RECORDS RETENTION & DISPOSAL GUIDELINES

1. Current Records: those records which are retrieved and cancelled frequently, or which contain information of immediate relevance to current activities.

2. Non-Current Records: those records which are needed to be used regularly in daily administration but must be retained for a further period (based on financial, legal or administrative requirements).

3. Ephemeral, Duplicate & Information Copies (Unclassified): These records which are of short-term, temporary informational value with virtually no requirement for retention and can be disposed of when reference value ceases.

4. Non-Current (Redundant or Obsolete): Those records which have been retained for the necessary retention period and are no longer required to any other purpose. Ephemeral, Duplicate & Information Copies (Classified): Records which contain confidential, restricted or sensitive material.

BUSINESS UNIT

IDENTIFY
1. Current Records
2. Non-Current Records

RETAIL
In or Near Business Unit

TRANSFER
Interim or Secondary Storage

IDENTIFY
2. Non-Current Records

LIST & BOX

IDENTIFY
0. Duplicate & Information Copies

CHECK & CULL

DISPOSAL
In Line with Established Procedures

IDENTIFY
4. Non-Current Records
Status: Checked & Disposal Authorized

DESTRUCTION CERTIFICATE ISSUED

DISPOSAL
In Line with Established Procedures

Contacts:
Archives (8840)
Records (8286)
Disposal Instructions

Retain

Records cannot be destroyed before the expiry of the minimum retention period. The University can decide (for whatever reason) to keep records longer than the minimum retention period - even indefinitely - but this should be the exception rather than the rule. Records may be retained in situ for the duration of the retention period or arrangements can be made with the University Archivist for transfer to secondary storage.

Archive

Refers to physical transfer to the University Archives (unless another location is specified) which must take place by arrangement with the Archivist. The Archivist may then transfer materials to the State Records Office, as required.

Electronic Records

Electronic records (word processing, email, spreadsheets, databases...) identified for permanent retention should be archived by the creating agency. These must be managed, migrated and refreshed as required throughout their life, to ensure access and readability, in accordance with the State Records Office Policy Number 8. Destruction of electronic records must be in accordance with current best practice, as advised by the University Archivist.

Destroy

Records can only be destroyed in accordance with an authorised retention and disposal schedule - and in consultation with the Head of School/Department and University Archivist. Confidential destruction measures must be in line with University policy. Destruction must be done in an approved manner such as shredding, trashing, or pulping. On campus this may constitute placement in locked confidential disposal bins whose contents are then destroyed in an appropriate manner. Prior to destruction, records must be listed in generic groupings and the list authorised by the Head of School/Department and by the University Archivist. The destruction list must be retained permanently for purposes of accountability.
1. Ensure that current records are held on official, numbered files and managed in accordance with established policy and procedures.
2. Use TRIM Capture software for file/document movement and control.
3. When the records are no longer required for day-to-day business (or for reference) arrange transfer to secondary storage or archives.

**WHAT GOES ON AN OFFICIAL FILE?** Those records which provide evidence of business activity, decisions or outcomes.

**Examples**

- a. records of correspondence received by post, facsimile or electronic mail
- b. memos, reports, and signed copies of outwards correspondence
- c. agendas, minutes, background papers, and outcomes of formal meetings
- d. documentary evidence of decisions for which the University is held accountable
- e. records which document University policy, practices and procedures
- f. records which document the rationale behind agency policy, corporate or senior officers’ decisions and directives

That is they:
- > describe the issue.
- > record who was involved.
- > record why a decision was made.
- > record how a decision was made.
- > record who approved the decision.

- g. official information related to students and personnel
- h. copies of contracts, leases and agreements, and related documents
- i. facsimile transmissions
- j. personal copies of minutes or other official papers that have been annotated
- k. electronic mail messages
- l. records relating to precedent cases, where precedent plays a role
- m. audio records held in any format including voice mail, voice cassettes, tapes or any other media
- n. decisions and commitments made orally (person to person, by telephone or in conference). These should, as a standard practice, be minuted;
- o. records of individual actions, where there is a likelihood of the individual having to account for that action later.

