THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

University Archives
Irving K. Barber Learning Centre
1961 East Mall
Vancouver, BC, V6T 1Z1

Records Management Office
Phone: 604 827 3952
http://recordsmanagement.ubc.ca
records.management@ubc.ca

Records Management Manual

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Records Management Overview

What You Need to Know

- UBC Records Management Office is governed by Board of Governor's Policy GA4 - Records Management Policy

- The Records Management Office (RMO) creates the Records Retention and Disposition Schedules (RDS), approved by the University Archivist in consultation with the Office of University Counsel
- The RDS define the requisite time that units must retain records which they create, and then specify whether they must be destroyed or sent to the University Archives (UA) for permanent retention
- Units must store university records in a secure manner; Library PARC is a service provided by the RMO for long-term storage of physical records
- Units with permanently valuable records should contact the UA to arrange for transfer
- The RMO is available to provide advice on appropriate disposition of records that may not be described in the schedules

Purpose of the Records Management Manual

The purpose of this Manual is to help UBC staff understand the records management principles applicable to the information they create and receive, and to help employees manage their information in a secure and efficient manner.

The Manual will serve as a guide and starting point for unit-level records management at UBC. Employees are encouraged to use the tools being developed by the University Archives, including this manual, RDS, on-line training and the model file plans.

Benefits of Records Management

Records management will result in a number of positive benefits for units, most notably:

- Increased efficiency in finding and filing information
- Increased ability to protect sensitive and personal information
- Simplified FIPPA administration
- Better email management
- Increased useable space (on shared drives, contents systems and closets)
- Reduced costs and risk for the University
- Preserve data that documents UBC's institutional history

The cost of storing unnecessary information is considerable at UBC. Digital information, previously seen as inexpensive, also comes with ever-increasing attendant costs and challenges. By managing the structure, access and disposition of records in collaborative spaces information is easier to find and both risk and costs are reduced for the university.

Records management helps in the administration of University records by allowing employees to locate information reliably and efficiently, including simplifying FIPPA requests and other legal requests for records.

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Life Cycle of Records

Records are typically understood as existing within a life cycle: records creation, use, and finally, disposition. After creation records are used as evidence or as reference to an action or an event. Over time, the record will be referred to less frequently, until they are no longer required. At disposition, a decision is made to either destroy or archive the record series. How long units need to retain records and what happens to the records when they are no longer required is detailed in the university's retention schedules.

Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (RDS)

The UBC Records Retention and Disposition Schedules reflect the life cycle of a record, defining the length of time that specified types of records are to be retained as active records (maintenance and use) and as semi-active records (temporary storage), as well as their final disposition once they become inactive records (destruction or preservation). The schedules are determined based on the following considerations:

- Federal and provincial legislative requirements
- Administrative and operational requirements of the unit and the University
- The historical value of university records as determined by the University Archives

After University records have been retained by the creating units for the requisite time in accordance with the RDS, they must either be destroyed or sent to the University Archives for long-term retention. Units with permanently valuable records not described in the RDS should contact the Records Management Office.

Disposition

UBC automates destruction of some digital information; however, individual units must manually remove other digital records that are no longer required according to the timetables detailed in the RDS. All destruction of records must be done according to the records schedules.

Examples of digital information that is automatically destroyed include messaging in collaborative systems such as MSTeams and default Outlook folders (Trash, Junk, RSS Feeds).

Contact the Records Management Office for help in the destruction of records in either digital or paper form.

Defining Recordkeeping Responsibility

Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR)

The RDS specifies the OPR for each set of records. It is important to know what your unit has responsibility to keep and what records are retained for reference or convenience only. Convenience copies can be destroyed sooner than defined in the RDS because a more complete set of records is being retained by the OPR.

Examples include:

- Faculty Relations is responsible for faculty human resource records (HR4050). Units may have their own HR personnel files that are retained for a shorter period of time defined in the RDS (see HR4000-23).
- Enrolment Services is responsible for the official student record (ST6700) but units will retain their own student records for a shorter period of time defined in the RDS (see ST6600-12)

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- The Office of University Counsel – responsible for full set of legal files while individual units may have copies pertaining to their specific needs.

Any departments holding copies of these types of records are not the OPR and the retention period will be of shorter duration. Unless otherwise noted in the RDS, units holding **copies** of records should retain them according to the transitory records schedule.

Recordkeepers

Responsibility for maintaining and removing records from the system (physical or digital) should be identified otherwise the system cannot said to be managed.

