

LEARNER GUIDE

Course: Information Science

Unit Title: Records and Archives Management

Topic: Introduction to Digital Records Management

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1.0 Introduction

Digital records management is an essential function in modern organizations. It involves creating, organizing, storing, and protecting information in electronic form to ensure it is reliable, accessible, and secure. This topic introduces you to the role and value of managing digital records as a backbone of accountability, efficiency, and transparency in both public and private institutions.

2.0 Purpose of the Guide

This learner guide is designed to:

- Support your learning of the topic Introduction to Digital Records Management.
- Provide structured notes, examples, and learner activities.
- Guide both classroom and self-study learning.

3.0 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this topic, you should be able to:

1. Define digital records.
2. Explain the importance of digital records management.
3. Describe the steps involved in managing digital records.
4. Identify challenges and opportunities in digital recordkeeping.

4.0 Key Content

4.1 Definition of Digital Records

Digital records are information created, used, and stored in electronic form. Examples

include:

- Emails
- Word documents and PDFs
- Electronic databases
- Scanned documents
- Audio and video files

4.2 Importance of Digital Records Management

- Evidence – Provide proof of activities and decisions.
- Efficiency – Quicker access and retrieval of information.
- Space-saving – Reduce the need for bulky physical storage.
- Security – Can be backed up and protected with passwords.
- Transparency – Supports accountability in organizations

4.3 Steps in Managing Digital Records

1. Creation and Capture – Generating electronic information.
2. Classification – Grouping records for easy retrieval.
3. Storage – Using secure servers or cloud systems.
4. Access and Use – Allowing only authorized users to retrieve information.
5. Maintenance and Protection – Backups, updates, and system security.
6. Disposal or Archiving – Destroying or preserving records when no longer in active use.

4.4 Challenges

- High cost of software and technology.
- Cybersecurity threats such as hacking and viruses.
- Skills gaps among staff.

4.5 Opportunities

- Faster and easier information sharing.
- Improved service delivery.
- Long-term preservation of important data.

5.0 Learning Activities

1. Group Discussion: What risks would an organization face if it failed to manage digital records properly?
2. Practical Task: Visit a workplace or institution (or use your own email). Identify at least three types of digital records created daily.

3. Case Study: Review how cloud storage (e.g., Google Drive, OneDrive) helps manage records.

6.0 Self-Check Questions

1. Define digital records and give two examples.
2. State three reasons why managing digital records is important.
3. List two steps involved in managing digital records.
4. Give two challenges of digital records management.

7.0 Assessment

- Written Task: Write a one-page essay on the topic “Digital records are vital to modern organizations.”
- Practical Task: Create a simple digital records policy for a small office, highlighting how records should be created, stored, and protected.

8.0 Resources

- International Council on Archives (ICA). (2016). Principles and Functional Requirements for Records in Electronic Office Environments. Paris: ICA.
- ISO 15489-1:2016. Information and Documentation – Records Management – Part 1: Concepts and Principles. International Organization for Standardization.
- Shepherd, E., & Yeo, G. (2015). Managing Records: A Handbook of Principles and Practice. Facet Publishing.
- National Archives UK. (2019). Managing Digital Records. Retrieved from <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/>
- Local institutional digital records system or cloud storage platform.