



## Glossary of archival terms

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Dear all,

*Palm'Data is a company dedicated to archives and records management for the healthcare industry. We offer regulatory archiving, consultancy and training services in compliance with pharmaceutical regulations*

*Our experts have pooled their know-how and knowledge to write this **Glossary of archival terms** and provide you with the definitions of the terms you need to understand archives and records management.*

*Please feel free to send us your comments at [info@palm-data.com](mailto:info@palm-data.com) so that we can continue to improve our resources aligned with your needs.*

**Good reading!!!**

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**Access rights**

The right of a user to operate on archived elements within the limits provided by the organization's procedures.

**Accessibility**

The ability to communicate an archived item to a person who requests it, according to the access rights defined in the procedures of the organization concerned.

**Accurate**

According to the ALCOA principles, this term means data are correct, truthful, complete, valid and reliable

**Archival description**

All operations allowing the identification of archived elements. From these operations results the archival metadata.

**Archive box**

Material unit for data preservation made with cardboard, of variable shape, structure and dimensions, intended to contain and protect archival elements, and to facilitate their handling and storage on the shelves of stores.

**Archive group**

Expression usually used to designate the whole of the records preserved in an archives department.

**Archive Producer**

Individual or legal person who has produced, received and preserved records in the course of his activity.

**Archive room**

Storage spaces dedicated to the retention of archived records in a logical order. The archive rooms are made up of fixed or mobile shelving, or other equipment depending on the needs (ventilated cupboards, freezers, fridges...).

**Archives**

Archives are all elements, including data, regardless of their date, place of storage, form and medium, produced or received by any natural or legal person and by any public or private service or organization in the course of their activity. (Code du Patrimoine, Article L211-1, Modified by LOI n°2016-925 of July 7, 2016 - art. 59)

**Archives unit**

See archive boxes.

**Archiving**

Transfer, by a producing department to an archives department, of elements which have ceased to be of current use and which must be preserved for administrative and/or regulatory reasons.

**Archivist**

Person responsible for the management of archives.

**Archivistic**

Science that studies the principles and methods applied to the collection, treatment, conservation, communication and development of archival material.

## Article

Smallest physical unit of preservation and description of archival records.

Synonym: piece.



## Backup

A set of operations aimed at copying digital data at a given date(s), from a physical medium to one or more distinct physical media. The backup implies the maintenance of the integrity of the data and the possibility of restoring the data.

Note: that backup differs from archival in that back-up copies of electronic records are typically only temporarily stored for the purposes of disaster recovery and may be periodically overwritten. Such temporary back-up copies should not be relied upon as an archival mechanism.



## Classification plan

A system that establishes the organization of archives, allowing them to be arranged, classified and retrieved.

## Communication

Provision by an archive of archived elements to a person who requests them. This communication can take place either on the spot in the reading room, or with displacement, or at distance.

## Container

Material unit of preservation made of a rigid cardboard box which can contain several archives boxes.

## Current records

Open items/files that are in use for the activity of the departments that produced or received them. These items are kept in the departments until they are closed.



## Data

All original records and true copies of original records, including source data and metadata and all subsequent transformations and reports of these data, which are generated or recorded at the time of an activity.

## Data lifecycle

Succession of the stages in the life of an element produced or received by an organization, from its creation to the implementation of its final fate.

See: Current records, Intermediate Archives, Final Archives.

## Digitization

Electronic process which means reproduction of a physical archive as an electronic record.

## Disposal

Operation regulated by procedures that consists in destroying records whose retention is no longer justified.

## Disposal form

Form produced by an archives department, which proposes to a producer service the elimination of archived items at the end of their shelf life.

## Document type

Category of documents distinguished because of common criteria, material (for example: block, blade) or functional (for example: study file, submission file, quality document...).

## Double-shelving

A set of two contiguous shelving between two aisles of traffic.



## Electronic archiving

Electronic archiving refers to the perennial preservation of natively electronic or digitized data, and their accessibility throughout their life cycle.

## Electronic archiving system (EAS)

Computerized system consisting in the management of archived records (receiving, preserving, communicating and restoring ) whether they are physical and/or electronic (hybrid archiving).

## Electronic records

Data produced or received by an organization in the course of its business and maintained in the form of electronic records that can only be read by computerized tools.

## Entry

A generic term for the set of operations by which records are taken over by an archive.

## Extreme dates

Dates of the oldest and the most recent element of the archival unit.



## Filing

Intellectual and physical arrangement of archival elements within a file in accordance with information management procedures. In the absence of existing procedures, filing is done according to chronological, alphabetical or thematic criteria.

