

# Appraisal and deaccession policy

## Version 1.0

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## 1. Purpose of this document

This document outlines a framework of policies and procedures put in place to retrospectively appraise datasets and support the sustainable management of ADS' collections.

- ADS' *Strategic Plan*<sup>1</sup>
- *Collection Policy*<sup>2</sup>
- *Repository Operations*<sup>3</sup>
- *Preservation Policy*<sup>4</sup>
- *Ingest Manual*

## 2. Introduction

The ADS recognises that it has a continued responsibility for the care of the records and datasets within its holdings, and that the ethical options for the removal of data, and particularly the deaccession of datasets, are limited. This document outlines the policies and procedures in place to appraise and, where necessary, remove of data, deaccession collections and dispose of datasets. This framework provides the policies, plans and procedures to ensure that the repository adheres to current requirements, best practice and provides mitigation for any risk.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/strategicPlan.xhtml>

<sup>2</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/collectionsPolicy.xhtml>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>

<sup>4</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#PresPol>

<sup>5</sup> See, for example, National Archives (2015) *Deaccessioning and disposal: Guidance for archive services*. National Archives: London, p.10.

<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/Deaccessioning-and-disposal-guide.pdf>.

### 3. Collections Policy

The primary reference point of any review, removal of data and deaccession of datasets is the *Collections Policy*<sup>6</sup>, and that this, framed within the *Strategic Plan*<sup>7</sup>, provides the parameters of the collecting scope for the repository. Additionally policies and procedures are in place to ensure the consistent and coherent management of collections and datasets, specifically the *Repository Operations*<sup>8</sup>, *Preservation Policy*<sup>9</sup> and *Ingest Manual*.<sup>10</sup> With more detailed, focused and specific procedures provided by the *Data Procedures*.<sup>11</sup> All policy documents and procedures are subject to regular (annual) review by repository staff and approved by the ADS Management Committee.<sup>12</sup>

### 4. Collection Review

Recognition that any appraisal of datasets,<sup>13</sup> therefore, can be an ongoing, and somewhat protracted, throughout the negotiation and deposition phases of a submission is important. The ADS is fortunate in that throughout its history<sup>14</sup> policies and procedures have been in place, and diligent governance<sup>15</sup> employed, to scrutinise the creation and application of its *Strategic Plan* and *Collections Policy*. That said, it may still be necessary undertake some form of retrospective appraisal of collections, particularly where documentation is limited, or poorly maintained.<sup>16</sup>

The process of assessment of datasets begins before the transferal of data during negotiations for deposition. During this time, depositors will provide an outline of the collection, submit data management plans and/or provide samples of the data being collected allowing the repository to assess the significant properties of the dataset, and evaluate its appropriateness for deposition. The Collections Development Manager, with reference to the *Collections Policy*<sup>17</sup> and the support of the Director, Deputy Director and Digital Archivists, carries out this assessment. Where necessary the advice of the *Management Committee*<sup>18</sup> may also be sought. Consultation with data creators, and potential depositors, is integral to this appraisal process; consequently, negotiations can often involve repeated requests for more information and the clarification of any concerns. In some circumstances, deposition with the repository may be a requirement stipulated by an external

<sup>6</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/collectionsPolicy.xhtml>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/strategicPlan.xhtml>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#PresPol>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#Ingest>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DataProcedures>, internal access only, but static versions of these procedures are available -

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#DataProcedures>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/managementCommittee.xhtml>.

<sup>13</sup> See Appendix 1 for an explanation of the terminologies used within this policy document.

<sup>14</sup> A detailed history of the repository is available

(<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/background.xhtml>) and current activities are summarised (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/ourWork.xhtml>).

<sup>15</sup> For a discussion, see <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/governance.xhtml>.

<sup>16</sup> Section 3 provides a fuller discussion of the appraisal, reappraisal and retrospective appraisal of datasets.

<sup>17</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/collectionsPolicy.xhtml>.

<sup>18</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/managementCommittee.xhtml>

funder, or a condition of a research framework or scheme of investigation, that are the result of existing agreements with the ADS.<sup>19</sup> This appraisal process forms part of the general negotiation for deposition, with both data creators and depositors notified of any problems or issues.

