
The InterPARES Glossary

*A controlled vocabulary of terms
used in the InterPARES Project*

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action

The conscious exercise of will by an officer of the records creator or by an external person aimed to create, maintain, modify or extinguish situations.

active record

A record needed by its creator for the purpose of carrying out actions.

affix

To store on a medium.

annotation

An addition made to a record after it has been created. See also: execution annotation; business matter annotation; record management annotation.

archival bond

The relationship that links each record, incrementally, to the previous and subsequent ones and to all those which participate in the same activity. It is originary (i.e., it comes into existence when a record is made or received and set aside), necessary (i.e., it exists for every record), and determined (i.e., it is characterized by the purpose of the record).

archival date

The date on which a record is officially incorporated into the creator's records.

archival fonds

The whole of the records of a creator.

archives

1. The whole of the records of a creator.
2. An agency or institution responsible for the preservation and communication of records selected for permanent preservation.
3. A place in which records selected for permanent preservation are kept.

attestation

The written validation of a record by those who took part in the issuing of it (author, writer, countersigner) and by witnesses to the action or to the signing of the record.

audit trail

A means of tracking all the interactions with records within an electronic system so that any access to the system can be documented as it occurs for the purpose of preventing unauthorized actions in relation to the records.

authentic record

A record that is what it purports to be and that is free from tampering or corruption.

authentication

A declaration of a record's authenticity at a specific point in time by a juridical person entrusted with the authority to make such a declaration

authentication certificate of trusted third party

An attestation issued by a trusted third party for the purpose of authenticating the ownership and characteristics of a public key. It appears in conjunction with the digital signature of the author of a record, and is itself digitally signed by the trusted third party.

authenticity

The quality of being authentic, or entitled to acceptance. As being authoritative or duly authorized, as being what it professes in origin or authorship, as being genuine.

baseline requirements supporting the attestation of authenticity of copies of electronic records

The minimum conditions necessary to enable the preserver to attest to the authenticity of copies of electronic records.

benchmark requirements supporting the presumption of authenticity of electronic records

The conditions that serve as a basis for the preserver's assessment of the authenticity of electronic records.

business matter annotation

An addition made to a record in the course of handling the business matter in which the record participates, that reflect actions taken subsequent to the creation of the record for the purpose of handling the activity or the matter in which the record participates.

certificate of authenticity

A declaration by the preserver that one or more reproduced or reproducible electronic records are authentic

chronological date

The date (and, possibly, the time of day) of a record, included in the record by its author, or by the electronic system on the author's behalf, in the course of its compilation.

class

A subdivision of a classification scheme and the concrete body of records corresponding to it.

class code

The component of the classification code that uniquely identifies the class to which a record belongs.

classification code

A series of alphabetical, numerical, or alphanumeric symbols used to identify the record in its documentary context.

classification scheme

Diagram, table, or other representation categorizing the creator's records by hierarchical classes and according to a coding system expressed in alphabetical, numerical, or alphanumeric symbols.

classify records

To assign records to the pre-established classes in the classification scheme and, within each class, to the dossiers to which they belong (if applicable), by attaching to each record a classification code.

competence

A sphere of functional responsibility entrusted to an office.

competent person

The office which is given a competence and has, therefore, the authority and capacity to act within it.

completeness

The characteristic of a record that refers to the presence within it of all the elements required by the creator and the juridical system for it to be capable of generating consequences.

context

The framework in which the action in which the record participates takes place. The types of context include juridical-administrative context, provenancial context, procedural context, documentary context, and technological context.

copy

An entity that is generated from and resembles a record.

SCOPE NOTE: In common language, a copy and reproduction are synonyms. For the purposes of this research, the term reproduction is used to refer to the process of generating a copy, while the term copy is used to refer to the result of such a process, that is, to any entity which resembles and is generated from a record.

