

Staff training and awareness

Staff awareness is critical to the success of records management in an organisation.

The Code recognises this and recommends that all staff should receive the training they need to meet the organisation's expectations of them with regards to records.

Below is an explanation of the training and awareness required for:

- All staff
- The practitioner (the person with operational responsibility)
- The senior management lead

All staff

All staff, including temporary staff, contractors and others working for the organisation, should receive induction training that outlines the organisation's records management policies, standards, procedures and guidelines and makes clear their personal responsibilities. The records manager should work with human resources, in-house training and communications colleagues to plan records management awareness raising and training.

Some possible training methods are:

- inclusion of records management in the organisation's employee induction programme
- formal technical training for employees new to particular system responsibilities or at times of system change
- formal or informal in-service training and coaching
- training courses provided by external training providers either as part of their general syllabus or customised to meet the organisation's requirements.

The selection of training approaches will depend on the roles and responsibilities of the staff concerned and on your organisation's approach to training and development.

top tips

- Decide what should happen to records held by the body losing the function or being abolished.
- Document any transfer of records.
- Agree how to manage future Freedom of Information (FOI) requests relating to those records.¹¹ Last updated 31 August 2010

The practitioner (the person with operational responsibility)

The records manager needs a full understanding of records management principles and practices. He or she also needs to be aware of the organisation's obligations under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and other relevant legislation so that the records management policies and procedures will support compliance with those obligations. The practitioner also needs to understand how records management fits in with related responsibilities, such as for information security.

Some of this is a matter of applying common sense but specialist knowledge is required also, especially in the early stages of developing a records management programme in the organisation and when implementing new systems or arrangements. The skills and knowledge required will depend on the scope of the job and the work required of the person. They may vary over time, depending on what needs to be done to get records management on a proper footing in the organisation and keep it there.

top tips

- Follow up initial training – offer refresher training and surgeries.
- Keep records management visible within your organisation by publishing news items in newsletters and on internal websites.

The skills and knowledge required for records management

In central government, a professional skills framework has been developed for knowledge and information management (which includes records management).

See: gkimn.nationalarchives.gov.uk/framework.htm.

This identifies four levels: strategist, leader, manager and practitioner and lists relevant skills for each level under four headings:

- Strategic planning for knowledge and information management (business focus)
- Using and exploiting knowledge and information (user focus)
- Managing and organising information (process focus)
- Information governance (compliance focus).

This framework provides a basis for developing job or role descriptions and describing the knowledge and skills expected of the records manager within central government.

A new practitioner without relevant qualifications or experience should be provided with opportunities to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills through training courses and other means such as mentoring by an experienced record manager or formal study for a relevant qualification. The Code also recommends that staff who work primarily in records and information management should be given opportunities to undertake continuing professional development by attending training courses, conferences, etc.

The senior management lead

The person with lead responsibility needs a general understanding of what the records manager is trying to achieve but does not need to be a records specialist themselves. For training purposes this person will count as a general staff member.