HERITAGE AND INFORMATION GOVERNANCE

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records

This category is intended to cover the conduct of all academic research, whether its is funded by the institution itself or by external organisations, or by both. It is also intended to cover research undertaken in collaboration with other institutions.

This retention schedule is based on the recommendations made by the Joint Information Systems Committee. The letter indicates the final disposition of each type of record, and applies to original records. Where copies of originals are kept locally, these can be destroyed when these are no longer required:

A = 1 copy to be transferred to the University Archive. See Retention Schedule Guidelines for further details.
D = Destroyed.

The number following the letter code indicates the period (in years) after which records may be destroyed, and is the minimum retention period required by best practice or legislation. It assumes a new file is opened at the start of each academic, calendar or financial year, and is **always** calculated from the date of the last record in the file.

FOLDER STRUCTURE	Examples of Types of Record	Retention Period	Legislative Authority
RESEARCH/STRATEGY • identifying requirements for new/revised strategy • undertaking research • developing strategy proposals • consulting on strategy proposals • reviewing and revising strategy proposals in the light of comments received • drafting strategy documents • consulting on strategy documents • reviewing draft strategy documents in the light of comments received • producing final strategy documents • submitting final strategy documents for formal endorsement • formally endorsing strategy documents • disseminating strategy documents • reviewing strategy.	Key records documenting the development and establishment of the institution's research strategy. Working papers documenting development and establishment of the institution's research strategy.	A: Superseded + 10 years Copy to the University Archive after approval for permanent retention. D: Issue of strategy + 1 year	

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (2)

RESEARCH/POLICY • identifying requirements for new/revised policy • undertaking research • developing policy proposals • consulting on policy proposals • reviewing and revising policy proposals in the light of comments received • drafting policy documents • consulting on policy documents • reviewing draft policy documents in the light of comments received • producing final policy documents • submitting final policy documents for formal approval • formally approving policy documents • disseminating policy documents • reviewing policy.	Key records documenting the development and establishment of the institution's research policies. Working papers documenting development and establishment of the institution's research policies.	A: Superseded + 10 years Copy to the University Archive after approval for permanent retention. D: Issue of policy + 1 year	
RESEARCH/PROCEDURES • identifying needs for new/revised procedure • undertaking research • analysing work processes • drafting procedure documents • consulting on procedure documents • reviewing draft procedure documents in the light of comments received • trialling procedure • refining procedure as a result of trials • submitting final procedure documents for formal approval • formally approving procedure documents • disseminating procedure documents • reviewing procedure.	Master copies of procedures relating to research. Development of the institution's procedures relating to research.	A: Superseded + 10 years Copy to the University Archive after approval for permanent retention. D: Issue of procedures + 1 year	

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (3)

RESEARCH/BUSINESSDEVELOPMENT • liaising with research sponsors to monitor their research policies and objectives, and to promote the institution's research capabilities, projects and achievements • identifying and developing new research opportunities • identifying and targeting research funding opportunities • identifying and developing opportunities for collaboration and partnership to undertake research.	Liaison with research sponsors to monitor their research policies and to promote the institution's capabilities. Identification and exploration of new research opportunities which lead to research projects. Identification and exploration of new research opportunities which do not lead to research projects. Formation and management of partnerships and other collaborative arrangements to undertake research.	D: Current academic year + 5 years D: Completion of project D: Last action + 5 years D: Life of partnership/arrangement + 6 years	 Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6
RESEARCH/CONDUCT • developing and establishing research protocols and procedures • obtaining approval for subsequent amendments to, or deviations from, protocols and procedures • carrying out research in accordance with project protocols and procedures, and with all legal and ethical requirements • identifying and reviewing issues and risks which arise in the course of research work, and taking appropriate action • obtaining approval for modifications to the design of research; managing research data. Depending on the discipline and on the nature of research, specific activities might also include: • obtaining informed consent from participants in health-related studies • reporting adverse reactions or adverse events in clinical studies • consulting beneficiaries/consumers (e.g. in applied research) • conducting surveys.	Conduct of research funded by the Medical Research Council, except where other requirements are specified (see TBC). Conduct of clinical or public health studies funded by the Medical Research Council, except specific categories of records in studies for which consent was obtained. Conduct of all other research funded by all other organisations.	D: Completion of project + 10 years The MRC requirement is specifically for primary research data. However, retaining full records of research studies is recommended. D: Completion of project + 20 years The MRC requires full records of these studies to be retained for this period and advises that retention for a longer period may be required where studies were of historical importance, where novel clinical interventions were first used, where studies have proved controversial or where research is ongoing. D: Completion of project + 10 years A shorter or longer retention period may be appropriate, depending on the discipline and the characteristics of the project, or may be required by a research sponsor.	Medical Research Council, *Good Research Practice*, section 5.2 MRC, *Good Research Practice*, section 5.2 MRC, *Personal Information in Medical Research*, section 7.1.2 Stated/implied requirements of UK Research Councils and other significant research sponsors. See *Guidance on Managing Research Records*.

