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Records Management in Search of Efficiency in the Administrative Archive of the Archive of the University of Coimbra

*Isabel Cristina Guerra Correia Rostami*¹

ABSTRACT: This paper results of the work developed in the Administrative Archive of the Archive of the University of Coimbra (AUC). Driven by the difficulties and possibilities of information management in organizations, an intervention project was conceived to test the possibility of applying records management tools: NP 4438-1-2 and ISO INE TR 26122 standards - to identify and solve the records management problems of the administrative archive of the AUC. The work has a theoretical and a practical component. It began with an analysis of the literature to provide a theoretical foundation and to justify the choices made and, at the same time, collection and analysis of data based on the procedures set out in the Standards. Benefiting from the flexibility they provide, the intervention project followed the recommendations set out in NP 4432-1-2:2005 and ISO INE TR 26122, adapted to the needs and objectives defined. We confirmed the possibility of applying different document management tools to identify and solve document management problems in an organization with hybrid business processes. The work allowed us to discuss the contribution and complementarity of the different archival theories when we want to critically contribute to solving records management problems in organizations.

KEYWORDS: Archivistics, records management, standardization, Coimbra University Archive

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INTRODUCTION

This article is the result of an intervention project carried out as part of the Master's programme in Information Science at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Coimbra. It is therefore located in the scientific field of Information Science, more specifically Archivistics.

The choice of the intervention project resulted from the interest in carrying out a theoretical practical study that reflects the challenges currently facing archives and which, at the same time, could prove useful to the Organisation.

Among the challenges currently facing Archivistics, the ones that challenge us are the following:

- i) the archival theories that have emerged since the last decades of the 20th century; ii) the paradigm shift pointed out by some authors;

And the challenges faced by records management:

- i) that arise mainly from the complexification of organizations;
- ii) possibilities brought by the theoretical perspectives and the possibility of crossing them.

The increase in document production since the second half of the 20th century has led to the appearance and coexistence in organisations of documents associated with tasks that take place in both physical and digital environments. This reality has contributed to organisations resorting to standardisation as a necessity because it makes it possible to rationalise investments and increase the efficiency of procedures.

Therefore, the intervention project's main objective is to apply different but complementary records management tools to a specific situation, helping to increase the effectiveness of procedures and to meet identified needs in terms of managing archive documents.

This article is organised in four sections. The first section presents the history of archivistics and its relationship with efficiency, and discusses the theoretical issues related to the paradigm shift identified by some

authors, which involves moving from the primacy of the document to the primacy of information. The second section presents the methodology. The theoretical and practical aspects of the intervention project are based on a qualitative methodology. In this section, we justify the choice of project work, explain the object, the objectives to be achieved, the methodological procedures adopted and the techniques used. The third section presents the results in conjunction with the methodology and techniques used. In the fourth section, we discuss the intervention project results. Finally, we present the conclusions.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This work is theoretically based on Archivistics, a disciplinary area within Information Science.

Like any other area of knowledge, Archivistics is the result of the historical process of transformation it has undergone and is related to the social, political and economic contexts from which it emerges (Schmidt & Mattos, 2020).

If we take into account the chronology of the appearance of the terms Archivistics and Information Science or Information Management, we can conclude that the term Archivistics preceded the other two. From consulting *The Dictionary of Archives Terminology* da Society of American Archivists [SAA] (2023) we have retained the following definitions:

- i) *archival science* is understood as: “a systematic body of theory that supports the practice of identifying, acquiring, authenticating, preserving, and providing access to records of continuing value” (SAA, 2023).
- ii) for its part, *information science* is related to “study of the theory and practice of creating, acquiring, processing, managing, retrieving, and disseminating information, especially the use of computers to facilitate these processes” (SAA, 2023).

iii) and *information management* relates to “principles and techniques to process, store, retrieve, manipulate, and control access to information so that users can find information they need” (SAA, 2023).

The definitions above show an evolution towards access to documents being replaced by access to information, as can be seen in the last two definitions. Between access to documents and access to information lies records management.

