

Title	Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records – IM11
Version	05.0
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General changes	
Official publications retainment requirements in Appendix I have been updated. Links and titles of UPRs IM02 and IM08 have also been updated throughout.	
Section	
Appendix I, section 5.10.2	See Text

RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND THE ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS AND BUSINESS RECORDS

(Amendments to version 04.0, UPR IM11, are shown in italics.)

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The University's Records Management policy establishes a framework for the determination, creation and management of records within the University of Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 The regulations and supporting schedule relating to the archiving and retention of prime documents set out in Appendix I, UPR IM11¹ are approved from time to time by the Secretary and Registrar who is the senior administrative officer of the University, Secretary to the Board of Governors and is advised by the Chief Information Officer.

2 CONTEXT

- 2.1 This records management policy should be regarded as a subsidiary policy of the University's overall Information Management *Principles* (UPR IM02¹, refers). The key principles set out in that policy also apply to records management.
- 2.2 The University's records management policies and practices will be integrated fully with the University's broader information management policy and strategy programme (including business systems and knowledge management).

3 DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 For the purposes of this document the following definitions will apply:

3.1.1 'Documents':

containers of information, stored on a physical medium, which can be interpreted in an application context (includes both electronic and paper or other analogue format);

3.1.2 'Records':

those documents created or received by an organisation and maintained as evidence of its activities in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business (ISO 15489, refers);

3.1.3 'Records management':

the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transactions in the form of records (ISO 15489, refers);

3.1.4 'Classification':

the systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods and procedural rules represented in a classification system (ISO 15489, refers)²;

¹ UPR IM02 'Information Management *Principles*'

² The University will be employing the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) functions based classification scheme that classifies all records by the functions, activities and transactions of the University.

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3.1.5 **'Disposition':**

the range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments (ISO 15489, refers). All University records will belong to a record series with an agreed retention schedule, approved by the Secretary and Registrar, assigned to each series;

3.1.6 **'Folder':**

a set of related documents/records. This term may be applied to both paper and electronic folders;

3.1.7 **'Part':**

a subdivision of a folder created to improve manageability of that folder: typically a part set up on a chronological basis or when a folder reaches an agreed size.

4 RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

4.1 The University is committed to establishing and maintaining records management practices that meet its business needs, ensure good corporate and academic governance and enable it to meet accountability requirements and stakeholder expectations.

4.2 The University's records are its corporate memory and, as such, are a vital asset for ongoing operations. They provide essential evidence of business activities and transactions. The University recognises its legal and regulatory obligations and is committed to the records management principles and practices set out in the International Standard for Records Management (ISO 15489).

4.3 This policy provides a corporate framework for all the University's record keeping activities. Subsidiary policies and strategies may be developed, as appropriate.

4.4 The University is committed to implementing best record-keeping practices and systems to ensure the creation, maintenance and protection of accurate and reliable records. All practices concerning record-keeping within the University are to be in accordance with this policy and its supporting procedures.

5 SCOPE OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The records management policy applies to:

- i records in all forms;
- ii all University of Hertfordshire activities;
- iii individual Members of the University (UPR GV06³ refers);
- iv the University's wholly-owned subsidiary companies⁴;

³ UPR GV06 'Membership of the University'

⁴ Wholly-owned subsidiary companies which operate with the Financial Regulations of the University are automatically subject to the policies and procedures set out in this document (UPR IM11). Wholly-owned subsidiary companies which operate with separate Financial Regulations and partly-owned companies will be subject to the policies and procedures set out in this document (UPR IM11) unless, for good reason, an exception is granted by the Secretary and Registrar who will be advised by the Chief Information Officer and provision will be made, as necessary, in Financial Regulations, Shareholder's Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding.

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- v activities undertaken under the provisions of academic agreements, as defined in the Financial Regulations (UPR FR06)⁵, such as collaborative activities with Partner Organisations.

6 LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

- 6.1 The University's records management procedures and systems will comply with legal, regulatory, ethical and best practice standards and University policies and rights management requirements including Data Protection (UPR IM08⁶ refers), Freedom of Information (UPR IM09⁷, refers), copyright legislation, contracts and licence agreements.
- 6.2 The University will develop records management systems that capture and maintain records with appropriate evidential characteristics in accordance with its obligations under these pieces of legislation.
- 6.3 The University is committed to best practice record-keeping and will develop records management systems consistent with the International Standard for Records Management (ISO 15489); the Lord Chancellor's 'Code of Practice on Records Management for Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act' and The National Archive's Functional Requirements for Electronic Records Management Systems 2002.

7 RECORDS MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

- 7.1 The Chief Executive's Group has approved Corporate Records Management Standards which apply to all documents and records of the University (relevant Appendices to UPR IM11⁸, refer).
- 7.2 All data records will be held in databases within the University's corporate systems.
- 7.3 The University's main document and records management repository is the Document Management System (DMS). This is used to capture, manage and store all prime documents and business records, both paper and electronic, which are not held in the University's corporate data systems, such as the Student System or Finance System. Examples of prime records held in the DMS include Board and Committee papers, contracts and exam papers.

(Note for guidance:

It should be noted that in the case of boards and committees within the Board of Governors and Academic Board Committee Structures, Standing Orders or constitution documents may specify that their primary record of business is the Minute Book, in which case a copy of the documents that form the Minute Book will be also be deposited in the DMS.)

⁵ UPR FR06 'Corporate Governance and Financial Regulation'

⁶ UPR IM08 'Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statement'

⁷ UPR IM09 'Freedom of Information'

⁸ Appendix II, UPR IM11 'Corporate Records Management Standards'
 Appendix III, UPR IM11 'Corporate Records Management Standards - Guidelines for Creating and Maintaining Electronic Filing Systems'
 Appendix IV, UPR IM11 'Corporate Records Management Standards - Identifying and Managing Emails as University Records'
 Appendix V, UPR IM11 'Corporate Records Management Standards - Standard Naming Conventions for Electronic Files, Folders and Records'

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7.4 Paper records will be moved to central stores as they become inactive and logged and tracked on the system. Electronic records will be captured or created on the system and managed on the system throughout their life.

7.5 The University's records management systems are dedicated to the creation and maintenance of authentic, reliable and usable records for as long as they are required to effectively and efficiently support business functions and activities and/or to meet legal requirements.

7.6 The records management systems will manage the following processes:

- i the creation of records;
- ii the capture of records;
- iii the storage of records;
- iv the protection of record integrity and authenticity;
- v the security of records;
- vi access to records;
- vii the controlled disposal of records according to the University's agreed retention schedules (Appendix I, UPR IM11¹, refers).

7.7 Separate procedures will be determined to cover all aspects of paper and electronic records management.

8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 General

As records management is a primary responsibility of the University enshrined in its policies and regulations, it is the responsibility of all those working on behalf of the University to carry out their records management duties in accordance with their contracts of employment and service, with this policy and related procedures and in compliance with the University's Corporate Records Management Standards (Appendix II, Appendix III, Appendix IV and Appendix V, UPR IM11⁹, refers).

8.2 Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the authorisation of the records management policy and procedures and will oversee the management of this policy within the University.

8.3 Secretary and Registrar

As the chief administrative officer, the Secretary and Registrar is responsible to the Board of Governors for the maintenance of records management within the University in accordance with the standards established by this policy.

⁹ Corporate Records Management Standards – Standard Naming Conventions for Electronic Files, Folders and Records

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8.4 Chief Information Officer

The Chief Information Officer is responsible for the implementation, promulgation and promotion of this policy; training; maintaining the technology for the University’s records management systems; maintaining the integrity and authenticity of records and for the co-ordination of policy reviews (section 9, refers).

8.5 Records Manager

The Records Manager is responsible for overseeing the design, implementation and maintenance of this records management policy and related procedures, as well as monitoring compliance.

8.6 Managers

Managers at all levels are responsible for the management of this policy and related procedures through resource allocation and other management support within those areas for which they have responsibility. They will embed the records management practices within normal business practices and ensure records are captured in the appropriate corporate system.

9 MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Chief Information Officer will monitor and review the development of record-keeping strategies and practices across the University and will review this policy, biennially, in collaboration with the Secretary and Registrar.

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APPENDIX I - ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS AND BUSINESS RECORDS

Structure

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1	INTRODUCTION
2	SCOPE
3	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES
4	REGULATIONS
5	SCHEDULE FOR THE ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS
6	AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEDULE FOR THE ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS

1 INTRODUCTION

In accordance with the requirements of UPR FR06¹⁰, the Secretary and Registrar has established the following regulations and procedures for the management and retention of the University’s prime documents¹¹ and business records, These records and procedures form part of the University’s Records Management Policy (UPR IM11¹², refers).

2 SCOPE

2.1 The regulations and procedures set out in this document are binding on all Members of the University (UPR GV06¹³, refers) and specify the periods for which the University’s prime documents and the important business records referred to in this document must be retained to enable it to comply with legal and other statutory requirements, such as the Data Protection Act 1998 and to meet its operational and business needs. The retention schedule applies to all prime documents and the important business records referred to in this document in all formats (physical and electronic).

2.2 Academic agreements

Administrative audits in preparation for the validation of collaborative arrangements under the terms of academic agreements, as defined in the Financial Regulations (UPR FR06)¹, will ensure that Partner Organisations’ proposals for the storage and retention of prime documents and business records are consistent with the requirements of these regulations (Appendix I, UPR IM11).

¹⁰ UPR FR06 ‘Corporate Governance and Financial Regulations’
¹¹ Extract from UPR FR06 ‘Corporate Governance and Financial Regulations’:
 “3.15 ‘Prime Document’:
 as determined by these regulations (UPR FR06) or from time-to-time by the Secretary and Registrar, documents relating to the regulation, conduct or decisions of the Corporation, the companies or the Charitable Trust (section 3.20, refers) or the authorisation of their activities including, but not necessarily limited to, Schemes of Delegation, University Policies and Regulations (the series of documents through which the University publishes its institutional policies, procedures and regulations), financial records, legal agreements, personal information (including registration documents), machine readable data”
¹² UPR IM11 ‘Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records’
¹³ UPR GV06 ‘Membership of the University’

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3 **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 The Secretary and Registrar is the Chief Administrative Officer of the University and is responsible for the management, archiving and retention of the University's prime documents and business records and for maintaining the University's official record.
- 3.2 The Secretary and Registrar has delegated responsibility for certain records and sections of the official record to various Officers of the University (section 5, column 'C', refers). For this purpose these Officers act as nominees of the Secretary and Registrar.

