

# University Records Management Policy

## Introduction and purpose

1. Records contain information that is a unique and invaluable resource and an important operational asset. A systematic approach to the management of the University's records is essential to protect and preserve records as evidence of our actions.

2. This policy is an element of the University Information Framework. It is intended to provide the broad principles and guidelines to be applied to the management of records in the University throughout their life cycle. It is not intended to provide any details of underlying records management processes in the various strands of the University's activities, e.g. student records, finance, human resources etc. These can be found on the IMPS website in the **Guidelines for record retention and disposal**.

3. It is also intended to reflect and align with the general principles of records management as laid out in the **Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on Records Management**.

4. The efficient management of the University's records is necessary to support its core function to comply with legal and regulatory obligations and to contribute to the effective management of the University.

5. The policy has the following elements:

- Definitions
- Scope
- Key objectives
- Responsibilities for achieving key records management actions
- Relationships with existing policies
- Guidance and training in support of the policy
- Amendments and review
- Contacts

## Definitions

6. Records are defined as those documents and information, which regardless of format facilitate University activities and the business carried out by the University and which are thereafter retained (for a set period) to provide evidence of its transactions or activities. These records may be created, received or maintained in hard copy or electronically, and include email. Records include those designated for permanent preservation

in the University Archives.<sup>1</sup>

7. Records management is defined as a field of management responsible for the efficient and organisational control of the creation, maintenance, use, distribution, storage and disposal of records. It constitutes a series of integrated systems related to the core processes of the University, which ensure that evidence of, and information about, its activities are managed and maintained as viable records.

## Scope

8. This policy applies to all records created, kept or managed by staff in the course of carrying out their University function, or any third parties conducting business on behalf of the University. The policy also covers subsidiaries that are wholly-owned by the University. Records created in the course of research, whether internally or externally funded, may also be subject to contractual and academic record-keeping requirements.

## Key objectives

9. Records management is necessary to:

- i. ensure that the University conducts itself in an orderly, efficient and accountable manner;
- ii. realise best value through improvement in the quality and flow of information and greater coordination of records and storage;
- iii. support core University functions providing evidence of conduct and the appropriate maintenance of associated tools, resources and outputs;
- iv. meet legislative and regulatory requirements;
- v. deliver services to staff and stakeholders in a consistent and equitable manner;
- vi. assist document policy formation and managerial decision making;
- vii. provide continuity in the event of a disaster;
- viii. protect the interests of the organisation and the rights of employees, clients and present and future stakeholders;
- ix. establish an institutional and cultural identity and maintain a corporate memory;
- x. support the University's Information Framework and other corporate policies.

## Responsibilities for records management and compliance

10. The University has a corporate responsibility to maintain its records and record-keeping systems in accordance with the regulatory environment. As a member of the University's Executive Board, the University Secretary has overall responsibility for this policy.

11. In conjunction with the University Archivist, the Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS) Office is responsible for drawing up guidance for good records management practice and promoting compliance with this policy. The IMPS Office and the University Archivist will provide policy advice and practice recommendations to the University Secretary. Guidance will be published on the IMPS website in the **Guidelines for record retention and disposal**.

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<sup>1</sup> Some University records will be selected for permanent preservation, as part of the University archive, for historical research and as an enduring record of the conduct of the University functions and business.

12. Heads of School and Service (in the case of the Henley Business School, the Dean) have overall responsibility for the management of records generated by their activities, namely to ensure that the records created, received or processed within their purview, are managed in a way that complies with this Policy. They are assisted in this function by **IMPS Contacts**. Where an organisational entity is not aligned to a School or a Service overall responsibility falls to the line manager of that unit.

13. IMPS Contacts are designated by Heads of School or Service to provide a key point of contact between the various units of the University and the IMPS Office for the implementation of records management and information compliance policies. They are responsible for liaising with the IMPS Office on behalf of their unit, disseminating central guidance to colleagues and assisting in the local implementation of procedures and best practice.

14. Members of staff with designated responsibilities for computing and systems administration are ultimately accountable to their Head of School or Service for ensuring that electronic systems and the functions/transactions performed by their programmes comply with this policy and related requirements.

15. Committee Secretaries are responsible for ensuring that a full record of a committee's business (its minutes, agenda, and all supporting papers) are suitably managed and preserved to form part of the formal University record. This formal record will be taken as the definitive and authentic copy where minutes are not signed and may be designated for permanent retention.

16. Individual employees must ensure that the records for which they are responsible form complete and accurate records of their activities, and that they are maintained and disposed of in accordance with the University's records management guidelines and information compliance policies.

## Relationship with existing policies and codes

17. This policy has been formulated within the context of University policies and guidelines, national legislation and professional codes of practice, and is intended to act as a framework to support standards and promote compliance with legislative and regulatory environments. Key policies and codes related to this policy are cited below.

18. Relevant University Policies:

- i. **Information Framework**
- ii. **Data Protection Policy**
- iii. **Freedom of Information and Environmental Information Regulations Policy**
- iv. **Intellectual Property Rights**
- v. **Copyright Policy**
- vi. **Information Security Policy**

19. Professional Standards/ Codes of Practice

- i. **Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice**
- ii. **Code of practice for archivists and records managers**

## Guidance and training in support of the policy

21. All staff have a personal responsibility to manage records used in the course of carrying out their University function. They should have the required authority, skills and training to manage these records. Such training will be available through People Development, the IMPS website and via relevant online modules.

## Contacts

Head of School/ Service

IMPS Contacts

University Archivist

Head of Information Management and Policy Services (IMPS Officer)

Version	Keeper	Reviewed	Approved by	Approval date
1.0	IMPS	Every four years or earlier if required	IFSG	16/11/11
1.1		Annually	IMPS review	30/05/14
1.2			IMPS review	16/09/15
1.3			IMPS review	23/08/16