The recognition by archival theory that information is a resource that adds value to organisations led to the emergence of information management and its integration into the *curriculum* of the Master’s Degree in Information Science at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Coimbra (Borges & Freitas, 2020).

The Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA, 2007) defines “Records and information Management - RIM” as the area of action of records managers, aimed at managing organisational documents, considered vital (“records”), for as long as they are needed and to meet the purposes for which they were created and used (Borges & Freitas, 2020, p.223). Borges e Freitas (2020) quote Oliver (2015) who “emphasises that the activities carried out in this area must be based on working together and using unified and consistent approaches to make the management of documents and information vital for day-to-day use and for the memory of organisations efficient and effective.” (p.224, our translation).

Although efficiency and effectiveness are not synonymous terms, while in general the term efficiency refers to the way in which a certain result is achieved, the term effectiveness refers to whether or not the objective is reached and whether that objective is really the one to be reached. The concept of effectiveness is especially relevant at a strategic institutional level - it’s important not only to do what you do well, but also to do what you should (Robalo, 1995).

Schmidt and Mattos (2020) identify the different epistemological approaches to Archivistics and quote Duranti (2005), who calls the first

approach “archives before archivistics” (Duranti, 2005 cited by Schmidt & Mattos, 2020, p.29, our translation), placing it temporally between the invention of writing and the French Revolution (1789).

This is followed by the classic approaches that were in force until the end of the Second World War and which are characterised by: new uses for archive documents; the establishment of the principle *respect des fonds*; the idea of the archive; the principle of provenance and original order; the registration system; organicity; custody; ordering and description (Schmidt & Mattos, 2020).

Modern approaches lasted until the 1980s. They introduce modern records management, the life cycle, document evaluation and functional classification. Finally, in the last decade of the 20th century, we enter the contemporary theories of Archivistics (Schmidt & Mattos, 2020).

We believe that following on from Schmidt and Mattos (2020), Araújo's (2013) perspective helps to complement the division and characterisation presented by the authors. Araújo (2013) considers that the first manuals and initiatives that denote changes in the way archives are conceived appear at the beginning of the 20th century. Thus “adjectives such as “living”, “dynamic” and “active” are beginning to be used to point in the direction of a necessary change to be made in the archives in order to combat their inertia and closure in on themselves” (Araújo, 2013, p.65, our translation).

The separation between historical archives and administrative archives was gradually dissolved from the beginning of the 20th century, together with the question of the functions of archives and their effectiveness. This was, however, a troubled and controversial path, and not before the split between the “traditional” view of archives and records management had been emphasised.

In Eugenio Casanova's *Archivistica*, dated 1928, the author does not separate the administrative archive from the historical archive - because the latter is a consequence of the former. Casanova (1928 cit. by Araújo, 2013) states that it is also the function of archives, in addition to collecting, processing and preserving documents, to do so “with less effort, saving labour

and making the most economical use of facilities, staff, time and managing costs” (Casanova, 1928 cited by Araújo, 2013, p.66, our translation).

The period between the First World War and the Second World War saw an increase in document production and, consequently, a concern with document appraisal as an imperative need that was inseparable from the question of the effectiveness of organisations. However, this activity was the responsibility of the producing organisation and was not the archivist’s job (Araújo, 2013).

T. R. Schellenberg’s work accentuated the split between the “traditional” perspective centred on historical archives in Latin European countries and a more pragmatic perspective in which the archivist intervenes in all types of archives. By introducing the concepts of primary and secondary value, Schellenberg contributed to preserving the maximum amount of information with the minimum number of documents. Consequently, a new field of archival science emerged: archival appraisal (Araújo, 2013).

The need to control the growth of document production led to the emergence of records management, i.e. the management of archival documents with the intervention of the archivist at the earliest age of the documents. Records management is therefore closely linked to administration and marked a break with archivistics, which until then had focused more on historical documentation (Araújo, 2013).

The evolution of Archivistics in the United States of America and Australia cannot be dissociated from the fact that administration documents in these countries were much more disorganised and that the principles of *respect des fonds* and provenance were not put into practice or applied, as was the case in the centuries-old tradition of European Archivistics - which had already provided the necessary theoretical and conceptual framework for archivist work.