4 **REGULATIONS**

- 4.1 The Secretary and Registrar (or nominee) will retain prime documents and the important business records referred to in this document and maintain the University's official record in accordance with the requirements of the schedule in section 5.
- 4.2 Officers listed in section 5, column 'C' and other members of staff who store material which is not referred to specifically in the schedule should seek advice from the Records Manager in the first instance prior to disposing of such material. Where appropriate, the Records Managers will consult the Secretary and Registrar and the Chief Information Officer.
- 4.3 **Material relating to the history of the University**

Material relating to the history of the University and its buildings or campuses, for example, correspondence or photographs will normally be retained permanently under arrangements agreed with the Secretary and Registrar. Loans, donations and sales of such material will be approved in accordance with the requirements of UPR FR06¹.

5 **SCHEDULE FOR THE ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS**

- 5.1 This schedule is not an exhaustive list of the University's records, documents and files and will be amended, as appropriate, from time-to-time. The schedule will be developed in line with best practice, legislative requirements and with input from relevant Officers in order to reflect the business needs of the University and its component Strategic Business Units.
- 5.2 The Officers listed in column 'C' and other members of staff who store material which is not mentioned specifically in the Schedule should seek advice from the Records Manager prior to disposing of it. In developing its retention policies, the University will take account of the Joint Information Systems Committee Records Retention Schedule.

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5.3 Governance

(Records relating to the University’s corporate governance structure and rules, including its establishment and development, and to the conduct of the business, including compliance.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University’s official record
5.3.1	Board of Governors and Boards and Committees of the Board of Governors, excluding the Remuneration Committee Agendas, Agenda papers and Minutes	Permanent	Head of Governance Services
5.3.2	Remuneration Committee of the Board of Governors Agendas, Agenda papers and Minutes	Permanent	Director of Human Resources
5.3.3	Academic Board and Boards and Committees of the Academic Board managed by the Governance Services (Agendas, Agenda papers and Minutes) (For Boards of Examiners refer to section 5.10.18)	Permanent	Head of Governance Services
5.3.4	Committees or boards within the committee structure of the Academic Board which operated within the Schools or Research Institutes Agendas, Agenda papers and Minutes (For Boards of Examiners refer to section 5.10.18)	Permanent	Relevant School Administration Managers will have archived records in accordance with the instructions of the Secretary and Registrar published on 25 July 2012

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	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.3.5	Wholly-owned subsidiary companies and their wholly-owned subsidiaries Company Books Minute Books	Permanent Permanent	Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor or in accordance with other arrangements agreed by the Secretary and Registrar Head of Governance Services where not kept by the Company Secretary or in accordance with other arrangements agreed by the Secretary and Registrar
5.3.6	Partly-owned subsidiary companies Company Books and Minute Books	Permanent	Company Secretary or in accordance with other arrangements agreed by the Secretary and Registrar
5.3.7	University Calendars and Academic Year Calendars	Permanent	Head of Governance Services
5.3.8	University Policies and Regulations	Permanent	Head of Governance Services
5.3.9	Registers of Interest	Term of the Registree's employment/consultancy/relationship with the University plus seven (7) years	Head of Governance Services
5.3.10	Internal Audit Reports	Five (5) years	Head of Internal Audit

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5.3.11 Working groups

Working groups may be convened for specific purposes either by a committee or board with the Board of Governors structure or the Academic Board structure or by a committee or group within the Structure of Executive Management Groups approved by the Vice-Chancellor or directly or indirectly, on the authority of a Head of Strategic Business Unit.

It is assumed that the final reports of such working groups will include all relevant/necessary information required to substantiate the recommendations and arguments made by a working group to its commissioning board, committee or officer.

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
	Working Groups	Two (2) years after receipt by the commissioning board, committee or officer of the final report.	Convenor of the Working Group concerned

5.4 Legal Affairs Management

(Records relating to the management of the University's legal affairs and the provision of legal advice to the University by internal and external legal advisers.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.4.1	Licence agreements which are: the responsibility of the Chief Information Officer; otherwise	Permanent	Chief Information Officer Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor

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	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.4.2	Copyright clearance agreements which are not the responsibility of the Chief Information Officer Former Faculties: Schools: Professional Strategic Business Units	Permanent Permanent Permanent	Relevant School Administration Manager Relevant School Administration Manager Head of Strategic Business Unit
5.4.3	University of Hertfordshire Press author contracts	Permanent	Chief Information Officer
5.4.4	Deeds (including academic agreements as defined in UPR FR06 ¹)	Permanent	Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor
5.4.5	Contracts Under Seal	Twelve (12) years following the end of the term of the contract	Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor
5.4.6	Contracts Not Under Seal	Six (6) years following the end of the term of the contract	Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor
5.4.7	Litigation files	Six (6) years following settlement of the case, then to be reviewed by the Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor who will determine their archival value	Director of Legal Services and University Solicitor
5.4.8	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) documentation (effective 1 September 2011)	Fourteen (14) years following the end of the project	Relevant School Administration Manager

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5.5 Health and safety management

(Records relating to compliance with legislation on health and safety matters and managing the impact of the University's operations on the health and safety of its staff, students and others while on its premises and in other places where they may be affected by the University's operations.)

- 5.5.1 Where responsibility for these documents and files is shared between the Director of Estates, Hospitality and Contract Services and the Director of Occupational Health and Safety, these officers will establish appropriate procedures to ensure that the University's official record is maintained.

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.5.2	Asbestos Register	Thirty (30) years	Director of Estates, Hospitality and Contract Services/ Director of Occupational Health and Safety
5.5.3	Health and Safety files emanating from construction projects	Thirty (30) years	Director of Estates, Hospitality and Contract Services/ Director of Occupational Health and Safety
5.5.4	All other Health and Safety files (including Occupational Health Records)	Thirty (30) years	Director of Occupational Health and Safety

5.6 Finance Management

(Records relating to the management of the University's financial resources, including procurement and purchasing activities.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.6.1	Correspondence	Seven (7) years (maximum) subject to local policies	Head of Strategic Business Unit

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	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.6.2	Finance files	Current Financial year plus six (6) years	Group Director of Finance
5.6.3	Statutory returns to Government Agencies	Ten (10) years	Group Director of Finance
5.6.4	Pre-qualification Questionnaires and administration of tender admissions	Award of contract plus one (1) year	Head of Procurement
5.6.5	Invitations to tender and evaluation criteria	Award of contract plus six (6) years	Head of Procurement
5.6.6	Tender evaluations (unsuccessful candidates)	Award of contract plus one (1) year	Head of Procurement
5.6.7	Tender evaluations (successful candidates)	End of contract plus six (6) years	Head of Procurement
5.6.8	Contract Management records (including monitoring records and Service Level Agreements)	End of contract plus six (6) years	Head of Procurement
5.6.9	Purchase Orders with a value above £5,000	Current Financial year plus six (6) years	Head of Procurement
5.6.10	Purchase orders with a value below £5,000	Current Financial year plus six (6) years	Finance manager of the relevant Strategic Business Unit

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5.7 Estates management

(Records relating to the function of managing the University’s estate.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University’s official record
5.7.1	Estates drawings	Permanent	Director of Estates, Hospitality and Contract Services
5.7.2	Parking Permit Applications	Issue of permit plus one (1) year	Head of the Student Centre

5.8 Human Resources

(Records relating to the management of the University’s workforce and its contractual relationships with individual employees.)

5.8.1 Whilst the Director of Human Resources is responsible for the University’s centrally held personnel records, it is recognised that staff files may also be retained in Strategic Business Units. Such files, held manually and/or electronically, are subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and those holding such files must ensure that they are working within the requirements of the Act (UPR IM08¹⁴, refers).

5.8.2 Applicant information relating to discontinued applications may not be retained in Strategic Business Units following completion of a recruitment and selection process, without the specific agreement of the individual applicant concerned. All hard copy applicant information must be disposed of as confidential waste.

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University’s official record
5.8.3	Personnel files for individual employees	Seven (7) years after the individual has ceased to be an employee	Director of Human Resources

¹⁴ UPR IM08 ‘Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statement’

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	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.8.4	Summary entry for individual employees	Permanent	Director of Human Resources
5.8.5	Statutory returns to Government Agencies	Ten (10) years	Director of Human Resources
5.8.6	Outline action plans (arising from staff appraisals)	Until the individual ceases to be an employee	Head of Strategic Business Unit/line manager (as appropriate)
5.8.7	Discontinued applications (effective 13 June 2012)	Six (6) months	Director of Human Resources ⁶

5.9 Pay and pensions

(The activities involved in administering the University's employee payroll and remuneration.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.9.1	Payroll (Pay Advice Slips)	The current Tax Year and the three (3) previous Tax Years	Director of Human Resources
5.9.2	Pension records	Permanent	Director of Human Resources
5.9.3	P35s	The current Tax Year and the Six (6) previous Tax Years	Director of Human Resources
5.9.4	All other payroll records	The current Tax Year and the three (3) previous Tax Years	Director of Human Resources

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5.10 **Academic management and student administration**

(Records relating to the administration of the University's contractual relationships with its students, the delivery of its academic programme, the conferment of academic awards, the conduct of student assessments and the setting, administration and collection of tuition fees and the allocation of other financial support funds available students.)

- 5.10.1 Applicant information relating to discontinued applications should normally be held only in the University's business systems and not locally in Strategic Business Units. Exceptionally, applicant information may be retained in Strategic Business Units temporarily for resolving specific issues and for decision-making purposes. Where this is the case, the applicant information must be disposed of immediately following completion of the relevant specific task. All hard copy applicant information must be disposed of as confidential waste⁶.

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.10.2	Official publications of the University (including the University's Prospectuses)	<i>Permanent</i>	Director of Marketing and Communications
5.10.3	Definitive Scheme Documents/Programme Specifications (current and withdrawn programmes)	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.10.4	Model Course Descriptions/Course Information Forms/Definitive Module Documents Prior to 1 September 2000 From 1 September 2000	Permanent Permanent	Prior to 2000 relevant School Administration Manager Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.10.5	Discontinued applications (effective 13 June 2012)	A minimum of eighteen (18) and a maximum of two (2) years from the date of the application to the University	Head of the Student Centre on behalf of the Academic Registrar ⁶

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	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University’s official record
5.10.6	Students’ personal files	Twelve (12) years after the student has graduated/left	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.7	Academic Misconduct records	Twelve (12) years after the student has graduated/left	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.8	Students personal files – withdrawn students	Twelve (12) years after the student has left the University	Relevant School Administration Manager

(NOTE:

Students’ personal files

a A Student’s personal file (referred to sections 5.10.6 and 5.10.7 (above)) must be retained for a minimum of twelve (12) years after a student has graduated/left. It is recognised that information concerning students may be retained elsewhere manually and/or electronically subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998, but the following defines the content of the file, to be held in the Student Archive File, as the University’s core record.

b Purpose

Personal data is held by the University for several purposes, as defined in section 11, UPR IM08⁵. With regard to students the relevant purposes will be mainly, but not exclusively:

Purpose 4: ‘Provision of Education Services as a Primary Function’

Purpose 5: ‘Staff and Student Support Services’

Purpose 6: ‘Academic Research and/or Statistical Analysis’.

c Definition of ‘student’s personal file’

Information retained about a student which records the following information:

Student name and identifier;

Educational background;

Date of Birth;

Programme of study and dates;

Gender;

Assessment results;

Addresses;

Name, date and result of award achieved.