Further appraisal of the dataset forms part of the accession process.<sup>20</sup> Ingestion of datasets, carried out by Digital Archivists, provides an opportunity to examine the entire dataset in a more detailed and rigorous fashion. In those instances where assessment identifies problems, or raises concerns, the Collections Development Manager, in the first instance, is informed. The depositor will be informed where it is felt that these concerns have foundation and response to these issues sought. Accession will cease whilst resolution is sought. Accession process will only recommence once resolution, between depositor and repository, is agreed.

The completion of the accession and the return of a signed deposit licence marks the point at which the ADS agrees to accept responsibility for the preservation of the dataset.<sup>21</sup> This need for appraisal should diminish following the signing of the deposit licence and the completion of the accession process, and cease entirely following the completion of archival work and the release of the collection.

The preservation of all documentation associated with the deposition and its appraisal is essential; these records should be added to the 'negotiations' section of the appropriate collection record within the *Collections Management System* (CMS).<sup>22</sup> The 'notes' section of the CMS should be used to draw attention to any concerns or problems identified during the appraisal. All documentation should be stored in accordance with the *CMS Manual*<sup>23</sup> and the *Repository Operations*.<sup>24</sup>

Where the appraisal of collections has been successfully applied, subsequent reappraisal of the dataset should be a relatively rare occurrence, carried out only in exceptional circumstances. Any review of collections, whether undertaken on discreet individual datasets or as part of wider repository level reappraisal, should consider the motivation leading to initiation of the review; in the case of the ADS, external factors often prompt the reappraisal of a dataset.<sup>25</sup> Throughout the process staff should remain objective and impartial, with due diligence paid to the legitimate, but often conflicting, rights and interests of stakeholders,

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<sup>19</sup> These relationships are often extant and negotiated in advance (see the list of organisations for which the ADS is mandated or recommended - <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/research/partnerships.xhtml#recommended>). In other instances, it may be necessary to consult with these external agencies directly to ensure that the ADS is the most appropriate location for the deposition of the dataset.

<sup>20</sup> As outlined in the *Ingest Policy* - <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#Ingest>.

<sup>21</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/depositLicence.xhtml>.

<sup>22</sup> <http://adsmanticore0.york.ac.uk:8080/cms3/authenticate.do>, internal access only.

<sup>23</sup> <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=CmsManualNegotiations>, internal access only,

<sup>24</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

<sup>25</sup> See case studies outlined in Section 7.

including employers, owners, community members, data subjects and users, past, present and future.<sup>26</sup>

For much the same reasons any retrospective appraisal of datasets is infrequent. The repository is fortunate to have developed a detailed review process from the outset making any need for retrospective appraisal moot. Any retrospective appraisal focuses on metadata enhancement, the archive interface, or the migration of formats. Much like reappraisal, the initiation of any retrospective appraisal is a consequence of external factors, for example, an observation or complaint by a data consumer.

## 5. Accessioned Datasets

Removal of data and the formal deaccession of collections, is, and should always be, a rare event carried out as a last resort, and only following a thorough collection review and following the exhaustion of all other options. Where deemed necessary this policy outlines the procedures and policies to, in the first instance, reassure both depositors and data consumers that any removal of data or complete collections has been carefully considered, that all avenues that would facilitate the continued management and preservation of the dataset have been explored and that due diligence has been paid. At the same time, it explains the rationale and reasons why the removal of data, or the deaccession of an entire collection may be the most appropriate course of action. This guidance also provides a clear structure for both the reporting, appraisal and outlines the procedures for repository staff.

### 5.1 Disposal of non-accessioned data

In some circumstances, the ADS may receive data prior to ingest and deposition. Typically, this forms part of a process of checking the dataset, documentation and metadata to ensure that it is appropriate for deposition and meets the requirements outlined in the *Guidelines for Depositors*.<sup>27</sup>

**Scenario 5.1.1:** Client A has submitted data to the ADS to allow the Collections Development Manager and Digital Archivist to review the dataset and check metadata prior to formal deposition. The client has used an external data sharing service is used to share the dataset (*University of York DropOff Service*). The Collections Development Manager has stored the data in the repositories 'unaccessioned holdings' area while the review is scheduled, and then carried out.<sup>28</sup> On receiving the data the client is notified that the dataset will be held temporarily and that no liability for the preservation of dataset can be accepted.

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<sup>26</sup> Archives and Records Association (2018) *Code of Ethics*. Archives and Records Association (UK and Ireland): Taunton.

