

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

Northern Ireland Screen recognises that the efficient management of its records, regardless of their form or medium, is essential to support its core functions, to facilitate its overall governance and management, and to enable it to comply with its legal and regulatory obligations, in particular the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA). Records are vital both to Northern Ireland Screen's current and future operations and must be managed in a systematic way, from creation through to ultimate disposal. The effective and systematic management of public authority records, together with the development of an institutional *Records Management Policy* are specific legislative requirements under FOIA.

Northern Ireland Screen's *Records Management Policy* has been developed in line with the criteria in the *Code of Practice on Records Management* in accordance with national legislation. Failure of a publicly-funded body to implement a *Records Management Policy* and to demonstrate compliance with the legislation can result in the Information Commissioner taking action.

In addition to meeting legislative and regulatory obligations, this Policy, together with Northern Ireland Screen's *Records Retention Schedules*, will promote consistency of record-keeping across the organisation, eradicating unnecessary and wasteful duplication of records, and enabling the confident disposal of records that are no longer required, or their timely transfer to Northern Ireland Screen Archive.

Scope of the Records Management Policy

Overall responsibility within Northern Ireland Screen for ensuring proper maintenance of records and associated record-keeping systems lies with Senior Management. In practical terms, this responsibility is devolved to the Director of Finance and Corporate Services, and in turn to the Heads of Department and then to individual members of staff. Line managers should ensure that staff clearly understand their record-keeping responsibilities and that they adhere to this Policy and to the guidance contained within the *Record Retention Schedules*.

All staff should recognise that **all** the records they create, receive or maintain in the course of Northern Ireland Screen business are official records of the organisation. The definition of a *record* is recorded information, in any form, created or received by Northern Ireland Screen in the transaction of its business, or in the conduct of its affairs, and retained as evidence of such activity. This encompasses different types of media, from traditional paper-based records through to e-mails, databases, microfilm, video etc.

The Policy together with the *Retention Schedule* provide the framework for the management of records throughout their lifecycle; from creation when they are actively used as current records, through to their ultimate disposal by destruction, or transfer to the Northern Ireland Screen Archive.

Northern Ireland Screen Retention Schedule

It is important that the retention, disposal or final disposition of records is undertaken in accordance with clear guidelines. Please request a copy of the guidelines if required from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

Relationship with existing policies

This policy has been formulated with reference to relevant guidelines and policies, and to national legislation and standards, including:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Electronic Communications Act 2000
- International Standard on Records Management, *BS ISO 15489*

Adherence to the *Record Management Policy* and the *Retention Schedule* will facilitate compliance with other legislation, such as Health and Safety; Employment; or Human Rights provisions; and with areas of regulatory compliance such as teaching quality assessment, research governance and finance.

This Policy will be subject to review at least every three years by the Senior Management Team.

Further information

Further information and guidance on all aspects of records management is available from Northern Ireland Screen's Director of Finance and Corporate Services.