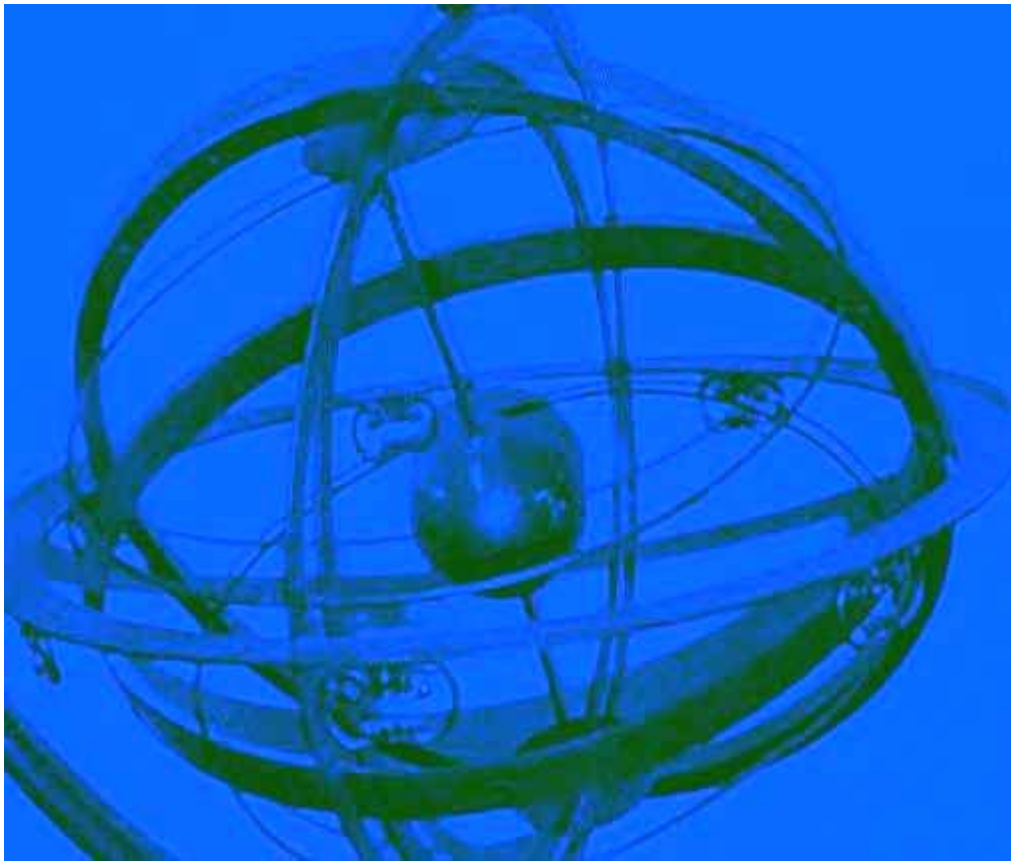
Guidelines
Records Management and Archive Storage (ReMAS)

Volume I

Database Entry – Write/Edit Access
Hard-copy Records



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Introduction

The Records Management and Archive Storage (ReMAS) database is a tool for managing the records and files of departments and divisions within Imperial College.

The database has been introduced throughout the College to ensure compliance with new and updated Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation, by showing that records are properly controlled and maintained. The process of answering any future requests for information under this legislation is simplified through the use of ReMAS and the data included within it.

Functions

The database was created using Microsoft Access. It has web capability and a number of different functions, including:

- Maintaining a secure catalogue of the records held in each office, and each new file subsequently created;
- Showing the location of each file;
- Allowing tracking of the use of files, for loans and returns;
- Printing reports on the use of files;
- Indicating the destruction date of records, when they become in active, and when they should be transferred to the Corporate Records Unit;
- Logging the destruction of records;
- Printing labels for boxes, enabling consistent information about storage;
- Addressing the issue of excess paper and file management and numbers of duplicate copies of records.

Issuing databases

Each department will be issued with the required number of databases for relevant staff. The database will be loaded complete with details of the files held in the relevant offices. It is necessary for the database to be checked immediately to ensure that the information is correct.

Inputting System

The inputting is done at the Inventory (file-by-file list) level. When listing the files in an office, the Corporate Records Unit has recorded the title of the file, any major subdivisions within it, the date range of the file, and a brief note of the file contents. The information for each file makes a separate entry in the database.

Input Level

The most relevant of the four inputting levels to most users are Inventory and Series.

Inventory (a file-by-file list of your cabinets)
Series (any major groups of records – e.g. student records or HR records)
Provenance (to which department/division the records belong)
Accession (physical location of records at time of listing)

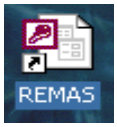
This manual is for users with Write/Edit access to the database. It concentrates mainly on the Inventory level, but Series level instructions are also given for users who require it. Users with Read Only access should see Volume 2 of this series 'Guidelines - Records Management and Archive Storage'.

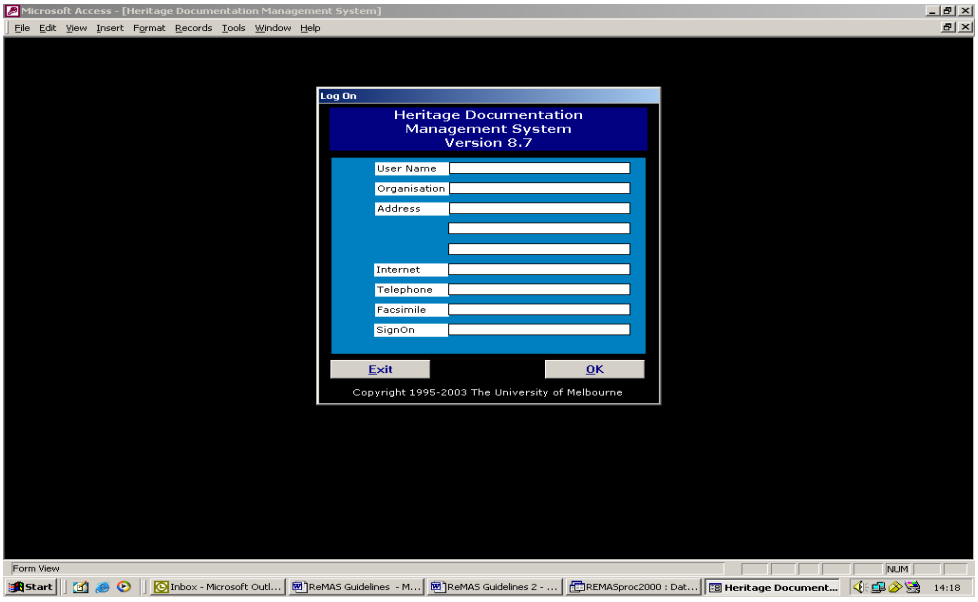
Issuing the Database

- The names of the staff members using and updating the database are given by departmental administrators to the Corporate Records Unit, who in turn contact ICT to arrange electronic permission for the database to be accessed individually. When this occurs the ReMAS icon will then appear on the relevant desktops.
- Staff from the Corporate Records Unit will visit each office to link the database correctly to the system and set up **User Names** and **Sign On** passwords

Accessing the Database

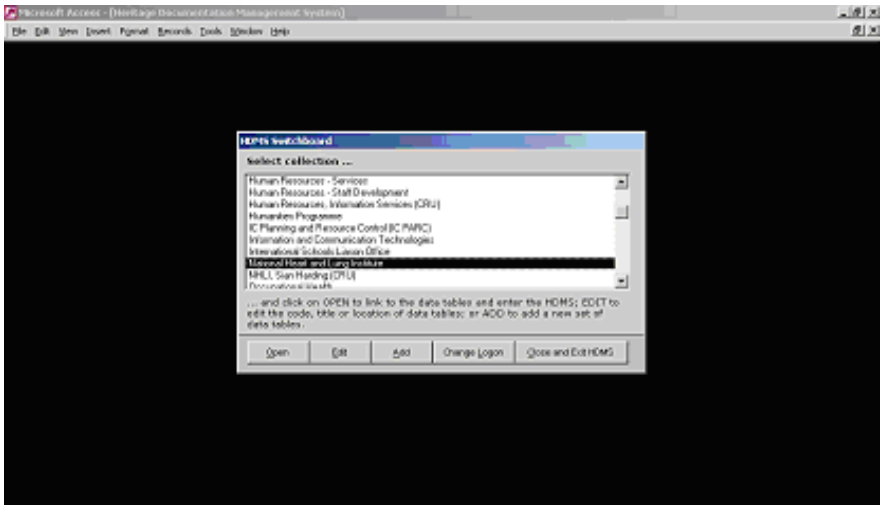
- Double click on the ReMAS icon on the desktop.





