

Archives Management Policy

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00	July 2017	Archives & Records Manager	ARC-POL-001	New policy

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Archives Management Policy

1. Introduction

The Royal Armouries is the United Kingdom's national museum of arms and armour, and the oldest museum in Britain. It operates three sites in Leeds, the Tower of London, and at Fort Nelson near Fareham, and in addition to its large collection of arms, armour and artillery, it holds a large archive of institutional records, other public records and private papers.

This policy deals with the management of Royal Armouries Archives, which are the subject of separate legislation, standards and good practice to museum collections management. It aims to gather together a number of separate policies relating to various aspects of archives management, their care and conservation etc. and to establish a number of overarching principles. It covers the Archives' analogue collections (paper records, photographic materials, film and film and audio-visual materials), and existing digitized collections. The strategy and policy relating to the management of the Museum's born-digital records is currently being developed, and will be addressed in future revisions of this policy.

2. Relationship with other policies

This policy supplements the:

- Information and Records Management Policy (and related policies) which deal with the management of the Royal Armouries current and semi-current records, and
- Collections Management Policy (and related policies) which deal with the management of the objects in the Royal Armouries collection, and collections management in general.

3. Mission Statement

The mission of the Archive Service is to:

Select and preserve records relating to the Royal Armouries and its collections, to the wider context of arms and armour in general, and to the Tower of London, and to make them accessible to staff and the public for the purposes of

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historical research, and to support the achievement of the Museum's purpose and vision.

4. Aims

The aims of the Archive Service are to:

- select records of administrative, legal, financial and historical value for permanent preservation;
- keep the records safe;
- arrange and catalogue the records in order to maximize their value as an information and research resource using appropriate tools and adhering to international standards;
- take all necessary steps to ensure the preservation of the records;
- make them accessible for current and future generations;
- promote the archive and encourage the use of the records by staff, students, the academic community and the wider public.

5. Legislation

The principle legislation relating to the management of Archives includes:

5.1. National Heritage Act 1983

The National Heritage Act 1983 (as amended by the Museums & Galleries Act 1992) establishes the Board of Trustees of the Armouries, and its general functions with regard to maintaining and exhibiting a national collection of arms, armour and associated objects, and of maintaining a record relating to arms and armour and to the Tower of London.

- Section 5(3) applies the provisions of the Public Records Act 1958 to the Armouries thus ensuring the retention of public documents.
- Section 18(2)(d) requires the Board of Trustees of the Armouries to maintain a record relating to their collection, to arms and armour in general, and to the Tower of London.

5.2. Public Records Act 1958

The Royal Armouries is one of the other establishments and organisations listed in Schedule 1, Part 2 as subject to the Public Records Act 1958 (and subsequent

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amendments).

- Section 3(1) of the Public Records Act 1958 requires the Royal Armouries to make arrangements for the selection of those records which ought to be permanently preserved and for their safe-keeping.
- Section 3(4) permits the Royal Armouries to retain its records after the standard Twenty Year period, and not to transfer them to the Public Record Office.
- Section 4(1) of the Public Record Act 1958. Place of Deposit status is granted to those archives outside the Public Record Office which afford suitable facilities for the safe-keeping and preservation of records, and their inspection by the public. The Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds was appointed a Place of Deposit in 2005.
- Section 4(3) of the Act the Lord Chancellor may direct that public records shall be transferred from the Public Record Office or another Place of Deposit to the Royal Armouries Museum.
- Section 5(5) of the Act requires the Museum to make arrangements for the inspection of public records comparable to those made for public records in the Public Record Office. These arrangements are currently sent out in *The National Archives' Standard for Record Repositories* (2005), and is proportionate to the circumstances of each repository and the records, but will be replaced by the new *Archive Service Accreditation* standard as the baseline requirement for Places of Deposit.

5.3. Data Protection Act 1998

The Data Protection Act 1998 makes provision for the regulation of the processing of information relating to individuals, including the obtaining, holding, use or disclosure of such information.

- The Section 51(4) Code sets out good practice for archivists and records managers.

5.4. Freedom of Information Act 2000

The access provisions for UK public records set out in the Public Records Act 1958 (as amended in 1967) were replaced by the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The Act established a general right of access to information held by public authorities subject to a limited number of exemptions. It came into force in January 2005 and is accompanied by two important Codes of Practice:

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- The Section 45 Code sets out good practice in handling requests for information. It also includes a section on Freedom of Information and public sector contracts.
- The Section 46 Code is in two parts:
 - Part I sets out good practice in records management and applies to all public authorities subject to the FOI Act, and other bodies subject to the Public Records Act 1958 or the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923;
 - Part II applies only to bodies subject to the Public Records Act 1958 or the Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923 and sets out how records should be transferred to records offices.