- **Unit Recordkeeper**: A recordkeeper or recordkeepers should be identified who will be responsible for the creation of the structure based on the classification system and to oversee maintenance of the records systems.
- **Project Recordkeeper:** A recordkeeper should be assigned to time-limited projects to ensure the records supporting the project are retained according to the RDS.
- **Staff**: All staff are responsible for filing both records and key email to the shared drive structure.

Record Types

Not all information is created equal. While some records are vital and need to be protected, not all information needs to be retained long term. In fact, a great deal of the information retained at UBC is retained unnecessarily.

Transitory Records

Records or data that are needed only for a limited time in order to complete a routine action or prepare a final record (e.g. drafts) are known as transitory records. This information can be considered to have little or no value to the unit. Such information might include personal or instant messages, cc copies, rough drafts or data used to prepare a final record, routine correspondence, third party material. Employees should recognize that such material holds no evidential value and can be destroyed once the information has been read and is no longer required for operational use.

See the Transitory Information Schedule here for more detail and examples: TR1000: Transitory Records

Administrative and Operational Records

Administrative records are those records produced by activities common to all offices, such as communications or finances. Operational records are unique to specific offices or units, such as library management or academic records.

The vast majority of records at UBC are important in the short term but become less so over time, eventually resulting in them either being destroyed or preserved in the Archives. These records should not be destroyed without consulting a records schedule. Examples include: correspondence, employee records, student records and many other record types.

Archival Records

Archival records are those which preserve institutional memory at UBC. They need to be carefully reviewed before disposition. Examples include:

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- Annual Reports
- External reviews
- Board of Governors and Senate minutes
- Committee minutes at the department level
- Records documenting a significant event such as 20-year anniversary
- Other records which detail decision-making at the university

Archival records are never destroyed and are sent to the University Archives for preservation.

University Archives (UA)

Role of the Archives

As stated in Board of Governors Policy GA5, the purpose of the University Archives is to:

- Serve as the University's corporate memory by preserving and protecting its permanently valuable records
- Provide the information necessary to establish continuity for future decision-making and meet institutional accountability requirements
- Coordinate the institutional records management program
- Augment corporate memory by acquiring non-corporate records of the University such as personal papers of faculty and staff
- Disseminate information about the development of the institution
- Facilitate academic research through the preparation of research tools and provision of reference services

Records Management relationship to Archives

The RMO is a program within the UA which facilitates the efficient management of university records by developing and coordinating an institutional records management program. Services provided by the RMO include:

- Tools to determine retention periods, such as the RDS and Model File Plans
- Advice and guidance concerning records management
- In-office records management services (fee for service)

Archival Records Guideline

The Archival Records RMO Guideline outlines records within units at UBC and the broader campus community that may be archival.

- UA is interested in the primary or original copy of records. Duplicate material and material created by other units are not generally considered archival. Circulation copies and supporting papers are most often not required.
- Records of minor committees whose main minutes/findings/reports are summarized at a higher level in the administrative hierarchy are not required to be retained permanently.
- Archival retention decisions should be made at the series level – for example, a series of departmental minutes, and not individual minutes of particular meetings.

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- Retention decisions for the majority of records will be governed by the University's retention schedules; however, records created pre-2000 may be of interest to the Archives – please consult before destroying.

Records Storage

The RMO provides off-site fee-for-service storage at Library Preservation & Archives Centre, (L-PARC). Valuable records which require preservation can be stored here at a low cost and in proper conditions. Contact Library Records Management at records.management@ubc.ca for more information on setting up an account.

Digital Records and Email

Digital records are the primary record of transaction at the University. This includes born-digital material, digitized hard copies, and records created via email. The following section provides practical advice in the management of digital records.

Folder Structure / Organization

The organization of all records systems, paper or digital, should mirror each other. Organization should be based on the principles of the RDS. The principles are reflected in the UBC Model File Plans, which should be used as a starting point wherever possible to organize shared drives and/or other content management systems such as MS Teams.

Folder structure should be kept as flat as possible, limiting to two or three levels. Top-level folders are based generally on functional blocks (such as Administration), divided into specific functions below (e.g. Staff Meetings). Sub-folders below this level will be determined by the unique activity of each unit, and are found at the secondary level in the RDS. Folders and sub-folders should be named according to the standards outlined in the Electronic Records Naming Conventions.

In an email mailbox, folders and tags should also be used to manage information according to functions reflected in the RDS.

Email

Use the same principles for creating and managing email records as you would for any other University record. Email Best Practices and Outlook Training Videos on the RMO website provide guidance on how to organize and manage university email accounts.