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d Collaborative agreements

Schools / Strategic Business Units with responsibility for collaborative programmes will ensure that partner institutions' core records are consistent with the minimum requirement defined in **C** and **G**.

e Roles and responsibilities

The Secretary and Registrar is responsible for maintaining the University's official record and in accordance with Appendix I, UPR IM11 has delegated the responsibility for maintaining students' personal files to the relevant School Administration Manager.

f Security

The School Administration Manager will ensure the safe-keeping of such files and will control the numbers of staff holding, processing and accessing students' personal data in accordance with the provisions of UPR IM08⁵.

g Content

g.1 The personal data defined in section **C** is generally provided by standard University documents which together form the core record known as the student's personal file which is to be archived. Therefore it is expected that each core, archived file will contain:

- a Application form and associated papers, including the University offer letter;
- b Placement record;
- c Signed Final Transcript detailing qualification achieved;
- d Mandatory data required by professional bodies.

g.2 The official documents recording each student's registration and tuition fee status are maintained separately by the Assistant Registrar (Student Registration).

g.3 Documentation/evidence relating to extenuating circumstances, medical conditions or appeals may be held separately and confidentially for Boards of Examiners and should be archived confidentially. An appropriate retention period will be applied in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

g.4 Guidance on retention of documents supplementary to the core record of the student's personal file is contained in Standard Procedures and Practices (SPPs) available on StudyNet.)

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.10.9	Academic achievement and qualification information (Transcripts)	Data to be held permanently on the Management Information System	Academic Registrar

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5.10.10 Collaborative agreements

Administrative audits in preparation for the validation of collaborative agreements will ensure that partner institutions' proposals for the archiving and retention of prime documents are consistent with the requirements of these regulations (Appendix I, UPR IM11).

	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.10.11	Research students' files	Twelve (12) years after end of student's relationship with University	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.10.12	Students enrolled on programmes leading to the award of a licence to practice (including nursing, teaching and/or work with minors and vulnerable adults) Student records and files	Sixty (60) years after end of student's relationship with University	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.13	Undergraduate student projects	To be returned to student unless it has been agreed that a project should be held by the School as an example	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.14	External Examiners' – records of appointment and payment	Seven (7) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.10.15	Master examination papers and solutions	Seven (7) years	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.16	Examination scripts (including multiple-choice answer sheets) at Levels 0 and 4 (or equivalent level)	Twelve (12) months after the relevant Programme Board of Examiners' meeting	Relevant School Administration Manager

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	A	B	C
	Record Series	Minimum period for which the Record Series is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, document retention and for maintaining the University's official record
5.10.17	Examination scripts (including multiple-choice answer sheets) at Levels 5, 6 and 7 (or equivalent level)	Twelve (12) months after the student has graduated	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.18	Other assessed work, which is defined for the purposes of these regulations as the sample of coursework retained for purposes of external moderation	Twelve (12) months after the relevant Programme Board of Examiners' meeting	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.19	Boards of Examiners (Principal, Module and Short Course): Minutes (including the relevant annotated Subject/Programme Board-Module/Programme Board of Examiners Reports)	Permanent	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.10.20	Award Pass Lists	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Exams and Awards)
5.10.21	Conferment lists (to 31 August 2009)	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Exams and Awards)
5.10.22	Statutory returns relating to Government Agencies	Ten (10) years	Academic Registrar
5.10.23	University statistics relating to student numbers	Twelve (12) years	Academic Registrar

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5.11 Academic Quality

(Records relating to the activities involved in managing the quality and standards of the University's teaching.)

	A	B	C
	Item	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, documentation and for maintaining the University's official record
5.11.1	Module Feedback Questionnaires	Two (2) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.2	Programme Files (undergraduate and taught postgraduate) to include Planning meeting minutes, correspondence, supporting papers	Twelve (12) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.3	Programme specifications (previously Scheme/Programme Documents)	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.4	Programme Approval Forms (Forms AQ3 and AQ4)	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.5	Programme Withdrawal/ Programme Suspension Forms (AQ5/ AQ7)	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.6	Validation Reports	Permanent	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.7	Validation/Review packs For events clerked by the Academic Quality Office For events clerked by Schools	Current year plus six (6) years Current year plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services) Relevant School Administration Manager

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	A	B	C
	Item	Minimum period for which the item is to be retained	Officer responsible for archiving, documentation and for maintaining the University's official record
5.11.8	Conditions Meeting Minutes	Twelve (12) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.9	Student Performance Monitoring Group Minutes	Current year plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.10	Hertfordshire Higher Education Consortium (Agendas, Agenda Papers and Minutes of boards and committees within the formal governance structure)	Current year plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Student Administration – Collaborative Partnerships)
5.11.11	National Student Survey (NSS) documents	Current year plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.12	Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (AMERS)	Current year plus six (6) years	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.11.13	Quality Assurance Agency audit documents and audit documents of other external academic quality assurance agencies	Current year plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.14	External Examiners records (short course, undergraduate and taught postgraduate)	Current year plus six (6) years	Relevant School Administration Manager
5.11.15	External Examiners records (research degrees)	Current year plus twenty (20) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)
5.11.16	Academic Agreements (including Memoranda of Understanding, Articulation Agreements, Academic Support Agreements and Recognition Agreements)	End of contract plus six (6) years	Assistant Registrar (Academic Services)

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6 AMENDMENTS TO THE SCHEDULE FOR THE ARCHIVING AND RETENTION OF PRIME DOCUMENTS

6.1 Proposed amendments to the Schedule will be recommended to the Secretary and Registrar, in writing, by the relevant responsible officer referred to in column 'C' who will provide full information in support of the proposed change.

6.2 Amendments to the Schedule which have been approved by the Secretary and Registrar will be notified to the Chief Information Officer.

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APPENDIX II – CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS

Structure

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1	<u>MANAGING RECORDS</u>
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1.2	<u>What is records management?</u>
1.3	<u>What are records?</u>
1.4	<u>What is not a record?</u>
1.5	<u>Why manage Records: the benefits</u>
1.6	<u>Managing records: A quick guide</u>
2	<u>ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES</u>
2.1	<u>Vice-Chancellor</u>
2.2	<u>Secretary and Registrar</u>
2.3	<u>Chief Information Officer</u>
2.4	<u>Records Manager</u>
2.5	<u>Managers</u>
2.6	<u>Training, Awareness and Advice</u>
3	<u>CREATING RECORDS</u>
4	<u>MANAGING PHYSICAL RECORDS</u>
4.1	<u>Organising Files</u>
4.2	<u>Labelling and tracking files</u>
4.3	<u>Storage of active physical records</u>
4.3.1	<u>University storage areas</u>
4.3.2	<u>Registering and tracking system using the University Document Management System</u>
5	<u>MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS</u>
5.1	<u>Classification: File structures</u>
5.2	<u>Adding Metadata (indexing)</u>
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5.5	<u>Unique identifiers</u>
5.6	<u>Managing Emails</u>
5.7	<u>Scanning records</u>
5.8	<u>Preserving digital records</u>
5.8.1	<u>Methods for electronic preservation</u>
6	<u>SECURITY</u>
7	<u>RETAINING AND DESTROYING RECORDS</u>
7.1	<u>Records retention and Data Protection</u>
7.2	<u>Records retention and Freedom of Information</u>
7.3	<u>Records disposition</u>
7.3.1	<u>Destruction</u>
7.3.2	<u>Permanent records</u>
	APPENDICES:
	<u>Appendix A: Relevant legislation, standards and guidance</u>
	<u>Appendix B: Glossary of Records Management Terms</u>

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1 MANAGING RECORDS

Records are a vital asset to any organisation and need to be managed efficiently for it to be able to conduct business, account for what has happened in the past and to make decisions about the future. Specifically records are required:

- to provide evidence of actions and decisions
- to support accountability and transparency
- to support decision making
- to protect the interests of staff, students and other stakeholders
- to comply with legal and regulatory obligations, including employment, contractual and financial, as well as the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

1.1 Aim of standards

These standards provide practical guidance for all University staff on key aspects of managing records including creation (or receipt), capture into recordkeeping systems, storage and maintenance, retention and disposal. They will be applied to all University records, in all formats, including use of the University's document management system. They have been formulated in accordance with the University of Hertfordshire's Records Management Policy UPR Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents (UPR IM11), relevant University Information Management policies (see Appendix A) and national standards including, BS ISO 15489 for Records Management.

1.2 What is records management?

Records Management is the efficient and systematic control of records (both paper and electronic) throughout their life-cycle from their creation or receipt until the time of their disposal (see figure 1).

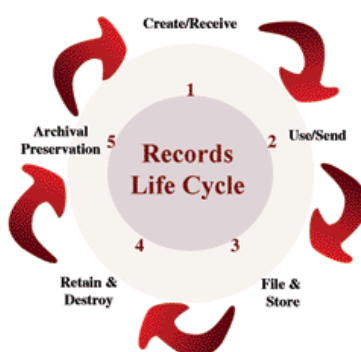


Figure 1: Records Lifecycle

It aims to ensure that records:

- are accurate and reliable
- can be retrieved quickly and easily
- are kept for no longer than necessary

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1.3 What are records?

Records can be in any format (paper documents, electronic files, e-mails, databases or scanned images) and broadly speaking are those which have a corporate governance, academic, business, legal, financial or historical value to the University.

