

BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE

CATALOGUING POLICY



Issued June 2007

1 Scope

This policy covers the creation of descriptive information about archives in the custody of Berkshire Record Office.

Cataloguing is defined as the process of creating multilevel descriptions which cover the context and content of archives and promote access to them.

The Record Office will create a cataloguing strategy document to define how it will implement this policy.

2 Governing standards

Berkshire Record Office has adopted the following standards for its cataloguing work:

- The General International Standard Archival Description, or ISAD(G), published by the International Council on Archives 2000
- The National Archives Standard for Records Repositories 2004

Berkshire Record Office will conform to the following statutes relating to the release of information:

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000

In addition Berkshire Record Office will seek to implement best practice guidance on cataloguing from the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, the Society of Archivists, or other recognised national bodies.

3 Staffing

- 3.1 Cataloguing work should usually be undertaken by professional staff who have been trained in both archival description and archive appraisal and are familiar with in-house cataloguing rules.
- 3.2 Some types of cataloguing work may be undertaken either by other staff or by volunteers under direction from a suitably qualified professional. This is work that requires no appraisal and the creation of descriptive information that follows a set form.
- 3.3 All staff who catalogue at Berkshire Record Office will receive training. Volunteers will receive task-specific training. Berkshire Record Office staff will receive training on in-house cataloguing rules. Berkshire Record Office staff may also receive job-specific training either in-house or through a recognised external provider.

4 Funding

Berkshire Record Office will commit dedicated resources to cataloguing work. However the Office may additionally seek external funding for cataloguing from time-to-time.

Depositors are not usually expected to fund cataloguing work but the Record Office may seek funding from depositors to prioritise cataloguing.

5 Content of multilevel descriptions

5.1 The content of multilevel description will be determined by the rules within ISAD(G). These rules prescribe that

- Description should be from the general to the specific
- Information is only provided that is relevant to the level being described
- Descriptions are linked to other levels
- Information is not repeated at separate levels

5.2 Content will be derived from the various individual elements outlined in ISAD(G). Content should be provided with guidance as to its accuracy, and subjective commentary should be identifiable as such.

5.3 A cataloguing manual will be produced which defines the production of catalogues, current editorial and presentational standards for catalogues produced by the Record Office, the appraisal and selection of material during cataloguing, and the documentation of cataloguing work. Catalogues will be produced in accordance with the manual.

6 Availability of catalogues

6.1 Berkshire Record Office aims to catalogue all records which are open to the public for research. Records acquired by the Office will be catalogued as soon as resources become available. The Office will produce a regular cataloguing plan and monitor its performance.

6.2 Catalogues will be made available in at least the Berkshire Record Office public searchroom and via the National Register of Archives maintained by The National Archives. A copy of the catalogue will also be provided to the depositor.

6.3 Berkshire Record Office aspires to make all catalogues also available online and will produce a strategy for achieving this.

7 Security of catalogue information

7.1 All catalogue information will be stored on a maintained server which will be subject to regular backups.

7.2 Copies of catalogues will be sent to the National Register of Archives.