
**Information and documentation —
Records management — Core concepts
and vocabulary**

*Information et documentation — Systèmes de gestion des documents
d'activité — Principes essentiels et vocabulaire*

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Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular, the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see www.iso.org/directives).

Attention is drawn to the possibility that some of the elements of this document may be the subject of patent rights. ISO shall not be held responsible for identifying any or all such patent rights. Details of any patent rights identified during the development of the document will be in the Introduction and/or on the ISO list of patent declarations received (see www.iso.org/patents).

Any trade name used in this document is information given for the convenience of users and does not constitute an endorsement.

For an explanation of the voluntary nature of standards, the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html.

This document was prepared by Technical Committee ISO/TC 46, *Information and documentation*, Subcommittee SC 11, *Archives/records management*.

This second edition cancels and replaces the first edition (ISO 30300:2011), which has been technically revised.

The main changes compared to the previous edition is as follows.

- The scope has been broadened beyond the series of standards on Management Systems for Records as it contains the definitions corresponding to the core concepts stated in all the updated products of ISO/TC 46/SC 11.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html.

Introduction

0.1 General

A vocabulary is a “terminological dictionary that contains designations and definitions from one or more domains or subjects” (see ISO 1087:2019, 3.7.5). This document provides a vocabulary for the subject field of records management. It defines core concepts to provide a common understanding of the records management domain within the ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards.

Clear, consistent and coherent standards need clear, consistent and coherent terminology. This document follows rules and guidelines provided by ISO/TC 37¹⁾ to build terminology standards. Readers unfamiliar with terminology work would benefit from an understanding of ISO 704.

This document is intended to provide ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards developers with the most relevant definitions related to the concepts used in the records management domain. It is also expected that this document will be used by standards users and any interested party to clearly understand records management concepts represented by consistent terms and definitions.

Terms and definitions in this document have been developed within a concept system. A concept is a unit of knowledge created by a unique combination of characteristics. Concepts are arranged in concept systems according to the relationships among them. Concept systems are graphically represented by concept diagrams. A concept in a specific domain is represented by a term. Concepts are not necessarily bound to particular languages. They are, however, influenced by the social or cultural background which often leads to different categorizations. This document facilitates consistent understanding beyond languages and cultural practices by illustrating core concepts about records management used in ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards and the relationships among those concepts in the core concept diagrams in [Annex A](#). The concepts identified in the field of records management and expressed in the diagrams in [Annex A](#) are ordered in [Clause 3](#) grouping by concepts diagrams. [Figure 1](#) shows the overview diagram with the correspondent subclauses both in [Annex A](#) and in [Clause 3](#).

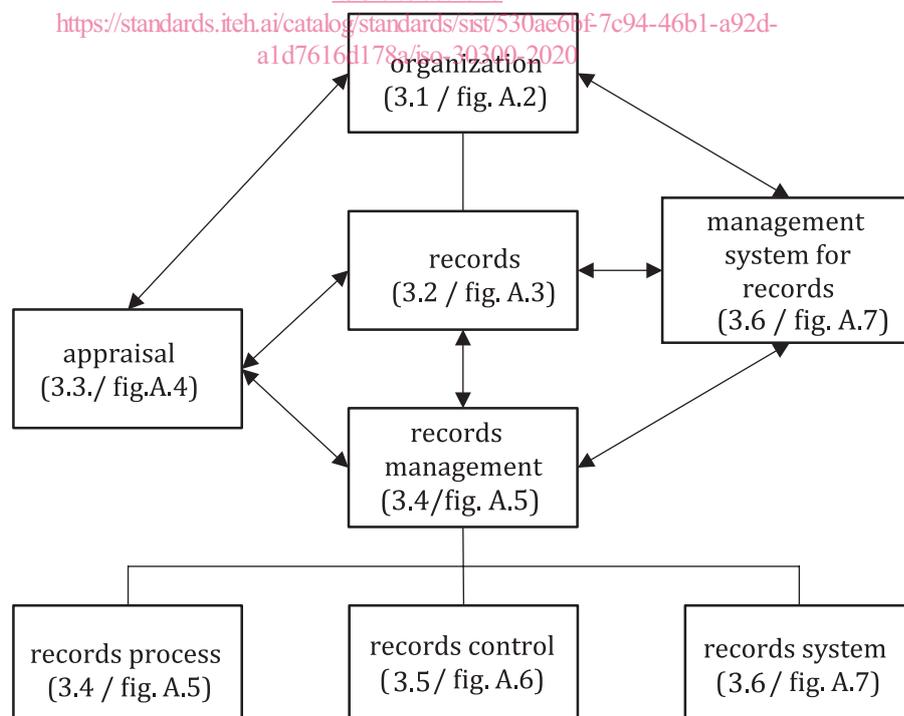


Figure 1 — Overall diagram showing core concepts, their relationships and mapping terms in [Clause 3](#) and [Annex A](#)

1) ISO/TC 37, *Language and terminology*.