Important records to be retained include those which:

- Provide evidence of key decision-making processes and responsibilities (eg Board and Committee records, programme and course validation)
- Are created as a result of a key business transaction (eg Student records, contracts and related records, building projects)
- Are required for legislative or other statutory requirements (eg QAA Institutional Audit purposes)
- Have long-term research value (eg research projects)
- Have historical value (eg major events and initiatives)

1.4 What is not a record?

To make sure that the University does not waste valuable resources keeping unnecessary records it is important to identify those documents which do not need to be managed as records and can therefore be destroyed routinely once they are no longer required. Such records include:

- duplicate records held for reference purposes where the original is held as a formal record elsewhere (eg Board or Committee records, strategy, policy or regulatory documents etc)
- draft documents where a final version has been created and approved, which do not track major policy development
- working papers where results have been written into an official document and are not required to support it
- copies of external and internal Publications, promotional material and similar materials that are publicly available elsewhere
- administration arrangements for lectures, room requests/ changes, meetings, events, conferences etc, which have all taken place
- individuals' day files – these may need to be checked for any important records prior to destruction
- personal diaries, address book etc.
- any other records being kept 'just in case...', there must be a valid reason for holding onto a particular record

1.5 Why manage Records: the benefits

Time	Saves time by ensuring information can be found quickly and easily
Space	Saves space by ensuring records are kept for no longer than necessary
Money	Saves money by reducing storage costs and maintenance costs
Efficiency	Improves efficiency by ensuring information is accurate and accessible
Legal compliance	Improves compliance by keeping documentation in line with and legal regulatory requirements, including Data Protection and Freedom of Information

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Control	Keeps information under control by preserving important data and preventing the accumulation of ephemeral material
Quality	Improves the quality of information by reducing unnecessary duplication and providing version control
Security	Increases the security of confidential information
Risk	Supports risk management and business continuity planning
Continuity	Ensures continuity by preserving the corporate memory (regardless of organisational restructuring and turnover of staff)

1.6 Managing records: A quick guide

Responsibilities	
•	Make sure that you are aware of the University's policies which affect the way you manage records and information. Appendix A provides a list of these.
•	Define and assign records management responsibilities and authorities to roles and named individuals so that it is clear who is responsible for making decisions and taking necessary actions
•	Ensure staff have the necessary records management knowledge and skills
Creating records	
•	Identify the records which need to be created and received to document business activities and ensure that they are complete, accurate and up to date
•	Identify which is the latest version or master copy of a record and ensure it is managed appropriately
•	Do not create unnecessary duplicate copies
Capturing records	
•	Develop adequate recordkeeping systems in shared areas, rather than personal systems, to ensure all records can be located when required by all relevant staff
•	Base the arrangement of shared recordkeeping systems on the activities your SBU carries out and the agreed University file structures and file naming conventions. Contact Records Management for advice on this.
•	Capture and attach relevant information (metadata) to help interpret, retrieve and manage records
Storing and maintaining records	
•	Store records in appropriate systems, locations, conditions and in equipment that is appropriate to their media, format and security and access requirements
•	Develop strategies to ensure electronic information will remain accessible, readable, usable and can be relied upon and accessed for as long as is required by the University and all relevant external agencies
•	Ensure access to records is controlled appropriate to the sensitivity, shared use or importance of the record
•	Track and record the movement, location and use of a record

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Retaining and disposing of records	
•	Establish and review how long records need to be kept to meet business needs and legal and regulatory requirements
•	Make sure you are aware of the University’s policy for retaining records
•	Formally assign responsibilities for authorising the disposal of records
•	Dispose of all copies of records in all formats securely, considering sensitivity and confidentiality of records
•	Make sure destruction of records is recorded

2 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Records management is a key responsibility of the University and all records created in the course of business belong to the University and not the individual. It is the responsibility of all those working on behalf of the University to carry out their records management duties in accordance with these standards, the Records Management policy and all other related policies and procedures.

Where possible, record keeping responsibilities should be agreed and defined in job descriptions. Training requirements relating to records management should be identified by managers and staff and training provided by records management staff, where necessary.

The Records management Policy, Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records (IM11) outlines the specific responsibilities as follows.

2.1 Vice-Chancellor

The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for the authorisation of the records management policy and procedures and will oversee the management of policy and standards within the University.

2.2 Secretary and Registrar

As the chief administrative officer, the Secretary and Registrar is responsible to the Board of Governors for the maintenance of records management within the University.

2.3 Chief Information Officer

The Chief Information Officer is responsible for the implementation, promulgation and promotion of the policy; training; maintaining the technology for the University’s records management systems; maintaining the integrity and authenticity of records and for the co-ordination of policy reviews.

2.4 Records Manager

The Records Manager is responsible for overseeing the design, implementation and maintenance of the records management policy and related standards and procedures, as well as monitoring compliance.

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2.5 Managers

Managers at all levels are responsible for the management of policy and related procedures through resource allocation and other management support within those areas for which they have responsibility. They will embed the records management practices within normal business practices and ensure records are captured in the appropriate corporate system. They are also responsible for identifying training requirements in records management related issues. Managers will be responsible for nominating key users who will carry out the duties of a key user

2.6 Training, Awareness and Advice

For all training, awareness and advice on records management please contact the University Records Manager.

3 CREATING RECORDS

All employees are responsible for creating complete, accurate and up to date records to support the business activities and decision-making processes in which they are involved. The implications of specific legislation and codes of practice should also be considered when identifying what records are required to support this.

The following practice will help in the creation of full, accurate and up to date records:-

- identify where key evidence is required to document activities and decision-making. It may help to draw up process maps of your activities to identify points where the recording of evidence associated with each activity is required;
- do not create duplicate copies of the same record. Identify the master copy of the record and capture into a shared recordkeeping system;
- set up and use shared standard templates and forms for creating records where possible. Nominate specific staff to control the editing and creation of templates and save new templates as a .dot template format; this will create a new document based on the template each time it is opened and ensure the original template remains intact;
- when creating records ensure that they are a true, objective account of what has happened, particularly in the case of minutes or case notes on an individual;
- always attach the following information to a record as a minimum:
 - Title
 - Date
 - Author/ Creator
 - Unique ID (if available).

4 MANAGING PHYSICAL RECORDS

University records will increasingly be managed electronically so the need to keep and store paper records will reduce. However, there are likely to always be a certain number of records which are in paper copy and the following guidance should be followed for paper records.

4.1 Organising Files

Organise files in a uniform, logical way (by date, invoice number etc.) so that documents can be retrieved easily and quickly. Personal files maintained by individual members of staff

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should only contain 'work in progress', reference or confidential material; all records that other members of the department are likely to need should be held within a centralised filing system. Maintaining departmental files will reduce duplication, allow information to be more easily located if someone is away and ensure greater consistency in the retention and disposal of information.

Only records of a similar nature should be grouped together because if the contents of files are too diverse it will be difficult, not only to locate material, but also to assign appropriate retention periods.

In some cases files can be divided into sections for papers with differing retention schedules. The redundant material can then be easily removed at the appropriate time without the need to undertake time-consuming weeding.

N.B. Files which are held electronically do not need to be printed out and stored in physical format providing the proper standards have been applied to the electronic version (see section 5. Managing Electronic Records)

Files should be closed at regular intervals to keep them at a manageable size and also to ensure that the content of 'open' files only relates to current or recent work.

Suitable rules for closing files are:

- when the academic/financial year has ended;
- when a project has come to an end;
- when a file covers a period of more than **5** years;
- when nothing has been added for **2** years.

When a file is closed, no further papers must be added. The disposal date should be recorded on the cover and it should be separated from the active records.

4.2 **Labelling and tracking files**

To help identify and retrieve the information, record some or all of the following on the file:

- reference numbers/ unique ID codes where available;
- a title which is a brief, accurate and meaningful description;
- the name of the department/section that has created or owns the file
- covering dates of the contents of the file (e.g. Aug 2005-July 2006);
- destruction date.

Track the use and movement of files by using a form to record the name of the person retrieving the file, as well as its reference, title and the date of retrieval. The form can then be inserted in place of the file so that if other members of staff require access, they will know where to find it.

4.3 **Storage of active physical records**

Active paper and other physical record types (video/ audio tape, microfilm) records required for current business needs should be stored in filing equipment appropriate for storage and security needs as well as being near to where they are being used.

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When considering where to store records the following will help.

- **Activity/ frequency of use** – records used on a regular basis should be stored near to the users; those with less frequent use but which have to be kept for several years should be stored in centrally managed University storage areas. Contact Records Management to arrange.
- **Protection required** – make sure records can be adequately secured and protected from environmental effects.
- **Cost** – Storage space is expensive and limited so must be used effectively to store active business records. Clear out unnecessary or duplicate documents regularly.

Storage Units must be strong and have sufficient space, to provide effective storage for records. They must also:

- be secure if holding personal or other confidential records;
- be able to be reached by a person of average height for health and safety reasons;
- protect records from environmental damage such as fire, flooding or vermin - where a flood risk exists the lowest shelf should be 85-100mm off the floor.

Records in all formats can deteriorate if not protected adequately. Simple, common sense measures can be taken to protect them from avoidable damage:

- store paper records away from extremes of temperature, humidity or light;
- avoid sticking important, additional notes onto documents as these can easily become detached. Photocopy these instead and add to the file;
- take care when hole punching paper to ensure content is not damaged;
- use appropriate folders to store paper documents. Avoid using ring-binders and lever arch folders where possible as these are most likely to cause damage and also take up valuable storage space. Cardboard document wallets should be used instead.

4.3.1 University storage areas

The University has a contract in place with a fit-for-purpose, offsite records storage provider for semi-active or inactive paper records and files but these will only be used to store business records as defined in section 1.4 of these standards. If you are in doubt about whether records need to be stored, contact Records Management who will carry out an appraisal of the documents and advise as necessary.

The procedural document 'Managing Physical Records' provides further guidance on how paper records should be organised and managed. Also refer to the storage procedures made available on *HertsHub* when requesting to deposit new files and records.

These can be found at:

<https://herts365.sharepoint.com/sites/Legal-and-compliance/SitePages/Documents-and-Records-Management.aspx>

When filing records in boxes please note the following:

- weed out all unnecessary, duplicate or out of date material;
- only records of the same type and age should be stored together so that appropriate indexing data and retention periods can be applied;

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- do not pack files and boxes too tightly. Boxes which are too full will damage the records and will also not be able to be lifted (10kg max. weight limit is accepted);
- take records out of lever arch files, plastic wallets and hanging files which all take up space and can be re-used and secure, instead, using treasury tags or cardboard document wallets which can be recycled.

4.3.2 Registering and tracking system using the University Document Management System

All paper and physical records held in central storage areas must be registered into the Physical Records system on the University Document Management System. The system will allow the University to effectively track and locate the movement of all its physical records through an auditable trail, preventing loss or misplacement of records. The system will also be used to monitor and record destruction of records.

5 MANAGING ELECTRONIC RECORDS

The main recordkeeping system of the University will increasingly be the University Document Management System. All records must be captured into the Document Management System where this has been made available for the relevant function.