The emergence of the concepts *records group*, *records management* and *archival appraisal* provided American and Australian archivists with the necessary tools to solve an urgent problem. So much so that, in 1947, the US Congress created a specific group to deal with the problem of

records management. In 1950, the “doctrine” of *Records Management* was established, which prioritised administrative efficiency, distinguishing it from the theoretical and methodological approach to *documents* - documents with historical value.

In 1964, Peter Scott proposed abandoning the *record group* approach and adopting the series system, as he considered that the *record group* did not reflect the reality of document creation and use in environments with complex administrative changes, where multiple provenance is a frequent phenomenon. It proposes an approach to classification that allows description strategies to reflect the dynamic nature of document creation and that any set of documents can be viewed from various contextual perspectives (Schmidt & Mattos, 2020).

In addition to the exponential growth in the production of documentation and technological development, there are other factors that will mark the theoretical formulations in Archivistics from the 1980s onwards. Archivistics is confronted with new uses, values and functions of documents.

In Canada, in the 1980s, “integrated archival science” emerged, with Carol Couture, Jean-Yves Rousseau and Jacques Ducharme among its main representatives. This trend rejects the division created by modern American archivistics between records and archives and aims to make archivistics a scientific discipline. It argues that information management should subsidise document management and the union of primary and secondary value for an “expanded definition of archive” (Tognoli & Guimarães, 2010, p.16, our translation).

The functional or post-modern archival approach assumes the influence of the subject in document production and, consequently, the document is no longer considered an impartial and neutral construct. Functional analysis focuses on the process of document creation rather than the document, considers digital documents and new forms of document production, proposes macro-appraisal and analysis of the production context, and the concept of background becomes dynamic. Terry Cook,

Hugh Taylor and Tom Nesmith are some of the representatives of this approach (Tognoli & Guimarães, 2010, pp.7-10).

We conclude this tour of some of the theoretical approaches in contemporary archivistics with the *records continuum* model, developed by Frank Upward in 1995. This model was based on Peter Scott's "series system" approach (Gilliland, 2014 cited by SAA, 2023).

According to Anne Gilliland (2014), the *records continuum* is a descriptive model that provides a complex and holistic way to think about the nature, role, use, and life of records, regardless of their media, as they exist and constantly interact across four dimensions: create, capture, organize, and pluralize (Gilliland, 2014 cited by SAA, 2023)

The *records continuum* rejects the life cycle theory as a linear and fragmented view. From this perspective, the archive document is a logical and non-physical entity and its management is continuous. This gives rise to the concept of *life continuum*, defined as

The unified pattern of a record's life, comprised of four interrelated stages: creation or receipt; classification; scheduling and its implementations, including maintenance in the creating office, an active storage area or records center, or an archives; and use (primary or secondary) (SAA, 2023)

As we can see, the separation between current and permanent documents is also rejected. Consequently, at a professional level, the separation between records managers and archivists no longer makes sense.

This model enables accountability in two ways: a) by conceptualising document interactions and identifying the path of documents in all their dimensions - creation, capture, organisation and pluralisation - it makes the document available as evidence; b) by identifying all the axes that represent different facets of accountability - the identity of the entity involved in a transaction documented by the records, what that entity's intervention consisted of, what evidence is made available by the documents, how the documents are found and retrieved for later use (SAA, 2023).

This journey would not be complete without reference to Theo Thomassen, who argues that archivistics as a science is distinguished

from other sciences by the objectives it pursues, its object of study and its methodology. The object of study is information in its relationship with the process that generates it, which structures it and the circumstances in which this phenomenon occurs. Its aim is to analyse documents as products and producers of social activities in order to establish, develop and preserve their quality and that of the archives [...] (Thomassen, 2006).

As far as the methodology is concerned, it involves chain analysis of the links established “between information and documents, documents and other documents, documents and work processes and work processes and their social environment” (Thomassen, 2006, p.14, our translation).

Therefore, we believe that the fundamental aspect of this whole journey has been to transfer the value of the document to the value of the information contained in the document.

