Records Management - Physical Records Storage Procedure

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) Under the Public Records Act 1973, Victoria University is considered a public office and must comply with the standards set by the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV). The PROV standards around disposal, known as Retention and Disposal Authorities (RDAs), provide authorisation for Victoria University to dispose of records once the minimum retention periods have been met. Until minimum retention periods have been met, it is the responsibility of the head of each business area to ensure the records created are safely and securely stored, and that storage areas meet health and safety requirements. Records Services can provide advice and assist in assessing storage locations.

(2) Information about how to dispose of records, including how long different records need to be kept, can be found in the Records Disposal Procedure.

(3) This procedure outlines how records should be stored based on the status of the record, if it still needs to be accessed regularly, and how long it needs to be retained. It is important that records are stored appropriately and not just placed anywhere there is room. As far as reasonably practicable, records need to be protected from environmental hazards, including vermin, fire, damp and flooding. All VU storage areas must be inspected and assessed at least annually to ensure they meet the requirements listed in these procedures.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(4) This procedure applies to:

a. physical records only. Storage of electronic records in University systems is the responsibility of ITS.
b. records identified as having temporary value only, as permanent records are to be transferred to the University Archives when no longer required for business use. See the Records Disposal Procedure [insert link] for more information about transferring permanent records to the Archives.

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) Nil

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(6) See Records Management Policy.

Section 5 - Procedures

Roles/Responsibilities

Roles	Responsibility
(7) Records and Archives Services	a. Responsible for monitoring overall (University wide) compliance with records management legislation, policies and procedures. b. Responsible for training staff in records management. c. Assisting departments and colleges to implement good recordkeeping practices. d. Maintaining VU's permanent records in the University Archives.
(8) Managers	a. Responsible for monitoring compliance with records management legislation, policies and procedures within their organizational areas.
(9) Director, Legal, Governance and Risk	a. Responsible for establishing the framework for records management at VU, including university wide policies, procedures and systems for managing records.

Storage in Office Areas

(10) Records stored in office areas should primarily be those still required for ongoing use by the area. Only records or files in active use should be kept on staff desks. All other records in office areas should be stored securely in filing cabinets, drawers, cupboards or shelves. In general, records are stored in office areas because ongoing access to them is required.

(11) Student Records should not be stored by colleges or departments, but should be sent to Student Records Management within Records and Archives Services for filing as soon as they have been actioned. A list of documents that are kept on the central student record, and instructions for sending them to Student Records Management, can be found on the student records intranet page .

(12) Determine a logical order to keep the records, to assist with retrieval. Examples of ways to order records include:

a. Staff or student surname, then first name
b. Student number
c. Case number
d. File number
e. Course or subject code

(13) Assess the records for personal, private or confidential information, and determine who requires access to them.

a. Records often contain personal, private or confidential information and should not be accessed by all staff or left in open areas. In these cases, it may be necessary to separate these records and store them securely, for example, in a locked filing cabinet rather than on open shelves.
b. Ensure staff who require access to these records have access. This may take the form of providing appropriate staff with keys, or designating one staff member to provide access to others as required.

(14) Track records as they are used, to ensure you know who has accessed them, and where they are. The easiest way to do this is to register the records on RecFind, the University's records management system.

a. Whenever a record is moved, use the "move" function in RecFind to update the location.
b. Records should either be located with an individual (using the "move to person" function in RecFind) or else located in a storage area (using the "move to space" function in RecFind).

(15) Determine when the records are no longer required for ongoing, regular access.

a. Records should continue to be stored in office areas until they are not required for ongoing access (for example, at the end of a semester, or a financial year).

b. Records should be assessed for access requirements once a year, as there are many records which do not need to be available for ongoing reference. Some areas may wish to base this on calendar year, others may choose end of financial year or end of teaching time.
c. After records are no longer needed for ongoing access, they should be boxed and placed in dedicated storage areas or moved to Central Storage until they can be destroyed.

Transfer of Records to Central Storage (LTO)

(16) Records and Archives Services maintain a secure Central Storage area for inactive University records at the Land Titles Office (LTO) at the Queen St campus.

(17) Types of records accepted into the LTO.

a. Records which are deemed temporary, need to be stored for at least 12 months before they are due for destruction, and are not actively used, are accepted into the LTO.
b. The following records will not be accepted into the LTO:
    i. Active records. Records that are used/referenced often should be kept locally, as there may be delays in retrieving records from the LTO.
    ii. Records due for destruction, or which will be due for destruction within the next 12 months (use the Business Classification Scheme to determine when records are due for destruction).
    iii. Permanent records. Records that need to be retained permanently should be transferred to the University Archives.
    iv. Records relating to impending legal action.
    v. Individual student records. These should be sent to Student Records Management at Melton, with some exceptions (see Student Records intranet page).

