

Scope of the Policy

The aim of the Digital Preservation Policy is to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the ingest and preservation of digital records in the custody of the Highland Archive Service (HAS) in line with current professional guidance. It outlines the inter-relationships between all areas of the Archive Service which are reflected in the Vision and Mission Statement and Service Objectives.

Service Objectives

Archives

- To fulfil a custodial role in the acquisition and cataloguing of the Highlands' digital archives.
- To be able to effectively preserve the digital records of the Highlands for present and continued use.
- To promote and provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to use digital archives to better understand and appreciate their heritage.
- Providing opportunities for staff and volunteers through work-based learning and training.

Records Management

- To ensure that digital information and records sources are retained only for as long as is necessary for legal compliance and administrative needs across High Life Highland (HLH) and The Highland Council (THC).
- To co-ordinate the selection and transfer of digital records from THC into an appropriate digital repository contributing to the Council's corporate memory within the Highland Archive Service.
- To work with THC's Information Management Governance Board and HLH's Senior Management Team to ensure compliance with legislation relating to information and record keeping.
- To develop and promote best practice and legal compliance in the creation, use, maintenance and disposal of digital information and records.

Standards

The following standards are relevant to this policy:

- ISO 14721:2012 Space Data and Information Transfer Systems – Open Archival Information System (OAIS) – Reference Model
- PREMIS Data Dictionary for Preservation Metadata, v.3.0

Digital records

1. General Principles

- We will endeavour to preserve and offer continued access to the digital records in our custody however sometimes, due to factors such as obsolescence, this may not be possible. This will be discussed in full with depositors at the time of deposit.
- We currently have no plans to offer emulation technology for obsolete records.
- All specific considerations relating to the preservation of digital records will be discussed with the depositor at the time of deposit.

2. Formats

- We will endeavour to accept most formats but some may require greater consideration than others.
- We do not advise converting formats before deposit as this may remove technical metadata from the files.

- We will create additional copies of records in other formats for access purposes however, if we do this, an original version of the file will be retained.
- We may not have the ability to preserve hardware or software relating to some digital records we accept.

3. Metadata

- We will accept as much descriptive and technical metadata as can be given by the depositor and will not refuse a deposit solely due to lack of metadata.
- We will work with depositors to gather metadata for their deposits.
- We may use other applications to extract technical metadata from records.

4. Depositing and Accessioning

- The deposit process for digital records will take more time than for analogue records because digital deposits will have to be prepared for transfer to digital archival storage.
- The legal deposit process remains the same as it is for analogue records.
- We will support depositors throughout this process.

5. Storage

- We will store at least three copies of digital records in separate locations with one of these being offline.
- Storage solutions will be discussed with the depositor at the time of deposit and if these are subject to change, where possible, the depositor will be informed accordingly.

6. Cataloguing

- We will endeavour to catalogue digital records for access purposes.
- Where possible, catalogues for digital records will be the same style and format as those for analogue records.
- Depending on the size, organisation and complexity of the deposit, full cataloguing to item level may not be possible. This will be discussed in with the depositor at the time of deposit.

7. Appraisal

- Material may be appraised during the cataloguing process and if it is deemed not to be of archival value the depositor will be informed. The selected material will be offered back to the depositor or destroyed with their prior agreement.

8. Access

- As with analogue records, digital records will only be available for access once catalogued.
- Finding Aids will be produced for digital deposits to facilitate access.
- Access to digital records will be given through the Public Access Computers in the Archive searchrooms.
- There are currently no plans for online access to digital records.

9. Ongoing Preservation

- Digital deposits will be fixity checked on accession into the Archives, as will any copies generated by the Archive.
- Deposits will continue to be fixity checked at regular intervals to ensure the bit stream remains the same as at the time of deposit.

10. Withdrawal

- The process for the withdrawal of collections will be discussed with the depositor at the time of deposit.
- It is not possible to withdraw collections that have been gifted to the Highland Archive Service.
- We reserve the right to retain the metadata of withdrawn collections for the purpose of an audit trail.

Policy Review Schedule

This policy will be reviewed at least once every 3 years, or earlier if a response is needed to any changes in legislation.

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