



Information and documentation— Records management

Part 1: Concepts and principles



This Australian Standard® was prepared by Committee IT-021, Records and Document Management Systems. It was approved on behalf of the Council of Standards Australia on 20 March 2017.

This Standard was published on 29 May 2017.

The following are represented on Committee IT-021:

- AMS Imaging
 - Australian Computer Society
 - Australian Industry Group
 - Australian Society of Archivists
 - City of Boroondara
 - Department of Defence (Australian Government)
 - Monash University
 - National Archives of Australia
 - Office of Finance & Services (NSW)
 - Public Record Office Victoria
 - Queensland State Archives
 - Records and Information Management Professionals Australasia
 - State Archives and Records Authority of New South Wales
 - State Records Office of Western Australia
 - University of Sydney
-

This Standard was issued in draft form for comment as DR AS/NZS ISO 15489.1:2017.

Standards Australia wishes to acknowledge the participation of the expert individuals that contributed to the development of this Standard through their representation on the Committee and through the public comment period.

Keeping Standards up-to-date

Australian Standards® are living documents that reflect progress in science, technology and systems. To maintain their currency, all Standards are periodically reviewed, and new editions are published. Between editions, amendments may be issued.

Standards may also be withdrawn. It is important that readers assure themselves they are using a current Standard, which should include any amendments that may have been published since the Standard was published.

Detailed information about Australian Standards, drafts, amendments and new projects can be found by visiting www.standards.org.au

Standards Australia welcomes suggestions for improvements, and encourages readers to notify us immediately of any apparent inaccuracies or ambiguities. Contact us via email at mail@standards.org.au, or write to Standards Australia, GPO Box 476, Sydney, NSW 2001.

Australian Standard®

Information and documentation— Records management

Part 1: Concepts and principles

Originated as part of AS 4390.1—1996, AS 4390.2—1996, AS 4390.3—1996, AS 4390.4—1996, AS 4390.5—1996, and AS 4390.6—1996.
AS 4390.1—1996, AS 4390.2—1996, AS 4390.3—1996, AS 4390.4—1996, AS 4390.5—1996, and AS 4390.6—1996 revised, amalgamated and redesignated as AS ISO 15489.1—2002 and AS ISO 15489.2—2002.
AS ISO 15489.1—2002 and AS ISO 15489.2—2002 revised, amalgamated and redesignated as AS ISO 15489.1:2017.

COPYRIGHT

© Standards Australia Limited

All rights are reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or copied in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, without the written permission of the publisher, unless otherwise permitted under the Copyright Act 1968.

Published by SAI Global Limited under licence from Standards Australia Limited, GPO Box 476, Sydney, NSW 2001, Australia

ISBN 987 1 76035 780 1

PREFACE

This Standard was prepared by the Standards Australia Committee IT-021, Records and Document Management Systems, to supersede AS ISO 15489.1—2002, *Records Management*, Part 1: *General* and AS ISO 15489.2—2002, *Records Management*, Part 2: *Guidelines*.

The objective of this Standard is to define the concepts and principles from which approaches to the creation, capture and management of records are developed. This Standard applies to the creation, capture and management of records regardless of structure or form, in all types of business and technological environments, over time.

This Standard is identical with, and has been reproduced from ISO 15489-1:2016, *Information and documentation — Records management — Part 1: Concepts and principles*.

As this Standard is reproduced from an International Standard, the following applies:

- (a) In the source text ‘this part of ISO 15489’ should read ‘this Australian Standard’.
- (b) A full point substitutes for a comma when referring to a decimal marker.

None of the normative references in the source document have been adopted as Australian or Australian/New Zealand Standards.

