G-Cloud Service Definition: Records Lifecycle Management & Transfer to The National Archives (TNA)

1. Overview

This Service Definition describes a managed Records Lifecycle Management service designed for UK public sector organisations. The service enables the compliant governance of digital and physical records throughout their lifecycle—from creation and active use through retention, review, and final disposition, including mandatory transfer to **The National Archives (TNA)** in accordance with the Public Records Act and the 20-year rule.

The service provides a structured, controlled, and audit-driven approach aligned with UK government standards, Microsoft 365 capabilities, and TNA Transfer requirements.

2. Service Objectives

The service enables public sector bodies to:

- Ensure robust, end-to-end lifecycle management across all record repositories.
- Identify, review, and prepare public records of enduring value for lawful transfer to TNA.
- Reduce operational burden by automating complex lifecycle and archival processes.
- Strengthen organisational compliance with statutory, regulatory, and information governance obligations.
- Provide evidential audit trails appropriate for internal and external assurance.

3. Key Outcomes

Compliant Lifecycle Governance

Implementation of a single, consistent model for applying retention rules, managing review cycles, and executing disposition or archival actions.

Support for Mandatory Transfer to TNA

Full alignment with the TNA transfer requirements, including metadata validation, packaging, and transfer-readiness.

Operational Efficiency & Automation

Automation of identification, review workflows, packaging, and submissions reduces reliance on manual processes.

Regulatory Assurance

Supports government standards including ISO 15489, BS 10008, and TNA appraisal and transfer expectations.

Risk Reduction

Ensures records are retained appropriately, reduces data accumulation, and mitigates FOI, audit, and security risks.

4. Service Scope & Features

4.1 Records Lifecycle Management

- Automated application of retention labels and rules.
- Identification of records due for retention review or archival review.
- Multi-stage review process (business owner → information governance → archivist).
- Defensible deletion workflows for records authorised for destruction.

4.2 Transfer to The National Archives

- Identification of content with archival value.
- Validation and enrichment of metadata to comply with TNA schemas.
- Evidence capture of transfer activities and outcomes.
- Support for creating submission packages compliant with the TNA process.

4.3 Reporting & Dashboards

- Real-time visibility of lifecycle status.
- Oversight of records approaching archival review or disposal.
- Compliance monitoring against approved retention schedules and file plans.
- Audit-ready reporting for governance boards and external stakeholders.

4.4 Audit & Assurance

- Long-term preservation of audit logs (20+ years).
- Evidential chain-of-custody for all lifecycle decisions and transfers.
- Transparent record of reviewer actions and approval timestamps.

5. Service Benefits

- Demonstrates compliance with the Public Records Act and government recordkeeping obligations.
- Standardises lifecycle processes across diverse repositories (e.g., SharePoint, Teams).
- Reduces manual operational overhead and supports scalable processes.

- Improves organisational readiness for TNA transfer obligations.
- Reduces storage, risk, and administrative overhead through timely disposal.

6. Core Service Components

6.1 Records Governance Portal

The central interface for records managers, archivists, and departmental reviewers.

- Unified view of all disposition and transfer tasks.
- Bulk review and approval functions.
- Governance dashboards and reporting tools.

6.2 Lifecycle Orchestration Engine

- Automatic application of retention controls.
- Metadata extraction and validation.
- SIP creation and packaging.

6.3 TNA Transfer

- Pre-submission compliance checks and validation.
- Supporting activities to complete the submission.

7. Managed Service Activities

- Identification of records approaching retention or archival milestones.
- Quarterly or scheduled lifecycle reviews.
- Preparation and submission of TNA transfer packages.
- Ongoing alignment with evolving TNA requirements.
- Regular audit assurance and integrity checks.

8. Roles & Responsibilities (Target Operating Model)

Business Owner

- Confirms accuracy and relevance of records during review.

Records Manager

- Oversees retention policies, governance processes, and compliance reporting.

Archivist

- Determines archival value and approves or executes transfer to TNA.

System Administrator

- Manages technical configuration, connections, and security controls.

9. Governance & Risk Controls

- Quality assurance checks applied before transfer workflows.
- Metadata completeness checks to minimise TNA rejection risks.
- Controls preventing premature destruction of records.
- Measures to mitigate poor information architecture (e.g., remediation review cycles).

10. Security & Compliance

- All data processed within the organisation's Microsoft 365 and Azure tenant.
- RBAC model enforcing least privilege.
- Conformance with UK public sector security requirements.
- Supports ISO 15489, BS 10008 and TNA recordkeeping expectations.

11. Service Levels

- Defined SLA for portal availability.
- Processing times for SIP generation and review workflows.
- Guaranteed preservation of audit logs for the contracted retention period.

12. Onboarding & Offboarding

Onboarding

- Repository connection and configuration.
- Import of file plans and retention schedules.
- Workflow configuration, including role-based permissions.
- Initial training for records governance and archival reviewers.

Offboarding

- Export of audit logs and evidence packs.
- Provision of transfer receipts and governance documentation.
- Secure decommissioning of service components.