In Portugal the issue of the effectiveness of organisations and archives is a current and pressing issue that has accompanied the government’s administrative modernisation policies.

The first moment was the “Lei de Bases da Reforma Administrativa” of the Second Constitutional Government, of 1978, which set “the objectives of rationalising circuits, making things easier for the public, simplifying processes [and procedures], generalising information services and reducing bureaucracy in services” (Silva, 2008, p.3, our translation). Between 1983 and 1985, the IX Constitutional Government focused on meeting the needs of users and recognising their rights (Silva, 2008).

For Silva (2008), the concept of administrative modernisation as “effective service provision, humanized service, timely and rapid satisfaction of users’ requests” (p.4, our translation) is in line with what quality advocates - which sees the relationship between the administration and the administered as a relationship between organisations and their customers.

Still according to the author, quality, at least since 1999, has been understood as “a management philosophy that makes it possible to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency in services, to reduce bureaucracy and

simplify processes and procedures and to satisfy the implicit needs of the citizen.” (Silva, 2008, p.4, our translation).

From the 1990s onwards, quality became part of the lexicon of modernisation and administrative reform policies, now combined with eGovernment (Information Society) and the “Technological Plan”. At the same time, legislation aimed at administrative modernisation and quality emerged with the aim of standardising processes and procedures (Silva, 2008).

Portuguese archives and archivists are no strangers to this context, and are now including administrative modernisation and quality management among their concerns. Silva (2008) cites as an example the communication by Pires de Lima (1997), in which the author warns of the urgent need for archivists to integrate records management into their work (Silva, 2008, p.4).

According to Penteado (2015), a paradigm shift in national archival policy began in 2005, triggered by the diagnosis of the central administration’s intermediate archives, carried out a few years earlier. The diagnosis identified “a set of deficient practices in the management of archival information, which needed to be changed quickly” (Penteado, 2015, p.123, our translation). To this end, the then *Direção-Geral de Arquivos* (DGARQ) designed a set of strategies to promote the qualification of national archive systems.

The appearance in Portugal of NP 4438-1-2 in 2005 is a milestone for records management. The standard is presented as a guide that contributes to the management and organisation of documents from a quality perspective, in line with ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. It emerged from the production of ISO 15489-1, which resulted from the need to regulate the chaotic situation experienced in Australian archives. NP 4438-1-2:2005 presents a set of recommendations that allow organisations to implement records management systems while maintaining the characteristics of an archive document. Its general aim is to ensure that documents are created, organised and archived in a relevant manner. According to Sousa (2022):

*The vector for the spread of the functional approach and functional analysis was the first version, in 2001, of the ISO 15.489-1 standard, which clearly recommended that the development of the classification plan for archive documents should be based on an analysis of functions, activities and work processes. This was followed by ISO 26.122:2008, entitled **Analysis of work processes for document management**, which provided guidance on how to carry out a functional analysis of organizations. (p.7, our translation)*

RESEARCH METHODS AND OBJECTIVES

The theoretical and practical aspects of the intervention project are based on a qualitative methodology.

In the first phase, prior to defining the intervention strategy, we analysed the literature resulting from bibliographic searches carried out in the Repositórios Científicos de Acesso Aberto em Portugal (RCAAP), Repositório científico da UC (Estudo Geral), Biblioteca do Conhecimento ON-Line (B-ON), Base de Dados Referencial de Artigos de Periódicos em Ciência da Informação (BRAPCI) and the EBSCO database. Analysing the literature made it possible, firstly, to substantiate the choice of project work and, subsequently, to support the theoretical basis of the theme chosen for the work project and the choices made in the intervention strategy.

Project work provides the opportunity to develop professional competencies based on concrete problems that require the development of critical thinking, research skills, the integration of theory and practice and the ability to adapt to a dynamic reality.

According to Terra (2022), “since the 1970s, a new profile has been advocated for the professional responsible for managing the entire life cycle of information in the most diverse contexts” (p.56, our translation). Project work has advantages identified by authors such as Moylan, who points to critical thinking and problem-solving orientation, creativity and innovation as some of the professional competences that this type of academic work enables to be developed.

