

Integrity of Public Records

What is integrity of public records?

Maintaining the integrity of public records means ensuring that public records, regardless of their format, are trustworthy and reliable throughout their lifecycle. It's about keeping public records accurate, complete, and accessible while protecting them from unauthorised changes, damage, or loss.



Public record integrity is vital because public records have legal, historical, administrative, and cultural value. When public records are properly maintained, they provide a reliable foundation for decision-making, help protect rights, and preserve the history of Queensland for future generations.

Why does it matter?

Public records must be accurate, complete and reliable to be trusted. Record integrity strengthens transparency, accountability and the preservation of Queensland's history.

The integrity of public records supports:

Accountability and governance: supports transparency, accountability and responsible government decision-making.

Legal and compliance: helps ensure important information accessible for legal claims, investigations, court matters as well as compliance with the *Public Records Act 2023* and other legislation.

Trust: Protects organisational and community interests while ensuring information remains reliable and usable over time.

Operational continuity: Helps public authorities run smoothly and reliably by providing accurate and easy-to-access public records of past activities and decisions.

What do I need to know?

All employees, contractors, and consultants who make and keep public records are responsible for:

- Making accurate public records.
- Keeping public records in authorised systems.
- Protecting public records from unauthorised access or alteration.
- Following organisational record management policies and procedures.

How can we protect the integrity of public records?

Public authorities can protect the integrity of public records by following these key principles:

Consistency

Manage public records in line with legislation, approved standards, policies, and procedures

Auditability

Maintain audit trails that record actions taken on public records and support accountability

Security

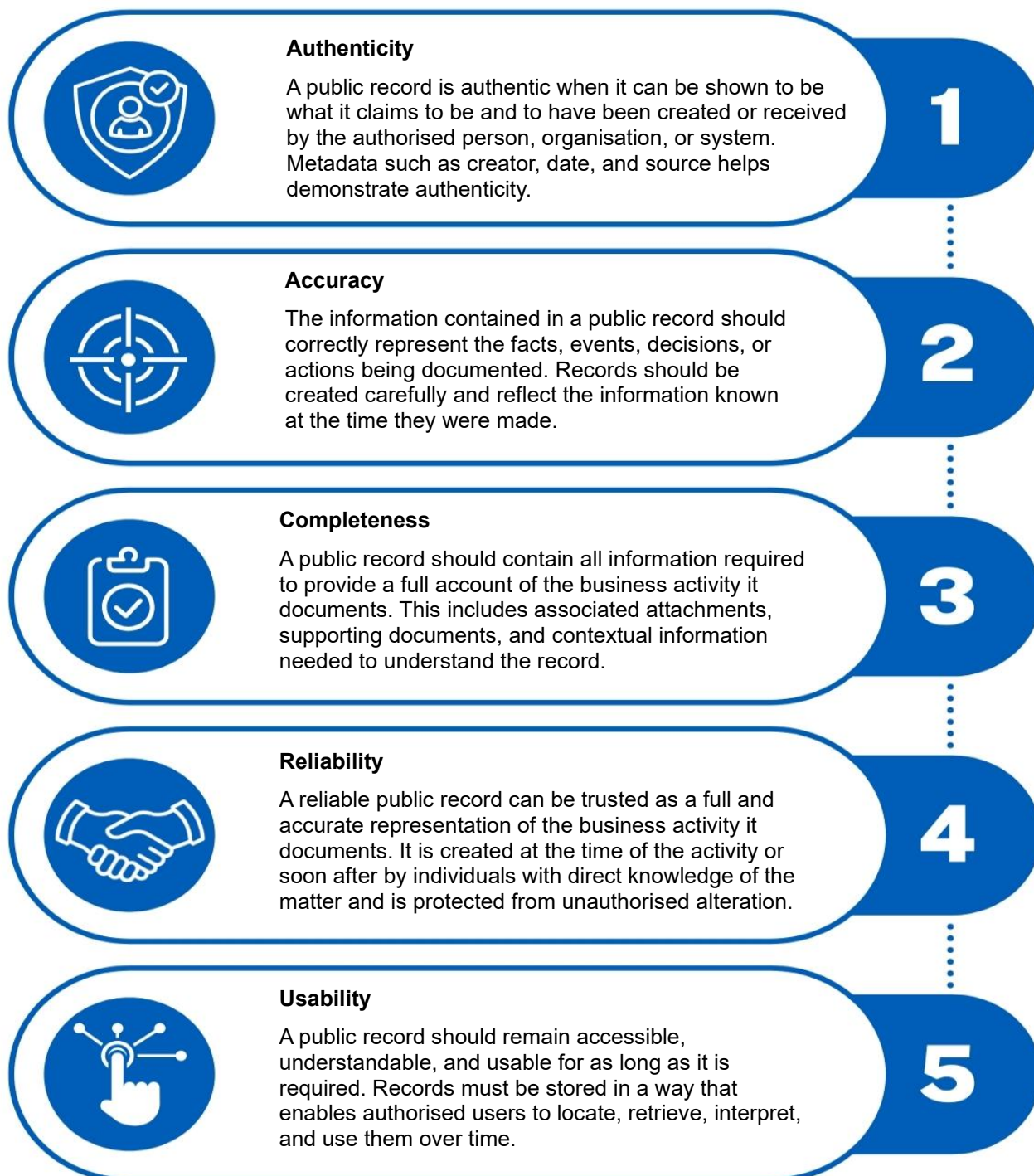
Protect public records from unauthorised access, alteration, loss or damage

Transparency

Enable public authorities to demonstrate that records are authentic, accurate and managed appropriately

Elements of Record Integrity

Record integrity depends on maintaining a set of core principles throughout the lifecycle of a public record. Together, these principles ensure records remain trustworthy evidence of government business:



Example: Approval of a funding grant

A grant approval record demonstrates integrity when it is:

- **Accurate:** The approved funding amount, recipient details, and approval date are recorded correctly.

- **Authentic:** Metadata shows who created and approved the record and when it was captured.
- **Complete:** The application, assessment documents, approvals, and supporting correspondence are linked to the record.
- **Reliable:** The record was created as part of the approval process and includes an audit trail of any authorised changes.
- **Usable:** The record is stored in the organisation's recordkeeping system and can be easily found, accessed, and understood when needed.

Public Record Integrity checklist



Where do I find more information?

For guidance on integrity of public records, visit the [Queensland State Archives website](https://www.archives.qld.gov.au). For specific queries, please contact us at rkqueries@archives.qld.gov.au or phone us on (07) 3037 6630.