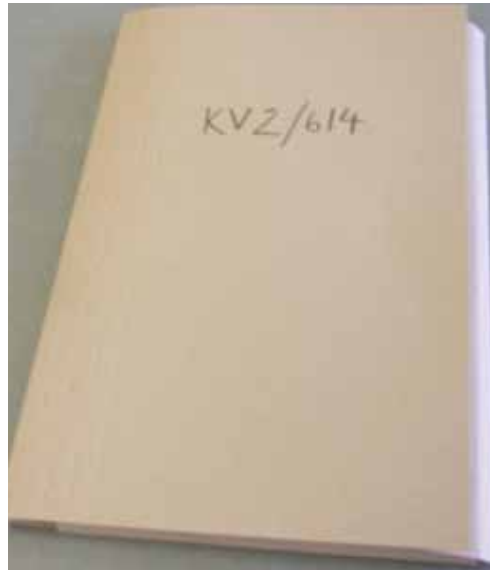


Extracted pages need to be enclosed in a new file cover; this is now an 'item'. A 'closed until' label and 'closed extract label' need to be applied to the cover.

Preparation of records: Standard files



If the original file cover is protecting the pages within, clearly endorse this file cover. Choose the most appropriate space on the file cover so that it can be easily identified.



If the original file is not protecting the pages insert the file, including the original cover, into a four-flap folder and clearly endorse on the front.



Oversized files should be split into smaller parts. Split files that are thicker than 3cm evenly.



This large file has been split into four parts keeping the original file cover with part one.



If the original file cover is protecting the pages within, clearly endorse this file cover. Choose the most appropriate space on the file cover so that it can be easily identified.

The four parts should then be inserted into four-flap folders and clearly endorsed on the front.

Remember to number each part separately, for example:

WO 171/504/1, WO 171/504/2,
WO 171/504/3 and WO 171/504/4

There should be no need to tie cotton tape around individual files.

The List will need to be updated to reflect the new status of the piece, now in four parts:

D	S	Ss	Sss	P	I	First Date	Last Date	Scope/Content	Former Ref
WO				504		01/01/1944	31/12/1944	Information on file	AA 01/02
WO				504	1	01/01/1944	31/12/1944	Part 1 of 4	
WO				504	2	01/01/1944	31/12/1944	Part 2 of 4	
WO				504	3	01/01/1944	31/12/1944	Part 3 of 4	
WO				504	4	01/01/1944	31/12/1944	Part 4 of 4	

Preparation of records: Tagging items into a file

Booklets



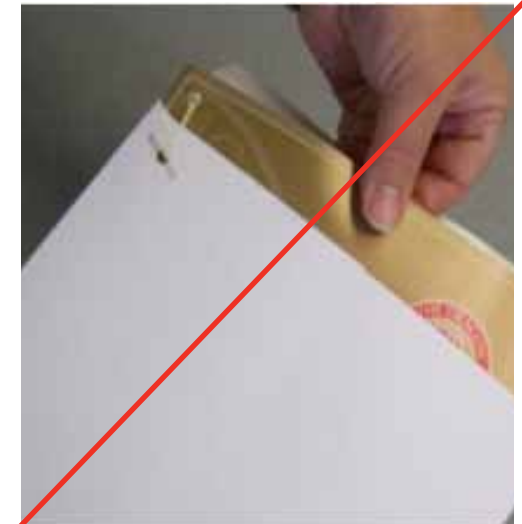
Remove any unsuitable packaging and remove any metal staples binding the booklet.



Tag the booklet to ensure it will stay together in order. Take care to avoid affecting any text on the inside.



Endorse the booklet. Insert the prepared booklet into an acid-free envelope tagged accessibly into the file. Record the contents on the front of the envelope, for example: 'one booklet'.