RELATED TERM: reproduction

corroboration

The explicit mention of the means used to validate the record.

create records

To make and set aside or receive and set aside records.

creation medium

The physical carrier on which a record, made or received, is set aside, either for further action or reference.

custody

The physical and legal control over the existence, authenticity, location and accessibility of records.

data

The smallest meaningful facts.

description of action

A presentation of the ideal motivation (the preamble) and the concrete reason (the exposition) for an action, as well as the action or matter itself (the disposition).

destroy inactive records

To obliterate inactive records from existence without reasonable hope of recovery.

digital component

A digital object that is part of an electronic record, or of a reproduced electronic record, or that contains one or more electronic records, or reproduced electronic records, and that requires specific methods for preservation.

digital time-stamp issued by a trusted third party

An attestation by a trusted third party that a record was received at a certain point in time.

diplomatics

The study of the genesis, inner constitution and transmission of archival documents, and of their relationship with the facts represented in them and with their creator.

document

Recorded information.

documentary context

The archival fonds to which a record belongs, and its internal structure.

documentary form

The rules of representation according to which the content of a record, its administrative and documentary context, and its authority are communicated. The two types of documentary form are extrinsic elements and intrinsic elements.

draft

A record made for purposes of correction.

draft number

The unique identifier assigned to sequential draft versions of the same record. The draft number is added to the record when it is stored.

electronic record

A record that is created (made or received and set aside) in electronic form.

electronic seal

A specific means of authenticating a record or ensuring that it is opened only by the intended addressee. A type of electronic signature. An example of an electronic seal is a digital signature, which is an electronic signature based on public key cryptography.

electronic signature

A digital mark that has the function of a signature in, is attached to, or is logically associated with a record, and is used by a signatory to take responsibility for, or to give consent to, the content of the record.

execution annotation

An addition made to a record, after its creation, as part of the document execution phase of an administrative procedure.

extrinsic elements

An element of a record that constitutes its external appearance. The types of extrinsic elements include presentation features, electronic signatures, electronic seals, digital time-stamps issued by a trusted third party, and special signs.

file

An integrated aggregation of records, constituted according to the person, action, or matter to which it refers.

file identifier

The means used to identify uniquely the file in which the record belongs.

folder

A cover in which non-electronic records, belonging in the same dossier, are loosely kept, usually in chronological order. A dossier may be distributed across a number of folders.

function

All of the activities aimed to accomplish one purpose, considered abstractly.

graphic

A representation of an object or outline of a figure, plan, or sketch by means of lines; a representation of an object formed by drawing.

image

An artificial imitation or representation of the external form of any object, or an optical appearance or counterpart of an object, such as is produced by rays of light, refracted as through a lens, or falling on a surface after passing through a small aperture. A subset of image is moving images, which are visual images, with or without sound, that, when viewed, present the illusion of motion.

inactive records

Records which are no longer needed for ongoing agency business.

indication of action

The subject line(s) and/or the title at the top of a record.

indication of attachment

The mention of autonomous items that have been linked inextricably to the record before transmission (i.e., added during its execution) in order for it to accomplish its purpose.

information

An assemblage of data in a comprehensible form capable of communication.

institutional requirement

1. An external, legal, regulatory, societal, and/or cultural constraint imposed on the institution responsible for preserving records, and/or an internal policy or procedure for the preservation of electronic and/or non-electronic records.

intrinsic elements

1. The elements of a record that constitute its internal composition. The types of intrinsic elements include name of author, name of originator, chronological date, name of place of origin of record, name of addressee(s), name of receiver(s), indication of action (matter), name of writer, corroboration, attestation, and qualification of signature.
2. The elements of a record that convey the action in which the record participates and its immediate context.

juridical person

An entity having the capacity or the potential to act legally and constituted either by a succession or collection of physical persons or a collection of properties.

juridical-administrative context

The legal and organizational system in which the creating body belongs.

medium

A physical carrier.

mode of transmission

The method by which a record is communicated over space or time.

name of addressee

The name of the physical or juridical person(s) to whom the record is directed or for whom the record is intended.