- Type in **User Name** and **Sign On** password, then click **OK**.
- CRU will issue you with this information.

- After a few moments the Switchboard screen will load.



- The Switchboard shows the titles of all the databases stored in ReMAS.

- Select the database by scrolling through the list using the arrow keys on the right, highlight the relevant database, then select **Open**.

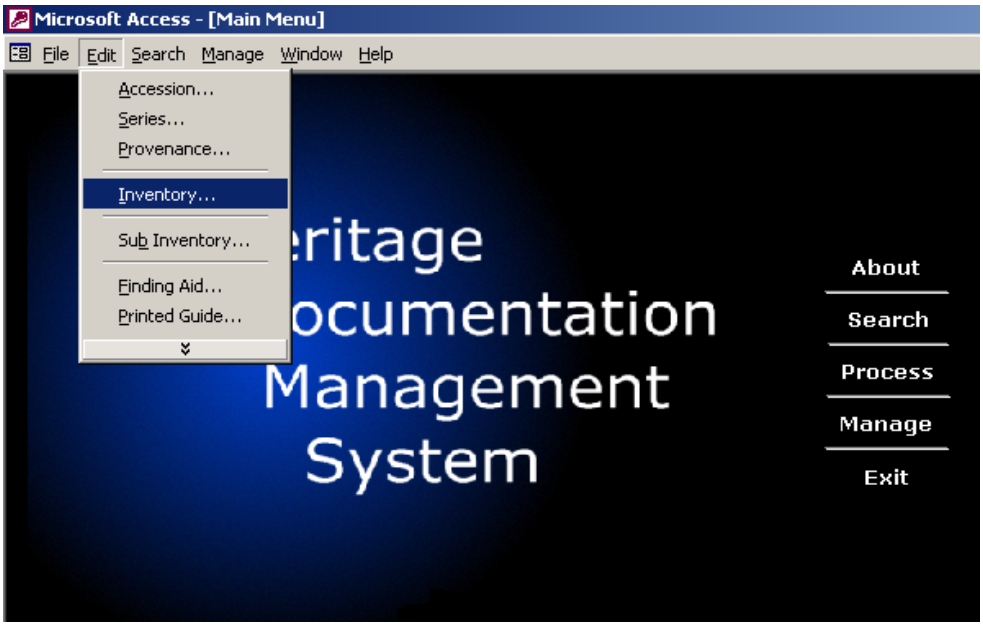
- You may notice that there are other databases with similar titles to your own. These contain information about collections transferred to the Corporate Records Unit before the current databases were created and refer to inactive records held in archive storage.

- To differentiate between the databases the letters (CRU) have been added to the older databases, which you will not need to access.

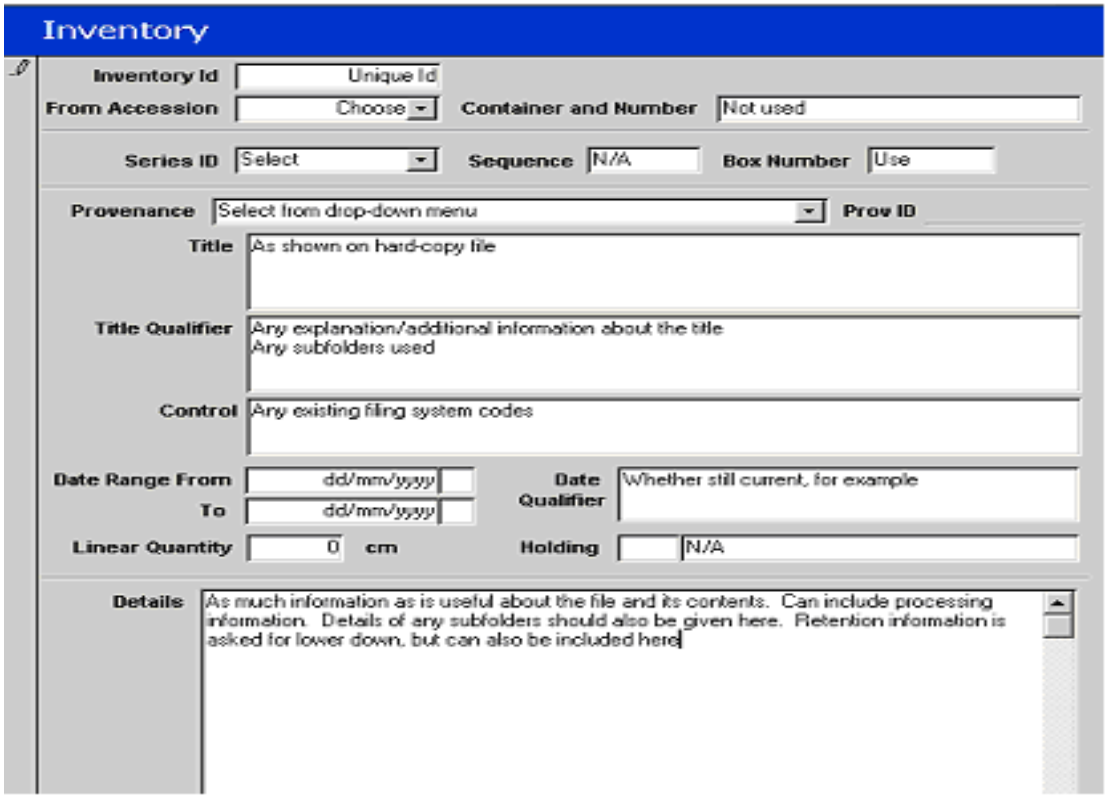
- Users only have permission to access the database for their own department. The Corporate Records Unit has access to all databases but do not allow others to use this facility.

Inputting Data

- The drop-down menus from the upper toolbar at the top of the screen are quicker and easier to use than the links on the right hand side of this screen, although these can also be used.
- Select **Edit** from the toolbar, then select **Inventory** to open the standard Inventory input screen,



- This will open the Inventory input screen, as shown below.

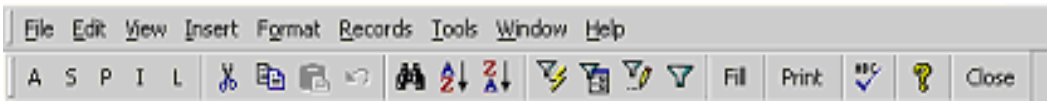


- Use the same action to select other screens, for example **Series** and **Reporting**.

Toolbar Icons Explained

The ReMAS database includes three toolbars.

Upper Toolbar



A = Accession

S = Series

P = Provenance

I = Inventory

L = Location of Inventory item

= Find (search for text, or a date)

= Sort Ascending (from first entry to most recent)

= Sort Descending (from most recent entry to first entry)

= Filter By Selection (other occurrences of a highlighted word)

= Filter By Form (available, but not used)

= Advanced Filter/Sort (available, but not used)

= Apply Filter (or Remove Filters, if filter is activated)

Fill = Fill Current Inventory Record (with a template from Edit Fill)

Print = Inventory Print Options

= Spelling

= Help (ReMAS help screens, see also p. 23 of these Guidelines)

Close = Close (input screen) – automatically saves data.

Note: There is **NO** prompt to save changes when a screen is closed. All changes are saved automatically.

