

Ulster University Schedule Cover Sheet

Document Title	Records Retention and Disposal Schedule 2.5
Custodian	University Secretary in consultation with Chief Digital and Information Officer
Approved by	University Secretary Chief Digital and Information Officer
Schedule approved date	April 2020
Schedule effective from date	April 2020
Schedule review date	April 2022

Changes to previous version

Updating of record types and retention periods.
Reorganisation of schedule in line with new University structures.
All record types and retention periods now searchable using an online tool.

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

A Records Retention and Disposal Schedule is an essential component of an effective records management programme. It sets out an organisation's policy on retention of its business records. This provides a basis for consistent action across the entire organisation ensuring records are only retained for as long as necessary to meet operational and business needs, and to comply with legal and regulatory requirements.

This Schedule has been developed following the model retention schedule for Higher Education Institutions developed by JISC, which may be found along with supporting documents on-line at:

<https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/records-retention-management>

AIMS, PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE SCHEDULE

All University records are subject to the requirements of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 2018 as well as other legal and regulatory requirements.

The aim of this schedule is to set out the retention durations and disposal requirements for different record types taking all of these considerations into account to:

- Provide a basis for consistent action across the University – ensuring records are not disposed of prematurely
- Manage risk - avoiding the costs and potential liabilities of retaining information unnecessarily
- Minimise administrative overheads – saving space, time and money

Disposal is as important as retention. The retention durations given here are meant to also imply secure disposal of records at the end of the retention period.

The schedule applies to all staff and all records in whatever format they are held (i.e. paper or electronic).

DEFINITIONS AND CLARIFICATION

Record - information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business. These records may be in either electronic or traditional paper format.

Records Retention and Disposal Schedule - a table that describes the length of time each document or record will be retained and its final disposition (disposal or storage).

JISC - an organisation whose name has evolved from an acronym for "Joint Information Systems Committee". JISC is a United Kingdom non-departmental public body whose role is to support post-16 and higher education and research by

Records Retention and Disposal Schedule 2.5

providing leadership in the use of ICT (Information and Communications Technology) in learning, teaching, research and administration. It is funded by all the UK post-16 and higher education funding councils.

Public Records Office for Northern Ireland (PRONI) - an archival institution that holds both public and private records. It performs the functions of Public Record Office, Manuscripts Department of a National Library, County Record Office for the six counties of Northern Ireland, and holder of a large range of private records.

University e-mail - E-mail records are subject to the same laws and policies that apply to other forms of paper and electronic records. All work-related emails are subject to General Data Protection Regulation, Freedom of Information legislation and other judicial discovery, and may be legally admissible. Statements in e-mail records must not be made that could expose the University to legal liability or damage its reputation. It is the responsibility of all staff to ensure that e-mail records are retained for the appropriate period and are also deleted when appropriate in accordance with the record type as defined in this document. The acceptable and unacceptable uses of University e-mail are outlined in the document "[Acceptable Use of Information Technology Code of Practice](#)".

E-mails must not be used as a primary storage medium for University records. Appropriate storage for retention and disposal is the responsibility of the originator/recipient of the document.

Additional specific information on University policy concerning e-mail may be found on the [ISD website](#)

PROCEDURE

Differentiation is made between paper and electronic records; although the retention and disposal requirements by record type are still the same, the method of retention and disposal will be different.

The primary responsibility for: identifying record types; marking records (visibly or electronically) with type, retention and disposal dates; and actual retention and disposal lies with the originating Department/Faculty.

IMPLEMENTATION

Responsibility for implementing the schedule should be assigned to appropriate members of staff in each department and time allowed to ensure information is being disposed of in line with the appropriate retention periods.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVE

Originating departments should retain all records which they need for their own operational purposes for as long as they need them. Records should only be transferred to the University Archive when they cease to be operationally relevant.

Where it has been noted that records should be retained permanently by the University Archive, such records may eventually be deposited in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) in accordance with any future strategy agreed between the University and PRONI.

RECORD TYPES AND RETENTION PERIODS

Record types and their retention periods can be found and searched using the online tool at the link below.

<https://www.ulster.ac.uk/isd/schedule-checker/>