Records management policy

The Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body (SPCB)
The Scottish Parliament
The Scottish Commission for Public Audit (SCPA)
Foreword

Records management is vital for the proper functioning of any organisation and is essential in ensuring that the Parliament has accurate, reliable and accessible records of its work to support its business and maintain a sufficient archive of its activities for future generations.

This records management policy has the full support of the Parliamentary Corporate Body, myself and the Parliament’s senior managers but it is dependent on the support of all stakeholders to ensure its success. There are clear personal and business benefits from good records management, including improving access to information we need, ensuring compliance with our legal obligations, keeping the information we need for as long as we need it and ensuring we maintain an archive of the Parliament’s activities.

Some of the records we produce record significant events in the history of the Parliament and need to be managed to ensure they remain accessible. We are responsible for ensuring that the records we produce not only meet our short-term business requirements but also our obligations to manage records for long-term access.

Sir Paul Grice
Clerk/Chief Executive
January 2017
Introduction

The SPCB recognises records management as an essential corporate activity. Nearly everything we do involves creating, managing and sharing information and good records management is an aid to everyone’s role and crucial to the efficiency and effectiveness of all of our corporate processes. It ensures we have access to our information when we need it and that we take a consistent approach to records creation, use, retention and disposal throughout the organisation, reducing reputational risk and ensuring records of historical significance are maintained. This policy will ensure the necessary levels of organisational support are in place to enable effective record keeping.

The SPCB acknowledges that records management is an essential business activity. SPCB records form the documented history of the Scottish Parliament, the Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body and the Scottish Commission for Public Audit.

All records created by individuals employed directly by the SPCB, or on the basis of a contract for services, are the property of the SPCB, not of the individual members of staff who created or received them.

The SPCB has and will maintain a records management strategy which ensures that records are secure, accessible, complete and authentic for as long as they are required to be kept. Digital records are captured and managed in the Scottish Parliament’s document and records management system, SPShare.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Scottish Parliamentary Service (SPS) staff have a defined and consistent approach to making and maintaining full and accurate records of transactions and official activities in accordance with good practice and legislative requirements.

The policy sets out practices which SPS staff must follow for the creation, management and disposal of our information. This will mean:

- we will spend less time looking for our information;
- the public will spend less time waiting for information;
- the public will be given the right information;
- we will have direct access to all relevant information on a topic; and
- we will know at a glance what a document is about and know which version is the most recent.
Scope and definitions

This policy applies to all the information we create, receive and share, regardless of format and storage repository. It applies to all information created by the Scottish Parliament, the SPCB and the SCPA. All individuals employed directly by the SPCB, or on the basis of a contract for services, are responsible for applying this policy.

For this policy, and all subsequent procedures and guidance, records are defined as ‘information created, received, and maintained, as evidence and information, by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business’ (ISO 15489-1:2001).

Records management is defined as the ‘field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records’ (ISO 15489-1:2001).

All digital records of the Scottish Parliament, SPCB and SCPA should be captured and managed in SPShare, the Scottish Parliament's document and records management system.

Policy objectives

SPS staff are required to maintain appropriate records of their activities and ensure that these records are accessible and managed in SPShare in accordance with records management procedures and the SPCB records retention schedule. Staff are required to ensure that SPCB records:

- are declared as a business-as-usual process
- are authentic, reliable and protected against unauthorised alteration;
- can be retrieved quickly to aid decision-making and increase management effectiveness;
- remain accessible to those that need to use them for as long as they are required;
- comply with regulatory and other business needs;
- are managed cost effectively, retained only as long as required and disposed of in accordance with the defined process; and
- are held securely in a manner commensurate with their value and retention period.

Each SPCB office will declare records of their activities to ensure that they are accessible and managed in accordance with records management procedures and the SPCB records retention schedule.
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Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years in conjunction with retention schedule reviews. The next review will be no later than January 2020.

Related documentation

RM-01 The SPCB records retention schedule
RM-02 The SPCB records management strategy
RM-04 The SPCB records management procedures and guidance
Records management plan

Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for keeping appropriate information and complying with records management policies and procedures.

Individuals

Each individual is responsible for the information they create and receive. Individuals are responsible and accountable for keeping accurate and complete records as appropriate of their decisions and actions to ensure that public accountability expectations are met. Individuals are responsible for identifying and declaring records of their activities within SPShare and for reviewing documents not declared as records and have not been edited within the last 2 years. Individuals should be aware that should no further amendments be made to such documents they will be deleted.

Teams/Office

Each team or office is responsible for keeping a complete and accessible record of what they do and for ensuring that document owners identify and declare records in SPShare.

SPShare site owners

SPShare site owners are expected to provide immediate support to colleagues in their office, to promote and champion the use of SPShare as a document and records management solution by acting as a champion of good practice and to provide an essential point of contact between the Information Manager and office staff.
Group and Office Heads

Group and Office Heads are responsible for supporting site owners and for the effective application of the SPCB records retention schedule and the records management policy and procedures in their areas of responsibility. Group and Office Heads are responsible for ensuring their business areas declare records within SPShare to accurately document activities within their business areas.

Information Manager

The Information Manager is responsible for:

- providing records management good practice through policies, procedures and guidance which meet our needs;
- ensuring all teams and individuals understand and can carry out their responsibilities;
- ensuring SPShare is fit-for-purpose
- supporting the network of SPShare site owners;
- managing the SPShare records centre to ensure records are disposed of in accordance with the SPCB records retention schedule.

Scottish Parliamentary Service senior management

Overall responsibility for records management and the implementation of associated policies, procedures and guidance lies with SPS senior management, making use of advice and assistance from Gordon Hobbs, the Information Manager as appropriate. Alan Balharrie, Head of the Digital Services Group, is the senior responsible owner of records management.

Scottish Parliamentary Corporate Body

The records produced or received by the Scottish Parliament, SPCB and SCPA during the course of business activities are owned by the SPCB although managed by individuals.

This policy does not apply to Members of the Scottish Parliament or their staff.