*Not required if an official record has been created and maintained, and the documents are only used as memory aids.*
2. Non-Current Records

1. Check (or ask the Archives Office to check) the retention period for the non-current records you wish to transfer or dispose of.
2. Prepare the proposed list and email it to the University Archives for checking against the relevant Retention and Disposal Authorities.
3. On receiving advice from the Archivist, box those records which must be retained for a further period.
4. Fill in the front cover sheet of the Archives Consignment Form, number and label the boxes.
5. Copy the box lists, retaining one for reference and sending the other with the consignment.

*** See item(s) 3 & 4 on what to do with Non-Current and Ephemeral records which are deemed to have no on-going value and have been approved for destruction.

General and Ad Hoc Disposal Schedules

Disposal schedules contain listings and descriptions of the records created by the University. They are used to plan the life of records from the time of their creation through to disposal. Each schedule is a legal document which sets the retention period, identifies the disposal trigger and specifies custodial arrangements for each record series.

Existing Disposal Schedules

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function / Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Retention Action</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Disposal Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Administrative</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1. Common All Areas</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>13. Committees</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Edith Cowan University (ECU) committees formed:</td>
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<tr>
<td>1. In a standing or permanent capacity to deal with general issues within broad parameters; or</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. To investigate and report on a specific subject (descriptors include Working Parties, Academic Council, Committee); or</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Inter-agency committees where Edith Cowan University acts in secretarial role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.1 Committee records</td>
<td>Agendas, minutes, submissions, reports from last date of use.</td>
<td>Retain 2 years in department Transfer to Archives.</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Archive ECU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duplicate Information copies</td>
<td>Retain until reference ceases then archive.</td>
<td></td>
<td>RU</td>
<td>Destroy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment proposals</td>
<td>Retain 2 years in department then archive</td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Archive ECU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members' appointment</td>
<td>Retain 2 years in department then archive</td>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Archive ECU</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXTRACT FROM AN ECU RETENTION & DISPOSAL AUTHORITY**
1. In the course of business, offices accumulate duplicate and information copies of all sorts of material. Regular purging of these ‘ephemeral’ records frees up valuable work and storage space and is to be encouraged. However, some material is confidential (or sensitive) and must be disposed of in the proper manner. Approved disposal methods are:
   - on-site shredding, or
   - off-site disposal by an approved service provider.

**WHAT DOES NOT (HAVE TO) GO ON FILE?**

*Ephemeral Records* - those records which are of short-term, temporary informational value with virtually no requirement for retention.

Examples:
   a. duplicates of documents, without additional notations;
   b. copies of other organisations reports and files;
   c. telephone messages of a routine or trivial nature;
   d. facsimile transmissions of a routine or trivial nature or that duplicate information held elsewhere (working documents, ‘for your information’ communications);
   e. electronic mail of a routine or trivial nature or that duplicate information held elsewhere (working documents, ‘for your information’ communications);
   f. incoming promotional literature (brochures or leaflets for goods and services not actually purchased);
   g. desk calendars and office diaries where no entries pertaining to work activities have been recorded;
   h. audio recordings of a routine or trivial nature or that duplicate information held elsewhere (recordings of minutes that have been subsequently transcribed to paper and accepted as a true and accurate record of proceedings by the committee members concerned).

Sources:

1. Make sure that Non-Current records which have been authorised for disposal are destroyed in line with established procedures.
2. If you are not sure of the status of a record series or batch, you can check the relevant schedules or contact the Archives Office.

Existing Disposal Schedules

Architectural Documents
Examination Records
Human Resources Management Records
Central Files
Financial & Accounting Records
Nursing Clinical Evaluation Records
Counselling Records
Teaching Practice Evaluation Records
Student, Student Administration, Research and Teaching Records