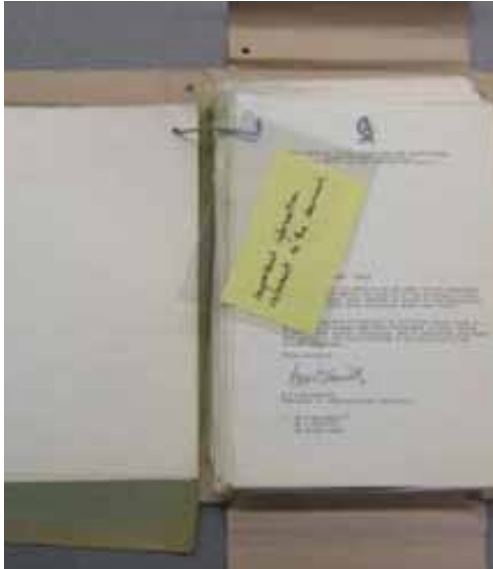


Do not tag the envelope after inserting the booklet. Ensure that the booklet can be easily removed from the envelope without first removing the tag.

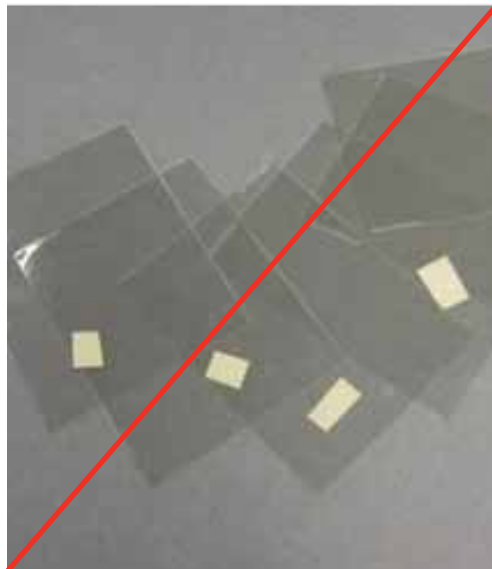
Alternative items that might be tagged into a file in this way:

- Newspaper – cuttings or folded sheets should be photocopied and tagged into the file alongside the original inside an acid-free envelope. Note the contents on the front of the envelope.
- Map and plans – see *Maps and plans* information card.
- Photographs – see *Photographs, negatives and glass plates* information card.
- Thermal paper – should be photocopied and both should be tagged into the file together (Thermal paper is very unstable and the information can quickly fade).

Post-it notes

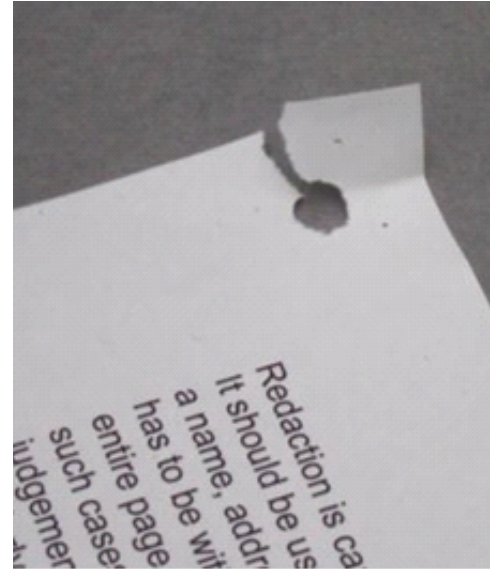


Post-it notes containing pertinent information should be removed from the document surface and tagged next to the relevant page in a polyester enclosure.

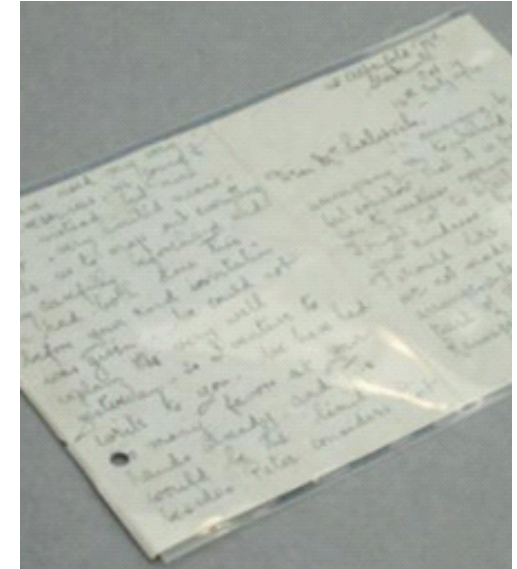


There is no need to keep sticky notes if they do not contain useful information.

