



**The Open University  
Information and Records Management Policy**

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Signed off by Fraser Woodburn, University Secretary

## 1. Purpose

- ▶ To provide a framework for the management of information and records across the University
- ▶ To uphold the University's statutory and legal obligations
- ▶ To support the University's strategic direction and intent to deliver business efficiencies, reduce costs and improve effectiveness.
- ▶ To ensure that information to support decision making and transparency is available and usable.
- ▶ To emphasise the importance of information and records management practice to the University's business, as information is an asset essential to the University's work

## 2. Scope

The Information and Records management policy is owned by the Information & Records Management Team based in Library Services and applies to all staff employed by The Open University who create, use or own Open University business information and records.

All information or records that are created during, or in support of University business – regardless of format, media, or location – fall within the scope of this policy. This includes content which may be considered ephemeral such as emails, social media interactions and content in databases and business systems. It also includes content which is used or maintained by third parties under contract.

## 3. Policy objectives

To ensure:

- ▶ All key OU information and records are organised and managed in appropriate university systems
- ▶ Information is available to support decision making and accountability
- ▶ Vital records are identified and protected against loss and destruction
- ▶ The authenticity and reliability of records as an aid to accountability
- ▶ Information and records are secured appropriately and made available to those who need them
- ▶ Information and records are destroyed appropriately in line with business and legal or regulatory obligations. Retention periods are set out in the university retention schedule
- ▶ Information and records are managed in compliance with all legal and statutory obligations
- ▶ University systems have functionality to support appropriate management of information and records
- ▶ Cost savings and efficiencies are achieved through best practice and automation where appropriate

## 4. Legislative, standards and regulatory framework

The Information and Records Management programme will follow best practice as specified by ISO 15489 and the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the management of records under Freedom of Information (<http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/information-access-rights/foi/foi-section-46-code-of-practice.pdf>).

The policy will facilitate compliance with the Data Protection Act ([http://ico.org.uk/for\\_organisations/data\\_protection](http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/data_protection)), the Freedom of Information Act ([http://ico.org.uk/for\\_organisations/freedom\\_of\\_information](http://ico.org.uk/for_organisations/freedom_of_information)), and those rules required by HEFCE and other national funding bodies for Higher Education. It will also support compliance with legislation relating to specific areas of University business, e.g. Health and Safety, Finance, and Human Resources Management.

## 5. Roles and responsibilities

In order to achieve an integrated approach to information and records management throughout the University, it is important that individual, unit, and University-wide roles and responsibilities are clearly defined.

This section defines these roles and should be read alongside the information guidelines and responsibilities document (currently being revised) which specifies those senior roles that have overall responsibility for categories of data within the University.

The **University Secretary** is responsible for the effective governance of the University as a corporate institution. The University Secretary approves the Information and Records Management Policy and informs business priorities.

The **Director of Library Services** is the strategic accountable officer for University Records Management.

The Information & Records Management Team based in Library Services:

- ▶ Are responsible for developing policy and guidance for good information and records management practice and compliance within the University.
- ▶ Provide advice, guidance, training and tools to facilitate best practice
- ▶ Maintain a retention schedule for the management and destruction of university information/records
- ▶ Maintain a classification scheme/folder structure to provide context to information
- ▶ Maintain an Information Asset Register in collaboration with IT and USO
- ▶ Define information and records management functionality for appropriate OU systems
- ▶ Monitor Information and Records Management Policy compliance across the organisation
- ▶ Support Records Management Liaison Officers with compliance in their respective areas
- ▶ Manage the records storage service, and act as the custodian for physical records in storage which no longer have an active owner
- ▶ May audit staff compliance with the policy

### Senior accountable officer:

- ▶ Have overall accountability for Information and Records Management in their individual unit, including compliance reviews
- ▶ Are expected to be at Dean, Director, or Senior Faculty Administrator level
- ▶ Ensure that all information owned or maintained by the unit is created, managed, and destroyed appropriately, according to best practice guidance
- ▶ May delegate responsibility for specific systems or information to individuals
- ▶ Ensure information and records management is included as part of the induction of new staff in their area
- ▶ Ensure that all information is handed over to a suitable successor, e.g. if the business activity is taken over by another member of staff or part of the organisation, becomes defunct, or the information is transferred to an archive.

### Records Management Liaison Officer (RMLO)

- ▶ Provide a first point of contact for information or records management queries from unit colleagues
- ▶ Disseminate good practice policy and guidance within the unit under the direction and guidance of the University Records Manager and Information Manager
- ▶ Champion best practice in the unit
- ▶ Co-ordinate compliance reviews
- ▶ Will be closely associated with the Data Protection Liaison Officer and Information Security Liaison Officer roles in their unit

### All staff

All staff including those in the roles above are expected to:

- ▶ Take personal responsibility for the information they create, capture or maintain and treat it as a corporate asset
- ▶ Create accurate and usable information which documents actions taken and decisions made
- ▶ Store information in appropriate OU supported systems, and manage it according to best practice and unit procedures
- ▶ Ensure information they maintain is accessible to those who need it
- ▶ Regularly dispose of redundant information appropriately in line with business requirements and the university retention schedule
- ▶ Comply with statutory and regulatory requirements under the guidance of the RMLO/University Records Manager

## 6. Information and records management support

Information to support these roles and responsibilities can be found on the Information and Records Management pages of the Library Services intranet site - <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/library/main/information-management-services>

## 7. Policy review

The policy will be reviewed every three years by the Information & Records Management Team based in Library Services to ensure that it conforms to current legislation and business requirements.

The results of the review will be submitted to the University Secretary, or to a relevant committee. This is in accordance with the Lord Chancellor's code of practice on the Management of Records under Freedom of Information.

## 8. Related policies

- ▶ Data protection - <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/governance/data-protection/>
- ▶ Freedom of Information - <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/governance/freedom-of-information/>
- ▶ IT Information security - <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/it/information-security/>
- ▶ OU Retention Schedule - <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/library/main/information-management-services/retention-schedule>
- ▶ Research Data Management – appendix 1 of <http://intranet.open.ac.uk/research-school/strategy-info-governance/docs/CoPamendedJuly2013mergedwithappendix-forintranetupdatedFeb2014.pdf>

## 9. Further information and contact

For information about Information and Records Management can be found at <http://intranet6.open.ac.uk/library/main/information-management-services>

Any queries regarding this policy or for information management in general should be forwarded to [Library-Info-Management@open.ac.uk](mailto:Library-Info-Management@open.ac.uk)

## Document History

<u>Date</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Author / Modified</u>
April 2014	3.0	Policy reviewed with comments/amendments	David Turpie
May 2014	3.2	Suggested comments/amendments	Samantha Mansfield
10/06/2014	4.0	Amendments/suggestions agreed	David Turpie, Samantha Mansfield, Elizabeth Mallett
11/06/2014	4.1	Amendments following suggestions made by Nicky Whitsed, Directory of Library Services	David Turpie, Elizabeth Mallett
27/06/2014	5.0	Signed off by Fraser Woodburn, University Secretary	David Turpie