Given the characteristics that we have been able to identify and attribute to the project work, we consider it to be part of a qualitative methodology. Since “[w]hat defines an investigation of this nature is the fact that the data obtained is not quantified, measured or counted for inferential purposes” (Freitas, 2009, p.61, our translation). We also see a convergence with the characteristics identified by Flick (2007), for whom “Qualitative research is recognised by the fact that it has different ways of confronting reality, with a view to understanding it holistically” (Flick, 2007 cited by Freitas, 2013, p.1086, our translation).

The agreement with the qualitative methodology can also be found in the procedures adopted, since we followed the recommendations of NP4438-1-2:2005 and UNE ISO TR/26122:2008, adapting them to the defined objectives and the context of the organisation. This is because the standards present a model to follow, but also allow flexibility and adaptation to the organisational context.

We therefore agree with Strauss and Corbin (2002 cited por Freitas, 2013,) when they consider that

There are at least three components that characterise qualitative research [...]: the peculiar way of collecting data, suggesting different sources; the way of reducing and interpreting it, generating conceptual constructs; the way of communicating the results, focusing on descriptive and interpretative aspects of reality.” (p.1087, our translation).

Data collection and the techniques used to comply with the standards consisted of on-site observation; unstructured interviews; documentary research and analysis based on standards NP 4438-1-2:2005 and AENOR IT 26122:2008.

The main objective it's apply different but complementary records management tools to a specific situation, helping to increase the effectiveness of procedures and to meet identified needs in terms of managing archive documents. The application exercise took place at the University of Coimbra Archive (AUC) Secretariat.

To achieve the main objective, the following specific objectives were formulated: a) identify the records management needs of the administrative archive of the AUC; b) integrate the records management instruments NP 4438-1-2:2005 and UNE ISO TR/26122:2008 into the proposed solution for the records management needs identified; c) contribute to solving the needs identified on the basis of the records management tools and the context of the organisation.

The research question is: How is it possible to integrate and apply the NP 4438-1-2:2005 and UNE ISO TR/26122:2008 records management tools in the administrative archive of the AUC?

The following questions were also asked:

- a) What are the records management needs of the administrative archive of the AUC?
- b) How are the NP 4438-1-2:2005 and UNE ISO TR/26122:2008 records management tools used to solve the records management needs identified?
- c) What are the contributions to solving the needs identified based on the records management tools and the context of the organization?

In order to answer the above questions, it was also necessary to answer the following questions:

- a) how are business process mapping and Classificação e avaliação da informação pública (CLAV) Lista consolidada (LC) integrated/related within the implementation of an organisation's records management system?
- b) How are business processes, CLAV (LC), quality management and strategic planning linked in an organisation?

FINDINGS

The methodology was applied as follows.

The research was carried out during the 2022/2023 school year.

The first task of the project work consisted of a preliminary study that allowed for the diagnosis of the main records management difficulties experienced at the AUC Secretariat. This first, more general analysis, supported by on-site observation, unstructured interviews and document analysis, enabled the definition of the object of work, the objectives to be achieved, as set out above, and the intervention strategy.

The main difficulty identified was the need to describe processes and procedures, classify and evaluate them.

After identifying the needs, the business processes targeted for intervention were selected according to the established criteria, namely:

- i) those identified as core;
- ii) those with the highest number of occurrences in requests addressed to the AUC;
- iii) those that are specific to archival work and directly related to AUC's functions as a District Archive;
- iv) those which, given their demand and complexity, would benefit most from the intervention carried out.

The strategy intervention was then outlined.

We used the same methodology and methods as above: on-site observation, unstructured interviews and document analysis, and added the use of the UNE ISO/TR 26122:2008, NP 4438-1:2005 and NP 4438-2:2005 as guidelines for the intervention strategy to be developed and with the aim of constituting a documentary *corpus* that would respond to the needs of the service and the normative requirements.

Specifically: UNE ISO TR/26122:2008 presents the methodology for analysing business processes with a view to records management (AENOR, 2008). A functional and sequential analysis of the business processes was carried out, preceded by a study of the organisation's context, in line with what is also proposed by NP 4438-1-2:2005.