## Final Archives

Items that, after the end of their administrative usefulness, are retained for regulatory purposes or for the preservation of know-how.

## Format

Set of metadata that defines the formal characteristics of a record.



## Hygrometry

Measurement of the humidity of the air.



## Increase

The difference between entries and deletions within a given period.

## Index

Set of characters (letters, numbers, signs) identifying each archived item for filing or storage purposes.

## Indexation

Intellectual operation consisting in analyzing the content of a record whatever its support and in describing it by one or more key words with an aim of facilitating research.

## Indexing

Assigning a rating to the records entering the archives.

## Integrity

The integrity of a record refers to the completeness and unaltered state of the record. The record has not undergone any untraceable changes.

## Intermediate Records

Items that are no longer in common use in the producing departments and must be retained for regulatory, administrative or legal purposes.

## Inventory

A tool that lists or describes a set of archived records in a way that makes them known to users.

## ISAAR (CPF)

International standard for archival authority records for communities, individuals and families.

## ISAD(G)

A general, international standard for archival description that provides a standard structure for describing archives of any form, medium, or time period in the context of respect for the holdings.



## Legal value

Quality of the archived records allowing them to be used as evidence.

## Linear meter

A unit of measurement corresponding to the quantity of archived records standing on a shelf one meter long.



## Metadata

Data describing the context, content and structure of records and their management over time.

## Migration

Action of transferring data from one system to another while preserving their authenticity, integrity, reliability and usability.

## Mobile shelving

Shelving system composed of spikes and bays that can be moved on rails or hinges.



## Outsourcing

Transfer of activities from a company to a specialized external service provider.



## Packaging

Operation intended to protect archival items materially with the help of folders, sub-folders, boxes, packaging paper, tubes, zip bags etc.

## Personal data

Any information relating to a natural person who is identified or can be identified, directly or indirectly, by reference to an identification number or to one or more factors specific to that person.



## **Piece**

Record or part of a record that is materially individualized (single or double sheet, several stapled sheets, notebook, register ...)

Synonym: article.

## **Pre-archiving**

Term designating the transitory phase between the reception of the records to be archived by an archive service and their archiving.

## **Preservation standard**

Any technical requirement relating to the climatic and physical conditions of conservation of the records in the archives.

## **Processing**

All the procedures and operations of organization, sorting, classification, description and packaging of archives.



## **Record**

A set of materials and information that can be used as evidence or for consultation.

## **Records Management**

A set of measures designed to rationalize the production, sorting, preservation and use of current and intermediate records.

## **Retention Period**

The period of time defined in an organization's retention schedule after which the final disposition decision is applied. This period may be extended as defined in the procedures.

## **Retention schedule**

Document that allows the management of the records produced or received by an organization, regardless of their medium (paper, electronic, specimen, product). It is used to indicate for each record their administrative useful life, their retention period, their format and the final fate to be applied to them.

Synonym: retention schedule.

## **Retrieval**

Taking cognizance of an archived record, made available on request by an archive.



## **Sampling**

Sorting operation aiming at retaining a limited number of archived records, considered representative of a whole that its mass does not justify to keep completely.

## **Shelf**

Board(s) of standardized dimensions, attached to two uprights, intended for the storage of archived records.

## Shelving

A set of shelves and the frame that supports them, designed to store archived records.

## Shelving section

All the shelves superimposed between two vertical posts.

## Sorting

Operation consisting in separating, in a set of documents, those which must be preserved from those which are intended to be destroyed (sampling, selection etc.).

See also sampling.

## Space management

A set of procedures used to optimize the storage of archived records, and used to determine the available space in the archive rooms.

## Stock list

The process of making a topographical list of the records held in an archives room. This operation is intended to verify the completeness of the archive group periodically or when the person in charge of an archive changes.



## Temperature

Degree of cold or heat of a place. The temperature is one of the elements of environmental condition of material conservation of the archived records.

## Thesaurus

A controlled vocabulary of semantically related terms (hierarchical, associated or equivalent) used to index concepts in a set of records.

## Traceability

The act of creating, recording and preserving data about the movement and use of archived records throughout their life cycle.

## Transfer

- a. The physical and intellectual process by which responsibility for the preservation of records is transferred from the transferring institution to the archive. By extension, this term also refers to the records thus transferred at one time.
- b. The act of transferring physical custody and responsibility for records.

## Transfer service

Any department that transfers records in its possession to an archive, whether it produced them itself (called the producing department) or received them.

## Transfer slip

Documentary evidence of the transfer operation listing the elements handed over to an archive service by a transferring service; the transfer slip serves as a record of the taking over of the archives.