Loose pages



Pages that have become loose from their parent document should be placed in a polyester envelope, which is then tagged instead of making a new hole in the loose sheet.



Take care that the polyester sleeve is large enough to accommodate a hole for the tag so as to avoid tagging through the original sheet.

If there are too many loose sheets within a document place the whole piece in an additional four-flap folder and endorse on the front in the usual way. (See *Loose papers* information card for more details.)

If there is any uncertainty please contact your representative from The National Archives.

Preparation of records: Loose papers



Bundles of loose papers, for example in a folder, will need to be tagged to keep the contents together and in order.

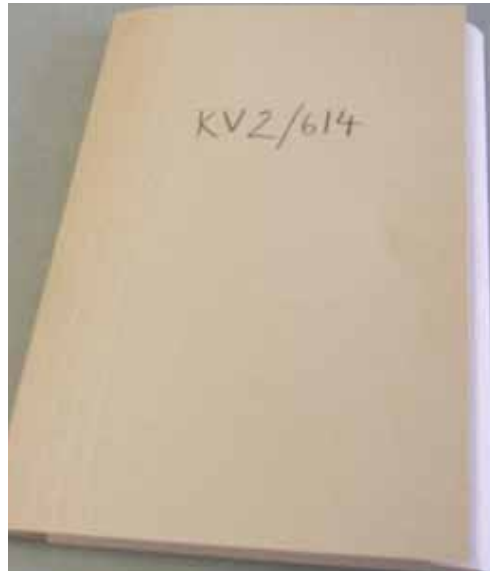


Make the tag hole in the pages and insert a nylon treasury tag of the appropriate length. The file should open comfortably without being restricted, but the tag should be short enough to support the pages.

Tag holes should not be made through information. If there is not enough room to make a tag hole, please insert the loose papers into a four-flap folder and secure with cotton tape. Tag the pages so that the file is even and tidy. The hole should be in the same place throughout the file to avoid uneven pages protruding.



Insert the file into a four-flap file cover. Discard the original folder. If there is important information on the cover it should be carefully cut and tagged with the contents.



This is an example of a correctly packed and labelled document.



Lever arch files and ringbinders are unsuitable for transfer because of their metal components and often bulky nature.



Place the contents in a four-flap folder and tag through the original binder holes. Discard the ring binder. If there is original, unique information on the front of the file cover this should be photocopied before the binder is discarded.

Preparation of records: Maps and plans

Maps should be transferred in the format in which they have been stored previously. Do not flatten rolled maps and do not roll maps that have been stored flat. Each map, rolled or flat, should be treated as an individual piece.

Rolled maps



Rolled maps should be rolled onto the outside of an archival tube. The tubes should not be too thin, so that the maps are not rolled too tightly.



Secure the map with broad linen tape tied in an easy release bow.



Insert the tube, with the map secured on the outside, into a linen bag.



Endorse at the top and bottom. Secure a label, also bearing the appropriate endorsement, at the opening.

Maps in files



Large maps that have been folded should be kept this way. If they are a single piece they should be placed in a four-flap folder which is endorsed on the front. They should also be endorsed twice on the back, on opposite corners, in HB pencil.



Folded maps found in registered files and bound volumes should be kept with their parent files and noted on the transfer form. If tagging into a file, place the map into an acid-free envelope and tag in place. Make sure the map is accessible and endorse the envelope with contents, for example: 'one map enclosed'.

Flat maps



Flat maps will have to be inserted into folders. Contact your representative from The National Archives for advice on size, construction and materials. The National Archives can provide folios to support large flat maps during transfer.

The map should be endorsed twice on the back, on opposite corners, in HB pencil.

Preparation of records: photographs, negatives and glass plates

Photographs, negatives and glass plates should never be handled without gloves.

The repair of photographs should not be undertaken.



Unprotected photographic material should always be handled with gloves.