For a better understanding of the context in which the work project took place, we present a summary characterisation of the AUC.

The AUC is an organisational unit of the University of Coimbra (UC), under the supervision of the Rectorate. The UC is a legal person governed by public law, with its headquarters in Coimbra, in the Paço das Escolas.

The AUC is a centuries-old institution, recognised for its rich documentary heritage. It is known above all as an institution of memory and culture. However, like all other institutions of its kind in activity, it has a current or administrative archive which sets in motion a set of procedures that allow the definitive Archive to fulfil its functions.

The SAA Dictionary defines the term “function” and the term “competence” as “The activities of an organisation or individual performed to accomplish some mandate or mission” (SAA, 2023).

From the analysis carried out, we can see that during 2023, around 6,821 requests were received only via the formally established (Request Ticket), i.e. not counting requests that reached the AUC via other channels (telephone, emails from employees, the Board, etc.), among which the following types of requests stand out: issuing certificates, endorsements, reservations or advance seat reservations, information and reproduction of documents, document loans and acquisitions. The types of requests identified are related to the functions, competences and activities of the AUC and constitute business processes, and it was on these that we developed the intervention strategy.

The NP 4438-1:2005 provides public and private organisations with the guiding principles for document management (IPQ, 2005a). NP 4438-2:2005 presents an eight-stage methodology. Of the eight stages, in the intervention project we concentrated on the first five: “Stage A: Preliminary investigation”; “Stage B: Functional analysis”; “Stage C: Identification of archive document requirements”; “Stage D: Evaluation of existing systems” and “Stage E: Identification of strategies to fulfil archive document requirements”.

As a result, and in fulfilment of the recommendations of “Stage A: Preliminary Investigation”, we decided to create *Modelo para Estrutura de Processos ou Procedimentos*². We reached this conclusion based on document analysis, interviews and on-site observation, actions that allowed us to understand the “administrative, legal, functional and social contexts” (IPQ, 2005b, p. 11, our translation) of the AUC.

The functional analysis, provided for in Step B, aims to demonstrate how the documents relate to the organisation’s activities and business processes, resulting in a description of the activities and business processes selected. Stage B also recommends defining a functional classification scheme that shows the organisation’s functions, activities and transactions. To fulfil this objective, in addition to using the methodology recommended by ISO INE TR/26122, we also used the Lista Consolidada³ (LC) available at Classificação e Avaliação da Informação Pública⁴ (CLAV)⁵. Instruments made available by the Direção-Geral do Livro, dos Arquivos e das Bibliotecas (DGLAB).

“Stage C: Identification of archive document requirements” aims to “identify and document in a structured way an organisation’s requirements for producing, receiving and retaining archival documents” (IPQ, 2005b, p.12, our translation). A systematic analysis of organisational needs and legal and regulatory obligations is necessary to ensure that only the appropriate documents are kept for the proper conduct of activities and to guarantee the legal and administrative accountability of individuals and the organisation. The *Model for the Structure of Processes or Procedures* in its entirety, i.e. taking into account all its fields, makes it possible to control the production, receipt, processing, maintenance and destination

¹ Our translation: Process or Procedure Structure Model.

² Our translation: The LC is a hierarchical structure of classes that represent the functions, sub-functions and business processes carried out by the Public Administration, including their description and evaluation. Its purpose is to serve as a reference for the development of organisational or multi organisational instruments for classifying and evaluating public information (Lourenço et al., 2019a).

³ Our translation: “Modular platform for classifying and evaluating public information Plataforma” which, as part of the country’s administrative modernisation, is part of the Simplex+ programme, which aims to simplify and dematerialise administrative processes (Lourenço, et al., 2019b).

⁴ CLAV is a collaborative platform which we used to gather data on the selected business processes in terms of description, classification and evaluation. Available at: <https://clav.dglab.gov.pt/>

of archive documents, thus contributing to their reliability, authenticity, integrity and utilisation.