[https://www.archives.org.uk/images/ARA\\_Documents/ARA\\_Code\\_Of\\_Ethics.pdf](https://www.archives.org.uk/images/ARA_Documents/ARA_Code_Of_Ethics.pdf).

<sup>27</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/guidelinesForDepositors.xhtml>.

<sup>28</sup> 'Unaccessioned holdings' is an area used for the temporary storage of data whilst it is reviewed, or while it awaits formal deposition. This shared drive is backed-up locally as outlined in the *Preservation Policy* - <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#PresPol>.

## Procedure

1. Removal of all data should follow the completion of any assessment.<sup>29</sup>
2. No formal notification is necessary as the process is explained when data is submitted for assessment.

When accepting data for assessment it is clearly explained to clients that no formal liability for the storage, or archiving, of the dataset is accepted by the repository. Any retention of the data is temporary and will only be stored until the assessment process is complete.

**Scenario 5.1.2:** Depositor B has submitted a large dataset through the repositories ADS-easy portal. While the deposition waits allocation for full deposition, the data is stored, temporarily, on the data server forms part of the application. The retention of data on this server continues until completion of preservation activities and the release of the collection.

## Procedure

1. Notification of the transfer of data from temporary storage to the preservation servers forms part of the standard accession process, specifically through the issuing of a deposit receipt and email<sup>30</sup>, and the issuing and subsequent return of the deposit licence.<sup>31</sup>
2. The retention of the dataset within temporary storage, or within ADS-easy or OASIS Images applications, continues until *Archival Information Package* (AIP) and *Dissemination Information Package* (DIP) are complete, the archive has been released and the dataset has been transferred to deep/offsite storage. Where submission of the dataset has occurred electronically, outside of the ADS' own submission portals, the repository has less control and retention of dataset is dependent on terms of use for those services.<sup>32</sup>
3. No formal notification of the removal of data from temporary storage is required, as transferral of the dataset to the ADS preservation servers' forms part of the formal accession.

In those circumstances where data is held temporarily in preparation for full accession, either following assessment, when submitted through the ADS-easy or OASIS Images portals, or where data is submitted electronically through an external file sharing service,

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<sup>29</sup> Except in those circumstances where an agreement between the depositor and the repository agree that formal deposition would follow appraisal.

<sup>30</sup> The deposit receipt states: "Thank you for depositing the digital data associated with the above project, all files have been copied to our servers and will be stored until work is started on the collection. Please retain your own copies until we have notified you that your collection is ready to be released and you have checked it." See the Deposit Receipt <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only.

<sup>31</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/depositLicence.xhtml>, internal access only.

<sup>32</sup> In the case of the *University of York DropOff Service*, the dataset is available for 14 days (see <https://www.york.ac.uk/it-services/services/dropoff/#tab-2>). Other data sharing services retain data according to their terms of use and account settings.

the depositor is notified that datasets are only stored temporarily while they await formal accession.

## 5.2 Removal of submitted data without a deposit licence

In rare cases, the submission of a dataset to the repository may stall before completion of the accession process.

**Scenario 5.2.1:** Depositor C has submitted data to the repository by sending an external hard drive in the post. Accession of the *Submission Information Package* (SIP) has begun, and the Digital Archivist has issued the deposit receipt and associated email.<sup>33</sup> Evaluation of the data has shown that some files are corrupt. Added to this some of the metadata is incomplete. Requests for the submission of replacement data and updates to the metadata remain unanswered.

### Procedure

1. Notification of the transfer of data from temporary storage to the preservation servers forms part of the standard accession process, specifically through the issuing of a deposit receipt and email<sup>34</sup>, and the issuing and subsequent return of the deposit licence.<sup>35</sup>
2. Where appropriate a request for additional/replacement data, metadata or documentation during accession should be made by the Digital Archivist. Where a response is not forthcoming, the issuing of a follow up should ensue.
3. The issuing of a second request for the additional/replacement data, metadata or documentation follows 30 days after the initial request. Where possible this should use an alternative method of communication. This notification should include other representatives of the organisation/project submitting the dataset. This ensures that any lack of communication is not the result of a problem with the contact details.
4. If no response is forthcoming within 30 days of the second request,<sup>36</sup> the Collections Development Manager and/or Archives Manager should be informed. The Collections Development Manager or Archives Manager should issue a third, and final, request for the submission of the additional, replacement or updated data/documentation. This should give the depositor 14 days to respond, before the process of accession will cease and the data returned/removed from the preservation servers.

