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Managing an ISO 16363 Self-Assessment:
A How-To Guide

BRITISH LIBRARY

ISO

www.bl.uk/aboutus/stratpolprog/collectioncare/digitalpreservation

Audit and certification standards help demonstrate whether a repository is trustworthy. Their guidelines provide a framework with which to assess the on-going viability of a digital repository as well as the surrounding resources and infrastructure.

Conducting a self-assessment helps organisations to better understand the state of their repositories before undertaking formal certification.

About ISO 16363

- Replaced Trusted Repository Audit Certification (TRAC; 2007) in 2012
- Recognised standard by the digital preservation community
- Defines 'repository' as an organisation responsible for digital preservation, not just the technical system
- Comprised of 109 metrics divided into three areas: Organisational infrastructure (25), Digital Object Management (60), and Infrastructure and Security Risk Management (24)
- References ISO 14721: *Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS)*

Objectives

1. Conduct an internal assessment of the Library's approach to preserving digital collections against the ISO 16363 standard to assess its trustworthiness

2. Identify areas to improve trustworthiness, review with stakeholders and agree responsibilities for an outline plan of action to address these

The British Library's digital collections

- Born-digital content is predominantly acquired under legal deposit legislation
- Born-digital and digitised content is also deposited voluntarily
- Collection currently comprised of over 12 million items
- Digital items preserved within the Library's Digital Library System repository

Approach

Step 1

- Become familiar with ISO 16363 standard individual metrics and requirements
- Determine parameters, including which metrics do not apply to the repository
- Determine a timeline for completing self-assessment
- Create a spreadsheet to organise findings.
- Inform colleagues of this work and generate interest

Step 2

- Identify colleagues who are responsible for the work described in each metric
- Schedule individual meetings to discuss whether and how requirements are being met
- Record this information, as well as any relevant documentation, procedures, and standards, in the spreadsheet

Step 3

- Apply the RAG system to designate each metric's severity or level of completion
- This system will help determine prioritisation of improvement work.
- For amber and red metrics, assign metric ownership as well as action ownership of work that needs to be completed

Step 4

- Write a report of findings
- Circulate report to key organisational staff
- Determine next steps for implementing report recommendations
- Set a timeline for undertaking either re-assessment or repository certification

Challenges

- Allocating time
- Engaging staff participation
- Identifying stakeholders and conducting interviews
- Compiling supporting evidence and documentation
- Determining the best method for recording findings
- Interpreting metrics and/or explaining why certain metrics might not apply
- Determining when/whether to pursue full certification