CONTENTS

1	Scope	1
2	Normative references	1
3	Terms and definitions	1
4	Principles for managing records	3
5	Records and records systems	4
5.1	General	4
5.2	Records	4
5.2.1	General	4
5.2.2	Characteristics of authoritative records	4
5.2.3	Metadata for records	5
5.3	Records systems	6
5.3.1	General	6
5.3.2	Characteristics of records systems	6
6	Policies and responsibilities	8
6.1	General	8
6.2	Policies	8
6.3	Responsibilities	8
6.4	Monitoring and evaluation	9
6.5	Competence and training	10
7	Appraisal	10
7.1	General	10
7.2	Scope of appraisal	11
7.3	Understanding the business	11
7.4	Determining records requirements	12
7.5	Implementing records requirements	12
8	Records controls	13
8.1	General	13
8.2	Metadata schemas for records	13
8.3	Business classification schemes	14
8.4	Access and permissions rules	15
8.5	Disposition authorities	15
9	Processes for creating, capturing and managing records	16
9.1	General	16
9.2	Creating records	16
9.3	Capturing records	16
9.4	Records classification and indexing	17
9.5	Access control	17
9.6	Storing records	17
9.7	Use and reuse	18
9.8	Migrating and converting records	18
9.9	Disposition	18
	Bibliography	20

INTRODUCTION

This part of ISO 15489 establishes the core concepts and principles for the creation, capture and management of records. It sits at the heart of a number of International Standards and Technical Reports that provide further guidance and instruction on the concepts, techniques and practices for creating, capturing and managing records.

About records and managing records

Records are both evidence of business activity and information assets. They can be distinguished from other information assets by their role as evidence in the transaction of business and by their reliance on metadata. Metadata for records is used to indicate and preserve context and apply appropriate rules for managing records.

Managing records encompasses the following:

- a) creating and capturing records to meet requirements for evidence of business activity;
- b) taking appropriate action to protect their authenticity, reliability, integrity and useability as their business context and requirements for their management change over time.

NOTE 1 Reference to “business activity” or “business activities” in this part of ISO 15489 is interpreted broadly to mean those activities that support the purposes of the organization’s existence. Functions, activities, transactions and work processes are representations of particular forms of “business activity” and are defined in [Clause 3](#).

Increasingly, records are made and kept in digital environments, offering a range of opportunities for new kinds of use and reuse. Digital environments also allow greater flexibility in the implementation of records controls, within and between systems that manage records.

Changing models of business are extending responsibilities for records beyond traditional organizational and jurisdictional boundaries. This requires records professionals to understand and meet a diverse range of internal and external stakeholder needs. These can include increased expectations of transparency of decision-making from business and government, the general public, customers, users of services, records’ subjects, and others with an interest in how records are created, captured and managed.

NOTE 2 In this International Standard (all parts), the phrase “creation, capture and management” is used to summarize the management of records as a whole. It is inclusive of the act of receipt of a record and of the range of records processes described in this part of ISO 15489.

With these environmental factors in mind, this part of ISO 15489 has been developed with an acknowledgement of the following:

- a) the roles of records as enablers of business activity and information assets;
- b) increased opportunities for records use and reuse in the digital environment;
- c) systems and rules for the creation, capture and management of records that need to extend beyond traditional organizational boundaries, such as in collaborative and multi-jurisdictional work environments;
- d) records controls that can be independent of other components of records systems;
- e) the importance of recurrent analysis of business activity and context to identify what records need to be created and captured, and how they should be managed over time;
- f) the importance of risk management in devising strategies for managing records and the management of records as a risk management strategy in itself.

While the concepts and principles of this part of ISO 15489 apply across varied business and technological environments, these environments can require different approaches to the

implementation of records controls, processes and systems. This part of ISO 15489 is not intended to provide detailed implementation advice for specific environments in which records are created, captured and managed. Rather, it defines key concepts and establishes high-level principles from which records controls, processes and systems for managing records in any environment may be developed. Advice on the design and implementation of controls, processes and systems for managing records in these different environments is addressed in subsequent part(s) and in other International Standards and Technical Reports.