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<sup>33</sup> As outlined in the *Ingest Manual* -

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#Ingest>.

<sup>34</sup> The deposit receipt states: "Thank you for depositing the digital data associated with the above project, all files have been copied to our servers and will be stored until work is started on the collection. Please retain your own copies until we have notified you that your collection is ready to be released and you have checked it." See the Deposit Receipt

<http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only.

<sup>35</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/depositLicence.xhtml>, internal access only.

<sup>36</sup> 90 days after accession began.



5. Notification of the intention to refuse the dataset, and return the data, should follow once the deadline has elapsed. This notification should clearly state the motivation for the decision and outline the procedures brought into effect.
6. Where possible agreement should be sort on the best method to return the data to the depositor, should it be required.
7. Record any discussions within the CMS. The retention of any emails should form part of that documentation process.
8. Record the contents of the submitted dataset. The creation of a 'data log' of the complete dataset, following the same process outlined for the creation of the deposit receipt<sup>37</sup>, ensures the retention of a complete record of the submitted dataset.<sup>38</sup> The CMS should include a copy of this documentation.
9. Any data returned to the depositor should follow the agreed plan of data transferal. Any exchange of data should include a copy of the data log/data receipt, alongside a formal email acknowledging the return of the dataset. The transfer should include a data receipt, signed by the depositor and returned to the ADS, to acknowledge receipt of the dataset. Any transfer of data should include the return of any physical media.<sup>39</sup> The retention of all documentation within the CMS is essential.
10. On receipt of this acknowledgement, the removal of data from ADS servers commences. The entire SIP should be removed the preservation server. This should include the deletion of all collection and file level metadata within the CMS and *Object Metadata Store* (OMS).
11. The retention of the CMS tracking record, and any associated documentation, should form part of the process.
12. Any records within ADS-easy or OASIS Image can be reopened allowing the depositor an opportunity to resubmit the dataset later.
13. The depositor, and other stakeholder, are notified about the removal of the dataset.

Typically, this scenario occurs where calls for replacement data, or updated metadata, have gone unanswered causing cessation to the accession process, but accession may also stall following failure to return a signed deposit licence. Consequently, no formal permission for the retention or dissemination of the dataset has been forthcoming, and no liability for the preservation of the dataset accepted.

**Scenario 5.2.2:** Depositor D has submitted data to the repository through the OASIS Images portal. Accession has begun and the Digital Archivist has issued the deposit receipt and associated email.<sup>40</sup> The issuing of the deposit licence followed, but it remains unsigned.

<sup>37</sup> See <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only. This file should use the name filename data\_log.cev.

<sup>38</sup> Where a deposit receipt already exists, this should be sufficient to record the contents of the deposition.

<sup>39</sup> Including CDs, DVDs, hard drive, etc.

<sup>40</sup> As outlined in the *Ingest Manual* - <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#Ingest>.

## Procedure

1. Notification of the transfer of data from temporary storage to the preservation servers forms part of the standard accession process, specifically through the issuing of a deposit receipt and email<sup>41</sup>, and the issuing and subsequent return of the deposit licence.<sup>42</sup>
2. If the deposit licence remains unreturned after 30 days, the Digital Archivist should contact the depositor and reiterate the need for signed deposit licence. Where possible this should use an alternative communication method to ensure that contact details are accurate. Where necessary this notification can include other representatives of the organisation/project submitting the dataset. Reissuing of the licence may be necessary in cases where the initial licence has been lost, or an update to the details required.
3. If no response is forthcoming within 30 days of the second request,<sup>43</sup> the Collections Development Manager and/or Archives Manager should be informed. The Collections Development Manager, or Archives Manager, should issue a final request for the licence. This should give the depositor 14 days to respond, before the process of accession will cease and the data returned/removed from the preservation servers.
4. Notification of the intention to refuse the dataset, and return the data, should follow once the deadline has elapsed. This notification should clearly state the motivation for the decision and outline the procedures brought into effect.
5. Record any discussions within the CMS. The retention of any emails should form part of that documentation process allowing for a clear documentation trail.
6. Where possible agreement should be sort on the best method to return the data to the depositor, should it be required.
7. Record the contents of the submitted dataset. The creation of a 'data log' of the complete dataset, following the same process outlined for the creation of the deposit receipt<sup>44</sup>, ensures the retention of a complete record of the submitted dataset.<sup>45</sup> The CMS should include a copy of this documentation.
8. Any data returned to the depositor should follow the agreed plan of data transferal. Any exchange of data should include a copy of the data log/data receipt, alongside a formal email acknowledging the return of the dataset. The transfer should include a data receipt, signed by the depositor and returned to the ADS, to acknowledge receipt of the dataset. Any transfer of data should include the return of any physical media.<sup>46</sup> The retention of all documentation within the CMS is essential.

