Accessions to Repositories: Guidance for local authority places of deposit reporting public records

The Accessions to Repositories programme

The programme annually surveys records received by collecting archives during the calendar year. Participating archives are asked to report all new accessions. This allows for accurate assessment of eligibility for New Burdens funding as well as analysis of trends and collecting practices. To enable more comprehensive analysis of this data we ask participating repositories to use the updated template and read the guidance below. Please see the section ‘what will happen to the information you send us’ for more details on how we use accessions data.

This guide is specifically designed to help local authority places of deposit complete their Accessions return and report their accessions for the last year, including all public record accessions.

Taking Part

Invitations to participate are sent out in early December to repositories known to be actively collecting beyond their own institutional records.

The template is set up to aid us in the analysis of the data. Please use the template attached to your invitation email. The template is also available via http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/projects-and-programmes/accessions/

The deadline

Archives need to complete the updated Accessions return template and send it to asd@nationalarchives.gov.uk by 03 February 2020.

This deadline allows for sufficient time to process and analyse the information gathered. For returns received after 03 February 2020, payments of New Burdens funding cannot be guaranteed.

If you have accessioned eligible records, you will need to respond to any request for confirmation of stated quantities and agree to the terms by 02 March for payment to be authorised.

Why am I invited?

We have identified your archive as being a local authority place of deposit appointed to take in certain public records specified in secondary legislation: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3249/schedule/1/made

New Burdens funding is available to cover the accelerated accessioning of certain classes of public records listed in the above Schedule. To make a claim, local authority places of deposit must highlight their public record accessions for 2019, and report the quantity of their public records accessions in linear metres, or in Mb or Gb for born-digital public records, in the relevant column of their 2019 Accessions return.


What extra data is needed in relation to public record accessions?

Changes have been made to the template for local authority places of deposit to capture specific information about public record accessions. In addition to the primary fields, we need archives to mark-up public records on their return, and provide the following additional data:
Providing this information is essential for verifying the eligibility of your records for New Burdens funding; without it, payment cannot be made.

**Please ensure you indicate which accessions are public records by putting a ‘y’ in the public record field in order to be considered for New Burdens funding.** We rely on your information and will not be checking returns to look for unmarked public records.


### Taking part in Accessions to Repositories

**What information is collected for the Accessions to Repositories survey?**

The survey aims to collect information on all newly accessioned manuscript material, photographic and audio-visual records, as well as born digital documents. We want to gather a full snapshot of collecting patterns across the sector.

Please mark newly accessioned records that you believe to have the strongest evidential, cultural and societal impact in the **collections highlight** column in the template. We would also like to hear of major deaccessioned collections so that we can understand any changes in custody.

**The template**

**We ask all repositories to use the template provided.** Please contact us if this is a problem. Please do not add to or change the order of columns in the template, as this will affect our ability to analyse the data accurately. The methods we use to analyse accessions data rely on the format being as uniform as possible.

We recognise that as newly accessioned material is often uncatalogued, not all details about the creator or nature of the records may be known. If exact details or dates have not been identified, please give an approximation (e.g. personal records, 20th century). **However, when reporting public records exact dates and volumes in linear metres, and either Mb or Gb for born-digital material, are needed.** Only public records formally selected for permanent preservation and accessioned should be reported.

All returns must include the following details:

**ARCHON number**

This can be found by searching [http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-home](http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-home)

**Creator of records**

This should include full name, dates, epithet (e.g. occupation), and descriptor and/or function for any entities (corporate bodies, families or individuals) that created the records. More details will help us to disambiguate creators, verify and add information to our resources and link between related collections. **Please note the creator is not necessarily the same as the depositor.**

**Summary description**

Brief information about the records; can include types of records, e.g. minutes and correspondence, and format.

**Covering dates**

The covering dates for the whole collection, preferably in the format yyyy-yyyy (e.g. 1858-1957).
**ISAD (G) reference number and/or accession reference**
The collection reference number and/or accession reference.

**Quantity**
The extent of the collection being accessioned in this year. Note: for public records, this total includes any 2005 and post-2005 records. Please report quantity of public record collections in **linear metres**. For digital collections, please give the quantity in **Mb or Gb**.

**Additional deposit?**
Whether the deposit is an addition to an existing collection in your repository. If yes, please provide the reference number.

**Catalogue link**
A permanent URL. This is a web address that will consistently point to your specific information resource such as an entry in an online catalogue.

