Developing a Digital Preservation Policy

Making Progress in Digital Preservation
31st October 2014
Policy and the University of Edinburgh

* There is no digital preservation policy at the University of Edinburgh... **YET!**
* Document is a “work in progress”
* Projected to be signed off by University Court early 2015

What I will do today is...
* Where we are to date
* Methodology adopted

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What is a ‘policy’?

“A course or principle of action adopted or proposed by an organisation or individual.”

Oxford Dictionary

“A set of ideas or a plan of what to do in particular situations that has been agreed officially by a group of people, a business organisation, a government or a political party.”

Cambridge Dictionary
What is a Digital Preservation Policy?

“A digital preservation policy is the mandate for an archive to support the preservation of digital records through a structured and managed digital preservation strategy.”

The National Archives

“A digital preservation policy facilitates the effective management of digital records ensuring the organisation is able to carry out its mandated functions.”

InterPARES project
Why develop a policy?

Benefits:
* Help to raise awareness of digital preservation
* Guide staff in their activities related to digital preservation
* Supports decision making
* Helps support a business case for digital preservation solutions
* Gains buy-in from senior management
* Solidifies the commitment of the institution/organisation
Challenges I’ve faced/facing…

- Finding published digital preservation policies within the HE sector (Oxford, Newcastle, Sussex, Manchester, Leeds)
- Navigating the wealth of information online on digital preservation policies and developing policies
- Determining the level and focus of the policy
- Nestling within the wider institutional policy framework
The process

- Establish purpose
- Research
- Identify elements
- Develop structure
- Develop content
- Revise
- Review

- Court approval
- Division approval
- Equality impact assessment

- Periodic review
- Catalogue of Policy Elements
- Relevant to public sector
- Relevant to stakeholders

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Identifying the elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy element matrix</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Element no.</strong></td>
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*Prevalence in Archives in Europe*
### Developing the Structure

<table>
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<th>Element</th>
<th>Related policy/reasoning</th>
<th>Order</th>
<th>COPE elements</th>
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<td>Access and use</td>
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<td>Security management</td>
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<td>Glossary</td>
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<td>Library strategy/CRC mission statement</td>
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<td>Auditing</td>
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<td>Standards</td>
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<td>7.1, 7.2, 7.3</td>
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### Final Structure

- Purpose
- Scope
- Context
- Principles/Preservation objectives
- Policy Requirements
  - Selection/Appraisal
  - Accessioning/Ingest
  - Preservation Strategy
  - Preservation Planning/Risk Assessment
- Access and Use
- Rights and Restriction Management
- Storage, Duplication and Backup
- Security Management
- Standards
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Communication
- Auditing
- Policy Review
- Glossary
Develop content

* Approach
  * Low detail (active)
  * Low detail (aspirational)
  * High detail (active)
  * High detail (aspirational)

* University of Edinburgh policy...
  ‘low detail, aspirational’
Catalogue of Policy Elements

1.1 Integrity

Alberto Vincenzi

SCAPE Policy Framework

One of the main goals of digital preservation is that the preserved digital objects, once stored in the repository, are not changed without intent.

Related Guidance Policy

Authenticity

Definition/Description

Integrity checking covers approaches like encryption, digital signatures, fecity checks etc.

Why

One of the main goals of digital preservation is that the preserved digital objects, once stored in the repository, are not changed without intent.

Risks

If the organization does not explain the measures it will take to avoid unnoticed loss, is might not achieve its goals. The risks can occur in many stages of the digital life cycle. A digital archive needs to describe a set of approaches it intends to implement in order to avoid the risks. The measures to take are very related to the operational IT tasks and are often already part of their work, but the preservation policy needs to make explicit that these measures will contribute to the authenticity of the digital objects.

Relevant areas are:

- Ingest: The completeness of the digital object will need to be defined before ingest and could be part of the discussion with the content deliverer or producer. At ingest the received checksums can be compared with the checksums generated upon retrieval. This will show whether bits were lost during transportation. This measure should be implemented for all data movements, including when the data is moved inside the repository.
- Storage: Moving data from one place to another needs to be accompanied by measures to check before and after the move whether the digital object is still complete and undamaged. This also applies to back up copies.
- Authentication measures to safeguard that personnel cannot make changes to the data stored or (unintentionally) delete (part of) digital objects.

Life cycle stage

Preservation Planning, Ingest, Preservation Action, Receive, Storage

Stakeholder

Management: should decide on overall measures to maintain integrity
Operational management: should implement the measures
Producers: can contribute by supporting integrity measures (for example to send checksums with the digital object)

Cross Reference

Bit preservation
Functional Preservation [migration]

Examples

Parliamentary Records: "The record must be maintained to ensure that it is complete, and protected against unauthorised or accidental alteration. In this Policy, integrity is ensured through the bitstream preservation function [...], and through the provision of metadata to describe all authorised actions undertaken in the course of content and bitstream preservation."
Equality Impact Assessment

* Equality Act 2010
* Public Sector Equality Duty – April 2011
  “public authorities must have ‘due regard’ to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, advance of equality of opportunity and foster good relations”
  Scottish Government
* University is bound to perform an EqIA on all its new and existing policies and procedures
Exercise

Write a sentence, or two, that defines the purpose of your policy...

“the purpose of this policy is to state and communicate the principles that guide parliament’s activities to secure the preservation of its digital information resources.” [Parliamentary Archives]

“the purpose of this digital preservation policy is to outline what we can hope to achieve in the way of preserving digital material and to clarify what depositors and other stakeholders can expect from the service in the way of digital preservation.” [Cheshire Archives and Local Studies]

“the purpose of this policy is to address the risk of losing digital material held by Newcastle University Library’s Special Collections department through material becoming unreadable due to obsolescence of the physical carrier containing digital material or the file formats they were created in.” [Newcastle University]
“The purpose of this policy is to outline how the University intends to manage, preserve and make accessible digital objects selected for long-term preservation because of their enduring cultural, historical, informational or evidential values.”