name of author

The name of the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to issue the record or in whose name or by whose command the record has been issued.

name of creator

The name of the physical or juridical person in whose archival fonds the record exists.

name of handling office

The office with the authority and capacity for treating an action or matter.

name of originator

The name of the person assigned the electronic address in which the record has been generated and/or sent.

name of place of origin

The name of the geographic place where the record was generated, included in the content of the record by the author or in the electronic system on the author's behalf.

name of receiver

The name of the physical or juridical person(s) to whom the record is copied for information purposes.

name of writer

The name of the physical or juridical person having the authority and capacity to articulate the content of the record.

needed source records

A source record after conversion which, instead of being destroyed, is returned to storage as a semiactive record.

original

The first complete and effective record.

overall presentation

The record's overall information configuration, i.e. the manner in which content is presented to the senses, using text, image or sound, either alone or in combination.

presentation features

A set of perceivable features (graphic, aural, visual), generated by means of encoding and program instructions, and capable, when used individually or in combination, to present a message to our senses. Presentation features include overall presentation and specific presentation features.

preservation framework

The whole of the principles, policies, and strategies for maintaining digital components and related information over time, and for reproducing the related authentic records and/or archival aggregations of records, that is produced by interpreting external controls and applying them to the records selected for preservation.

preservation strategy

Coherent set of objectives and methods for maintaining digital components and related information over time, and for reproducing the related authentic records and/or archival aggregations.

preserver

The juridical person whose primary responsibility is the long-term preservation of authentic records.

presumption of authenticity

An inference as to the fact of a record's authenticity that is drawn from known facts about the manner in which that record has been created and maintained.

priority of transmission

Indication of the priority in which a record is to be transmitted.

procedural context

The business procedure in the course of which the record is created.

procedure

In general, the body of written and unwritten rules governing the conduct of a transaction, or the formal steps undertaken in carrying out a transaction. In particular, the legislative machinery set up to carry out a given transaction.

provenancial context

The creating body, its mandate, structure and functions.

qualification of signature

The mention of the title, capacity and/or address of the persons signing a record.

record

A document made or received and set aside in the course of a practical activity.

record attribute

A defining characteristic of a record or of a record element.

record element

A constituent part of a record's documentary form.

record identity

The distinguishing character of a record, i.e., the attributes of a record that uniquely characterise it and distinguish it from other records.

record integrity

The quality or state of being a complete and uncorrupted record.

record item identifier

The component of the classification code that corresponds to the progressive number of the record within the dossier or, in the absence of dossiers, within the specific class.

record management annotation

An addition to a record made in the course of handling the record itself. It reflects actions taken subsequent to the creation of the record for the purpose of managing it as part of an agency's records.

reproduce electronic record

To process the digital components of an electronic record to produce an authentic copy of it.

reproduction

An assemblage of data in a comprehensible form capable of communication.

RELATED TERM: copy

sound

An aural representation of words, music, or any other manifestation of sound.

special sign

A symbol, such as a digital watermark, or a logo or crest of an organization, that identifies one or more persons involved in the compilation, receipt, or execution of a record.

specific presentation features

The specific aspects of the record's formal presentation that are necessary for it to achieve the purpose for which it was created.

storage medium

The physical carrier on which a record is affixed, when it is different from the creation medium.

technological context

The characteristics of the technical components of an electronic computing system in which records are created.

terms and conditions of transfer

A document that identifies in archival and technological terms electronic records to be transferred, together with relevant documentation, and that identifies the medium and format of transfer, when the transfer will occur, and the parties to the transfer.

text

A word, number, or symbol.

transmission, form of

The form that the record has when it is received.

validate

To grant official sanction to by marking.

verification of authenticity

The act or process of establishing a correspondence of known facts about the record itself and the various contexts in which it has been created and maintained with the proposed fact of the record's authenticity.

version

One of two or more forms in which a record is issued.