The Chief Information Officer is responsible for determining the arrangements for the electronic storage of the University’s records and documents, in consultation with the Secretary and Registrar. Please consult the Chief Information Officer about any specific requirements prior to considering any local Strategic Business Unit or team arrangements.

The following guidance is recommended for documents and records not yet included in the University Document Management system to ensure appropriate availability and back up It is recommended that Records:

- are stored in a shared area (X:Drive) where they can be stored and retrieved by all those who need access to the information;
- should not be maintained on computer hard drives (C: drives or external hard drives) because this is not automatically backed up so there is a greater risk of loss of information due to system or equipment failure;
- should not be stored on portable media (USB, external hard drives laptops) long term as these are insecure, not backed up and, therefore, at risk from damage or loss. If records are stored on portable media for home working purposes or because of system or equipment failure, they should always be stored onto the University’s network at the earliest opportunity;
- the storage and use of personal and confidential information must comply with the University’s ‘Managing Personal and Confidential Information’ guidance. Personal information (such as Student or staff records) should not be saved onto portable media as these can easily be accessed if lost or stolen. All staff are provided with secure access to University systems via the UHVPN (University of Hertfordshire’s Virtual Private Network) from where they should access this kind of data;
- should only be stored on CDs for short term (up to **3** years); CDs are not suitable for long or medium term storage or for important business records as they are prone to corruption. Where CDs are used they should be stored in cool, dark, dry conditions

5.1 Classification: File structures

Electronic records must be arranged in a consistent, logical way to ensure they can be accessed quickly and easily, properly secured with relevant permissions attached and retained for the correct amount of time. A well-defined folder structure or file plan will enable this.

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Wherever possible, folder structures should reflect the functions¹⁵ and activities¹⁶ of the Department or SBU rather than the organisational structure, which is prone to frequent change. Personal named folders should never be used as these do not adequately describe the contents and become out of date with personnel changes.

The University's document and record management file structure is determined by the Secretary and Registrar based on national standards and with advice from the Records Manager from whom staff should request advice and guidance when creating and maintaining filing systems.

5.2 Adding Metadata (indexing)

Metadata is data describing the context, content and structure of records and their management through time. This information is used to help identify, retrieve and manage records. Metadata also helps to create an audit trail of a record, ie how it is used and accessed over its lifetime, making it authentic and reliable.

Examples of metadata include:

- Title
- Date created or received
- Version
- Date to or closed
- Author
- Subject
- Unique identifier (eg student number, personnel number)
- Retention and disposal information

The University uses the e-Government Metadata Standard (e-GMS) which recommends the following elements must be applied **as a minimum** to all records and documents:

- Creator
- Date created or published
- Title
- Unique identifier (if applicable)

In addition to these, there are a number of other recommended metadata elements which should be considered. These are:

- Subject (or keyword)
- Version
- Destruction Date

All SBUs should think about metadata requirements and develop local guidelines in line with University standards.

5.3 Titling records

Records need to be identified and retrieved by a number of different people over a period of time so it is important they are titled and indexed or described adequately to ensure this.

¹⁵ things the University does to achieve its aims and obligations

¹⁶ actions carried out to achieve the functions

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In general, titles should accurately reflect the content, be concise and should not include uncommonly understood abbreviations.

Standard University naming conventions have been written to allow for consistent titling to be carried out and can be found in the document Standard Naming Conventions for Electronic Files, folders and Records. These standards should be adopted and local guidelines written within each SBU.

5.4 **Version Control**

Version control procedures should be applied to documents which are frequently updated (policy etc.). Including a number and date on the title page (and within footers) will reduce confusion over which document is the current version, as well as providing an audit trail for tracking changes.

A version control table on the document could also be used to keep track of what changes have been made and by whom.

Decimal increments should be used so that a distinction can be made between major and minor changes. You can add 'Draft' or 'Final' to show the difference between drafts and published versions.

For example

- The first draft would be v0.1 draft then 0.2 draft etc.
- Once the document has moved to a final version, then the integer values should begin, so the first final version should be V1.0 Final. Any minor revisions made after this would then be V1.1, V1.2 etc. The second final version would be V2.0 Final etc.

5.5 **Unique identifiers**

Assign unique identifiers to records where available so they can be easier identified and retrieved. The title of a record alone may not be sufficient because two records could have the same title. Personal names are not adequate either because two people can often have the same name (e.g. Rachel Smith, John Brown etc.) or can change their name. The simplest form is to use a coding which is unique such as student number or staff number. Unique identifiers should also be used in place of personal names in compliance with Data Protection principles.

5.6 **Managing Emails**

Email is a major medium for business communication and a great deal of 'corporate knowledge' is contained in email correspondence which must be retained to protect the rights of the University of Hertfordshire.

Staff should be aware that emails may be evidential records and need to be saved appropriately. They are also legally admissible and may be released under access to information legislation (FOIA, DPA) or in a Court of Law.

Inboxes should be actively managed to ensure non-business emails are deleted and business emails are managed efficiently. Business emails should be saved alongside related records in the University document management system where available, or in a shared storage area. To save emails use the 'File, Save As...' option and save as an msg. file, remembering to give the email a clear title which should include the date the email was sent.

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Business emails should be retained and disposed of in line with retention policies. It is always the content of the email which determines how long it should be kept for and not the format.

Further guidance on this is available in the best practice guidance ‘Identifying and Managing Emails as University Records’.

5.7 Scanning records

Scanning paper records is sometimes seen as a way of freeing up valuable storage space and, whilst this is true, it is not always necessary or resource efficient to do this. In general, records with a short to medium retention are not worth back-scanning unless frequently accessed by many people instead, they should be stored offsite and possibly scanned as required. Records which are created electronically should always be captured in their original format rather than printing then re-scanning.

With the implementation of the Document Management system, the University has taken the overall decision not to undertake large-scale back-scanning of paper record, opting instead for a ‘from today forwards’ approach where required. However, there may well be valid business benefits to carrying out back-scanning in some areas – these will be assessed on an individual basis. Business Units should always consult the Chief Information Officer before undertaking any large-scale scanning exercise.

If scanning is to be carried out it is important to ensure the following:

- scanned images are an accurate duplicate of the original record, ie, all information is captured and of excellent quality;
- the correct dpi is used as follows to ensure readability:
 - Standard text documents – minimum 200 dpi
 - Drawings, maps and plans – minimum 300 dpi
 - Documents with faded text or fine detail – 600 dpi;
- written scanning procedures are in place;
- scanned records are authenticated, where necessary, with metadata etc;
- the quality of the scanned image is checked and verified before the physical record is destroyed. It is advisable to keep the paper record for up to **90** days in case of any problems with the scanned version;
- some important records (e.g. major contracts, deeds etc.) should also be kept in physical format but these can be stored elsewhere, records management can advise.

5.8 Preserving digital records

Electronic records should be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, migrated to new software so that they do not become inaccessible due to obsolete technology. Records with a mid to long-term life-span (i.e. over **5** years) may need to be part of a programme to ensure they are accessible and useable for as long as required by the University.

Consideration should be given to the long-term preservation needs of a particular record at all times. It is important to preserve records adequately in order to make sure they continue to provide an accessible, useable and authentic record of the University’s activities.

To identify electronic preservation requirements, consider the following:

- identify the records you create and their overall value to the University;

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- establish the retention on these records using the University retention schedule and advice from Records Management. In general, only those records with a retention of longer than **5** years need to be considered;
- determine the likelihood of losing the records and the impact to the University in terms of:
 - How serious the consequences would be;
 - How high the risks are to the records in their current format;
 - How expensive it would be to preserve or replace the records.

5.8.1 **Methods for electronic preservation**

There are three main options available, these are:

- **Emulation** – software is used to mimic a piece of hardware or software which preserves access to the electronic records. This method preserves the original feel of the record by maintaining its appearance and style. It will require IT specialists to create this software.
- **Migration** - transfers records from one generation of hardware/software to the next, for example converting a document from Word 6 to Word 7. The content of the record is preserved, though not always the original look and feel, and it is a labour intensive option.
- **Technological preservation** - involves keeping the original hardware and software. It can be an option for records that will only need to be kept for a very short period of time by simply maintaining them on their existing format and equipment. This option may be dependant on continuing maintenance contracts for the equipment and software and also carries a risk of breakdowns in the technology used.

6 **SECURITY**

The management of the security of information and records is essential to protect the information assets of the University and its stakeholders. This ensures business continuity, minimises risk and protects the rights of individuals about whom we hold information.

In order to mitigate the risk of security breaches or accidental damage or loss, there are some general good practice procedures which should be followed, these are provided below. Staff should also read the Information Security Policy (UPR IM03) for further information.

- Clarify the access requirements of staff to establish who needs to retrieve particular documents, who can edit those documents, and who is authorised to delete them.
- Information that is only accessible to a single person should be kept to a minimum: as far as possible, records that other staff may require should be stored within an appropriate folder on a shared network so that departments can operate effectively if individual members of staff are away.
- Access to confidential information (e.g. personal data) should be controlled through the use of ID log-ins, passwords and read-only settings, and computers must not be left unattended when logged-on.
- Screen lock computer screens when absent from your desk or work area when away at meetings so they are not left as readable. This can be done by selecting CTRL+ALT+DEL keys then selecting the Lock Computer option.

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- Staff should be aware of the risks of transporting data and records on portable media such as USBs and laptops. This should be avoided as much as possible and staff should use the UHVPN (University of Hertfordshire Virtual Private Network) to access data and records.
- The integrity of data is of paramount importance if it is considered the primary, definitive record of a transaction. Adequate audit trails, allowing all actions to be traced to a person, date and time are essential.
- Store confidential paper and physical records in a lockable filing cabinet and storage facilities.
- Unencrypted sensitive or personal data must not be sent via email as this can easily be intercepted.

7 RETAINING AND DESTROYING RECORDS

The University needs to make sure its business records are retained for as long as necessary for it to be able to carry out its core functions and comply with relevant legal obligations. It also needs to destroy records in a timely manner to ensure the efficient use of both physical and server storage space and minimise the risk of breaching the Data Protection Act.

The University Retention Schedule in the UPR Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records – IM11 sets out the amount of time that the University needs to keep certain types of records. It applies to records in all formats, including paper and electronic information. The UPR identifies the main University business records (Boards and Committee minutes, student files etc.) which need to be retained but it is constantly being updated and developed to include more records series.

Where records are not on the retention schedule it may help to consider the following before you decide to destroy a record:

- how likely is it that we will need the records again for business purposes?
- how serious would the consequences be if we did not have the records?
- how expensive is it to keep the records?
- what long-term research/ historical value do these records have?

