

Records Management Policy

1 Introduction

Brunel University is dependent on its records to operate efficiently and account for its actions. This policy defines a structure for Brunel University to ensure adequate records are maintained, managed and controlled effectively and at best value, commensurate with legal, operational and information needs.

Brunel University will manage the creation, capture, filing, retrieval and disposal of all academic and non-academic records of the University with the development and implementation of a records management programme as outlined in the Information Strategy.

A university record is any recorded information in all formats and media that the university creates, captures, collects, receives or uses to initiate, conduct or complete a university activity including any correspondence, map, drawing, photograph, sound recording, electronic mail and attachments or any other machine readable document that provide evidence of its transactions and activities.

All records whether paper or electronic created by Brunel University are records of the University. None may be destroyed except in accordance with the University Records and Disposal Policy and its associated schedules.

1.1 Status of this policy

It is a condition of employment that employees will abide by the rules and policies made by the University. Failure to follow this policy may therefore result in disciplinary proceedings.

2 Policy

This Policy will enable good records management practice to ensure that the University:

- creates and captures authentic and reliable records in all formats, to demonstrate evidence, accountability and information about its decisions and activities,
- maintains securely and preserves access to those records as long as they are required to support University operations,
- confidentially destroys those records as soon as they are no longer required,
- meets legal record-keeping requirements, including the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Environment Information Regulations,
- identifies and preserves in the University Archive, those records deemed worthy of permanent preservation
- protects vital records, which the University needs in order to function effectively.

The Policy applies to all records both paper and electronic created, received and maintained by all staff.

The Policy has been developed with other University Policies in mind, and with reference to the international Records Management standard (ISO 15489:2001) and the Lord Chancellor's revised Code of Practice on the Management of Records under section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. It will be subject to any changes in Government legislation, the University Strategy and developments in records management standards and practice. This Policy will be approved by the Strategic Planning and Review Committee on behalf of Council.

3 Framework

3.1 Implementation

The Policy is realised by the development of the following:

- a retention schedule to regulate how long records are retained by the University,
- a vital records policy to protect those records that are essential to the smooth operation of the University,
- a records centre to house those administrative records that need to be retained beyond the immediate operational needs, in a cost-effective manner but can still be retrieved when necessary,
- a classification scheme so records can be accessed efficiently,

- a disposal policy to show the procedures for destroying records so they are disposed of in a consistent manner across the University, by confidential shredding, with documented authorisation,
- an archive policy to identify and preserve records which are of historical interest to the University.

3.2 Guidance to University Staff

The Archives and Records Management Team will provide good practice guidelines via the web pages and printed relating to all aspects of records management. In particular guidelines relating to:

- a retention schedule to show staff how long to keep records in their care so they are not retained longer than is necessary or destroyed before they should be,
- naming records consistently and clearly, with simple version control to enable information to be located easily when required,
- transferring records to the records centre, retrieving transferred records and disposing of them when they are no longer needed.

The Archives and Records Management Team will develop and implement, with the help of appropriate staff and resources, a training programme for all members of staff to understand and use the methods for managing information, which are developed as part of this Policy.

4 Responsibilities

The Vice Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring that records are managed responsibly within the University.

The Head of Archives and University Records Management is responsible for developing the Records Management Policy with Senior Managers, and will be responsible for promoting, implementation, maintaining and monitoring records management in conjunction with academic and non-academic departments.

Heads of Schools and Services are responsible for ensuring the Records Management Policy is implemented in their individual areas. They may nominate local representatives to liaise with the Head of Archives and Records Management about their records.

The Records Manager with the assistance of Heads of Schools and Departments or their nominated representative will:

- ensure records are held on the most appropriate medium for the task they perform,

- transfer corporate records to the Records Centre,
- identify those records that are vital to the operation of the University, and ensure they are preserved appropriately,
- review records that have reached their retention period,
- ensure appropriate disposal takes place with appropriate documentation of those records that have reached the end of their retention period,
- ensure records of historical interest are transferred to the University Archive.

It is responsibility of all staff to ensure they keep appropriate records of their work for the University and manage those records in keeping with this policy and any guidance subsequently produced by the Archives and Records Management Team. In particular all employees will be responsible

- for creating and maintaining records in relation to their work that are authentic and reliable,
- classifying those records to ensure that meaningful titles and consistent reference codes are adopted,
- maintaining those records securely for as long as they are required in accordance with the retention schedule,
- ensuring that documents containing personal data or confidential information about the University are securely shredded in accordance with the University's Confidential Disposal Policy.

5 Related policies & guidance

5.1 Related policies

This policy has been formulated with the following University policies in mind:

- Data Protection Policy and procedural documents:
<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/administration/infoaccess/dataprot/policies>
- FOI policy and procedural documents:
<http://www.brunel.ac.uk/about/administration/infoaccess/freeinfo>
- Electronic mail policy:
<https://moss.brunel.ac.uk/SiteDirectory/computercentre/Documents/Policies/mailpol.pdf>
(for internal staff only)

- Archive Policy: <http://www.brunel.ac.uk/services/archives-management/university-archive-policy>

5.2 Records management guidance

The following information is available from the Records Management Team via archivesandrecords@brunel.ac.uk:

- Retention and disposal policy and associated schedules
- Using the Records Centre
- Secure documentation and confidential material.