5.5. Environmental Information Regulations 2004

The right of access to environmental information is governed by the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

5.6. Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988

Records created by the Museum prior to the establishment of the Board of Trustees of the Armouries on 1 April 1984 qualify for Crown Copyright protection under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 (and subsequent amendments). The records relating to the Royal Small Arms Factory and the MOD Pattern Room transferred to the Museum by the Ministry of Defence in 2005 are also Crown Copyright. The Armouries has a delegated authority from the Comptroller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office to sub-licence this material.

5.7. Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015

The Regulations on the re-use of Public Sector Information applies to information produced by central and local government, and other public bodies including cultural institutions. Any information (content) whatever its medium (form) – including print, digital or electronic, and sound recordings – produced, held or disseminated by the Royal Armouries as part of its core functions as a museum is considered public sector information, and therefore potentially available for re-use.

6. Standards

The principle standards relating to the management of Archives includes:

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6.1. Archive Service Accreditation

The *National Archives Standard for Record Repositories* (2005) has been replaced by the new Archive Service Accreditation, and the Royal Armouries Museum in Leeds is expected to apply by 2017. Accreditation defines good practice and agreed standards for archive services across the UK, thereby encouraging and supporting the development of the archive service. It looks at an organisation's ability to develop, care for, and provide access to its collections, and those areas such as resources and planning which underpin those activities. Archive Service Accreditation is aligned with other relevant quality assurance schemes, improvement tools and data gathering processes.

6.2. Public Services Quality Group, Standard for Access to Archives 2008

The PSQG *Standard for Access to Archives* provides a benchmark for archive services in the management of access, and may also be used by archive services, users and third parties as a means of assessing the quality of the service. It provides those who run archive services (large or small) with the means to examine how they manage, run and make their services accessible, and to help introduce changes and improvements to access for users. .

6.3. PD5454:2012

The Guide for the Storage and Exhibition of Archival Materials (PD5454:2012) provides detailed guidance on the nature of documents and best practice for their storage and use. It includes topics such as environmental controls for different media, protection against mould, infestation and pollution, environmental monitoring, environmental control, packaging and security. The guide also describes the repository building and measures that can be taken in the design and build of an archive facility. This section includes hazard avoidance, security, construction, environmental stability, fire and water protection, load distribution, shelving and lighting, to name but a few.

6.4. PAS198:2012

The Specification for Managing Environmental Conditions for Cultural Collections (PAS198:2012) provides a code of practice for developing a sustainable and strategic approach to Environmental Management for museums, archives and libraries.

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7. Ethical standards

The standards of behaviour expected of professional staff are set out in:

- Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland), *Code of Ethics*, adopted May 2016
- International Council on Archives, *Code of Ethics*, adopted 6 September 1996

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8. Expertise

The Royal Armouries employs professionally qualified staff with suitable skills, knowledge and experience to manage its archives including:

8.1. Archivists

A qualified archivist with a Postgraduate Diploma in Archives and Records Management will be responsible for the selection, arrangement and preservation of the archives according to established archival principals and standards, and to ensure that they are easily accessible for consultation. The Museum will provide induction training, mandatory training (i.e. required by law or by the nature of the role), maintenance/refresher training (to update specialist knowledge) and continuing professional development.

8.2. Conservators

The Museum's conservation staff will advise the archivist on the storage and exhibition of archival materials, carry out any remedial conservation, and assist with the selection of any contractors employed to undertake work on the archives.

8.3. Registrars

The Museum's Registrar will provide additional advice on national and international ethics and legislation, and the upholding of guidelines, standards and best practice as they relate to collections management in general.

8.4. Contractors

Any contractors working on the archives will be professionally qualified, accredited where appropriate (e.g. any conservators are listed on the ICON Conservation Register), and will provide be required to submit insurance documentation, case studies of recent work and references as appropriate.

9. Audit and Review

This document will be reviewed annually and updates in corporate policy, plan, legislation and international conventions will be amended or added where relevant.

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This document will be reviewed by the Archives and Records Manager and approved by the Head of Collections and the Director-General and Master of the Armouries.

10. Risk Management

The associated risk of non-compliance with this policy is:

Impact of non-compliance: High

Likelihood of non-compliance: Medium

11. Effective date

This policy is effective from the date of signing.

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Director General & Master of the Armouries

Date.....

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