Photographs should be lightly endorsed with The National Archives' file reference in HB pencil on the reverse before being inserted into polyester enclosures.



Photographic material should be placed in individual polyester enclosures.



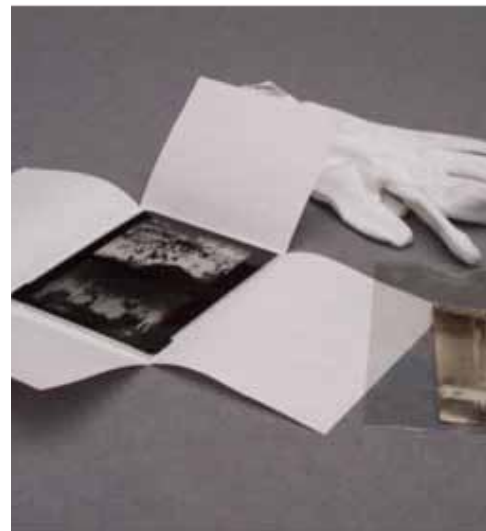
Files that contain photographs that may be of a distressing nature should have a warning sticker placed on the front of the file cover.



A collection of photographs of a distressing nature may be placed in an acid-free envelope carrying a warning label. This envelope may then be tagged into the file as normal, ensuring that the contents may be removed while the tag is in place.

If a file contains photographs of a distressing nature it is important that a warning is provided either on the front of the file (when such pictures are frequent) or alternatively single photographs should be enclosed within an opaque acid-free envelope stating:

'WARNING! THIS FILE/ENVELOPE CONTAINS PHOTOGRAPHS WHICH ARE OF A DISTRESSING NATURE' supplied by your representative from The National Archives.

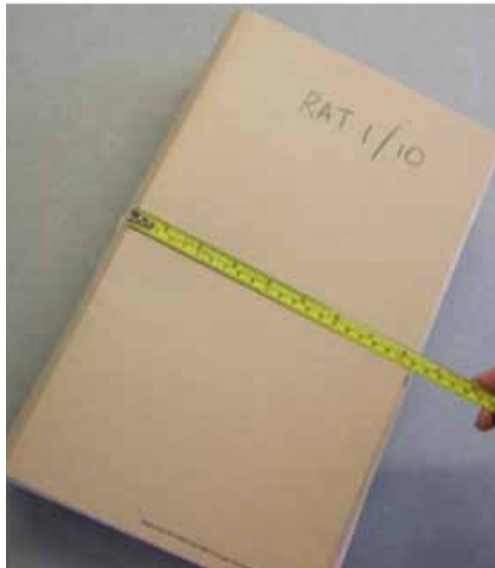


Negatives should be enclosed within Silversafe or acid-free envelopes and indicated on the transfer form.

Glass plates, photographic albums, x-rays etc require special attention. Please ask your representative from The National Archives for advice.

Preparation of records: packing

All records must be packed in materials approved by The National Archives (acid-free boxes, boards, cotton map/banner bags, etc). The National Archives must approve all new types of packing material before they can be used. Please see standard box specification for more details.



It is advisable to measure your documents to ensure you order the correct size box.



The box should be big enough to accommodate the removal of the documents – allowing for space to fit hands down both sides.



The box should be **slightly** overfilled in order to ensure the contents fit snugly and items are not free to move around or slump down when the box is on the shelves.



Where a piece has been extracted from a box temporary fillers should be added so that the piece can be reintroduced at a later date. Please record this on the transfer form so the material can be removed on arrival.



It is advisable to alternate the orientation, as shown here, as this should make the documents lie more evenly in the box. (Note that if all the pieces are orientated in the same way the tagged corners may become proud.)



Tie linen tape around the length of the box to ensure that the lid remains secure. The purpose of the loop in the linen tape is to facilitate access to the boxes once they are stored on the shelves.

Remember the boxes will be stored upright along their length when they are on the shelves at The National Archives.

- Brass
- Department
- Series
- Acid-free box
- 20mm linen packing tape
- Public access label
- The lid of the box must always face to the right when placed on a shelf
- Place number range in box