Lower Toolbar

= Input Format and Record Types (jumps to lower half of input screen)

= Edit Template (template of repeated information)

= Inventory Search Options (list of options)

= Add Keyterms to Inventory (not used)

= Register Terms in the Index (not used)

= Return to Top of Screen

= Previous/Next Records

= Add New Record

= Inventory Print Options

= Close this Screen

Bottom Toolbar

= Next Record (same function as using lower toolbar)

= Go To Final record in Set

= Add New Record (same function as using lower toolbar)

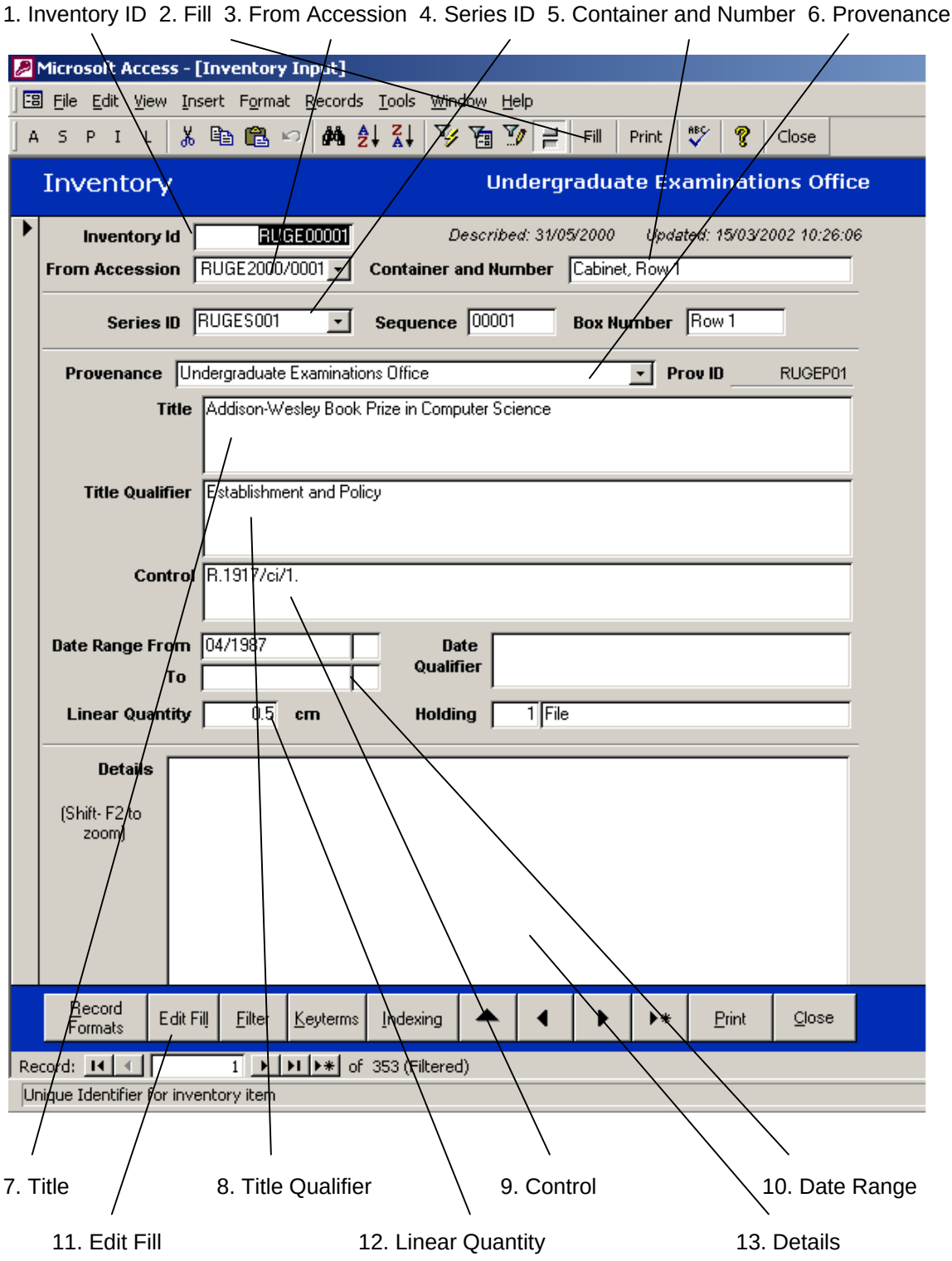
= Previous Record (same function as using lower toolbar)

= Go To First Record in Set

Creating a New Entry

Information to Enter in the Inventory Screen

- At inventory level the individual file is entered. Most new entries to be added by departments and divisions will be on this screen.
- To open the Inventory input screen, select **Edit** from the toolbar, and move down to select **Inventory**.



1. Inventory ID

- Consists of a 4-letter code denoting your department, division or section and a 5-digit number beginning 00001 in a running number sequence.
- The Corporate Records Unit will allocate the 4-letter code.
- Select **Add New Record**
- The **Inventory ID** can then be typed in, following on from the numerical sequence.
- Select **Previous Record** if you are unsure what the **Inventory ID** should be, then **Next Record** to return to the new screen.

2. Fill

- Select **Edit Fill** to chose standard information, and generate the correct **Inventory ID** number, if more than one record in a sequence is being entered.
- Select **Yes** if prompted to load a new template.
- Use **Previous/Next Records** to select the relevant standard information for your department
  or **Add New Record** if what you need is not shown.
- Ensure that the **Prefix**, the 4-letter code, and **Number** are correct for the next record in the sequence.
- Select **Close** once the information on screen is correct.
- Select **Fill** then type in the non-standard details
- Select **Fill** again for each new item and the standard information will appear, including the correct numerical sequence.

3. From Accession

- Select from the drop-down box, the information will relate to where the files were listed

4. Series ID

- Select from the drop-down box
- If **Series** are being used, they refer to large groups of related files. There should be no confusion about which to choose.
- If there are no options to select, **Series** are not being used.

NB. Selecting an option from a drop down box, for example a **Series ID**, does not take you to all entries in that particular Series. It is simply a method of choosing the right information for that entry. If an option is chosen and the entry is closed that information will be saved permanently. To go to all entries in one option use the top taskbar.

5. Container and Number

- The location of the file in your office.
- This is an important field as it will assist colleagues, CRU and successors to find individual files.

6. Provenance

- The office or division to which the files belong, select yours from the drop-down box.
- The **Provenance ID** is entered automatically on selecting the **Provenance**.
- If your office or division is not included as an option, no **Provenance** is needed.

7. Title

- For example, Health and Safety Committee, Visiting Examiners, Advertising, Articles of Agreement 10/07/1972
- Please ensure that this information is entered correctly and in full, exactly as it appears on the hard-copy file, so as to enable future retrieval

8. Title Qualifier

- If the file title needs further explanation, for example expansion of abbreviations used

9. Control

- Any filing system previously used to store and locate the files, for example filing list references. Entering this information will assist with future searches.

10. Date Range From To

- The date the file was opened and the date the file was closed. This will also assist in retention scheduling.
- Must include a start date for the file, c (for circa) and ? (for unknown) can also be used in the smaller box
- It is better to have an approximate date than no date at all as these fields are used for search purposes
- Use the **Date Qualifier** field to show additional information, for example significant gaps within the date e.g. mostly 1990. It can also be used to indicate that the records are not dated.
- If the file is still open and current leave **To** blank to indicate this. This field should be completed once the file is closed.

11. Edit Fill

- Used to edit the standard information input by selecting **Fill** on the upper toolbar.

12. Linear Quantity

- The amount of space being used for the files, estimated in centimetres

13. Details

- Used to give a more detailed description of the file.

- As much information can be put in this field as you wish. For example, it could include details on how a file is used, or any restrictions involved

14. Retention

- Use this field to indicate retention and weeding requirements for the files. For example;
    - If the files need to be held short-term or long-term
    - How long the files are required for audit or legislative requirements
    - Weeding of files on a regular basis to comply with legislation
    - Known dates for the disposal of the files

15. Retention Date

- Use this field to indicate the year in which the file should be destroyed, reviewed or transferred to the CRU, using the information shown in **Retention**.
- The format of the date is DD/MM/YYYY

NB. If you are unsure how long a file should be retained for, please check the College Retention Schedule available on Spectrum at the following link.