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (4)

RESEARCH/DESIGNPLANNING			
• generating, capturing and developing ideas for research projects • defining research aims and objectives • defining research methods • defining project roles and responsibilities • securing necessary ethical reviews and regulatory approvals • determining requirements for project resources • preparing research proposals.	Key records documenting design and planning of research projects. Working papers documenting the design and planning of research projects. Design and planning of research projects which are **not** undertaken.	D: Completion of project + 10 years D: Completion of project D: Abandonment of plans + 1 year	In line with retention period for records documenting the conduct of research. Retention for longer may be advisable, depending on reasons for abandoning project.
RESEARCH/FUNDING • preparing and submitting applications for funding • negotiating (where applicable) terms and conditions of funding • accepting/declining funding awards • administering funding in accordance with award terms and conditions (claiming payments from funders, re-allocating funds within budgets etc.) • administering amendments to awards (e.g. supplements, extensions, early termination) • submitting reports required by funders.	Preparation and submission of applications for funding, where the application is successful (i.e. results in the offer of a funding award). Preparation and submission of applications for funding, where the application is unsuccessful (i.e. does not result in the offer of a funding award).	Completion of project (i.e. termination of award) + 10 years *Some EU Regulations require a 10 year retention period* Receipt of notification that application was unsuccessful + 1 year	Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6
RESEARCH/PROJECTMANAGEMENT • monitoring and tracking the progress of research • preparing reports for project stakeholders • arranging appropriate insurance • managing project resources and complying with institutional policies and procedures to protect project staff, participants and the environment • facilitating and assisting with monitoring activities and audits conducted by the institution, by external project sponsors/funders or by regulatory bodies	Records documenting the management of internally-funded research projects. Records documenting the management of externally-funded research projects.	D: Completion of project + 3 years D: Completion of project + 6 years	Common internal audit requirement Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 A longer retention period for these records may be required by a research sponsor.

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (5)

RESEARCH/PROJECTMANAGEMENT (Continued) • selecting research partners and subcontractors, and managing relationships with them • managing the process of offering research data to, and depositing it with, external research data archives, and ensuring future compliance with the terms and conditions of deposit.			
RESEARCH/QUALITYSTANDARDS • conducting internal reviews of research quality and standards • facilitating and participating in external reviews and audits of research quality and standards.	Development of the institution's internal quality assurance processes. Conduct and results of formal internal reviews of research quality, and responses to the results. Conduct and results of external reviews and audits of research quality and standards, e.g. RAE	A: Copy to the University Archive after approval for permanent retention. D: Current academic year + 5 years D: Current academic year + 5 years	
RESEARCH/REPORTING • publishing research results • presenting research results at technical meetings.	Final versions of publications and presentations made to disseminate research results (**not** interim or final research reports). Working papers for the preparation of publications, audio-visual presentations etc. to disseminate research results (**not** interim or final research reports).	D: Publication/Delivery + 3 years This does **not** include interim or final reports of research studies, which are covered by **Research/Conduct** above. D: Publication/Delivery + 1 year This does **not** include interim or final reports of research studies, which are covered by **Research/Conduct** above.	

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (6)

This function is intended to cover the delivery of all research programmes, regardless of the award they lead to and whether they are delivered through traditional or newer approaches.

Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education, Section 1: Postgraduate research programmes, Quality Assurance Agency, 2004: 'PhD programmes (including the New Route PhD and PhDs awarded on the basis of published work); all forms of taught or professional doctorate; research master's degrees where the research component (including a requirement to produce original work), is larger than the taught component when measured by student effort.'

RESEARCH/PROGRAMMES/ASSESSMENT	Conduct of formal assessments of work undertaken by research students. Awards and classifications, including reviews in response to notifications of mitigating circumstances or academic appeals.	D: Completion of student's programme + 6 years D: Current academic year + 6 years Copies of external examiners reports should be filed in the individual students file.	Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6 Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6
RESEARCH/PROGRAMMES/DEVELOPMENT	Development of the institution's research programmes. Routine monitoring of external developments and trends to inform the development of the institution's research programmes.	D: Life of programme + 10 years D: Current academic year + 1 year	
RESEARCH/PROGRAMMES/MONITORING & SUPPORT • providing support and guidance to research students on subject selection • providing feedback to students on their progress • conducting formal reviews of student progress • providing students with general academic advice and guidance • providing students with opportunities to develop their research and other skills • providing advice and guidance to students whose progress is unsatisfactory or who are considering suspending or terminating their studies.	Academic advice and guidance to individual students on the selection of research subjects and on the progress and standard of their work.	D: Completion of student's programme + 6 years	Limitation Act 1980 c.58 s5 Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6

Records Retention Schedule for Research Records (7)

RESEARCH/PROGRAMMES/REVIEW	Data on, and analyses of, student numbers and other programme statistics. Reports of routine internal reviews of research programmes. Conduct and results of formal independent reviews of research programmes, and the responses to the results.	D: Current academic year + 3 years D: Current academic year + 5 years D: Current academic year + 5 years	
RESEARCH/PROGRAMMES/SUPERVISORS	Appointment of supervisors for research students.	D: Termination of appointment + 1 year	