Digital Records Checklist

- Define recordkeeping responsibilities for each recordkeeping area (e.g. shared drives, MS Teams site, other content systems)
- Document all areas where university records are kept
- Set up a folder structure according to the Model File Plans or other digital governance documentation; keep as flat as possible
- Document access roles to folder structures as described in the Model File Plans
- Dispose of digital records regularly according to the RDS
- Store substantive emails in a central location
- Remove transitory emails regularly or automate destruction by setting up Outlook rules

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Guidelines

The RMO has developed a number of resources to help users manage their records and information. These can all be found on the RMO's Policies, Guidelines, Best Practices and Standards page.

- **Model File plans** – help units structure their content systems. Folder structures are designed to work in conjunction with the RDS to help make information management efficient and effective
- **Digitization Standard** – direction for digital imaging to ensure digitized records are authentic, reliable, and possess quality and integrity
- **E-Records Naming Conventions** – help units to name documents consistently and efficiently, as well as organize shared drives and content management systems
- **MS Teams Best Practices** – guidelines and strategies for collaboration in Teams while maintaining proper recordkeeping standards
- **OneDrive Best Practices** – guidance on usage and storage in personal OneDrive accounts
- **Outlook Functionality** – a series of one-pagers and videos to assist in common functionality as well as setting up rules and automating destruction

The RMO has produced documents regarding security of digital and paper records:

- **Remote Work Records Security** – guidelines regarding responsibility toward, access, and sharing of records while working remotely
- **Security of Paper Records** – guidance on how to manage the University's paper records in a secure manner

Training

The RMO provides online training modules to help improve records management practices and standards. There are two courses with four modules each offered. Module one is an introduction to key concepts and module two is for more advanced records management concepts.

Associated Standards

- UBC Information Security Standards: include standards regarding destruction of electronic information, sharing electronic information, security classification, and more.

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA): Freedom of Information (FOI) requests administered by the Office of University Counsel. For more information, see https://universitycounsel.ubc.ca/subject-areas/access-and-privacy-general/access-to-information/.
- Risk Management: See UBC Safety & Risk Services: Privacy & Information Security (PRISM) for more information.

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Active Records	Records which are required and referred to regularly for current use, and which need to be readily accessible to users.
Administrative Records	Records common to the work of all units at the University, such as communications or finances.
Archival Records	Records which are considered by the University Archives to have enduring value as a historic record of the university.
Destruction	The process of eliminating or deleting Records beyond any possible reconstruction.
Digital Records	Records made or received and set aside as evidence of a unit's activities, by means of electronic or computer equipment.
Disposition	A range of processes associated with implementing Records retention, destruction, or transfer decisions.
FIPPA	The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.B.C. 1996.
Inactive Records	Records which are no longer required to carry out the functions for which they were created.
Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR)	Office or offices that are responsible for holding the complete record and who approve disposition orders.
Operational Records	Records unique to a specific unit, department or office.
Permanently valuable records	Records that because of their administrative, financial, legal, operational, cultural, social, or scientific value warrant permanent retention. Permanently Valuable Records include, but are not limited to: unit minutes and reports, budgets, records of special projects or studies, unit reviews, official correspondence of the unit head, and any surviving documentation of a unit's origins.

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Personally Identifiable Information (PII)	Information that allows the identity of an individual to be reasonable inferred (e.g. home address, phone, email, grades, SIN).
Preservation	The processes and operations involved in ensuring the technical and intellectual survival of authentic Records through time.
Record	Recorded information, regardless of medium or characteristics, which the University creates, receives, or maintains in connection with the conduct of the University's affairs.
Recordkeeper	The person or persons who have been defined by the unit, or group to ensure the shared drives or MS Teams site is structured according to the agreed-upon system.
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.
Records Retention and Disposition Schedule	A control document that describes records at a series level, indicates the length of time each series should be retained prior to final disposition, and the final disposition of each series. This document serves as the legal authorization for the disposal of public documents.
Semi-Active Records	"Records that are seldom (less than 12 times per year) used in day-to-day operations and that are appropriate for off-site storage." (SAA Glossary) Such records may include financial records which, while not needed for the conduct of current business, may be required as evidence in the future, and are usually required to be retained for a set time period. An example of this would be taxation records.
Substantive Records	Written evidence that an action did, or did not, happen. Transactional records, decisions and policies.

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Transitory Records	Records or data of temporary usefulness needed only for a limited time in order to complete a routine action or prepare a final record.

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