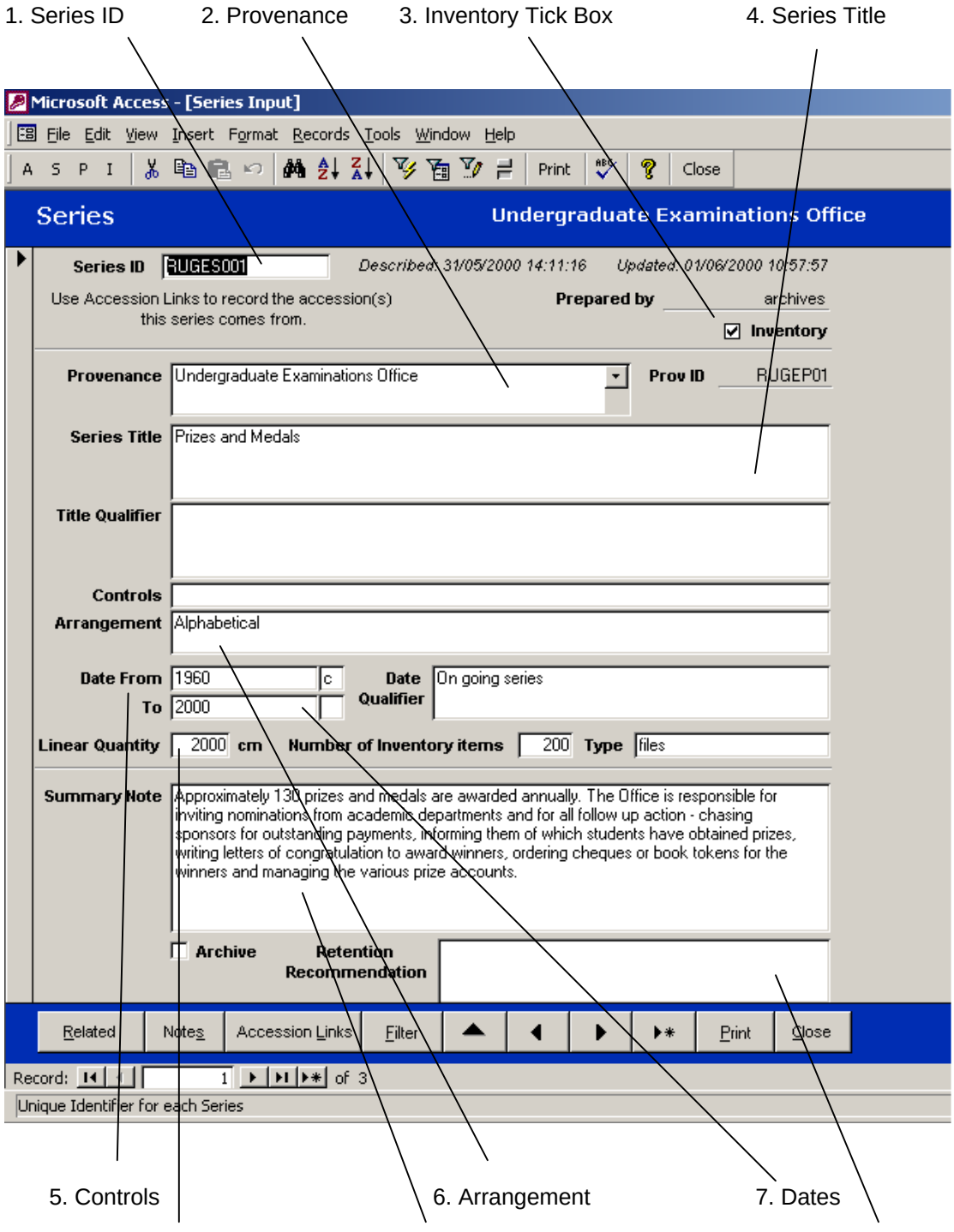
http://www3.imperial.ac.uk/pls/portallive/docs/1/62304.DOC

Information to Enter in the Series Screen

- A series is a group of records created for a common purpose, for example Student Records or Personnel Files.

  The term has also been used for different roles that take place within a Department or Division, for example the records of the Head of Department may be one Series in a database, the Finance Officer's records would be another.

- To open the Series input screen, select **Edit** from the toolbar, and move down to select **Series**.



16. Series ID

- Consists of a 3-letter code which signifies the project, provenance or owner of the file, the letter S, denoting series, and a 4-digit number beginning with 0001 in a running number sequence.
- The Corporate Records Unit will allocate the 4-letter code.

- Select **Add New Record**
- The **Series ID** can then be typed in, following on from the numerical sequence.

- Select **Previous Record** if you are unsure what the **Series ID** should be, then **Next Record** to return to the new screen.

17. Provenance

- Select the office or division to which the files belong from the drop-down box.
- The Provenance ID is entered automatically on selecting the provenance.
- No **Provenance** is needed if your office or division is not included as an option.

18. Inventory Tick Box

- Must be ticked to allow the database to link to the inventory

19. Series Title

- Describes the intellectual grouping of the files, for example Prizes and Medals, Minutes, Contracts

20. Controls

- Any filing system previously used to store and locate the files, for example filing list references.

21. Arrangement

- For example, alphabetical, numerical, chronological
- Only needs entering in the database if such a system exists

22. Dates

- The earliest start date of a file in the series, use c (for circa) and ? (for unknown) in the smaller box, if appropriate.
- Use an approximate date rather than no date at all, as these fields are used for search purposes,
- Use the **Date Qualifier** field to show additional information, for example significant gaps within the date e.g. mostly 1990. It can also be used to indicate that the records are not dated.

23. Linear Quantity

- The amount of space the files take up, estimated in centimetres

24. Summary Note

- Use to give a more detailed description of the files

25. Retention Recommendation

- Use this field to indicate retention and weeding requirements for the files. For example;
    - If the files need to be held short-term or long-term
    - How long the files are required for audit or legislative requirements
    - Weeding of files on a regular basis to comply with legislation
    - Known dates for the disposal of the files

Saving Data

- Select **Close** to exit a screen and all changes are saved.
- **Take care** when searching or entering data on ReMAS as **all** additions and changes will be saved once a screen is closed, with **no** reminder or prompt being given.

- Select **Shift** + **Enter** to save data without leaving or closing the record. No prompt is given that this has occurred.

Deleting an entry

- Select **Edit** from the upper toolbar
- Select **Delete Record** from the drop-down box
- A prompt will appear asking for confirmation, select **Yes**

- Note that once an entry is deleted the same Inventory ID cannot be generated again by selecting *Fill* without manual changes in the *Edit Fill* screen. If no such changes are the next number in sequence will be selected.

- Note that if a file is destroyed or transferred to the College Archives the entry in the database must not be deleted. Information on the destruction date and reasons should be entered into **Details** in the Inventory screen. This is necessary for your own audit purposes and also to assist colleagues, successors and enquirers.

Logging Off

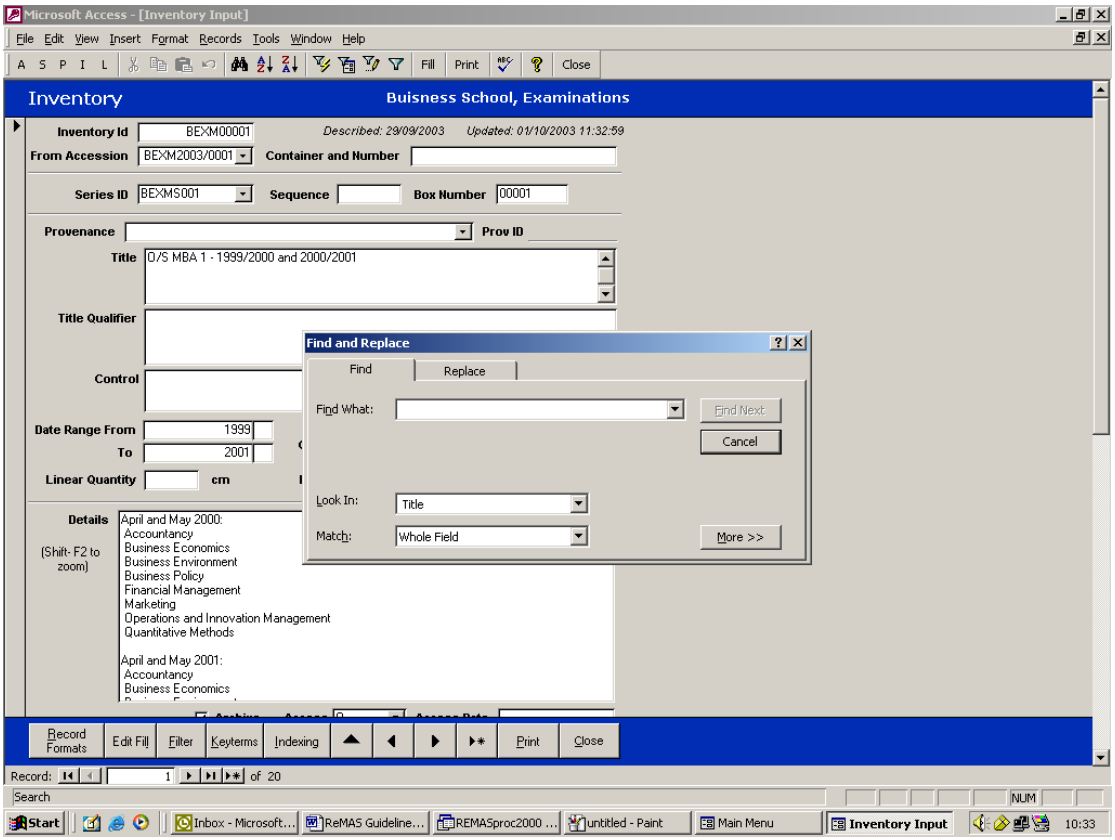
- Select **Close** to exit from an input screen.
- Select **Exit** from the Main Menu.

