

the Archive-Skills consultancy

Info-byte: Standards

What is a standard?

“A thing, quality or specification by which something may be tested or measured; an established or accepted model; a definite level of excellence or adequacy required, aimed at, or possible.” — *Chambers 20th Century Dictionary*

Why are standards good?

- They encourage consistency
- They help to define an agreed level of consistency
- They give a benchmark against which performance can be measured
- They demonstrate *professionalism*, *accountability* and *efficiency* to staff, users and funders

Current standards relevant to archives and records management

- BS 5454:2000 Recommendations for the storage and exhibition of archival documents (British Standards Institute, 2000)
- ISO 15489-1:2001 Information and Documentation — Records Management (International Standards Organisation, 2001)
- Rules for the Construction of Personal, Place and Corporate Names (National Council on Archives, 1997)
- A Standard for Record Repositories (Historical MSS Commission, 1997)
- ISAD(G): General international standard on archival description International Council on Archives (2000)
- ISAAR(CPF): International standard archival authority record for corporate bodies, persons and families (International Council on Archives, 1996)
- PRO standards for records management (see < <http://www.pro.gov.uk/recordsmanagement/standards/default.htm> >)

Further sources of information

- British Standards Institute
- Society of Archivists
- National Council on Archives
- International Council on Archives



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