

“Preserving the past, informing the future”

National Meteorological Archive Collections Acquisition Policy

Policy or Standard Control	
Authority	Head Services Strategic Change
Version	1.3
Link to Controlled Document Register for validation: https://metoffice.sharepoint.com/sites/MetOfficeLibrary&ArchiveCommsSite/Lists/MODocumentRegister/AllItems.aspx	

Met Office Records Selection Methodology Statement

The Met Office is the national meteorological service for the UK providing critical weather services and world-leading climate science. Our records selection reflects our public task which is defined by the Public Weather Service Customer Group (PWSCG) and documented in the PWSCG Customer Supplier Agreement (CSA).

Aims of the Service

The National Meteorological Archive is recognised and accredited by The National Archives as a place of deposit meeting the Standard for Record Repositories for records created under the authority of the Met Office and its predecessor organisations and subject to the Public Records Act 1958.¹

The archive seeks to preserve, in perpetuity, records relating to the national memory of the weather. It exists to collect, catalogue and preserve in accordance with national and international standards, and make publicly available records that reflect our public task which is defined by the PWSCG and detailed in the Public Weather Service (PWS) CSA.

Our analogue collections include meteorological data concerning the surface, marine and upper air environments of the British Isles and the wider world as created by the Met Office and its antecedents. Our digital collections capture some of the key PWS services and outputs including National Severe Weather Warnings, Met Office science and three-month outlook.

The National Meteorological Archive (NMA) Asset Register details those meteorological records (both analogue and born digital) created under the authority of the Met Office and its predecessor organisations that the Met Office agrees to retain in perpetuity on behalf of The National Archive.

Decisions about what to include in this register are made by the relevant Information Asset Owners who have the subject expertise to make informed decisions on behalf of TNA. The Library & Archive Manager as the Information Asset Guardian promotes the ongoing review of what is captured from our public task and ensure effective delivery of those outputs to the National Meteorological Archive. The NMA asset registers are regularly reviewed to reflect any changes.

In addition, the archive collection of the Royal Meteorological Society is held within the archive under a Memorandum of Understanding.

Items which are not automatically a matter of public record will be taken into the collection where they are deemed to supplement and / or complement the collection, both in relation to meteorological data and the history of the Met Office and its staff. This may be where they fill a gap in data coverage or add to climatological understanding.

¹ Note records held in PRONI (Public Records Office Northern Ireland) are subject to the Public Records Act (NI) 1923

Scope of the collection

1. Paper Format

The archive collects data produced by official meteorological recording stations from the point of foundation until the end of submission of data in paper form. This is collected in accordance with the Public Records Act. In addition privately created sources will be accepted where these are deemed to complement the official record, in particular those which relate to early periods or data sparse areas.

The archive also seeks to acquire records relating to:

- Station histories
- Meteorological and climate related research as carried out by Met Office personnel
- Documents reflecting the role of the Met Office in military operations
- Personal papers/photographs etc. of Met Office staff from any period where these are considered to add to the overall knowledge and understanding of the range and depth of work carried out by the Met Office and its staff from its foundation to the present

Records relating to England and Wales are held in Exeter, records relating to Scotland are held at National Records of Scotland and those relating to Northern Ireland are held at Public Records Office Northern Ireland.

2. Digital Format

The National Meteorological Library and Archive (NMLA) is a repository for electronic material including public records relating to the history of the weather and ongoing understanding of weather and climate science. It is maintained by the library and archive and comprises records in both born digital and digitised form. Additions to the Digital Library and Archive include those records detailed in the NMA Archive Register plus other records that are not automatically a matter of public record but are deemed to supplement and or complement the collection, both in relation to meteorological data and the history of the Meteorological Office and its staff.

Other born digital records both internally produced and relating to private individuals will be accepted where these are deemed relevant to the mission of the National Meteorological Archive and will complement or further develop the collection.

In the case of digitised records at present the library and archive seeks to include surrogate copies of original paper materials held by the library and archive which have been digitised for preservation purposes and/or to promote access. In the future it is expected that the acquisitions policy may be altered to enable inclusion of digital surrogates of material held externally to the collection but considered to complement the official record.

In both cases the archive will not normally accept or seek to acquire:

- Documents relating to the administrative processes involved in the day to day functioning of the Met Office, this includes staff records.
- Meteorological data, where not created by the Met Office, relating to parts of the globe outside of the British Isles unless these are deemed to complement the pre-existing collection with regard to current, or future potential research.

Process of collection, selection and de-accessioning

The repository seeks to acquire records by transfer or gift. Purchases will be made only of documents deemed, in the opinion of both the Archivist and the Library and Archive Manager to be of outstanding important to the history of the weather.

Permanent Loans are not accepted.

Only documents which, in the judgement of the Archivist, are of sufficient quality for permanent preservation will be accepted and it is a condition of acceptance that documents will be available for public access.

In the case of electronic material the NMLA retains the right to select only materials in formats that are more stable/more appropriate for electronic preservation.

Following deposit and during the accessioning process the Archivist reserves the right to select for destruction those documents, including electronic documents, within a collection deemed not to be worthy of permanent preservation and this intention shall be made clear at the time of transfer.

The archive shall have authority to transfer records to a more suitable repository if it is considered that the documents would benefit from relocation.

The archive also reserves the right to conduct a periodic review of records and where necessary, to recommend their disposal, destruction or transfer.

Related documentation:

1. National Meteorological Library Collections Development and Management Policy
2. National Meteorological Archive Collections Information Policy

Document Control		
	Role Title	Name
Document Owner	Archivist	Mark Beswick
Author	Library & Archive Manager	Catherine Ross
Reviewer	Library & Archive Manager	Catherine Ross

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Version	Date published	Review due	Change description
1.00	04/2016	04/2021	First Publications
1.10	03/02/2021	3/03/2026	Reviewed and Updated
1.20	1/12/2021	01/4/2027	Reviewed and updated
1.3	08/2025	08/2030	Reviewed, personnel updated