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<sup>41</sup> The deposit receipt states: "Thank you for depositing the digital data associated with the above project, all files have been copied to our servers and will be stored until work is started on the collection. Please retain your own copies until we have notified you that your collection is ready to be released and you have checked it." See the Deposit Receipt

<http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only.

<sup>42</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/depositLicence.xhtml>, internal access only.

<sup>43</sup> 90 days after first issue.

<sup>44</sup> See <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only.

<sup>45</sup> Where a deposit receipt already exists, this should be sufficient to record the contents of the deposition.

<sup>46</sup> Including CDs, DVDs, hard drive, etc.



9. On receipt of this acknowledgement, the removal of data from ADS servers can commence. The removal of the entire SIP from the preservation server should follow. The process should also include the deletion of all collection and file level metadata within the CMS and OMS.
10. The retention of the CMS tracking record, and any associated documentation, should form ensure a clear documentation trail and allow easy access to the record.
11. Any records within ADS-easy or OASIS Image can be reopened allowing the depositor an opportunity to resubmit the dataset.
12. Notification of the removal of the dataset should be forwarded to the depositor, and other stakeholder.

Without a signed deposit licence, the repository does not have legal permission to hold the dataset on behalf of the depositor, data creators or copyright holders. At the same time, without the deposit licence there is no formal agreement between the depositor and the repository concerning the preservation of the dataset.

### 5.3 Disposal of accessioned data with deposit licence

In circumstances where the deposition and accession of data is complete, including the signing of a deposit licence, but where work to create the AIP and DIP has not commenced, or the release process has not commenced. Such requests typically follow a request by the depositor; although in rare circumstances may be the result of a lack of funding to carry out preservation work<sup>47</sup>, or a lack of response to repeated requests for additional metadata or information.<sup>48</sup>

**Scenario 5.3.1:** Depositor E submitted a collection through ADS-easy; completion of the accession followed the return of the deposit licence. Whilst waiting for work to commence on the dataset the depositor realised he did not have permission from all the copyright holders, this could not be resolved and the depositor reluctantly requested the removal of data from the repository.

#### Procedure

1. The depositor telephones the repository to request the removal of the dataset. As requested by the Archives Manager a formal email, outlining the motivation for the removal of the dataset, follows.
2. Agreement is sort with the depositor over any additional charges incurred because of the deaccession process.

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<sup>47</sup> The repository recognises that this should not be the primary concern in preservation activities (see above) and where possible will attempt to find alternative funding streams, or where agreed with the Collections Development Manager waive charges for deposition.

<sup>48</sup> In these circumstances, preservation can continue on a 'best efforts basis', but all archives require 'sign-off', as per the *Ingest Manual* (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#Ingest>), before they can be released.

3. Document discussions concerning the removal of the dataset within the CMS. The retention of any emails should form part of that documentation process to ensure a detailed information trail.
4. An agreement should be sort, and plan arranged, with the depositor on the best method to return the dataset (if required).
5. Record the contents of the dataset. The creation of a 'data log' of the complete dataset, following the same process outlined for the creation of the deposit receipt<sup>49</sup>, ensures the retention of a complete record of the submitted dataset.<sup>50</sup> The CMS should include a copy of all this documentation.
6. Any data returned to the depositor should follow the agreed plan of data transferal. Any exchange of data should include a copy of the data log, alongside a formal email acknowledging the return of the dataset. The transfer should include a data receipt, signed by the depositor and returned to the ADS, to acknowledge receipt of the dataset. Any transfer of data should include the return of any physical media. The retention of all documentation within the CMS is essential to ensure a detailed data trail for the deaccession process.
7. On receipt of this acknowledgement, the deaccession and removal of data from the repository servers can commence.
8. The complete removal of the SIP from both local and deep storage should follow. Deaccession should also include the deletion of all collection and file level metadata from the CMS and OMS.
9. The retention of the CMS tracking record, and any associated documentation relating to the management and removal of the dataset, ensures a data trail for the collection.
10. Notification of the complete removal of the dataset from the ADS website and servers should be directed to the depositor(s), and any other concerned parties.