Search Options

There are three possible approaches to finding records in ReMAS.

1. Quick Search

- Press **CTRL + F** to activate a pop-up box. This box will search for matches in either the **Inventory** or the **Series** screens.

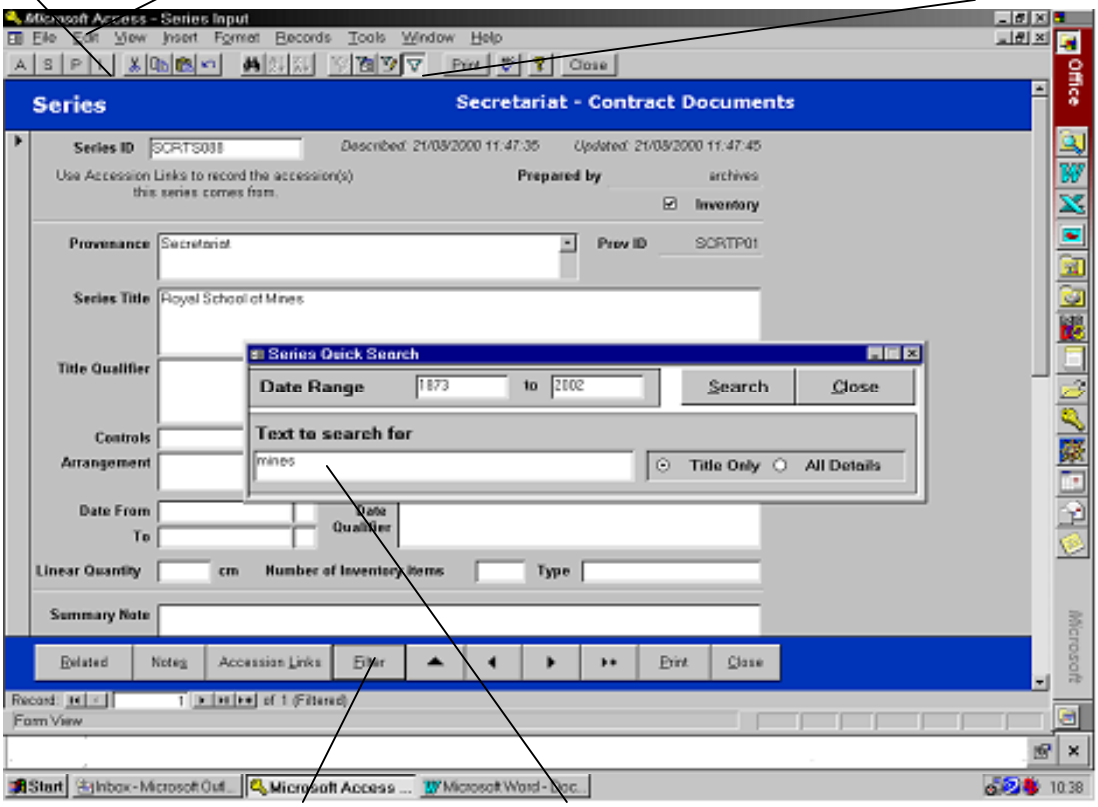


- Type a search term in **Find What**.
- Choose a field to search in from the drop-down box in **Look In**. If all fields are to be searched, change this to **Inventory Input.** This will slow the search down significantly.
- Change **Match**, the third box from the drop-down menu, to read **Any Part of Field** to ensure all fields are searched.
- Select **Find Next** to scroll through all records containing that keyword.

2. Series Screen Search

- Select **Edit** on the upper toolbar in the Main Menu screen.
- Scroll down and select **Series**.
- Select **Filter** on the lower toolbar once the screen is open.
- Enter a key word into the **Text to search for** box e.g. mines
- Select **Search**.
- Select **Remove Filter** on the upper toolbar if the correct results are not found and another search is needed.
- Select **I** on the upper toolbar once the subject area has been found.
- This takes the search down a level to examine all the individual records held on that topic.

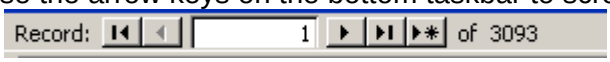
I button **Edit** **Remove Filter**



Filter **Text to Search For** e.g. mines

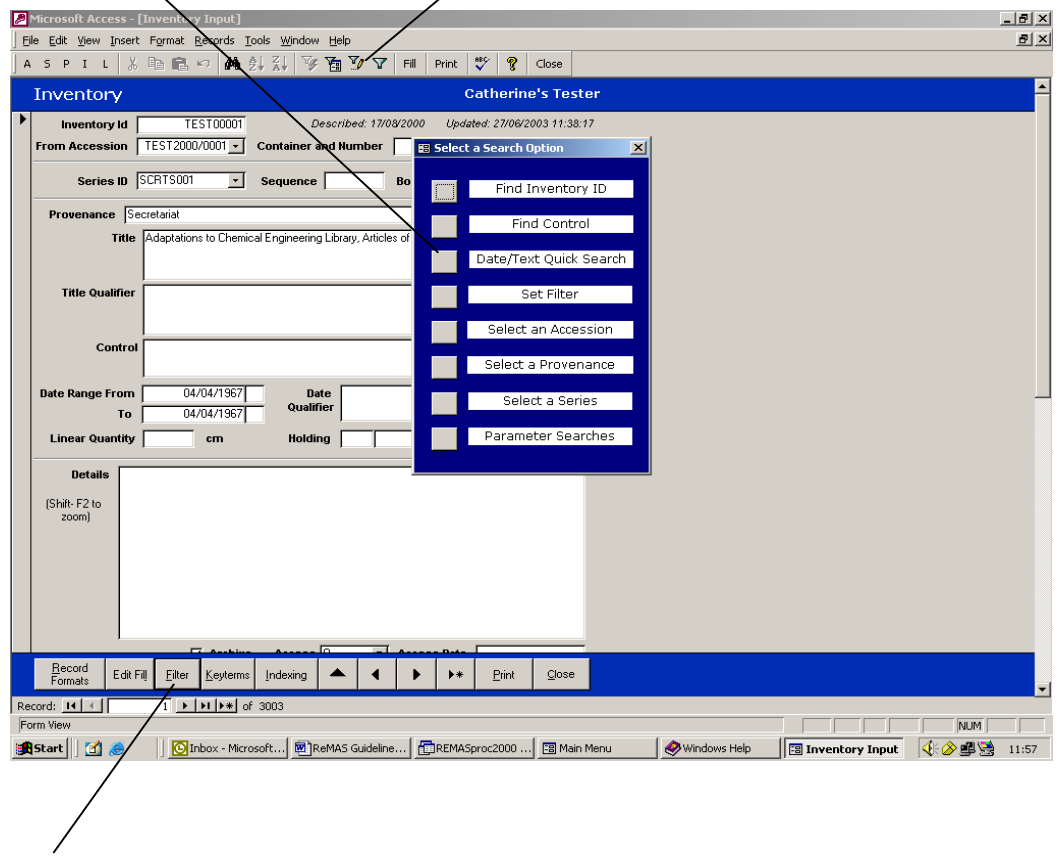
3. Inventory Screen Search

- If the details of the record are known it can be searched for directly e.g. files on the 'electron microscope'
- Select **Edit** on the upper toolbar
- Scroll down and select **Inventory**
- Select **Filter** button on the lower toolbar to limit the search
- Select the **Date/Text Quick Search** option
- Enter a keyword into the **Text to search for..** box e.g. micro
- Select **Search**
- Use the arrow keys on the bottom taskbar to scroll through the records found.