If you are in any doubt about what to do you should contact the Records Manager for advice.

7.1 Records retention and Data Protection

A retention schedule also helps the University to comply with specific pieces of legislation. The Data Protection Act stipulates that information should be held for as long as necessary and no longer so it is vital that a policy for how long we should be keeping data on individuals is in place.

7.2 Records retention and Freedom of Information

Freedom of Information does not require that all records are retained forever, just in order to comply with a request for information, as is a common misconception. Instead, the University must retain its records and information for as long as required to support its decision making processes and business activities. The University needs to dispose of its records in a timely, compliant manner and be able to have the policy to support its disposal decisions and actions.

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7.3 **Records disposition**

When a record comes to the end of its retention there are three (3) possible actions to be taken, these are:

- record is destroyed;
- records is reviewed and retained for a further retention period;
- record will be retained permanently for research or historical purposes.

The vast majority of the University’s records that have reached the end of their retention period will be destroyed with a very small number being retained permanently.

7.3.1 **Destruction**

When records are destroyed, the proper procedures need to be in place to make sure they are disposed of correctly and that there is an audit trail of their destruction.

Good Records Management practice ensures that destruction is done in a timely secure manner with the following:

- destruction should be authorised by a designated officer in line with retention policies and destruction procedures;
- sensitive and personal information should be destroyed in a confidential manner;
- all duplicates of the records authorised for destruction should also be destroyed;
- appropriate evidence of what has been destroyed should be retained.

Confidential paper records, including those stored off-site, will be destroyed confidentially by the University’s contractor. A record should be kept of all those records that have been destroyed along with the date they were destroyed.

Records stored in Offices which are due for destruction should be put into confidential waste sacks for collection by the Estates department. If you have confidential waste to be collected please keep in a locked office and contact the Estates department for collection at the earliest opportunity. Confidential waste sacks should not be left where they can be accessed freely.

7.3.2 **Permanent records**

Governance Services is responsible for managing the University’s Board and Committee papers.

The University also has a small archive relating to the history of the University. This houses a collection of business and historical material from the 1950s to the present day including: Annual Reports, Photographs from Graduations, University publications such as the Prospectus and other historical documents from Hatfield Polytechnic and other colleges (Balls Park, Wall Hall). All records which are deemed to have a long term, historical value to the University, and need to be managed as such, should be stored here.

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Appendix A: RELEVANT LEGISLATION, STANDARDS AND GUIDANCE

Relevant UK legislation and Records Management Standards

- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Code of Practice on Records Management under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Environmental Information Regulations 2004
- BS ISO 15489 Information and Documentation – Records Management – Part 1: General
- BS ISO 15489 Information and Documentation – Records Management – Part 2: Guidelines
- BIP 0008:2004 Code of Practice for legal admissibility and evidential weight of information stored electronically
- PD 00016:2001 Document Scanning – Guide to scanning business documents

University Records management Policies and guidelines

- Guidelines for creating and maintaining electronic filing areas
- Identifying and Managing Emails as University Records
- Managing and organising Physical Records
- Records Management and the Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records - UPR IM11
- Scanning Records: Guidelines (in draft, available later in 2009)
- Standard Naming Conventions for Electronic Files, folders and Records

Associated University Information Management policies and guidelines

- *IT and Computing Regulations – UPR IM20*
- *Data Protection Policy and Privacy Statement – UPR IM08*
- *Freedom of Information – UPR IM09*
- *Information Management Principles – UPR IM02*
- *Information Security Policy – UPR IM03*
- *Internet/Intranet Based Information Systems – UPR IM04*
- *Data Management Policy – UPR IM12*
- *Managing Personal and Confidential Information – UPR IM12 Appendix 2*

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Appendix B: GLOSSARY OF RECORDS MANAGEMENT TERMS

Term	Description
Active Records	See 'Current Records'
Appraisal	The process of evaluating an organisation's activities to determine which records should be kept, and for how long, to meet the needs of the organisation, the requirements of accountability and the expectations of researchers and other users of the records.
Archives	Records that are recognized as having long-term (including historical and cultural) value.
Authenticity	An authentic record is one that can be proven to be what it purports to be, to have been sent by the person purported to have created or sent it and to have been created or sent at the time purported.
Classification	The process of devising and applying schemes based on business activities which generate records, whereby they are categorised in systematic and consistent ways to facilitate their capture, retrieval, maintenance and disposal.
Current Records	Those records which are being regularly used for the conduct of business (see also 'records lifecycle').
Data Protection Act 1998	Provides legal rights to individuals with regard to the personal information held about them by others (see: http://www.hms.gov.uk/acts/acts1998/19980029.htm).
Disposal	The implementation of appraisal and review decisions. These comprise the destruction of records and transfer of selected records to the Archive. They may also include the movement of records from one system to another (e.g. paper to electronic) or the transfer of custody of the records.
Disposition	A range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions (e.g. disposal, review, and archive)
Document	The smallest unit of filing, generally a single letter, form, report or other item housed in a filing system
Document Management System	An electronic system that is used to store, organise, retrieve and manage records received or created by the University. Such a system offers the functionality of organising (or classifying) records into a relevant structure, managing retention schedules and providing audit trails of how a record has been used and by whom. .
Electronic Records	Records where the information is recorded in a form that is suitable for retrieval, processing and communication by a digital computer.
File	A group of related documents contained within a file cover and fastened together. A virtual file can be created for electronic documents.

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Term	Description
Freedom of Information Act 2000	Provides a general statutory right of access to information of any age and in any format held by public authorities, subject to a number of limited exemptions (see: https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/)
Hardcopy	All information that is not held in an electronic format and can be read without additional equipment. Includes files, maps and plans, and bound volumes.
Indexing	The process of attaching key data (see Metadata) to a record to enable it to be described, identified and retrieved efficiently
Integrity	The integrity of records refers to its being complete and unaltered
Medium	The format on which a record is held, i.e. paper, microfiche, microfilm, electronic, optical disc, magnetic tape etc
Metadata	Information about an organisations records, including information about their nature, extent and location, the context of their creation or receipt, the means of access to them and decisions relating to their future management.
Non-current Records	Those records which have little or no business value, though they may be used for other purposes, such as historical research (see also 'records lifecycle').
Physical records	See 'Hardcopy' records
Record Series	A collection of records having a common subject or theme or function e.g. annual accounts, invoices, committee minutes, Head of Department's correspondence files etc. A series is distinguished by the fact that it provides evidence of a particular process and as such may vary in size from a single document (e.g. School Strategic Plan) to many thousands in the case of invoices.
Records	Those documents required to facilitate the business carried out by the University and retained for a set period to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. Records may be created, received or maintained in many formats including hard copy, or electronic format.
Records Lifecycle	A concept for describing the various stages through which information passes. Records are current from their creation and for as long as their business/ administrative value remains at its highest. They become semi-current when their administrative value declines and reference to them becomes irregular and less frequent. When a record has ceased to have any administrative value at all it is non-current .
Records Management	The field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, maintenance, use and disposition of records.
Records Audit or Survey	A systematic exercise to locate and identify all the records held by a particular business area.

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Term	Description
Registration	The process of records creation and its recording in an appropriate finding aid, such as a register, index, computer database etc.
Reliability	A reliable record is one whose contents can be trusted as a full and accurate description of the transactions, activities or facts to which they are evidence of.
Retention Schedule	An index to different types of records, detailing how long they should be kept for in order to meet operational and legal requirements. For example, to meet VAT and taxation regulations, there is an obligation to keep most financial records for the current year +6, making the effective period of retention 7 years
Semi-current Records	Those records whose business value has declined, but which may still be referred to on an irregular basis (see also 'records lifecycle').
Tracking	Capturing and maintaining information about the movement, use and transaction of records.
Usability	A useable record is one that can be located, retrieved, presented and interpreted.
Version Control	A procedure which seeks to identify and manage records which are subject to intensive redrafting, thereby enabling differences in authorship and content to be logged and controlled.
Vital Records	Those records crucial to the conduct of the University's business and without which the University would be unable to function should they be destroyed by fire, flood or any other catastrophe. Identification of vital records would form an integral part of any business continuity planning."

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APPENDIX III - CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS - GUIDELINES FOR CREATING AND MAINTAINING ELECTRONIC FILING SYSTEMS

Structure

SECTION	TITLE
1	PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES
2	BENEFITS
3	CREATING THE FOLDER STRUCTURE
3.1	Identifying business processes and records
3.2	Arranging the records
3.3	File codes
3.4	General rules for electronic filing structures
4	NAMING FILES AND FOLDERS
5	IMPLEMENTING AND MAINTAINING THE FOLDER STRUCTURE

1 PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

As most records are created electronically, shared storage areas (such as X:drive) have superseded traditional paper filing systems as the main repository for storing records. As a result, due care and attention must be paid to how records and documents are saved, stored, organised and managed.

The University is committed to using an institution-wide electronic Document Management system to manage key University documents more effectively. These guidelines have been written to help departments and SBUs to develop, implement and maintain a shared electronic fileplan¹⁷ or filing structure.

2 BENEFITS

A well-managed shared area will provide the following benefits:

- provides clear, consistent folder structures for all records and documents
- supports effective information sharing
- aids search and retrieval process
- reduces duplication of records, assisting version control
- supports proper retention and disposal of records.

3 CREATING THE FOLDER STRUCTURE

The file plan structure should be a hierarchy of folders and sub-folders representing business functions (eg. student administration), activities (eg. Student records administration) and individual record series or types (student files).

Structures based on organisational structure or individual team members are ineffective as frequent changes in both team structure and members mean that file plans will quickly become out of date and meaningless. They are also not conducive to information sharing and retrieval.

¹⁷ Also referred to in records management terms as a classification scheme

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The following sections describe the steps to be taken in order to build a file plan or folder structure which supports the way you work and complies with records management best practice.

3.1 Identify business processes and records

Before creating the structure it is a good idea to discuss amongst your team what functions and activities you carry out and the records you create as a result.