(18) Preparation of records (carried out by department requesting transfer).

a. Notify Records & Archives Services that there are records to be transferred. Records & Archives Services can explain the transfer process, train staff in using RecFind, and provide advice on how the records should be boxed.
b. Pack the records into boxes for storage. Use only Standard A4 boxes from Staples (Fellows 800 Mini Archive Box, item code 86823458, box dimensions 385L x 180W x 260H).
c. Each box should contain only one type of record, and all records should be closed in the same year. For example, do not mix student attendance registers with student complaints in the same box, or have records closed in 2010 and 2013 in the same box. Contact Records & Archives Services for advice if unsure.
d. When packing a box, maintain the files in the order they were kept in while in active use. For example, records may be filed chronologically, alphabetically, or by reference number.
e. Pack the box appropriately. Do not overfill or underfill the box. As a guide, make sure you can move your flat hand between the records and the box wall. Overfull boxes, or boxes where the lid cannot be completely closed, will not be accepted for transfer.
f. Register each box and its contents on RecFind. If your records have already been registered as files in RecFind, update their location by doing a Move to Box. If the records have not been registered, use title levels to specify the types of records in the box. Fill in sufficient information in the Description field to enable searching, such as individual student names and numbers. Contact Records & Archives Services if you require assistance with RecFind.
g. Print out labels from RecFind using the Box Label with Barcode, and attach to the boxes. Records & Archives Services can supply you with the right labels for printing.

(19) Complete the Request Transfer of Records to Central Storage form and email to records@vu.edu.au .

(20) Boxes will be checked by Records & Archives Services before transfer. Records & Archives Services will then arrange the transfer of boxes to the LTO. The transfer costs will be met by the department transferring the records.

Storage in Dedicated Storage Areas

(21) Some business areas may have their own dedicated storage areas for inactive records. It is recommended that the need for such areas is reviewed on a regular basis, as it is usually more efficient to send records to Central Storage than to maintain a separate dedicated storage area.

If you need to set up a storage space for records storage

(22) Assess the storage space.

a. The Records Storage Assessment Sheet [insert link] can be used to assess the area. If you are unsure if a storage area should be used for records storage, contact Records & Archives Services When assessing the storage space, the following issues should be taken into consideration (these are covered in detail in the assessment sheet):
    i. Location
    ii. Size
    iii. Safety for staff
    iv. Conditions for the records
    v. Ease of retrievals
    vi. Security and access
b. In some cases, remedial action (for example, fitting a door with a lock and limiting who has access) may need to be taken before the area can be used for records storage. Records & Archives Services can provide advice on what actions need to be taken to prepare an area for records storage.

(23) Prepare the storage space for records.

a. Identify and label areas of the storage area to assist with retrieving records. The way you label a storage area will depend on the quantity of records being stored, and the area being used. For example, if the storage area is made up of shelves or compactus units, each bookshelf or compactus row could be numbered. In other storage areas, labelling of general regions of the room or area may be sufficient.
b. If the storage area is large, it is recommended that a floorplan of the area is labelled to show the different regions of the area, and locations of compactus and shelving are noted. This assists staff retrieving the records, particularly if they are unfamiliar with the location.
c. Ask Records & Archives Services to add the storage space to RecFind.

If the records storage space is already established

(24) Prepare the records for storage.

a. All records in storage should be entered in RecFind, in order to track the location of the records, and ensure they are kept for the correct amount of time.
    i. Pack the records into boxes for storage. Use Standard A4 boxes from Staples (Fellows 800 Mini Archive Box, item code 86823458, box dimensions 385L x 180W x 260H) as the small size of these boxes helps to reduce OHS risks.
    ii. Each box should contain only one type of record, and all records should be closed in the same year. For example, do not mix student attendance registers with student complaints in the same box, or have

records closed in 2010 and 2013 in the same box.

iii. When packing a box, maintain the files in the order they were kept in while in active use. For example, records may be filed chronologically, alphabetically, or by reference number.
iv. Pack the box appropriately. Do not overfill or underfill the box. As a guide, make sure you can move your flat hand between the records and the box wall.
v. Register each box and its contents on RecFind. If your records have already been registered as files in RecFind, update their location by doing a Move to Box. If the records have not been registered, use title levels to specify the types of records in the box. Fill in sufficient information in the Description field to enable searching, such as individual student names and numbers. Contact Records & Archives Services if you require assistance with RecFind.
vi. Print out labels from RecFind using the Box Label with Barcode, and attach to the boxes. Records & Archives Services can supply you with the right labels for printing.

(25) Move the boxes into the storage area.

a. Update the box location in RecFind.
b. It is recommended that boxes are stored in ways which assist in retrieval. For example, you may wish to store all records from a particular year together, or all course material together, or all records of the same type.

(26) Track the records if they are moved in and out of storage.

a. Whenever a record is moved, use the "move" function in RecFind to update the location.
b. Records should either be located with an individual (using the "move to person" function in RecFind) or else located in a storage area (using the "move to space" function in RecFind).

(27) Destroy the records when possible to do so.

a. RecFind automatically calculates a "Destroy Due" date, which you can use to determine when the records can be destroyed.
b. Refer to the Disposal of Records Procedure for information about how destruction should be carried out.
c. Contact Records & Archives Services for advice about destruction if you are unsure.

(28) Maintain storage areas.

a. Storage areas should be inspected at least annually, to ensure that they still meet the requirements listed in these procedures. Use the Records Storage Assessment Sheet [insert link] to carry out the inspection.
b. Access to storage areas must be reviewed regularly to make sure only authorised staff have access. Any security breaches must be reported to Facilities.

Section 6 - Guidelines

(29) Nil

Status and Details

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Effective Date	19th August 2014
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