- Select **Remove Filter** on the upper toolbar if the correct results are not found and another search is needed.

Date/Text Quick Search **Remove Filter**



Filter

Document Loans and Returns

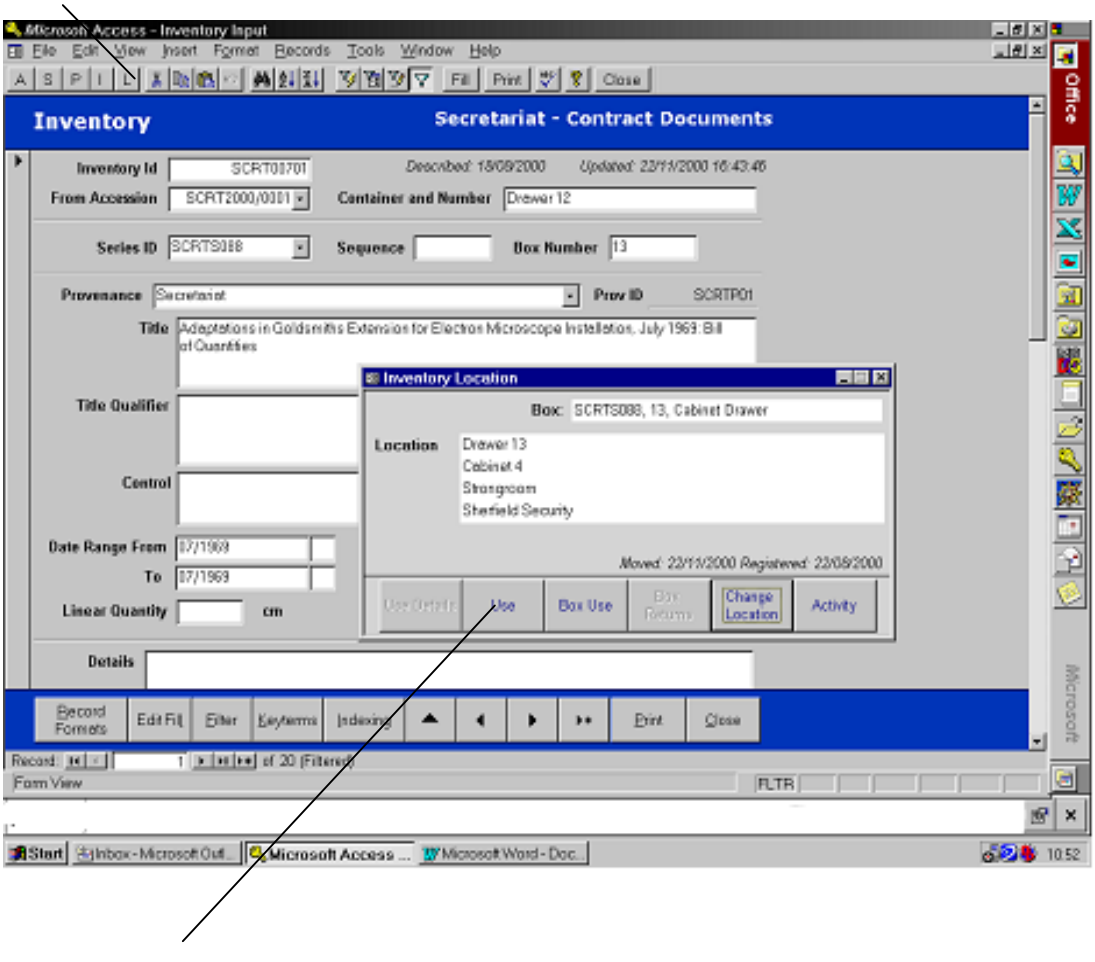
- Loans are only possible when the **Box Number** fields have been filled in the Inventory screen. Please check with CRU if you would like to make use of this option as it involves populating the database with detailed location information and this is not input as standard.

- Loan can apply to documents removed from storage for both office work purposes, for example for use in project work, and also those to be loaned elsewhere.

To Loan A Document

- From the Inventory screen of the item to be loaned -
- Select **L** on the upper toolbar to open **Inventory Location** box.
- Select **Use**.
- Select the name of the person borrowing the records from the drop down list in the **Select a User** box, or add this if their name is not shown.
- Click the **X** in the top right of the box to close the loan screen.
- It is not necessary to respond to the **Date Return** and **Entered By** prompt boxes.
- Select **Yes** when prompted to print out a cover sheet.
- Confirm the details of the document on the form and get the borrower to sign it.
- File the cover sheet, which will be required when the loan is returned.

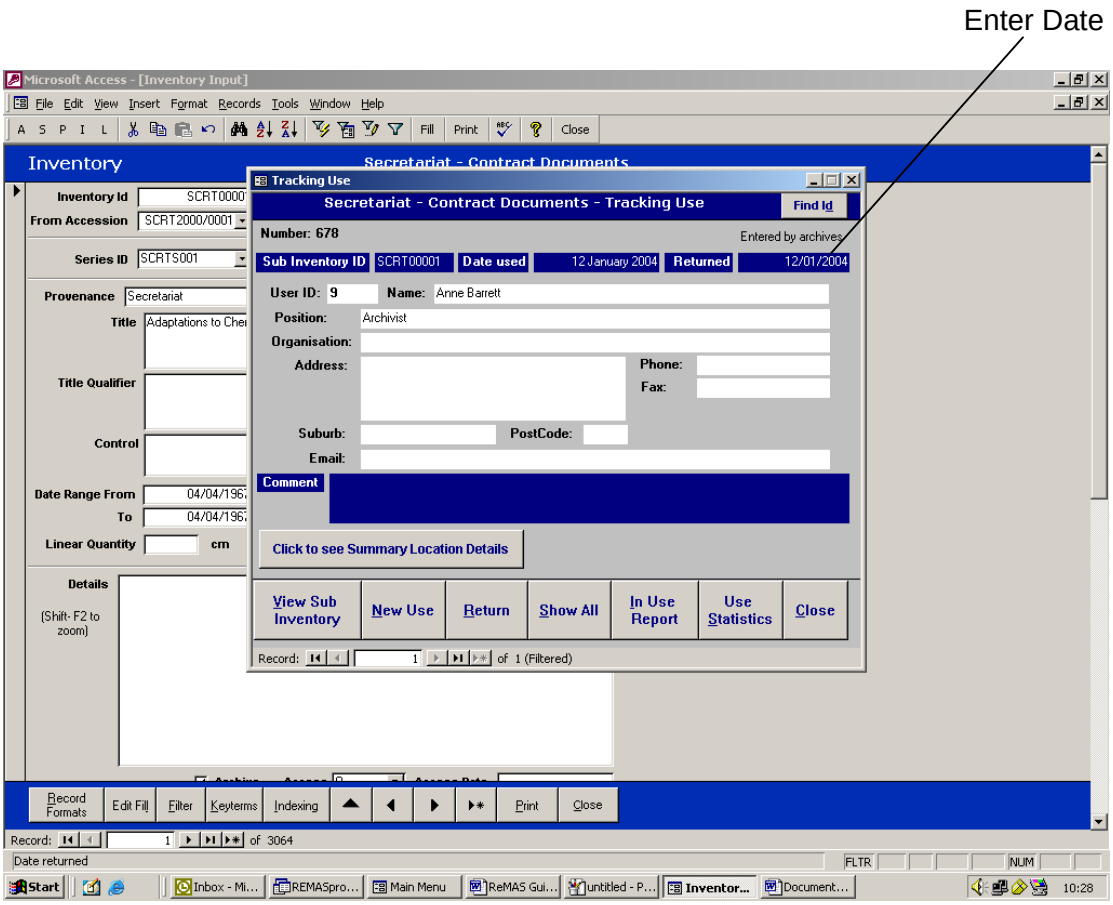
L



Use

To Return a Document

- Select **L** on the upper toolbar in the Inventory Screen for the file to be returned.
- The **Inventory Location** box will indicate that the file is 'In Use'
- Select **Return**
- Enter the date the file was returned, in the format DD/MM/YYYY



- Click **Close**
- Retrieve the hard copy of the cover sheet and mark that the loan has been returned. Include your signature and the date. The cover sheets should be retained for audit purposes and checked regularly for outstanding items.
- Ensure that the returned item is returned to its correct location in the filing system.

