

ask the experts >>>

Q: How should I destroy confidential paper records?

A: Use confidential destruction bins

The University has a contract for the provision of secure destruction services. The commercial company that supplies and removes destruction bins has been assessed by both Records Services and Property and Campus Services and complies with Public Record Office Victoria requirements for destruction services. You can find more information and order bins by contacting Property and Campus Services at:

http://www.pcs.unimelb.edu.au/services/disposal/confidential_waste

Any questions?

Records Services staff can provide advice about records management

Contact us on ext. 43534 or records-services@unimelb.edu.au

University records – well managed, used and online



The University of Melbourne
Records Services

Records
Services

A service for all University staff

www.unimelb.edu.au/records

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in this issue >>>

- p1 Records Management and You
- p2 Creating records
- p2 Relocating?
- p2 Terminology corner
- p3 Policy guidance
- p3 Privacy and records
- p4 Ask the experts



Issue One
June 2012

Records Management at the University of Melbourne

In the next issue

Continuous improvement programs

Learn how you can assess the current state of records management in your division and take steps to improve practice to support effective business and better compliance

on the record

Basic records management

Records need to be:

- Created
- Identifiable and accessible
- Secured when appropriate
- Managed correctly
- Stored in ways that stop them deteriorating
- Kept for the right amount of time
- Destroyed completely and securely when legally permitted

People, systems and processes are fundamental to good records management.

Records management and you

The University, as a public agency in Victoria, is subject to the Public Records Act 1973. This means that the University and its employees must comply with mandatory standards about records management. Key to compliance is understanding and taking responsibility for records management at all levels.

What does this mean for your daily work? And how can you ensure you are meeting your obligations?

Records support our daily work by providing evidence of decisions and actions. They can support subsequent decision making, reduce risk, protect our reputation, and demonstrate accountability for the University's actions.

To ensure the University has the records it needs and to meet mandatory standards you must:

1. **Create full and accurate records** of all work-related decisions and activities.
2. **Ensure records include information to allow others to easily find and interpret them**
3. **Consider recordkeeping requirements** when planning initiatives, projects and activities
4. **Ensure records are captured** according to University procedures and using appropriate systems (eg saved in the corporate electronic records management

system TRIM, a business system, or an organised network drive).

5. **Ensure safety and security of records** and the information they contain with good storage

Every university staff member is responsible for managing records

arrangements and access controls

6. **Consider the sensitivity of information** contained in records and ensure that access to personal, sensitive or confidential information is authorised

7. **Only destroy records when legally permitted.**

Authorisation can be found in the University's Records Retention and Disposal Authority or consult with records management staff.

8. **Refer to and use University and local records management policies and procedures.** Look for improvements in records management practices that will support a more efficient and effective workplace.



Creating records

Records need to be created as evidence of business. This allows others to understand why decisions were made – and, importantly, to defend those decisions if and when they are challenged.

Creating records needs to be comprehensive and contemporaneous – that is, you need to make sure that you are making records about everything that is important, and that you are doing it at the same time as the decision or the action. Making

records after the event often means that the record is not as accurate as it should be, simply because people’s memories can fade or significant details can be missed .

As soon as records are created they need to be organised and managed so that their authenticity and value as evidence is maintained. Managing records well from the beginning also means that they can be so that they can be retrieved when required.



Policy Guidance

Policies and procedures are the foundation for the ‘why’ and ‘how’ of records management. The set of policies and procedures for records management have been revised to meet new compliance standards from the Public Record Office Victoria and to simplify their presentation in line with University requirements.



Policy and procedures cover:

- Responsibility at the individual, local and divisional level
- Creating, organising and keeping records in enterprise or other appropriate systems
- Requirements for classifying records
- Legal requirements about how long records must be kept and under what conditions they can be destroyed
- Information security and access mechanisms
- Training, procedures and local records coordinators

Policy and procedures support our compliance with records law and articulate the University’s aspiration to implement best practice recordkeeping.

Policy documents about records management and related areas – *University Archives* and *Privacy* – can be found in the Melbourne Policy Library at www.policy.unimelb.edu.au



terminology corner

What is a record?

The Public Record Office Victoria defines a record as: information created, sent and received by an employee in the course of carrying out the business of the agency, including electronic documents, emails, websites, audio-visual records, databases and system-generated records, as well as physical documents and files.

A University typically has a great variety of records including student records, research data and records, records of teaching and learning activities, financial and human resources records, legal contracts and agreements, records of committees and similar decision making bodies, and many more. Some records are created and managed in business systems like ISIS or Themis. Others must be organised in a records system.

Records are evidence. They are used when you want to find out:

- when, where or why something happened, or
- how an issue was dealt with on a previous occasion

Records support efficient decision making, reduce risk, help us prove and account for our actions, and support the University’s reputation.

Relocating?

Moving can be stressful.

Make sure your relocation is as stress-free and efficient as possible by legally disposing of records which are due for destruction before you call the moving van.

Records Services staff can advise about planning a move, disposal programs and storage options but what can be achieved is often dictated by the time available. Plan your move early – get in touch with us for advice

Key concepts

Privacy and Records

Privacy is important to all of us and many University records hold information of a personal or private nature.

In Victoria the Information Privacy Act and Health Records Act are in place to ensure that personal information is managed properly. In some instances the University must also comply with Commonwealth Privacy laws.

The University has appointed a Privacy Officer. In addition, there is a Privacy Policy and guidelines for University staff about how personal information is to be managed.

Privacy legislation and University guidelines explain how information must be collected, used, managed and disclosed in order to ensure privacy. Being aware of how to manage information in the following areas will help you to meet privacy obligations:

Collection of personal information

Use and disclosure

Accuracy of information

Security of information

Openness in dealing with information

Access and requesting corrections

Use of identifying numbers and codes

The option of anonymity

Sensitive information

Transfer of information outside Victoria

Transfer of information to other health providers

More information about privacy can be found on the University’s privacy website at <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/privacy/>

Or from the Office of the Victorian Privacy Commissioner <http://www.privacy.vic.gov.au>