Benefits

Approaches to the creation, capture and management of records based on the concepts and principles in this part of ISO 15489 ensure that authoritative evidence of business is created, captured, managed and made accessible to those who need it, for as long as it is required. This enables the following:

- a) improved transparency and accountability;
- b) effective policy formation;
- c) informed decision-making;
- d) management of business risks;
- e) continuity in the event of disaster;
- f) the protection of rights and obligations of organizations and individuals;
- g) protection and support in litigation;
- h) compliance with legislation and regulations;
- i) improved ability to demonstrate corporate responsibility, including meeting sustainability goals;
- j) reduction of costs through greater business efficiency;
- k) protection of intellectual property;
- l) evidence-based research and development activities;
- m) the formation of business, personal and cultural identity;
- n) the protection of corporate, personal and collective memory.

Policies, assigned responsibilities and procedures for the creation, capture and management of records support organizational information governance programs.

Relationship to other standards

This part of ISO 15489 is designed as a self-contained resource. However, it is also part of a family of International Standards and Technical Reports on a range of aspects of the creation, capture and management of records. These are listed in the Bibliography and may be consulted for more detailed advice on particular aspects of managing records.

The management of records in line with this International Standard (all parts) is fundamental to a successful Management System for Records (MSR), the management system defined by the ISO 30300 series of International Standards. An MSR links the management of records to organizational success and accountability by establishing a framework comprising policy, objectives and directives for records. It establishes requirements for the following:

- a) defined roles and responsibilities;
- b) systematic processes;
- c) monitoring and evaluation;

d) review and improvement.

Managers and others seeking to implement, operate and improve an MSR are advised to use this part of ISO 15489 in conjunction with the ISO 30300 series of International Standards.

AUSTRALIAN STANDARD

Information and documentation—Records management**Part 1:
Concepts and principles****1 Scope**

This part of ISO 15489 defines the concepts and principles from which approaches to the creation, capture and management of records are developed. This part of ISO 15489 describes concepts and principles relating to the following:

- a) records, metadata for records and records systems;
- b) policies, assigned responsibilities, monitoring and training supporting the effective management of records;
- c) recurrent analysis of business context and the identification of records requirements;
- d) records controls;
- e) processes for creating, capturing and managing records.

This part of ISO 15489 applies to the creation, capture and management of records regardless of structure or form, in all types of business and technological environments, over time.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references.

NOTE This part of ISO 15489 is designed as a self-contained resource, meaning there are no documents which are indispensable for its application.

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the following terms and definitions apply.

3.1**access**

right, opportunity, means of finding, using or retrieving information

3.2**activity**

major task performed by a business entity as part of a *function* ([3.11](#))

3.3**agent**

individual, workgroup or organization responsible for, or involved in, record creation, capture and/or records management processes

[SOURCE: ISO 23081-1:2006, 3.1]

Note 1 to entry: Technological tools such as software applications can be considered agents if they routinely perform records processes.

3.4**business classification scheme**

tool for linking records to the context of their creation

3.5**classification**

systematic identification and/or arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules

3.6**conversion**

process of changing records from one format to another

3.7**destruction**

process of eliminating or deleting a record, beyond any possible reconstruction

3.8**disposition**

range of processes associated with implementing records retention, *destruction* ([3.7](#)) or transfer decisions which are documented in *disposition authorities* ([3.9](#)) or other instruments

3.9**disposition authority**

instrument that defines the *disposition* ([3.8](#)) actions that are authorized for specified records

3.10**evidence**

documentation of a *transaction* ([3.18](#))

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2011, 3.1.5]

Note 1 to entry: This is proof of a business transaction which can be shown to have been created in the normal course of business activity and which is inviolate and complete. It is not limited to the legal sense of the term.

3.11**function**

group of activities that fulfils the major responsibilities for achieving the strategic goals of a business entity

3.12**metadata for records**

structured or semi-structured information, which enables the creation, management, and use of records through time and within and across domains

[SOURCE: ISO 23081-2:2007, 3.7]

3.13**migration**

process of moving records from one hardware or software configuration to another without changing the format

[SOURCE: ISO 30300:2011, 3.3.8]

3.14**record(s)**

information created, received and maintained as *evidence* ([3.10](#)) and as an asset by an organization or person, in pursuit of legal obligations or in the *transaction* ([3.18](#)) of business