AC+erm - Accelerating positive change in e-records management

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Abstract: Electronic records management (ERM) has been a significant issue for organisations for more than two decades. Despite guidelines, standards and software systems developed by national archives, coalitions, professional associations, research groups and commercial organisations the pace of change has been relatively slow\(^1\). The question is why? And how can we change this situation?

AC+erm is a major 3-year multidisciplinary project, funded by the UK’s Arts and Humanities Research Council, which is investigating and critically exploring issues and practical strategies to support the acceleration of positive change in ERM. The project is focusing on designing an architecture\(^2\) by investigating three perspectives - people, working practices and technology. It is specifically designed to involve participants from the four stakeholder groups identified in ISO 15489-1, i.e. executives/senior managers, records professionals, IT/systems administrators and recordkeepers, as well as academics across different disciplines to make it trans-disciplinary.

An interesting research approach is being used, comprising a unique combination of methods:

- a systematic review of the literature
- an empirical investigation using global electronic Delphi studies and face-to-face colloquia in the UK; and
- a major continuous dissemination activity, via a project blog, website and Twitter, of ongoing findings, ‘vignettes’ or tools, presentations etc.\(^3\)

An expert panel, including John McDonald (Canada) and Adrian Cunningham (National Archives of Australia), acts in an advisory capacity.

The presentation will discuss the research problem and rationale for the project; the philosophy and design of the research methodology and elements that could be used in other contexts; and some of the findings to date, including vignettes that are being developed from the results for use by different stakeholders to support the acceleration of positive change in ERM. The audience will be encouraged to use and evaluate the vignettes after the conference and feedback comments to the project team.

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\(^2\) Ibid

\(^3\) AC+erm [http://northumbria.ac.uk/acerm](http://northumbria.ac.uk(acerm))
About the author:

Julie McLeod is Professor in Records Management in the School of Engineering, Computing & Information Sciences at Northumbria University, joining in 1994 after a career in industry-based information, library and records management services. She has been involved in a range of innovative work-based and distance learning training and education initiatives for records management, including with the BBC, Deutsche Bank, The National Archives, AIIM Europe, universities in Eire and the European Central Bank. A member of the BSI committee on records management standards work (IDT2/17) since its inception in 1998, and the respective ISO committee, she is author of BIP 0025:2 (2002) on implementing the ISO 15489 standard. Julie conducted the first AHRC (Arts & Humanities Research Council) funded records management research into the impact of ISO 15489 in the UK and the evaluation of a series of records management toolkits. She is currently leading a 3-year AHRC project *Accelerating positive change in electronic records management* ([www.northumbria.ac.uk/acerm](http://www.northumbria.ac.uk/acerm)). In 2003 she was Project Director/Advisor on four JISC funded research projects and in 2000-01 a member of the Socrates e-TERM project. She has published widely including co-editing the book *Managing electronic records* (Facet, 2005), is Editor of the *Records Management Journal* ([www.emeraldinsight.com/rmj.htm](http://www.emeraldinsight.com/rmj.htm)) and holds positions on the boards of other esteemed journals (*Journal of the Society of Archivists* and the *Journal of Documentation*). From 2006-09 she was a member of the AHRC Peer Review Panel for Libraries, Museums and Archives and is now a member of their Peer Review College. In 2005 she was awarded the individual prize for contribution to the profession by the Records Management Society (GB) and in 2007 was awarded a Personal Chair in Research at Northumbria University.