**Collection highlight?**
Let us know the highlights of your collecting over the past year; the records you believe to have the strongest evidential, cultural and societal impact. Please also use this field to flag records you would like us to highlight in our communications with researchers and the sector. You can also supply images and links to relevant news stories, blogs etc. about your accessions in the body of your email to us.

**Keyword**
A handful of words reflecting the main themes covered by the content of the documents comprising the collection. This will enable us to surface themes and trends when analysing the data.

**Mark up**
For internal use only, please leave blank.

**For Public Records only:**

**Public record?**
Please indicate whether the accession is a public record, in order to be considered for New Burdens funding. A definition of a public record is available on our website: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/our-archives-sector-role/legislation/approved-places-of-deposit/

Examples are records of courts (operational units of HM Courts and Tribunals Service), coroners, prisons (operational units of the National Offender Management Service) and NHS Trusts, Foundation Trusts or Clinical Commissioning Groups (and their operational units such as clinics or hospitals).

Do not include here any records received as ‘presentations’ under s.3(6) of the Public Records Act - once received by you, they cease to be public records (you will have been contacted by The National Archives if this is the case).

**Transferring body for public records only**
The organisation responsible for depositing the records. The records they transfer may have been originally created by a predecessor body or unit, and so the ‘creator’ and ‘transferring body’ may not be the same. Occasionally, records are received by an organisation or individual that may not appear to be directly involved in government business, in which case please give details. Please do not give personal data as part of your response.

**Quantity in linear metres of public records dating 1994 and earlier for public records only**
The reporting needs to be linear metres for reporting the volume of public records.

**Quantity in Mg or Gb of born-digital public records dating 1994 and earlier for public records only**
The reporting needs to be Mb or GB for reporting the quantity of born-digital public records.

**Quantity in linear metres of public records dating 1995 to 2004 for public records only**
The reporting needs to be in linear metres for reporting the volume of public records.

**Quantity in Mg or Gb of born-digital public records dating 1995 to 2004 for public records only**
The reporting needs to be Mb or GB for reporting the quantity of born-digital public records.
Reporting in *linear metres* or either *Mb* or *Gb*

For consistency with current reporting of 20-year rule transfers by government departments, the reporting unit will need to be **linear metres** and either **Mb** or **Gb** for born-digital records.

Repositories reporting accessions volumes in cubic metres should collect this data in the usual way, but then **multiply the number of cubic metres by 12 to give a linear metre equivalent**, as with CIPFA returns, rather than calculate directly on the basis of their own local shelving arrangements.

**Example:** 10.5 cubic metres of Bedford Hospital theatre registers = 126 linear metres

New Burdens funding

Please note that New Burdens funding is only available for the accessioning of records dated up to and including 2004 for certain classes of public record. For more information see the bodies specified in Schedule 1 under the statutory instrument amending the Public Records Act http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3249/schedule/1/made

For more details on eligibility, please see our web page: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/our-archives-sector-role/legislation/20-year-rule-and-records-of-local-interest/

After submitting your return

If you have not received an acknowledgment of your return within five working days, please contact us.

**Please let us know as soon as possible if your archive service has not received any deposits during 2019, or does not have the capacity to complete a return.**

If you submit information about public records that are eligible for New Burdens funding, a member of the 20-year rule team will contact you after initial processing. To be eligible for funding, please respond to any request for confirmation of stated quantities and agreement to the terms by 02 March 2020.

What will happen to the information you send us?

- The data will primarily be used to analyse and develop a national picture of collecting patterns, and identify gaps in collecting practices.
- It will be used to update Discovery and will be made available for researchers online and may be publicised on The National Archives’ social media outlets.
- Data will also be analysed to track records identified as part of our Sales Monitoring Service and monitor public records and manorial document transfers.

We will analyse the data collected, allowing us to better understand patterns or trends in thematic collecting. The results of this analysis will be shared with the archive sector.

Please note that accessions data will be published on data.gov.uk. This will aid transparency and allow researchers access to the entire set of reported accessions.

For more information or assistance with completing the survey, please contact Archives Sector Development at asd@nationalarchives.gov.uk

For information about contributing to Discovery please visit our website: http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/advice-and-guidance/managing-your-collection/developing-collections/contributing-to-our-resources/.

Information about contacting the team can also be found at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/ask-question.htm.

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