“Stage D: Evaluation of existing systems” was carried out by collecting information in Stage A, which made it possible to identify the organisation’s existing information systems. Subsequently, by assigning responsibility for the custody of the documents/records, identifying the support, location, administrative retention period, recording changes to the document and other meta-information elements contained in the *Model for the Structure of Processes or Procedures*, we sought to eliminate any possible discrepancies between the requirements for archive documents and what the existing systems allow.

Lastly, “Stage E: Identifying strategies to fulfil the requirements of archive documents”. The identification of the strategy took into account the analysis of the organisation and the objectives of this project work and consists of the description of the intervention strategy adopted and presented here.

We consider the proposed *Model for the Structure of Processes or Procedures* to be a strategy (Stage E) for “fulfilling the requirements of archive documents” (IPQ, 2005b, p.12, our translation) that brings together and synthesises the recommendations found in the Stages we are focusing on.

DISCUSSION

Given the characteristics of the AUC as a UC organisation and the activities it carries out, arising from the duties conferred on it as a District Archive and University Archive, the theoretical and methodological principles defended by the post-custodial theories of Archivistics - *records continuum* and Functional Archivistics - are adapted to the reality of this organisation, especially when the aim is to contribute to the implementation of a records management system aligned with the Quality Policy of the UC⁶ and with the policies of the DGLAB. This conclusion

⁶ In the Estatutos da Universidade de Coimbra, republished by Despacho normativo n.º 8/2019, the UC introduces Quality Management as a management practice.

also stems from the results obtained from combining the resources used - LC, CLAV and records management standards in the intervention project. The LC was inspired by the theoretical model of functional classification and, on a practical level, by the work carried out by the National Archives of Canada. On the other hand, since the business process is at the centre of all the actions carried out by records management, its dissection supported by the functional and sequential analysis recommended by ISO INE/TR 26122:2008 in conjunction with NP 4432-1-2:2005 made it possible to fill the gaps in the records management.

Bustelo Ruesta (2012) argues that in ISO standardisation, the orientation followed by TC46/SC11 was defined by ISO 15489, which translates into the inclusion in records management of document processes and controls, right from the creation of the document or even before and with the main objective “the integration of records management into work processes” (Bustelo Ruesta, 2012, p. 43, our translation). Changing times, technology and management methods have meant that strategic thinking has integrated records management and records management has integrated business processes (Bustelo Ruesta, 2012).

Moro Cabero and Llanes Padrón (2018) advance with the idea that the set of standards of which ISO TR 26122 and 15.489 are a part respond to the need to “build, implement and certify quality and business excellence” (Moro Cabero & Llanes Padrón, 2018, p.214, our translation), since a large part of the archives are understood as “information units and centres whose administration is subject to accountability, which includes an interest in demonstrating quality management and excellence” (Moro Cabero & Llanes Padrón, 2018, p.214, our translation).

With regard to the distinction between “current archives” and “historical archives”, we agree with Rousseau and Couture (1998) when they refer to the problem of the notions of primary and secondary value of documents and warn that these can lead to “an intellectual shortcut that must be avoided [...]” (p.123, our translation). The authors believe that associating primary value with active or semi-active documents and secondary value with documents that are part of definitive archives, is a pernicious simplification when put in simplistic terms. We proved this

premise when we began this project and therefore agree with the authors when they argue that “even when, at first glance, the definitive archives are no longer useful to the administration that produced them, we will see that their qualitative contribution is undeniable and that the administration must be able to count on them.” (1998, p.123, our translation).

CONCLUSION

We conclude that the application of the adopted methodology to a concrete work environment is possible and even beneficial for archival work, resulting in the achievement of the formulated objectives.

We also found that the methodology has a strong interpretative bias, which implies, for its good application, the knowledge of epistemology and Archival Theory, as well as the organizational culture of the institution. From a theoretical point of view, the practical work was based on literature from not only the *records continuum* and functional or post-modern archival theoretical approach, but also integrated archival science. We therefore believe that the contributions of the different streams of contemporary archivistics, depending on the objectives set by each organisation with regard to optimising document management, are complementary rather than competing.

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