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NOTE The meaning of forms used for the concept's relationships are explained in [A.2](#).

For facilitating search for a particular term, an alphabetical index is included at the end of this document.

0.2 Background

The terms and definitions in this document are based on the concept system of ISO 30300:2011 with new concepts added from ISO 15489-1. This document is also the vocabulary standard for the ISO series Management Systems for Records. Therefore, it includes all core terms and definitions for management systems from Appendix 2 of ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L^[13]. In addition, this document includes any terms and definitions that are relevant to core concepts of the records management domain used in TC 46/SC 11 standards.

This document is not intended as a comprehensive vocabulary of all terms used in the records management domain, not even in all ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards.

0.3 How to apply terms and definitions of this document

The terms and definitions in this document are adopted in any revision of the existing ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards. During the period before a complete revision cycle of all ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards, definitions in this document take precedence when a duplicate or conflicting definition exists in another ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standard.

When developing a new product or revising an existing one, additional terms and definitions may be added to that product when necessary. New notes on existing terms may also be added to the product to serve a specific purpose or explanation. In both cases, definitions are included in the Clause 3 of the standard in question in addition to the reference to ISO 30300.

In the future revisions of this document, new terms and definitions included in ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards are to be considered for inclusion.

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Information and documentation — Records management — Core concepts and vocabulary

1 Scope

This document contains terms and definitions that are relevant to the core concepts of the records management domain. It does not limit the definition of new terms in ISO/TC 46/SC 11 standards.

2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

3 Terms and definitions

ISO and IEC maintain terminological databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <http://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 Terms relating to the concept of organization

3.1.1

accountability

condition where an *organization* (3.1.19) is answerable to its governing bodies, legal authorities, and more broadly, its other *stakeholders* (3.1.13) regarding its decisions and activities

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.1, modified — Replaced “state” by “condition” and rephrased for better understanding.]

3.1.2

activity

task performed by an *organization* (3.1.19)

3.1.3

agent

person or group of people responsible for, or involved in *records processes* (3.4.13)

Note 1 to entry: A technological tool such as a software application can be considered an agent when substituting for individuals or workgroups if the tool routinely perform records processes.

3.1.4

audit

systematic, independent and documented *process* (3.1.23) for obtaining audit *evidence* (3.2.6) and evaluating it objectively to determine the extent to which the audit criteria are fulfilled

Note 1 to entry: An audit can be an internal audit (first party) or an external audit (second party or third party), and it also can be a combined audit (combining two or more disciplines).

Note 2 to entry: An internal audit is conducted by the organization itself, or by an external party on its behalf.

Note 3 to entry: “Audit evidence” and “audit criteria” are defined in ISO 19011.

Note 4 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure’s core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.5

business continuity

capability of an *organization* (3.1.19) to continue delivery of products or services within acceptable time frames at predefined capacity during a disruption

[SOURCE: ISO 22301:2019, 3.3]

3.1.6

competence

ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.7

compliance

meeting the *mandate* (3.1.14) of the *organization* (3.1.19)

Note 1 to entry: This includes obligations set by internal policies and decisions and/or external laws, regulations, standards and agreements.

[SOURCE: ISO 19600:2014 3.17, modified — In the definition “all the organization's compliance obligations” has been change to “the mandate of the organization”.]

3.1.8

conformity

fulfilment of a *requirement* (3.1.25)

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.9

continual improvement

recurring *activity* (3.1.2) to enhance *performance* (3.1.21)

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.10

corrective action

action to eliminate the cause of a *nonconformity* (3.1.17) and to prevent recurrence

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.11

effectiveness

extent to which planned *activities* (3.1.2) are realized and planned results achieved

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.12

function

group of *activities* (3.1.2) aimed at achieving one or more goals of an *organization* (3.1.19)

3.1.13**interested party** (preferred term)

stakeholder (admitted term)

person or *organization* (3.1.19) that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or *activity* (3.1.2)

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.14**mandate**

legal, regulatory or business rules governing the *organization* (3.1.19)

Note 1 to entry: to entry. In the records management field, mandates affect the records processes.