## 6. Preserved Datasets

The repository preserves and disseminates all collections under the terms of the deposit licence;<sup>51</sup> consequently, the depositor retains all rights for the dataset. A depositor will nominate an individual or organisation as a point of contact for the collection as part of the accession process and this 'contact information' is published within the archive interface.<sup>52</sup> Data users are encouraged to use this information to contact the depositor directly should they identify any issues with the dataset; however, the repository may also receive these requests. On receipt of requests for changes or updates to a dataset, the repository must reappraise the record and/or collection, and, where necessary, bring problems to the attention of the depositor. The scenarios below provides a typical example.

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<sup>49</sup> See <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only. This file should use the name filename data\_log.cev.

<sup>50</sup> Where a deposit receipt already exists, this should be sufficient to record the contents of the deposition.

<sup>51</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/depositLicence.xhtml>.

<sup>52</sup> Displayed in the left hand bar for all datasets. See, for example, Julian D Richards, Steve Roskams (2013) Burdale: an Anglian settlement in the Yorkshire Wolds [data-set]. York: Archaeology Data Service [distributor] <https://doi.org/10.5284/1021540>.

## 6.1 Removal of a record within an extant dataset following a request from a data consumer.

While all datasets are appraised before, and during, accession it is not possible to assess all records within a collection. The identification of additional issues can follow the publication of the resource as data users and consumers begin to utilise a dataset and, when found to have foundation, may require action by the depositor and repository. The repository publishes datasets both as discreet files and as searchable online resources, and, in some cases, identification of problems may be specific to a record within a larger file or dataset.

**Scenario 6.1.1:** User A was searching the *ArchSearch* resource<sup>53</sup> and noticed a record for a sensitive site impacted by 'night hawking'.<sup>54</sup> The user was concerned that the inclusion of information on the site and its location would lead to further problems. User A sent an email to the ADS helpdesk asking if the removal of the record would be pertinent.

### Procedure

1. A user emails helpdesk suggesting that the removal of the record from the dataset may be appropriate.
2. The issue of a holding response<sup>55</sup> to the user should acknowledge receipt of the complaint and outline that repository staff will conduct an appraisal of the record, and the associated dataset, and a response will be forthcoming.
3. A Digital Archivist will conduct a reappraisal of the record,<sup>56</sup> and the associated collection, and report the outcome to the Collections Development Manager and/or Archive Manager.
4. Where it is felt the complaint has foundation the Collections Development Manager/Archive Manager will contact the depositor and propose redaction of any sensitive information or the removal of the record in its entirety. Where possible a response should be sent from the depositor(s) within 5 working days.
5. Where the depositor(s) agree with the repositories findings, an agreement should be signed, and plan arranged, on the best approach to address the issue. This should include information on any additional charges incurred to update the resource or dataset. As a minimum, the removal of the record from the accessible version of the resource and DIP, but the depositor(s) may also request the removal of the record from the dataset in its entirety.<sup>57</sup> Where changes are complex and/or significant it may be pertinent for the depositor to supply replacement copies of affected files. These should treat as a new accession; consequently, it may be necessary to create

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<sup>53</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/basic.xhtml>.

<sup>54</sup> The theft of archaeological artefacts from protected archaeological sites and areas under the cover of darkness.

<sup>55</sup> Sent within three days of receipt of the initial complaint. This is in line with standard practice for helpdesk responses.

<sup>56</sup> Within five working days of the initial response.

<sup>57</sup> i.e. from the SIP and AIP.

a new 'version' of the entire dataset.<sup>58</sup> For resources published through searchable online interfaces, a 'reload' of the data may be necessary to ensure parity between published resources. Any proposed changes should follow the guidance within the *Repository Operations*<sup>59</sup> and *Preservation Policy*.<sup>60</sup>

6. A Digital Archivist should effect the agreed plan. All changes should be in accordance with the *Repository Operations*<sup>61</sup> and *Preservation Policy*.<sup>62</sup> Documentation of all changes within the CMS, in line with these policies, should form part of this process.
7. The notification of the depositor(s) should follow the completion of the agreed changes.
8. On completion of the process, notification of the outcomes of the appraisal, discussions with the depositor, and the subsequent change(s) should be forwarded to the complainant.
9. Document discussions concerning the removal of the record within the CMS. The retention of any emails should form part of that documentation process to ensure a detailed information trail.

