

Jargon buster



Administrative history provides an overview of an organisation's story and is used for collections where material has been accumulated through the activities of an organisation by people carrying out their role within it.

Accession is a formal donation of materials to an archive. Several accessions with the same origins may be taken in over a period of time.

Accruals are expected future donations of materials to a collection.

Appraisal is the evaluation of the archival value of a collection.

Archives are collections of information in any physical or digital media such as paper, film, tape, disc, which have been created and accumulated as a result of the activities of a person, family or organisation.

Biographical history provides an overview of a person's story and is used for collections where material has been accumulated through the personal, educational or professional activities of that individual.

Born-digital are materials where the originals were created digitally and not digitised versions of physical materials.

Digital preservation is the active management of digital materials to ensure that the authentic content can be accessed over time despite changes in technology or media failure.

Digitisation is the process of creating digital versions of physical materials using scanning technology.

File plan is a document that sets out the filing structure used for organising particular types of materials into groups, detailing where and how they are kept.

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Papers is the term used for the collection of materials that tell a person's or family's story.

Records is the term used for the collection of materials that tell an organisation's story. Record is also used more generally to describe a piece of information created or used by an organisation or person and which provides evidence of their activities.

Records management is the control of information through specified processes to ensure that records are kept and easily found throughout their life-cycle, from creation to disposal or archiving.

Repository is a safe and secure place where archive material can be stored and managed for preservation and access. It can be a digital or physical storage space.

Researcher is the name archive institutions give to a person who visits the archive to look through archive materials. They may be carrying out academic or personal research on a particular topic, looking for inspiration or just looking for the pleasure of seeing things that interest them.

Retention is the specified period of time for which records should be kept. It is dependent on legal, statutory and operational needs, and whether the material is of archival value.

Retention schedule is a document that sets out how long each specific type of record should be kept and guidelines for disposal or transfer to an archive.

Vital records are the key documents needed by an organisation to carry out core activities and ensure business continuity.

Weeding is the process of removing unnecessary material from a collection, such as duplicates or items that have no archival value.