

Table 1: Minimum specification for digitising paper format records as a business-as-usual process¹

Suitability	Best used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • business-as-usual digitisation supporting agency business processes (eg scanning incoming correspondence or invoices); • short term temporary value records; • default setting for agency multi-function devices (MFDs); • creating access or reference copies to support agency business 	
Mandatory use	Minimum standard for all agency digitisation where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the source record is disposed of, and • Table 2 does not apply. 	
Source record format	Bound or Unbound paper documents (regardless of size) ²	
File format	TIFF 6.0, PNG, JPEG or PDF/A ³ file types	
Compression	TIFF 6.0	Uncompressed or lossless ZIP or LZW compression ⁴
	PNG	Lossless PNG compression
	JPEG	Use Photoshop level 10 to 12 (ie not less than 77% on the JPEG compression scale)
	PDF/A	Use minimum compression setting for PDF/A (ie least amount of compression; maximum image quality)
Resolution	300ppi ⁵	
Scanning ratio	100% (ie original size)	
Colour present in documents - coloured paper or content (eg colour diagrams, fonts, or images)		
Bit depth	8 bits per channel colour(24 Bit)	
Colour space	sRGB	
No colour present in documents – no coloured paper or content (eg black text on white paper)		
Bit depth	8 bit (greyscale)	
Colour space	Greyscale	

¹ These are the minimum requirements recommended for use as default settings when configuring agency multi-function devices (MFDs). Agencies may use more rigorous, higher level specifications if desired.

² Any photographic print attached to, or found within, a paper file can be digitised in the same format and to the same standard as the rest of the file.

³ Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is recommended to improve searchability with PDF/A file formats.

⁴ JPEG compression requirements will apply to TIFF 6.0 files using lossy JPEG compression (including multipage TIFF 6.0 files).

⁵ Note that some software/hardware manufacturers refer to dpi (dots per inch) in place of ppi (pixels per inch).

Table 2: Specification for digitising permanent value paper format records ⁶	
Suitability	Best used for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> digitising accumulations of paper format records for preservation; permanent value records (ie 'Retain as national archives'; 'Retain permanently'; 'Disposal not authorised'); high business value or long-term temporary records; source records on loan from the National Archives
Mandatory use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When disposing of permanent value source records, or source records that do not have a valid disposal action under GRA 31 Transferring the digitised copies to the National Archives Digitising records on loan from the National Archives under an ADS exemption
Source record format	Bound ⁷ or Unbound paper documents (regardless of size)
File format⁸	Uncompressed TIFF 6.0 ⁹ or PNG file type (Uncompressed TIFF 6.0 preferred) (Must be single-page; multi-page files are not acceptable)
Compression	Uncompressed
Resolution	400ppi ¹⁰ (or 600ppi for fine detail)
Scanning ratio	100% (ie original size)
Comments	For specifications applicable to photographic prints, negatives and transparencies found in files, and additional requirements for digitising archival value records, refer to the Preservation Digitisation Standards .
Colour present in documents - coloured paper or content (eg colour diagrams, fonts, or images)	
Bit depth	8 bits per channel colour (24 bit) For any photographic print, 16 bits per channel colour (48 bit) is required for extra detail
Colour space	Adobe RGB (ICC profile embedded)
No colour present in documents – no coloured paper or content (eg black text on white paper)	
Bit depth	8 bit (greyscale)
Colour space	Greyscale

⁶ These are mandatory minimum requirements for permanent value paper format records digitised for preservation purposes. Agencies may use higher level specifications if desired. Additional requirements for digitising archival value records are provided in the [Preservation Digitisation Standards](#).

⁷ Older bound volumes can be fragile, and if necessary should be placed in a book cradle (blocks or rolls of polyethylene foam) during image capture, and/or a book scanner employed.

⁸ These formats are appropriate for creating the preservation archival master (digital surrogate). Agencies may also wish to simultaneously create derivative access versions (copies) in formats suitable to their business, such as multipage PDF.

⁹ Single-page Uncompressed TIFF.

¹⁰ Note that some software/hardware manufacturers refer to dpi (dots per inch) in place of ppi (pixels per inch).