In instances where the depositor may not wish to update/remove the resource/record, the retention of a clear documentation trail within the CMS of complaints, outcomes and the process is necessary. This should include copies of all communications with the complainant and the depositor. Such documentation may form part of a cumulative case should recurrent problems be identified.

## 6.2 Transferal of a released dataset following request from depositor.

Acknowledgement that deaccession of a collection following the completion of preservation activities and publication of the dataset is rare and only carried out in exceptional circumstances. In these circumstances, the process of deaccession is a more complex problem necessitating updates to archive web interfaces, DOIs and any catalogues where the dataset is exposed.

**Scenario 6.2.1:** A depositor contacted the ADS asking for advice on whether the repository continues to be the most appropriate location for their dataset.

### Procedure

1. A depositor emailed the Collection Development Manager after comments from a reviewer asked whether the ADS was the most appropriate place for their dataset.

<sup>58</sup> As outlined in the *Repository Operations* -

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

<sup>59</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

<sup>60</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#PresPol>.

<sup>61</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

<sup>62</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#PresPol>.

2. The issuing of a holding response to the depositor acknowledging receipt of the email follows. This email includes a notification that repository staff will conduct a reappraisal of the dataset and will formerly respond once that review is complete.
3. The Archive Manager conducts a reappraisal of the collection and reports the outcome of the assessment to the Collections Development Manager. Consultation of the *Disposal destination decision tree* may assist in the reappraisal process.<sup>63</sup>
4. The reappraisal identifies that the collection still fits within the repositories Collections Policy<sup>64</sup>, but acknowledges that since the release of the archive, ten years previously, other repositories have been founded which may be a more appropriate home for the dataset.
5. The Collections Development Manager reports the outcome of the reappraisal to the depositor. Formal notification should document pertinent outcomes from the review process and any potential procedures brought into effect should the depositor wish to remove the dataset from the repository and deposit the dataset elsewhere.
6. Discussions ensue which attempt to identify a more appropriate repository willing to take responsibility for the collection. The depositor then approaches that repository asking whether they would be willing to take responsibility for the archive.
7. In some instances, consultation with other stakeholders who may have an interest in the dataset may be necessary. This may include, but should not be restricted to:
  - any data creators responsible for the creation of the dataset
  - any funders of the research or its preservation
  - any organisation(s) under whose auspices the research was carried out and who may continue to hold responsibility for the dataset
  - any individual those setting out the requirement for deposition or preservationThese discussions should commence prior to any data removal or formal deaccession.
8. Where necessary the advice of the Management Committee should be sort as they may identify prospective issues, or have contacts that may assist in these negotiations.<sup>65</sup>
9. Following agreement between the depositor, stakeholders, the Management Committee and the receiving repository a plan for the transferal of the dataset is finalised. This should include information on any additional charges incurred by the decision to deaccession the dataset and the transfer it to the receiving repository.
10. Document discussions concerning the removal of the dataset within the CMS. The retention of any emails should form part of that documentation process to ensure a detailed information trail.<sup>66</sup>
11. Another senior member of repository staff should conduct a thorough review of the collection appraisal, decision process and any communications to ensure due

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<sup>63</sup> See Appendix 2.

<sup>64</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/collectionsPolicy.xhtml>

<sup>65</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/about/managementCommittee.xhtml>.

<sup>66</sup> The 'notes' section of the CMS should be used to draw attention to any concerns or problems identified during the appraisal. All documentation should be stored in accordance with the *CMS Manual* (<http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=CmsManual>, internal access only) and the *Repository Operations* (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>).

