Introduction and History
Introduction
Records: What are they?

- **Record**: any recorded information or data in any physical format or media created or received by an organization during its course of official business and kept as evidence of polices, decisions, procedures, functions, activities and transactions.

- For example, a driving licence application will be kept as a record by the Transport Department of the Government as evidence of its business.

- More examples of records
Introduction

Records: What are they not?

What isn’t a record?

- Reference materials
- Surplus publications
- Personal files
- Duplicates
- Preliminary drafts
- Convenience copies
- Blank forms
Introduction: Elements of a Record

In order to serve as evidence, a record should be complete and must possess the following three elements:

- **Content** - this refers to the information or ideas the record contains;
- **Context** - this refers to the information about the circumstances in which the record is created, transmitted, maintained and used (e.g. who created it, when, to whom it was sent, why); and
- **Structure** - this means the physical and logical format of the record, and the way parts of the record relate to each other (e.g. the structure of an e-mail record covers its header, body, attachments and corresponding reply).
Introduction
Records Management

- **Records management:** refers to the whole range of activities which an organization should perform to properly manage its records.

- The key activities include:
  - setting records management policy,
  - assigning responsibilities,
  - establishing and promulgating procedures and guidelines,
  - designing, implementing procedures and guidelines
  - administering recordkeeping systems.
History of Records Management

Records have been with us since the beginning of mankind. Some important landmarks in records management history were:

- The representation of specific/special events by man in pictorial or graphical/ hieroglyphic form;

- The introduction of the alphabetic script, which replaced hieroglyphics during the 5th millennium B.C.;

- The use of papyrus as a format to record information by the Ancient Sumerians;

- The recognition of the need to have Archives from as early as 2300 B.C.
History...

- The introduction of the Registry System in Britain, which came out of Ancient Rome;

- Monks mass producing books and other via hand writing

- The invention and use of printing presses to mass produce books and documents; (Gutenberg Press 16th Century)

- The invention and use of the typewriter as a business tool;
History...

- The establishment of records and information management as a bona fide profession and discipline with the offering of advanced professional courses and degrees in the Records and Information Management field by recognized universities, colleges and other training institutions;

- **WAR:** The global conflict in the “Concert of Europe” and the Orient involving the major powers in what was known as World Wars I and II, generated a lot of documents involving military affairs such as: espionage, intelligence, military concept weapons, and tactical strategies. This created the environment for a proper management system for military information. And so, the discipline has ironically benefited from this manner of treating important information.
History...

- Military activity giving rise to standards on use of the Internet, email management, ERM, and information security.

- The invention of the computer and the development of software/hardware specifically designed for the management of information, and for the records and information field;

- The introduction of the commercial electronic word processor in the business workplace environment;
History...

- The birth of the World Wide Web/Internet and its electronic mailing, and instant messaging service and its information sharing potentials and challenges; and

- The introduction of espionage prepared the way for Information Security management;

- The Internet and the use of electronic mail were both made possible by the US Military computer technology.
Definitions and In-depth Understanding of Records Management
Some Important Terms

- **Records Management**: includes the planning, directing, organizing, controlling, reviewing, training and other managerial activities involved with respect to the creation, classification and indexing, distribution, handling, use, tracking, storage, retrieval, protection and disposal of records to achieve adequate and proper documentation of policies, decisions and transactions as well as efficient and cost-effective organization operation.
Important Terms...

- **The Appraisal Process**, where records are assessed and then designated as either temporary or permanent records. NB. As an archive will usually only accept records that have been passed as permanent.

- **Appraisal** is the process of distinguishing records of continuing value from those of no further value so that the latter may be eliminated.

  or

- **Appraisal** = process of determining how long to keep records;

- **The Accessioning Process**, this is where the transferring of the legal and physical custody of archival records from their Offices of Origin to the archival facility; also the creation of records documenting receipt, and the acceptance of the records into the archives.
Important terms...

- **The Preservation Process**, this is where the specific steps undertaken to maintain, repair, restore, or otherwise conserve archival records in the appropriate facilities and with the specialized equipment that can facilitate: lamination, encapsulation, and microfilming of documents and records in order to preserve them.

- **Administrative value**: Records with administrative value are those needed to determine the policy and procedures necessary to carry out the activities of an organization. For example, policy documents, procedure directives, rules and regulations;

- **Operational value**: Records with operational value are those documenting the activities and transactions of an organization. For example, routine correspondence and technical data;
Important Terms..

- **Legal value:** Records with legal value are those required to define the rights and obligations of an organization, its staff and individuals and organizations with which it deals. For example, agreements, certificates and contracts. If necessary, legal advice should be sought as to the legal value of individual records;

- **Fiscal value:** Records of fiscal value are those relating to the financial transactions of an organization and especially those required for audit purpose. For example, contracts, guarantees, bonds and documents related to settlement of claims and loans; and

- **Archival value:** Records with archival value are those which should be preserved permanently.
Important Terms..

► **Retention period:** The period the records are to be kept after active use (i.e. meeting the defined inactive record criterion) but before their final disposal.

► **Custody venue:** The place where inactive records (records become inactive when meeting the inactive record criterion) are kept during the retention period (e.g. 2 years on-site and 3 years off-site storage); and

► **Disposal action:** The final disposition of records (e.g. destruction, transfer to the organization’s archives or the Public Records Office (PRO) of the Government Records Service (GRS) for permanent retention as archival records, migrating records to other storage formats etc.).
Important Terms...

- **Records Transfer**: Records can be moved from one location or a custodian’s physical custody to another. This includes sending them to off-site storage or transfer to another office or department. For transfers other than these two types, the Departmental Records Officer should provide approval.