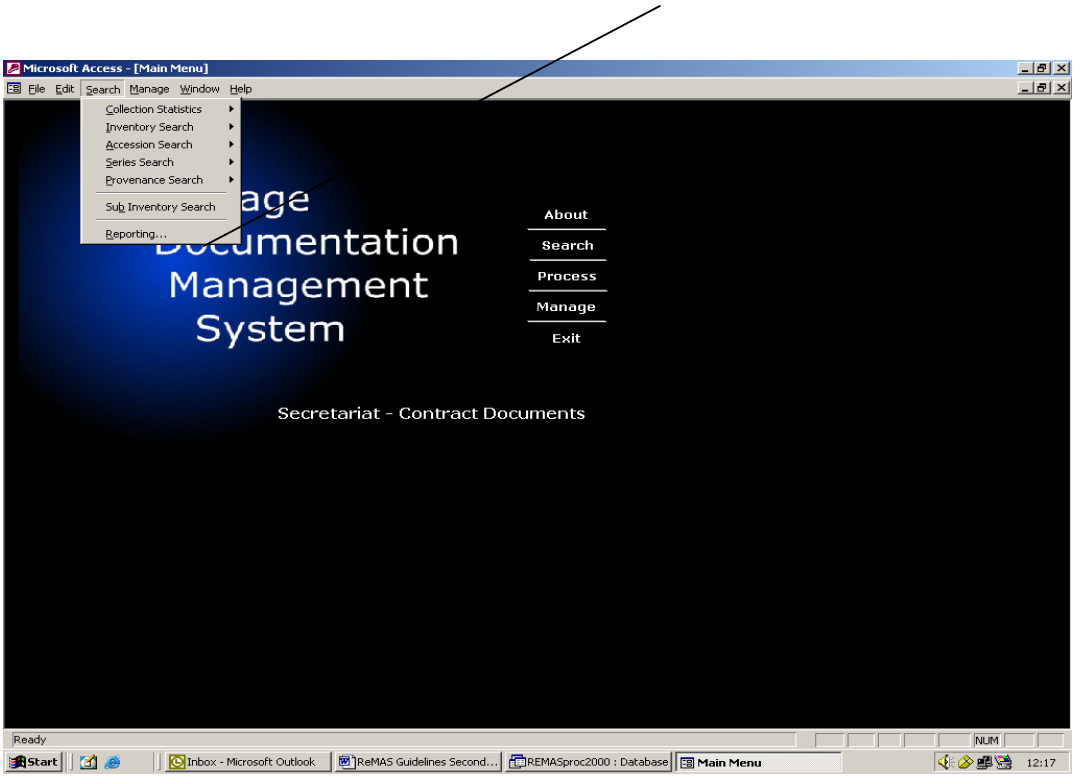
Printing Reports

Reports available include those giving a summary of the data held, destruction reports of all the records due for destruction, or destroyed, lists of all records in an inventory, series or accession and reports that combine a number of different elements.

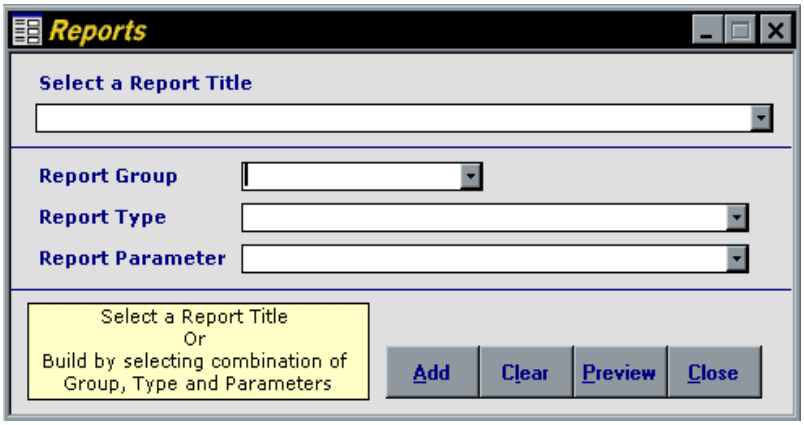
Many reports are possible; please contact the Corporate Record Unit if you wish to discuss your requirements in more detail.

From the Main Menu

- From the upper toolbar select **Search** and then **Reporting**



- **Select a report title** by choosing from the drop down list (click on the arrow button)
- Click **Preview**, this will allow the report to be checked before printing
- Click **Print** on the upper toolbar

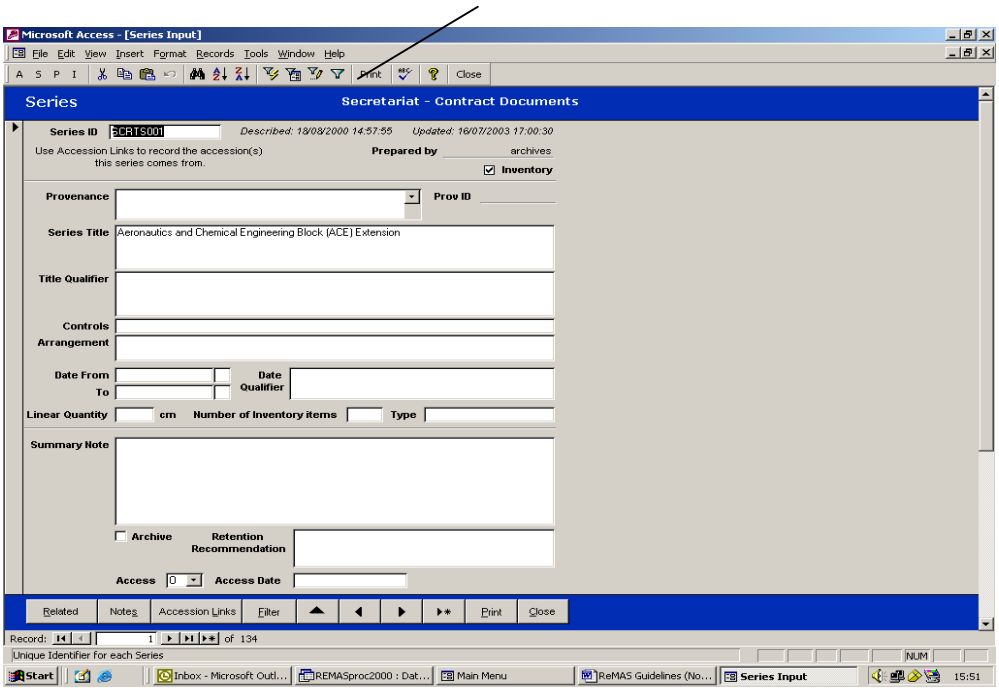


- Select **Clear** to choose another report

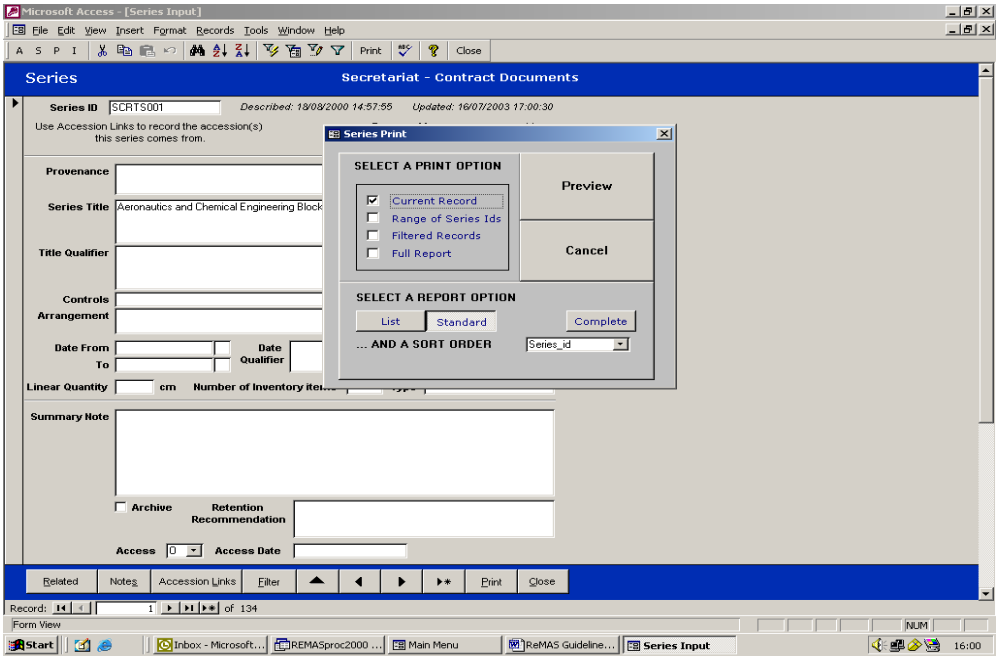
After running a report the Reports popup box will appear minimised in the lower left hand corner of the screen. Reactivate the Reports popup box by clicking the maximise button. Alternatively, select **Reporting** from the **Search** drop down menu.