- diligence has been paid during the process. If staff reach a consensus then the process of data removal or deaccession should be enacted.
12. A Digital Archivist should effect the agreed plan. The plan may involve the transfer of the SIP, AIP and DIP, alongside exports of collection and file level metadata from the CMS and OMS. The creation of a 'data log' of the complete dataset<sup>67</sup> ensures the retention of a complete record of the contents of archive prior to deaccession.
  13. Any exchange of data should include a copy of the data log, alongside a formal email acknowledging the transfer of the dataset. The transfer should include a data receipt, signed by the receiving repository, and returned to the ADS, to acknowledge receipt of the dataset. The process should also include the exchange, or return to the depositor, of any physical media used in previous transfers of the dataset.<sup>68</sup>
  14. On delivery of the data receipt acknowledging the transfer of the dataset to the receiving repository, deaccession and removal of data from the repository servers can commence.
  15. The process should begin with the removal of any web pages for the resource. Where appropriate the creation of a landing page, outlining what has happened to the resource and details of access in the receiving repository.
  16. Redirection of DOIs for the collection to this landing page, or location in the receiving repository, ensures that references to the resource continue to resolve.
  17. Removal of the dataset from repository catalogues should follow (e.g., ADS archives<sup>69</sup> and *ArchSearch* catalogue<sup>70</sup>). Where appropriate updates to external resources where metadata for the dataset is exposed should form part of this process.<sup>71</sup>
  18. Removal of all collection and file level metadata from the CMS and OMS respectively. Although the retention of a tracking record within the CMS, to which any documentation relating to the management and removal of the dataset, should be maintained. This ensures a completed data trail for the transfer of the collection.
  19. Removal of all data (SIP, AIP and DIP) from both local and then deep storage should follow.
  20. Notification of the complete removal of the collection from the ADS website and the deaccession of the data, should be directed to the depositor(s) and any other concerned parties.

## 7. Recording disposal

While removal of data and deaccession of datasets remain relatively rare occurrences, there is no formal way to document this in the CMS. It is, however, essential that in any of the scenarios outlined above that the creation and maintenance of a clear and detailed data trail of all discussions, appraisal/reappraisal and actions involved in the process. These records should be added to the 'negotiations' section of the appropriate collection record within the

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<sup>67</sup> This should follow the same procedure outlined for the creation of the *deposit receipt* (see <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=DepositReceipt>, internal access only) with the exception that it should include both AIP and DIP.

<sup>68</sup> Including CDs, DVDs, hard drive, etc.

<sup>69</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archive/>.

<sup>70</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/basic.xhtml>.

<sup>71</sup> For example, if the resource is exposed through MEDIN portal.



*Collections Management System* (CMS).<sup>72</sup> While the 'notes' section of the CMS should be used to draw attention to any concerns or problems identified during the appraisal. The creation of a complete 'data log' of the complete dataset (including SIP, AIP and DIP), following the guidance outlined for the creation of the data receipt, should be created and stored to ensure the storage of a complete of recorded of the entire dataset prior to removal/deaccession. All documentation should be stored in accordance with the *CMS Manual*<sup>73</sup> and the *Repository Operations*.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> <http://adsmanticore0.york.ac.uk:8080/cms3/authenticate.do>, internal access only.

<sup>73</sup> <http://adslocalwiki0.york.ac.uk:8080/wiki/Wiki.jsp?page=CmsManualNegotiations>, internal access only,

<sup>74</sup> <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/advice/PolicyDocuments.xhtml#RepOp>.

## 8. Appendix 1: Definition of terminologies

This document follows the definitions outlined in The National Archives' *Deaccessioning and disposal guidance for archive services* (2015: 8-9).<sup>75</sup>

- **Appraisal** – the process of deciding whether an item or group of items has continuing value in accordance with the collecting organisation's mission statement.
- **Deaccessioning** – the formal, documented removal of a collection or item from the accession register or custody of the archive service.
- **Reappraisal** – a renewed process of appraisal for collections or items previously appraised.
- **Retrospective appraisal** – appraisal of collections or items where evidence of previous appraisal to an approved standard is not apparent.
- **Disposal** – the physical act of transferring the collection or item from the archive service to another destination. This covers transfer to another repository, return to depositor or donor and as a last resort, destruction. Also called removal.

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<sup>75</sup> The National Archives (2015) *Deaccessioning and disposal guidance for archive services*.  
<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/Deaccessioning-and-disposal-guide.pdf>

## 9. Appendix 2: Disposal destination decision tree (National Archives)



Disposal destination decision tree

Disposal Destinations include: Transfer; Return to Depositor/donor; Sale; Destruction.

