How to use the University Records Retention Schedule (RRS)

What is the Records Retention Schedule (RRS)?

The RRS is a continually evolving document and a key component in the management of the lifecycle of records (creation, receipt, maintenance, use, and disposition). The RRS defines the duration of time for which different records should be retained at the University. The RRS is published on the University’s internet pages and transparently sets out the practices the University follows, or is working towards, in managing records in line with their retention periods. The RRS helps the University demonstrate compliance with its statutory, regulatory, and other information management obligations (E.g. GDPR [Storage Limitation Principle]; Freedom of Information Act 2000 [Section 46 Code]). The RRS helps with the efficient use of University resources for the storage of records and identifies records with historic research value for preservation at the University’s Modern Records Centre (MRC).

Why is the University RRS such a lengthy document?

The University is a large and complex organisation and whilst there is overlap between Departments in relation to the records they regularly work with there are also many types of record which are unique to specific areas of the University. The University RRS is lengthy because it is a collection of the main records the University’s many Departments works with. However when the RRS is thought about in terms of its individual sections, which each relates to a Department or a specific function, then these are short and on average contain only 19 entries, 7 different retention periods and span just 2 pages.

How do I search the RRS?

One way of searching the RRS is to review the hyperlinked contents pages at the beginning of the document to see if there is a section that relates to the records you are looking for. A second approach is to press both ‘CTRL and F’ on your keyboard and type in a keyword (in terms of a description of a record you are trying to locate) in the search/navigation window that appears.

I can’t find an entry for the records I work with in the RRS what should I do?

If you cannot find the records you work with in the RRS then please contact: RecordsManagement@warwick.ac.uk If you need to put together a new entry for the RRS to cover the records you work with then there is a range of guidance to help you (alongside meeting with the Records Management Team). The University Records Management webpage contains guidance on: retention scheduling at Warwick (and accompanying quick guide) as well as separate guidance on the procedure to follow when updating the RRS (including a template for a new RRS entry). N.B The RRS is not set in a tablet of stone and retention periods need to be revised as functions and processes change.

Can I make a version of the RRS that shows just the records my Department works with?

It is an option to create a local copy of the RRS with just the records you work with. The local RRS must be consistent with the University RRS and contain the following line ‘This document is an excerpt taken from the University RRS. Any changes made to this local RRS must first be reflected in the University RRS’. In a hypothetical situation where changes need to be made to the local RRS then first contact RecordsManagement@warwick.ac.uk to ensure these are consistent with the University RRS. This approach is in line with the University’s Records Management Policy which establishes the University RRS as the authoritative version of record retention practices at Warwick.