

British Online Archives - Takedown Policy for The National Archives

Scope of the policy

The takedown policy applies to digitised material licensed from The National Archives' collections and made available on the British Online Archives' website.

The takedown policy describes the circumstances in which information in open digital records may be subsequently removed by the British Online Archives pending further investigation.

Guiding principles

Takedown

As a general rule, information published on this website and licensed from The National Archives' collections will be considered to be in the public domain and will be removed from this website only in exceptional circumstances, at the discretion of the British Online Archives, in consultation with The National Archives.

The information will be regarded as having been removed temporarily and may be restored at a date decided by the British Online Archives. (All takedowns will be signalled openly on the British Online Archives' website by indicating the domain, the reason for takedown and the date of takedown)

In what circumstances might material be taken down from the website?

Material will be taken down temporarily on receipt of a request from a member of the public or a government department. The case will then be considered by the British Online Archives. In the case of any request relating to material from The National Archives' collections the request will be referred to the Takedown Panel at The National Archives, composed of members of staff with expertise in Freedom of Information (FOI) and Data Protection, along with other specialists from across The National Archives.

Where necessary, advice will be sought from The National Archives staff with particular knowledge of the record. The Takedown Panel is chaired by the Operations Director. The panel will approve continued withdrawal of the material only if one of the following criteria is met:

- Because of changed circumstances, material previously published in good faith is now considered to be subject to an exemption in the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act 2000 or the Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) 2004 and the public interest lies in withholding it from public access
- The material is personal information about someone who is still alive and continued online access would be unlawful or unfair to them under data protection legislation, would breach their or their family's right to a private and family life under the Human Rights Act 1998, or would constitute a breach of trust as demonstrated by the case of the Insolvency Service, where information concerning insolvent debtors is intended to be removed from the service's own website in its entirety after six months
- Making the material available online is an infringement of copyright
- The material is defamatory or obscene
- Continued online access would cause a government department serious and real administrative difficulties and it has requested takedown for a specified and limited period of time
- The material was released in error and removal is required to rectify a mistake
- Paper/original formats of online material taken down under this criterion will be brought to the attention of the Reclosure Panel as soon as possible after the Takedown Panel

Should the member of public disagree with a Panel's decision not to takedown information, then they have the right to appeal to the Keeper and Chief Executive of The National Archives. For further details, please contact the [Quality Manager](#) at The National Archives.

Please send any queries to info@britishonlinearchives.co.uk.