3.1.15**measurement**

process (3.1.23) to determine a value

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.16**monitoring**

determining the status of a *system* (3.6.5), a *process* (3.1.23) or an *activity* (3.1.2)

Note 1 to entry: To determine the status, there may be a need to check, supervise or critically observe.

Note 2 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.17**nonconformity**

non-fulfilment of a *requirement* (3.1.25)

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Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.18**objective**

result to be achieved

Note 1 to entry: An objective can be strategic, tactical, or operational.

Note 2 to entry: Objectives can relate to different disciplines (such as financial, health and safety, and environmental goals) and can apply at different levels (such as strategic, organization-wide, project, product and process).

Note 3 to entry: An objective can be expressed in other ways, e.g. as an intended outcome, a purpose, an operational criterion, as a records objective, or by the use of other words with similar meaning (e.g. aim, goal, or target).

Note 4 to entry: In the context of management systems for records, records objectives are set by the organization, consistent with the records policy, to achieve specific results.

Note 5 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.19

organization

person or group of people that has its own functions with responsibilities, authorities and relationships to achieve its *objectives* (3.1.18)

Note 1 to entry: The concept of organization includes, but is not limited to sole trader, company, corporation, firm, enterprise, authority, partnership, charity or institution, or part or combination thereof, whether incorporated or not, public or private.

Note 2 to entry: The concepts also include different parts working together with common objectives.

Note 3 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.20

outsource

to make an arrangement where an external *organization* (3.1.19) performs part of an organization's *function* (3.1.12) or *process* (3.1.23)

Note 1 to entry: An external organization is outside the scope of the management system, although the outsourced function or process is within the scope.

Note 2 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.21

performance

measurable result

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Note 1 to entry: Performance can relate either to quantitative or qualitative findings.

Note 2 to entry: Performance can relate to the management of activities, processes, products (including services), systems or organizations. <https://standards.iteh.ai/catalog/standards/sist/530ae6bf-7c94-46b1-a92d-a1d7616d178a/iso-30300-2020>

Note 3 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in the ISO Directives, Part 1:2019, L3.1.22.

3.1.22

policy

intentions and direction of an *organization* (3.1.19), as formally expressed by its *top management* (3.1.27)

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.23

process

set of interrelated or interacting activities which transforms inputs into outputs

Note 1 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure's core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.24

records policy

intentions and direction of an *organization* (3.1.19) in relation to *records* (3.2.10)

Note 1 to entry: A records policy in management systems for records (MSR) is a unique declaration of intention normally in a short statement formally expressed by the top management.

Note 2 to entry: Records policy can be used in plural to designate documentation covering technical aspects, set of rules and principles for the creation, capture and management of records.

3.1.25**requirement**

need or expectation that is stated, generally implied or obligatory

Note 1 to entry: “Generally implied” means that it is custom or common practice for the organization and interested parties that the need or expectation under consideration is implied.

Note 2 to entry: A specified requirement is one that is stated, for example in documented information.

Note 3 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure’s core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.26**risk**

effect of uncertainty on *objectives* ([3.1.18](#))

Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected. It can be positive, negative or both, and can address, create or result in opportunities and threats.

Note 2 to entry: Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

Note 3 to entry: Objectives can have different aspects and categories, and can be applied at different levels.

Note 4 to entry: Risk is usually expressed in terms of risk sources, potential events, their consequences and their likelihood.

Note 5 to entry: In the high level structure’s core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L, the definition of risk and the Notes to entry are slightly different.

[SOURCE: ISO 31000:2018 3.1, modified — A new Note 2 to entry about uncertainty has been added and subsequent Notes to entry have been renumbered.]

3.1.27**top management**

person or group of people who directs and controls an *organization* ([3.1.19](#)) at the highest level

Note 1 to entry: Top management has the power to delegate authority and provide resources within the organization.

Note 2 to entry: If the scope of the management system covers only part of an organization, then top management refers to those who direct and control that part of the organization.

Note 3 to entry: This term is part of the high level structure’s core terms and definitions for management systems stated in ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1:2019, Annex L.

3.1.28**third party**

person or body that is recognized as being independent of the *organizations* ([3.1.19](#)) involved, as concerns the issue in question

3.1.29**transaction**

smallest unit of an *activity* ([3.1.2](#)) consisting of an exchange between two or more participants or systems

3.2 Terms relating to the concept of records**3.2.1****asset**

item, thing or entity that has potential or actual value

EXAMPLE Examples of assets include information, software, computers, services, people, competences, skills, experience, reputation and image.