

Questions to police forces regarding archival management of criminal/forensic case files and related materials

1. What is your current position with regards to the following regulations? Please, comment your answers.

National Digital and Physical Evidence Retention Guidance (2021)

Aware of it

Implementing it

Working on implementing this across all files / formats.

Review, retention and disposal. Authorised Professional Practice (APP) (2013:2023)

Aware of it

Implementing it

Implementing this guidance - some technical limitations but applied as far as possible.

Codes of Practice and Conduct for Forensic Science Providers and Practitioners in the Criminal Justice System (FSR-C-100)

Aware of it

Implementing it

Please see answer below

NPCC Forensic Retention guidance (2021)

Aware of it

Implementing it

Forensics are accredited to the Forensic regulators codes of practice and conduct v7 and they are also compliant with the NPCC forensic retention guidelines. So aware and fully implemented.

College of Policing Archiving of records in the public interest (APP) (2021)

Aware of it

Implementing it

This is not yet in force but West Midlands Police (WMP) already apply several sections of it.

2. Do you ever appraise and archive case files & materials for their historical significance, value for research or for public interest? Please describe your practice.

Yes - when items approach their review / retention date WMP consider them for permanent historical retention against the Authorised Professional Practice retention criteria.

3. Do you ever provide access to case files & materials to private individuals and researchers, outside the criminal justice system (not for case review, appeals, training, etc.)? Please describe your practice.

This is i) considered case-by-case via FOI/ Comms for in-date records held by WMP, or ii) via our museum for older content moved to historical preservation.

4. If you rely on an external provider and/or repository for storage or archival/heritage services (e.g., catalogue, access or display), please describe how this works.

N/A - in house archive. (Some fragile / very old items are held by external library / archive specialists but still owned by WMP).

From WMP Museum - Some of our historic personnel records are held by the Library of Birmingham. These are still owned by WMP and both the Library and ourselves have an index.

5. If you have an inhouse archive or a heritage centre, do you follow any related guidance or standards (e.g., to inform collection care and conservation, cataloguing, and access provision) and which?

Yes - our museum has various indexes for archive material. Not everything has been indexed yet, this is a work in progress.

Should you be open to be contacted for further comment, please include the best contact details in your response.

Museum - museum@westmidlands.police.uk

Tel: 101 or - <https://www.west-midlands.police.uk/contact-us>