Print and Preview

- In each of the screens there is a **Print** button on the upper toolbar



- Select **Preview** to look at the selection layout before printing.



Printing Labels

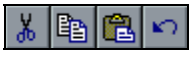
Labels must be added to files and boxes to assist with storage and location. It is recommended that you print to paper first, then use the printed output as a master and photocopy onto labels of the correct size, as these may vary.

- Select **Reporting** from the **Search** drop down menu in the Main Menu.
- Select one of the label options from the **Report Title** drop down list (click on the arrow button).
- Select **Preview** (ignore the message 'Some data may not be displayed' if shown)
- Select **OK**.
- Enter a parameter criteria if required (e.g. Series or Inventory ID).
- Select **Print** from the **File** drop down menu or click the **Print** button on the toolbar.

Shortcuts

The following keyboard shortcuts can also be used to enter data.

CTRL + '	Insert data from same field in previous record
CTRL + ;	Insert current date in field
CTRL + C	Copy the selection
CTRL + V	Paste the selection at the insertion point
CTRL + ENTER	Insert a new line in a memo field
SHIFT + ENTER	Saves the current record
ESC	Undo changes in current field or record
CTRL + F6	Cycle between open screens / windows
CTRL + F	Open the Find popup box
CTRL + BREAK	Cancel query, filter or find operations
TAB	Go to next field
CTRL+ TAB	Go to previous field
SHIFT + arrow keys	Highlight letter
CTRL + SHIFT + arrow keys	Highlight word / paragraph

- Use the **Cut**, **Copy**, **Paste** and **Undo** buttons  on the toolbar as needed to aid data entry, as well as standard Microsoft Access tools and techniques for navigation.

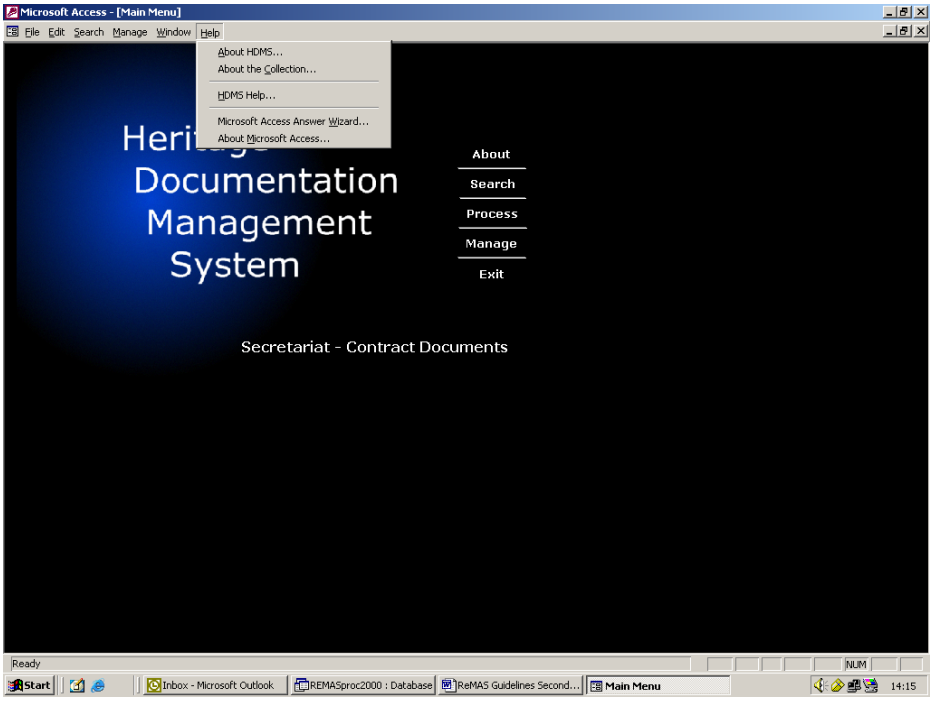
Errors

Errors will occur in data entry if:

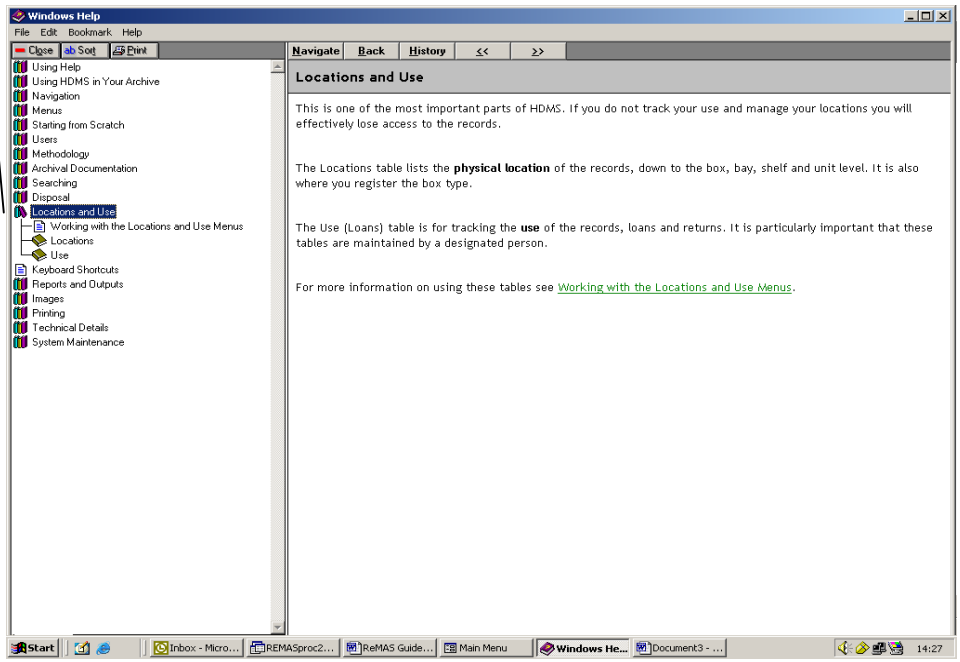
- The wrong data type is input in a field, e.g. the Quantity field is a number field, so typing in text will cause an error. An error message will occur.
- Too much data is input into certain fields. Field lengths are set according to field requirements. Inputting too many characters will mean that excess characters cannot be saved.
- A null or duplicate ID is input. The record cannot be saved until a unique ID is input.

Help

- Select **HDMS Help** from the **Help** drop-down box on the upper toolbar.



- Click on the icons on the left of the screen to search for the correct item



Quick Guide to Searches and Loans

Opening Up

- Open ReMAS from icon on desktop

Searching

If title or keyword of document is known

- Under **Edit** select **Inventory**
- Select **Filter**
- Select **Date/Text Quick Search**

If box number is known

- Under **Edit** select **Inventory**
- Put the cursor in the Box number field
- Press **Ctrl** and **F** to bring up search field

Location

- Click **L** on top toolbar

Loans

To loan a single item

- In **Locations** click on **Use**
- Select user name from drop down list
- Print loan sheet and get signature

To loan a box

- In **Locations** click on **Box Use**
- Select user name from drop down list
- Check box number details are correct
- Click **Update Use**
- Print loan sheet and get signature

Returns

To return a single item

- In **Locations** click on **Use**
- Click **Return**
- Enter the date the file was returned (DD/MM/YYYY)
- Click **Close**

- Complete loan sheet
- Relocate item

To return a box

- In **Locations** click on **Box Use**
- Click **Return**
- Enter the date the file was returned (DD/MM/YYYY)
- Click **Close**

- Complete loan sheet
- Relocate box

Notes

Notes

Notes

Notes