Use the University's top level file plan as a starting point, this can be found on the Information Management pages of *HertsHub* here:

<https://herts365.sharepoint.com/sites/Legal-and-compliance/SitePages/Documents-and-Records-Management.aspx>

The file plan has been based on the JISC classification scheme and retention schedule but adapted for the University. The JISC scheme can be used to help you create the lower levels of your file plan and is available here:

<http://bcs.jiscinfonet.ac.uk/he/default.asp>

The file plan should begin with the main function at the top, progressing into sub-levels to represent the activities and split into further levels representing the record series created. For example, the structure for the function of Student Administration may look like this:

- Student Administration (FUNCTION)
 - Application (ACTIVITY)
 - Application forms (RECORD SERIES)
 - Admission (ACTIVITY)
 - Student Records Administration (ACTIVITY)
 - Student Files (RECORD SERIES)

Or for a finance related function

- Financial Management (FUNCTION)
 - Accounts (ACTIVITY)
 - End of year accounts (RECORD SERIES)

3.2 Arranging the records

The next step is to determine how the records within each folder should be arranged (eg by date, alphabetically, by order number etc.). This should support retrieval requirements and the retention and removal of out-of date records, where possible.

For example, year folders can be added to enable retrieval and retention of documents as follows:-

- Financial Management
 - Accounts
 - Year End Accounts 2006-2007
 - Year End Accounts 2007-2008
 - Year End Accounts 2008-2009

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Not only does it make it clear which records are where for retrieval purposes, structuring records in this way means that the folder and its contents can be destroyed at the same time once they have passed their retention (7 years in the case of finance related material). Another example is meeting minutes which are usually retrieved according to date; therefore, it may be sensible to name a set of minutes with the date featuring first, ensuring the most recent set of minutes is filed at the top;

2008-10-31-Marketing Team meeting
 2008-09-30-Marketing Team meeting
 Project files could be created by project and would be structured either alphabetically by project name or numerically by project number where such a number exists (see 3.3 **File codes**). It may also be helpful to have a closed projects folder, which projects can be moved to once they have been completed.

3.3 **File codes**

File codes (eg project number) may be used to name files in order to aid identification and retrieval. They can be numeric or alphanumeric in design but should be as simple and short as possible. Any numbering system used should be documented so everyone is aware of it.

3.4 **General rules for electronic filing structures**

There are some general common sense practices which should be followed when creating structures for an e-filing system. These are:

- the top level of the structure should not include too many folders. No more than nine (9) folders is recommended but there may be times when it is practical to exceed this
- try not to have a mix of folders and documents on the same level; all documents should be assigned a folder
- avoid creating folders for one or two files as this creates too many layers of information which slows down the retrieval process
- once a structure at the top level has been decided upon, extra folders should not be added to this level unless absolutely necessary and should be done by a nominated member of the team (see section 5.)
- do not use overly verbose folder names – the full path to a document should be less than 255 characters

4 **NAMING FILES AND FOLDERS**

It is important to have clear titling conventions which all staff using the folder structure can use and adhere to.

- Folder titles should be clear, consistent and reflect the contents. Personal names and generic terms (eg General, Miscellaneous) must not be used
- All related records and versions should follow the same naming structure with the same elements being used in the same order.
- Dates should follow the international date format of YYYY-MM-DD (eg 2005-11-05 for 5th November 2005) as this will file documents in date order.

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- Acronyms can be used only if they are familiar to the user group, eg UH, otherwise names should be written in full. Where acronyms are used, a glossary of these should be written and publicised for all users.
- Documents stored in a repository that maintains version information, such as the Document Management System or Office 365, should not include version in the filename.

5 IMPLEMENTING AND MAINTAINING THE FOLDER STRUCTURE

The file plan needs to be implemented properly if it is to be adopted and used effectively by all members of the team. The following good practice pointers will help you to do this.

- Establish and write local guidelines on managing your shared filing structure to include folder structure and descriptions and file numbering and naming conventions.
- Make all new and existing staff aware of these guidelines and the folder structure. Provide training where necessary.
- Put time aside to weed and transfer files from old shared areas and folders to the new structure. See section 1 of the Records Management Standards for help on identifying records and what needs to be retained.
- Nominate a member of staff as administrator for the shared area to do the following:
 - create new folders and ensure any changes in work practices and activities are reflected in the folder structure
 - document any changes to the structure or naming conventions
 - check for duplication and misfiling
 - carry out regular health checks on the structure and content of the shared area
 - ensure naming conventions are being adhered to
 - make sure unnecessary and out of date folders and documents are weeded out regularly in line with local and University retention policies.

For help or further information please contact the Records Manager.

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APPENDIX IV - CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS - IDENTIFYING AND MANAGING EMAILS AS UNIVERSITY RECORDS

Structure

SECTION	TITLE
1	<u>INTRODUCTION</u>
2	<u>PURPOSE</u>
3	<u>IDENTIFYING EMAILS AS RECORDS</u>
3.1	<u>Non-business emails</u>
3.2	<u>Important University business email records</u>
4	<u>CAPTURING AND MANAGING EMAIL RECORDS</u>
4.1	<u>Who should capture an email?</u>
4.2	<u>Where should emails be saved?</u>
4.3	<u>How should emails be saved?</u>
4.4	<u>How long should emails be kept for?</u>
5	<u>OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE EMAIL MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVING</u>
6	<u>FURTHER INFORMATION</u>

1 INTRODUCTION

Email is used to carry out a wide range of University business such as contract negotiations, policy development, employment matters, communication with students, University announcements and circulation of reports and meeting minutes. Email correspondence is routinely used to make and record decisions and is often the only record of such transactions, replacing traditional paper records. As a result, some emails and their attachments are potentially records of value and must be managed as such, under the terms of the University's Records Management Policy (UPR Records management and Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records – IM11) to ensure their integrity and usability.

2 PURPOSE

This document provides guidance for managing those emails identified as being important University business records. It describes how such email messages should be identified, captured and stored as part of the University's corporate memory.

3 IDENTIFYING EMAILS AS RECORDS

Emails can be categorised into two types; non-business emails which can be deleted regularly and important University business emails which need to be treated as records retained in line with this policy.

3.1 Non-business emails

Emails with the following content should be deleted on a regular basis once they have been read or dealt with:

- personal correspondence such as social arrangements, lunch etc.
- publications, promotional material, URLs and similar materials that are publicly available;
- meeting arrangements (catering, room allocation etc) and accept/ decline messages;
- internal communications such as 'staffq' or other informal distribution lists;
- notices of employee activities such as holiday, team-building days, invitations to work-related events (and responses), meetings etc.
- routine business activities such as thank-you messages and emails you have been copied (cc'd) into for information only;

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- routine requests for information;
- spam email;
- out of Office messages;
- copies of circulated meeting minutes etc. where the original is held centrally.

3.2 Important University Business records

All email sent and received which has business value to the University must be retained in accordance with the agreed Records Management Policy and retention schedule (UPR Records management and Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records – IM11).

Important University business records include:

- authorisations and instructions;
- communications relating to official business;
- emails that add value or support to an existing record;
- submissions to and formal communications with external organisations (eg. *the Office for Students*);
- formal correspondence with students;
- formal drafts of agreements and legal documents and associated correspondence;
- minutes and agendas of committees and working parties;
- formal correspondence with applicants, members of the university or other individuals or organisations that have business or legal value;
- negotiations and commitments on behalf of the University;
- where legal advice is involved;
- email which is part of the audit trail for a business process, investigation or decision.

The following records will be archived centrally and/ or by the originator so do not need to be archived by individuals and can, therefore, be destroyed after reading:

- published minutes and agendas of official University Committees, working parties and project boards;
- email distributed on the official UHQ email list.

4 CAPTURING AND MANAGING EMAIL RECORDS

4.1 Who should capture an email?

As email messages can be sent to multiple recipients, the following guidelines give an indication of who is responsible for capturing an email as a record. Following this guidance will enable duplication to be minimised and also reduce the risk of important emails not being captured.

- For internal email messages, the sender of an email message, or, for thread email messages, the initiator of an email dialogue (this includes requests for approval or authorisations and all subsequent responses).
- For messages sent externally (including to students) the sender of the email message.
- For incoming external messages (including from students) received by one person, the recipient.
- For incoming external messages received by more than more person, the person responsible for the area of work relating to the message. If this is not clear it may be necessary to clarify who this is with the other people who have received the message.

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4.2 **Where should emails be saved?**

Any emails identified as an important business record as listed in 3.2 should be stored where they are accessible to all staff who need to see them. This is important for business continuity purposes and also to enable the University to meet its freedom of information and data protection obligations.

Emails that are identified as important business records must be saved alongside the relevant related documents and records in the relevant folder of work in the University Document Management system or the appropriate agreed folder in the shared storage area (X:drive).

4.3 **How should emails be saved?**

Emails should be stored in the format in which they were created to protect their integrity and authenticity. The following briefly describes how emails created and received in MS Outlook should be saved.

To save an email:

- open the email you want to save;
- choose 'Save As' and save as an **.msg** file. This will ensure email is saved in its native format, along with all related metadata (sender, time/ date sent etc.) **or**
- click and drag email into an appropriate folder on your shared or personal electronic storage area or into EDRM;
- if necessary, rename the saved email appropriately and clearly to ensure it is easily identifiable in the future. Include subject or context, name of sender or recipient and date transmitted (using format YYYY-MM-DD). Adding time sent or received (hh:mm) for thread emails will ensure they are stored in chronological order;
- when saving attachments, save within the accompanying email if the email adds context. If not save the attachment as a separate file remembering to give it a meaningful subject title (eg. content description, date and version).

4.4 **How long should emails be kept for?**

The length of time for which an email needs to be kept is determined by its content. For example, email correspondence relating to contract negotiation should be kept alongside the contract for as long as is specified on the retention schedule (Records Management and Archiving and Retention of Prime Documents and Business Records – IM11), whereas an email relating to arrangements for a meeting can be deleted as soon as the meeting has taken place.

5 **OUTCOMES OF EFFECTIVE EMAIL MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVING**

Managing emails identified as records effectively provides the following benefits:

- adds to the corporate memory of the University and aids better quality decision-making;
- ensures related records are held together in one system, rather than across a number of systems;
- ensures official records created by email are available and accessible to employees;
- provides evidence of decision-making and ability to defend decisions during litigation
- meets the requirements for legislative and external accountability (Freedom of Information Act 2000, Data Protection Act 1998) and avoids penalties for non-compliance;

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- prevents the arbitrary or illegal destruction of University records;
- promotes sharing of information;
- minimises space used for storage of unnecessary or duplicate records.

6 **FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you have any further queries please contact the Records Manager.