- **Records Retirement**: Records can be transferred to storage until ultimate destruction or accession. For example, the Kenya National Archives is a storage facility where government records are commonly “retired.”
Important Terms...

- **Destruction (Temporary Records):** Records can be physically destroyed or can be deleted, depending on the media format, when they have met retention requirements in an appropriate records disposition schedule.

- **Accession (Permanent Records):** A record is considered ready for accession when it is required to be kept permanently and has met the approved requirements to be given to National Archives (and in most cases physical custody as well). Accessioned records become the property of National Archives.
Records Life Cycle

- **Records life cycle:** The life of a record goes through phases starting from when it is created or received by the Agency, through to its use, maintenance and temporary storage before finally being destroyed or archived permanently. Consists of the following stages:
  - Creation
  - Maintenance & Use
  - Disposition/Preservation
  - Temporary or Permanent Storage/Destruction
Records Life Cycle

- Archiving
- Final Disposition
- Semi - Active/Inactive Records
- Active Records
- Creation/Receipt
- Destruction

Flowchart showing the lifecycle of records with steps from archiving to final disposition, semi-active/inactive records, active records, creation/receipt, and destruction.
Life cycle...

**Creation:** The first phase of the Records Life Cycle involves records being created, collected or received through the daily transactions of the Business Unit or Department and can include printed reports, emails or even phone messages, documents that detail the functions, policies, decisions or procedures of the agency.

**Maintenance & Use:** The next phase of the life cycle is the maintenance and use of the record. This can include filing, retrieving, use, duplication, printing, dissemination, release or exchange of the information in the record.
Life cycle...

- **Disposition:** At the disposition phase records are assessed to determine their retention value using General Disposal Schedules or Records Disposal Schedules. This leads to either the preservation or destruction of the record.

- **Preservation:** When a record has been determined to be of permanent value to the Organization, then it is transferred to the Archives for permanent archiving and preservation.

- **Temporary Storage & Destruction:** If a record still has ongoing value to the Organization it will be temporarily stored either onsite at the Secretariat or offsite with an approved Provider. When the retention date of these records is reached, permission will be sought from the Organization for their destruction.
Characteristics of Records

- Authenticity, reliability, integrity and usability are the characteristics of a record. The purpose of any records management policy, practices, guidelines and procedures is to ensure that records should have these characteristics, as follows -

- **Authenticity** - an authentic record is one that can be proven
  (i) to be what it purports to be;
  (ii) to have been created or sent by the person purported to have created or sent it; and
  (iii) to have been created or sent at the time purported;
Characteristics..

- **Reliability** - a reliable record is one whose contents can be trusted as a full and accurate representation of the transactions, activities or facts to which they attest and can be depended upon in the course of subsequent transactions or activities;

- **Integrity** - the integrity of a record refers to its being complete and unaltered; and

- **Usability** - a usable record is one that can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted. It should be capable of subsequent presentation as directly connected to the business activity or transaction that produced it.
Records Management Scope and Role in different Institutions and Cultures
Scope of Records Management

In regard to RM an organization should:

- formulate and promulgate its records management policy, e.g. in the form of records management policy statement setting out what the organization intends to do in respect of records management;
- formulate and promulgate records management requirements, guidelines, procedures and best practices for compliance and reference by its staff;
- review and improve records management policy, recordkeeping systems, practices, guidelines and procedures whenever appropriate;
- develop and provide records management training for its staff;
designate a senior officer as Records Manager to oversee its records management and to establish and implement a proper records management programme within the organization;

designate Assistant Records Manager(s) to oversee records management matters in each section/unit;

designate a responsible staff to control the creation, naming and coding of new files to facilitate accurate capturing and ready retrieval of records; and

reflect in the job descriptions of the staff concerned their assigned specific records management roles and responsibilities for accountability and to facilitate evaluation.
Group Work!

- In groups of 3 people each discuss various roles you think Records Management has in your organization

- Take notes and choose a member of the group to present your ideas
Role of Records Management

Records management is important because it supports an organization to:

- make decisions based on evidence;
- meet operational, legal and regulatory requirements;
- be open and accountable;
- enhance operational efficiency and effectiveness; and
- maintain organization or collective memory.
Roles...

- protect the organization from litigation;
- have evidence of transactions/ events for audit purposes;
- To provide transparent business processes
- facilitate the resumption of operations in the event of a disaster;
- ensure that employee benefits can be supported via information maintained in personal records.
Records Management Culture

For records management the fundamental element needed to create an effective culture is communication.

► Communication: implies an exchange and understanding of ideas. You need to understand how your employees use the company’s records and information. Your employees need to understand the need for following best practices as well as what procedures they entail.
In broad terms you need to do the following:

- **Ask & Listen** - Ask your colleagues about how they use records and information. Find out what data is important to them. Ask how they use it. Find out about problem areas and areas that can be improved. Learn about their feelings on records management practices currently being employed.

- Create questionnaires and do surveys of your workmates experiences. You will be able to gain considerable insights that will help you build the right records management culture.
Culture...

- **Educate & Promote** - Once you know how your workmates use records and information you will be able to create and align your procedures to help your colleagues manage documents more effectively. Once done you have to educate staff and regularly promote the need for compliance.

  - Meetings and even mini workshops are a great way to educate employees. Regular announcements, posters, internal emails and other means can be used to keep promoting compliance.
Culture

- **Rewarding Compliance** - If you carry out proper education and promotions then achieving compliance should be a lot easier. Including rewards and making them known through your promotional actions can further increase compliance.

  - Use both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators