



Writtle
University
College

Records Retention Policy

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Policy Owner	Department
University College Secretary	Professional Support
Version Number	Date drafted/Date of review
2.0	1 August 2017
Date Equality Impact Assessed	Has Prevent been considered (see Policies Guidance if unsure)
1 March 2015	Yes
Reviewed and Approved by (see Policies Guidance for approval process)	Date
SMT ICC P&R	15 September 2017 (minor amends) 3 June 2015 12 June 2015
Access (tick as appropriate)	
Public access (website) <input type="checkbox"/> And/Or Internal access (MyWi) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Staff and Student access <input type="checkbox"/> Or Staff access only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Policy Overview and Scope

Purpose

Writtle University College is committed to creating, managing and disposing of its academic and non-academic records effectively in order to document its operations efficiently and openly, as well as help to meet its accountability requirements and community expectations.

Writtle University College's Record Retention Policy and Retention Schedule are a formalisation of the University College's approach towards the creation, filing, retrieval and disposal of its records.

Scope

The policies are based on the understanding that all Writtle University College employees are responsible for creating and maintaining authentic and reliable records in relation to their work.

Within the context of this policy statement, "records" refers to all documents created, received or maintained by Writtle University College in the course of carrying out its corporate functions. These documents may be held in electronic or hard copy format.

Basic Principles

The Retention Policy and Retention Schedule are built on the premise that effective creation, control and disposal of records brings administrative and financial benefits to Writtle University College, while promoting good practice in complying with legal obligations, particularly those established by Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

Effective management of records and other information brings the following benefits:

- Promotes business efficiency by ensuring that authoritative information about past activities can be retrieved, used and relied upon in current business;
 - Supports compliance with other legislation which requires records and information to be kept, controlled and accessible, such as the Data Protection Act 1998, employment legislation and health and safety legislation;
 - Improves accountability, enabling compliance with legislation and other rules and requirements to be demonstrated to those with a right to audit or otherwise investigate Writtle University College and its actions;
 - Enables protection of the rights and interests of Writtle University College, its staff and its stakeholders;
 - Increases efficiency and cost effectiveness by ensuring that records are disposed of when no longer needed. This enables more effective use of resources and saves staff time searching for information that may not be there;
 - Provides institutional memory.
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Policy and Procedure

1. Procedure

Records may relate to individuals (e.g. staff or students) or to Writtle University College as an organisation (e.g. financial records). In all cases the records should be stored securely and only available to staff and external organisations who are authorised to view them.

University College records are a valuable resource as sources of information for re-use and as evidence of actions, rights and obligations. However, records that are out of date, inadequate or unnecessary can be misleading and can impact storage and retrieval capability and costs without any corresponding benefit.

To manage this resource, each department should follow the Records Retention Policy and Schedule to manage the retention and disposal, storage and retrieval of its records which should be implemented consistently and updated as necessary.

Records should be stored securely and access to records should be controlled. Access restrictions should be applied when necessary to protect the information concerned and should be kept up to date. Particular care should be taken with personal information and information obtained on a confidential basis.

During their retention period, records may be held in different locations and on different media depending on operational efficiency but should always be properly managed in accordance with this and other policies.

The majority of records will eventually be destroyed, however, the small proportion of records and artefacts deemed to be of permanent legal or historical significance may be preserved in Writtle University College's archives.

2. Records Retention Schedule

A Records Retention Schedule is a control document that sets out the periods an institution will retain records in order to meet its operational needs and to comply with its legal obligations.

It is an essential component of an efficient and effective record management system. Properly developed and consistently implemented, the Records Retention Schedule protects the interests of Writtle University College and its stakeholders by ensuring that business records are kept for as long as they are needed to meet operational needs and comply with legal obligations, before being disposed of securely.

The Writtle University College Retention Schedule is appended to this policy and provides specific guidance about how long individual records should be retained.

3. Responsibilities

The University College Secretary is responsible for drawing up guidance for good record retention practice and promoting compliance with the policy.

Senior Management and the Heads of Departments have overall responsibility for the management of records generated by their areas, to ensure the records created, received and controlled are managed in accordance with Writtle University College policies and procedures.

It is the responsibility of the Senior Management and the Heads of Departments to ensure that all live records are maintained in good order and retrieval is simple but controlled (unauthorised access must not be possible in accordance with the Data Protection Act)

It is the responsibility of all staff to use the Records Retention Schedule for the purpose of filing their records. Staff should notify the University College Secretary of any additions or amendments they feel are necessary to the Records Retention Schedule.

4. Archiving of Records

Paper records should be clearly labelled with a description of the contents of the box and a destruction date.

A template archive label is attached at Appendix 1. This should be completed and attached to each archived file to assist with correct disposal at the end of the retention period.

5. Disposal of Records

At the end of the retention period the records should be assessed to ensure whether changes in legislation, particular disputes, claims and enquiries require extended retention. If the retention period remains valid and no further reasons exist for retaining the information appropriate action should be taken where records are to be destroyed.

Electronic records should be deleted, non-confidential paper records should be recycled and confidential records (including those containing personal or financial information) should be disposed of using confidential waste disposal.

6. Review and update of the Records Retention Policy

This policy will be reviewed by Senior Management every two years in order that the policy is kept up to date and reflects the current needs of Writtle University College.

7. Queries and Contact

Queries concerning any aspect of Records Retention Policy, including Data Protection and Freedom of Information, should be addressed in the first instance to the University College Secretary at secretary@writtle.ac.uk.

This policy supersedes any other policy and procedural guidelines, which may be in other existing University College documents. Writtle University College may amend this policy from time to time and any such amendments will be notified via the website, through Writtle Weekly or by email.

If this information is difficult to access, read or understand, it can be provided in another format, for example in large print or by someone talking it through with you.

Version Control

Version Number	Purpose/Amendment	Date
1.0	Existing policy moved to new WUC template	9 August 2016
1.1	Update to Safeguarding records	1 August 2017
2.0	SLT sign-off	15 September 2017

**APPENDIX 1
TEMPLATE ARCHIVE LABEL**

<p>ARCHIVE LABEL</p> <p>File Name:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>File Contents:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Owner/Department:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Date Archived:</p> <p>.....</p> <p>Date due to be Destroyed:</p> <p>.....</p>
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