

Records Management Guidance

Every day Estates creates more records that need to be managed in an appropriate manner either on paper or electronically. Records Management aims to guide the creation, distribution, filing, retention, storage and disposal of records in order to save necessary information that is visible to all and reduce storage costs.

There are three basic types of information created:

1. Legal: includes estate title, leasehold and other contract documentation relating to the building and its surrounding land
2. Policy: includes surveys, evaluation reports and policy studies
3. Administrative: particularly relevant to the maintenance, repair and reconstruction of buildings. They comprise information such as survey drawings, 'as built' drawings and records of services, historical narratives and descriptions, photographs, maintenance records, inventories of plant, equipment and furnishings, and possibly archaeological information about the site and building

Why do I need Records Management?

Good management of estates records will ensure that the University:

- complies with legislation ([Data Protection Act and Freedom of information Act 1998](#))
- can provide evidence of what was done and why.
- is able to minimise the risk of not being able to produce records (i.e. in a legal case)
- will know what records it has and where they are
- can make better use of staff time
- can continue business following a disaster
- is more effective and efficient
- can save on storage costs and space
- is able to improve control of valuable information resources

Who is responsible for Records Management?

All Estates staff who create receive and use records have records management responsibilities. Looking after Estates' records is part of the daily job and, if done properly, will assist staff in their work, ensure compliance and reduce unnecessary storage.

Advice and guidance for Estates Staff

1. Find out what paper records you or your department holds.
 - Carry out a survey of all storage areas overseen by your office and also all the cabinets and desks
 - Look at your servers and find out what documents are held on your PCs and what has been burnt onto CDs
2. Organising Electronic Records
 - Apply the Estates Retention and Disposal Schedule in the same way as you would to your paper records
 - Ensure that your shared drives are well organised – comply with current Estates file naming convention.
 - Avoid meaningless titles such as “John’s files” or “miscellaneous/general.”
 - Make sure that you save records where they can be accessed by your team if you are absent from the office – store them on the shared drive
3. Apply the [Estates Record Retention Schedule](#)
 - This has been created based on [JISC Higher Education Retention Schedule](#) compiled by the Joint Information Systems Committee and The National Archives-Buildings
 - ERRS lists every type of record Estates creates and/or holds and recommends how long the records should be kept for
 - Establishing a regular (perhaps annual) review against the ERRS will help to ensure consistent and timely disposal

[Keeping emails as records](#)

[Checklist for identifying a record](#)

[Guide to keeping records in electronic form only](#)

[Disposal and Retention Checklist](#)

Estates Policy and Procedure

[Estates Records Management Procedure](#)

[Estates Records Retention Schedule](#)

Further advice, guidance and training for all staff is available from [Estates Records Management](#) to ensure that records are managed and maintained in accordance with best practice.

Please contact [Estates Property & Asset Information Team](#) if you require advice, assistance or guidance on any other aspect of records management.