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APPENDIX V - CORPORATE RECORDS MANAGEMENT STANDARDS - STANDARD NAMING CONVENTIONS FOR ELECTRONIC FILES, FOLDERS AND RECORDS

Structure

SECTION	TITLE
1	INTRODUCTION
1.1	Purpose
1.2	Why use naming conventions
1.3	How should documents be titled
1.4	Naming conventions at a glance: Key rules
1.5	Standards
2	CONVENTIONS
2.1	Making file titles meaningful
2.3	Demarcating words in titles
2.4	Using numbers in file names
2.5	Using dates in file names
2.6	Using personal names
2.7	Words to avoid using at the start of file names
2.8	Ordering the elements in a file name
2.9	Naming correspondence records (including emails)
2.10	Applying version number and draft status
2.11	Use of non-alphanumeric characters in file names
3	FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

University of Hertfordshire is increasingly using electronic document and record management. This document sets out the rules and conventions for naming files and records in the University Document Management system and in University shared storage areas (X: drive etc.) These guidelines refer to documents created in all formats.

1.2 Why use naming conventions?

Electronic document and records management enables the use of search technologies to find accurate, up to date information, so it is essential that information can be easily identified and retrieved.

Consistency in the use of metadata and how we name documents, emails or folders is important to be able to identify information quickly and easily. Putting time and effort into naming records consistently and logically will distinguish similar records from one another at a glance, and by doing so will facilitate the search and retrieval of records and enable users to browse file names more effectively and efficiently.

Naming records according to agreed conventions should also make file naming easier for colleagues because they will not have to ‘re-think’ the process each time.

1.3 How should documents be titled?

The conventions provided in this document offer practical advice on how to title documents. How the general rules given here are applied across the University will depend on how each

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Business Unit works and it is advised that specific rules are created by each SBU to reflect working practice. In general, a title should be:

- descriptive – it says what the document is about;
- helpful – it distinguishes the document from others on the same/ similar topic;
- consistent – it follows the convention described in this document.

Documents should always contain one or more of the following elements listed below:-

- date;
- subject;
- document type;
- version or status.

The sequence of the elements will vary depending on the document being named. Each element should be separated by a hyphen (-).

eg. Date-Subject

2007-04-02-Information Management Strategy

Sometimes these rules can produce longer titles but this is important as it will help you and others see at a glance whether it is the right document, saving time in the long run.

1.4 Naming conventions at a glance: Key Rules

- Titles should be as concise as possible – keep them short but meaningful. Avoid use of personal names and uncommonly understood abbreviations. Commonly understood abbreviations are permissible (e.g. UH).
- Use the agreed University abbreviations and codes where relevant.
- Make sure documents can be identified on their own without the folder they are saved in
- Numbers 0-9 in filenames should always be written as two-digit numbers (01,02,03,04 etc.) to ensure they are stored in numerical order.
- Dates should always follow the BS ISO 8601:2004 format, YYYY-MM-DD, to ensure documents are stored in chronological order.
- When adding personal names, always put the Surname first (e.g. Smith B).
- Avoid using common words such as Draft, Letter or memo at the start of a file title.
- Documents stored in a repository that maintains version information, such as the Document Management System or Office 365, should not include version in the filename.
- Make sure elements in the file title are ordered in the most appropriate way to retrieve the record. This will depend on the audience and/or the way the SBU works.
- Correspondence record titles should always include the following elements: name of correspondent, subject description (if not already in folder name), date of letter, email etc. and 'rcvd' if incoming correspondence.
- Apply version number or status to documents where required. This will be captured automatically in the Document Management system.
- Avoid use of non-alphanumeric characters in file names (i.e. * : / \ < > “ ! + = £ \$ & ,).

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1.5 Standards

These Naming Conventions have been based on the following standards and guidelines:

- BS ISO15489-1 and 2: 2001- Information and Documentation – Records Management;
- BS ISO8601:2004 - Data elements and interchange formats - Information interchange - Representation of dates and time;
- Management, appraisal and preservation of electronic records – The National Archives;
- Standard Naming Conventions - University of Edinburgh;
- Naming Conventions for electronic documents – University of St Andrews.

2 CONVENTIONS

2.1 Make file titles meaningful

File names should be meaningful to anyone who needs to access them. The wider the audience, the clearer the title should be. Simple rules are:

- ensure the title accurately reflects the contents;
- avoid using initials, abbreviations and codes that are not commonly understood;
- avoid using words like 'and', 'or', 'a', 'the' etc. as they add length but not meaning, to a file name;
- use a hyphen to separate each element of the title for clearer identification of documents.

Suffixes such as .pdf or .doc are unnecessary as the system will capture file extensions and document icons automatically.

Example:

Finance General Purpose Cttee-Minutes (Subject-Record Type) rather than The finance and general purpose committee minutes or FGPC minutes

2.2 Make sure documents can be identified on their own

Consideration should be given to the document's intended audience, searching requirements and how the document may be identified when retrieved on its own without the folder or if it ever becomes relocated or detached from the folder. For example, a large number of documents entitled 2004-2005-Minutes is not helpful.

Example:

Audit Committee/ 2008-01-31-Audit Cttee-Minutes rather than Audit Committee/ 2008-01-31-Minutes

NB Although this may look fine when browsing through the file structure, a search will return the document as 2008-01-31-Minutes, which is not very descriptive.

2.3 Demarcating words in titles

- Use a space to separate words and a hyphen to separate each element of the naming convention.

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- Do not use running filenames.
- Avoid using other separation marks (underscores, slashes etc.) should be avoided as these affect searching capabilities.
- Capital letters can also be used at the beginning of each word.
- Where approved capitalised acronyms are used in file names the acronym should appear in capitals.

Example 1:

Risk Mgt-Annual Report rather than, Risk_management-Annual_Report,
or
Riskmanagementannualreport

Example 2:

UH Brand-Template rather than University_of_Hertfordshire_
Brand_Template

2.4 **Using numbers in file names**

To maintain the numeric order when file names include numbers it is important to include the zero for numbers 0-9. This helps to retrieve the latest record number.

Example:

Paper 01		Paper 1
Paper 02		Paper 10
Paper 03		Paper 11
Paper 04		Paper 2
Paper 05	rather than	Paper 3
Paper 06		Paper 4
Paper 07		Paper 5
Paper 08		Paper 6
Paper 09		Paper 7
Paper 10		Paper 8
		Paper 9

(Ordered alphanumerically as the files would be in the directory list.

2.5 **Using dates in file names**

Dates and times should always follow the BS ISO 8601:2004 basic format:

- YYYY Year eg 2008
- YYYY-MM Year and month eg 2008-03
- YYYY-MM-DD Year, month and day eg 2008-03-31

Putting the dates 'back to front' means the chronological order of the records is maintained when the file names are listed in the file directory. This helps when trying to retrieve the latest dated record.

In following the basic format everyone will be able to tell that 2007-12-07 means December 2007 and not 12 July 2007.

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Months entered alphabetically do not file in chronological order.

Example:

2004-03-24-Audit Cttee-Agenda	rather than	1Feb2005-Agenda
2004-03-24-Audit Cttee-Minutes		1Feb2005-Minutes
2004-03-24-Audit Cttee-Paper-A		13Sep2005-Agenda
2005-02-01-Audit Cttee-Agenda		24Mar2004-Agenda
2005-02-01-Audit Cttee-Minutes		24Mar2004-Minutes

2.6 Using personal names

When including a personal name (e.g. to correspondence) type surname first followed by initials as it is most likely that the record will be retrieved according to the family name of the individual.

Example:

Brown SR-2004-12-01 rather than SamR Brown-2004-12-01

There is no need to use the person’s title (Mr, Miss, Dr) unless it is required for business purposes. Where this is needed, use the format:

Brown Prof SR
(Surname /Title/ initials)

2.7 Words to avoid using at the start of file names

Avoid using common words such as ‘draft’ or ‘letter’ or ‘memo’ at the start of file names, otherwise all of those records will appear together in the file directory, making it more difficult to retrieve the records you are looking for.

You may only ignore this rule if starting file names with these sorts of words aids the retrieval of the records. See 2.8 for further details.

2.8 Ordering the elements in a file name

The elements to be included in a file name should be ordered according to the way in which the record will be retrieved. For example, if the records are retrieved according to their date (eg. meeting minutes) the date element should appear first. If the records are retrieved according to their description (eg. Events) the description element should appear first.

Example 1:

2004-06-30-Audit Cttee-Agenda	rather than	Agenda-1Feb2005
2004-06-30-Audit Cttee-Minutes		Agenda-20Jan2005
2005-01-20-Audit Cttee-Agenda		Agenda-30June2004
2005-01-20-Audit Cttee-Minutes		Minutes-1Feb2005
		Minutes-20Jan2005
		Minutes-30June2004

Example 2:

Garden Party-2004-06-30	rather than	2004-06-30-Garden Party
Procurement Award-2004-09-05		2004-09-05-Procurement Award

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2.9 Naming correspondence records (including emails)

File names of correspondence should include the following elements so that the record can be easily identified and retrieved:

- name of correspondent, (i.e. the name of the person who sent the letter/email/memo or to whom you sent the letter/email/memo)
- subject description, where it is not given in the folder title
- date of letter/email/memo (and time HH:MM for string emails)
- for all incoming correspondence, include 'rcvd'

When saving emails, rename messages so they can be identified and delete any prefixes such as RE:, FW:, etc.

Example:

Evans W-Appeal-2004-07-15-rcvd	rather	William Evans-
Evans W-Appeal-2004-08-20	than	15Jul04
Evans W-Appeal-2004-09-05		William Evans-
		20Aug04
		William Evans-
		5Sep04

2.10 Applying version number and draft status

Version control procedures should be applied to documents which are frequently updated (policy etc.). Including a number and date on the title page (and within footers) will reduce confusion over which document is the current version, as well as providing an audit trail for tracking changes.

A version control table on the document could also be used to keep track of what changes have been made and by whom.

Decimal increments should be used so that a distinction can be made between major and minor changes. You can add 'Draft' or 'Final' to show the difference between drafts and published versions.

For example,

- the first draft would be v0.1 draft then 0.2 draft etc.
- once the document has moved to a final version then the integer values should begin, so the first final version should be V1.0 Final. Any minor revisions made after this would then be V1.1, V1.2 etc. The second final version would be V2.0 Final etc.

2.11 Use of non-alphanumeric characters in file names

Avoid the use of non-alphanumeric characters in file names as these can affect search results and don't add much meaning

Avoid: * : \ / < > | " ? [] ; = + & £ \$, .

However, hyphens (-) can be used to separate elements of file titles as specified in this document

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Example:

Guidelines and Regulations **not** Guidelines & Regulations
Budget-2006-2007 **not** Budget 2006/07

Replace characters with words where required, eg. "&" can be replaced with "and".

3 **FURTHER INFORMATION AND ADVICE**

For further information or help on devising SBU specific naming conventions please contact the Records Manager.

Sue Grant
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **13 December 2019**