

Retention and Disposal Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) The Purpose of this Procedure is to identify responsibilities and actions for retention and disposal of University Records and information in accordance with the [Records and Information Management Policy](#).

Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to all Macquarie University staff and all University Records.

Background

(3) The [State Records Act 1998](#) provides a number of means to lawfully dispose of State records. Generally this is through the [retention and disposal authorities](#) issued by State Records NSW. Another means is in accordance with the Normal Administrative Practice provisions of the [State Records Act 1998](#) which allow for the disposal of certain types of facilitative and duplicate records. Please see Schedule 2 of the [State Records Regulation 2024](#) for more information on what constitutes Normal Administrative Practice in a public office.

Section 2 - Policy

(4) Refer to the [Records and Information Management Policy](#).

Section 3 - Procedures

Responsibilities and Required Actions

Records Retention and Disposal Program

(5) The Records and Archives Manager will:

- a. maintain and make available the [Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#);
- b. advise on the relevant [retention and disposal authorities](#) issued by State Records NSW;
- c. advise on its application to Faculty, Office and other business units' Records;
- d. accept Faculty, Office and other business units' Records for transfer to Vital Records or Archives; and
- e. advise on appropriate storage mechanisms for both hard copy and digital Records.

(6) Faculties, Offices and other business units must:

- a. determine, in consultation with the Records and Archives Manager, disposal class and retention requirements for all University Records within the organisational area;
- b. implement regular Records and information disposal programs, with reference to [Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#) and with consultation with Archives and Records for the University Records and information for which they have responsibility;

- c. identify Records and information no longer required for daily administrative use as soon as possible. Some Records can be destroyed immediately as part of Normal Administrative Practice;
- d. apply the necessary retention and disposal action;
- e. store semi-active Records as necessary;
- f. identify and transfer permanent Records as necessary to Archives and Records; and
- g. only destroy Records in line with the relevant Records Retention and Disposal Authority/[Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#) and after consultation with the Records and Archives Manager.

(7) If staff cannot identify the appropriate disposal class in [Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#) or are unsure how to apply the Guide, they must consult the Records and Archives Manager through ask.memory@mq.edu.au.

Normal Administrative Practice

(8) Normal Administrative Practice (NAP) is a process that allows Faculty, Offices, and business units to destroy certain types of low-value and short-term information in the normal course of business. Business information that is not needed to document the University's business can be destroyed in accordance with a NAP without formal permission.

(9) The basis for Normal Administrative Practice is the [State Records Regulation 2024](#).

(10) The [State Records Regulation 2024](#) prescribes guidelines on what constitutes Normal Administrative Practice in a public office in relation to disposal of:

- a. drafts;
- b. working papers and records;
- c. duplicates of records;
- d. computer support records;
- e. facilitating instructions records;
- f. outgoing correspondence;
- g. messages (in electronic format);
- h. facsimiles;
- i. stationery; and
- j. solicited and unsolicited advertising material.

(11) For all the records listed above, the [State Records Regulation 2024](#) prescribes guidelines for the retention of:

- a. drafts that must not be disposed of;
- b. working papers and records that must not be disposed of;
- c. duplicates that must not be disposed of;
- d. computer support records that must not be disposed of;
- e. facilitating instructions that must not be disposed of;
- f. requirements in relation to outgoing correspondence; and
- g. messages that must not be disposed of.

(12) Staff should consult the Records and Archives Manager when preparing for Normal Administrative Practice.

Intermediate Storage

(13) Faculties/Offices and other business units are responsible for making arrangements for storing temporary University Records and information which are not needed for daily use. Archives and Records can advise on off-site

Record storage options.

Permanent Records

(14) Archives and Records are responsible for arranging the storage of permanent University Records. Where the Faculty/Office or business unit identifies permanent Records that are no longer in use, they must contact Archives and Records staff to arrange transfer to University Archives.

Destruction

(15) University Records must not be removed or destroyed except in accordance with the NAP, the [Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#), or the relevant disposal authority issued under the [State Records Act 1998](#).

(16) Staff must be aware of pending legal actions and legislative and other provision outside the [Appendix 1 Records Retention Guide](#) which will affect decisions about Records destruction (refer to the [Records and Information Management Policy](#)).

(17) Under the [State Records Act 1998](#), a Litigation Hold (or legal hold) is a mandatory instruction to suspend the destruction of records when a public office is aware of possible legal action, such as lawsuits, investigations, or Freedom of Information (GIPA) requests. This ensures evidence is protected from loss or destruction.

(18) Faculties/Offices and other business units must not destroy hard copy originals that have been digitised or scanned without first consulting Archives and Records, to ensure that all State Records requirements for quality control and retention of hard copy source Records are met.

Staff Leaving Their Position

(19) When a staff member leaves their position, they must make arrangements for the ongoing custody of Records for which they were responsible. Departing staff must formally hand over all business records—including physical files, electronic documents, and emails to their manager. This includes ensuring Records are left accessible to others and carrying out Records disposal so that Records which are no longer required have been properly stored or destroyed.

Section 4 - Guidelines

(20) Nil.

Section 5 - Definitions

(21) The following definitions apply for the purposes of this Procedure:

- a. Archive means a record that has continuing value but is no longer required for current use. This includes permanent university and state archives.
- b. Litigation Hold is also called a 'legal hold' or 'preservation order' – a legal hold is made to prevent spoliation and keep evidence in its original condition. Freedom of Information requests, health records requests, privacy requests, subpoenas, upcoming and ongoing cases would freeze a records disposal process for the records identified in the information access requests or the legal documents.
- c. Records means 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. (AS ISO 15489 Part 1 Clause 3.15). Any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means (the [State Records Act 1998](#)).
- d. Retention and Disposal Authority means the documents authorised by [State Archives and Records Authority of](#)

[NSW](#) that set out appropriate retention periods for classes of Records.

- e. [State Archives and Records Authority of NSW](#) (also known as 'State Records NSW') means the NSW State Government's Archives and Records management authority. It manages the NSW State Archives collection and sets the rules and provides guidance on the management of official Records.
- f. University means Macquarie University and where the context permits includes any one or more of the following:
 - i. its controlled entities;
 - ii. any institution affiliated with Macquarie University or any of its controlled entities;
 - iii. any college; and
 - iv. any educational institution located on the premises of the University.
- g. Vital Record means a record that is essential for the ongoing business of the university, without which the University could not continue to function effectively or protect its interests. These include, but are not limited to, contracts and associated variations, deeds, memoranda of understanding, licences, evidence of ownership of physical and intellectual property, and other records documenting the legal authority or rights of the University.

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