

**Heriot-Watt University**  
**Retention Schedule: Records documenting applicant/student lifecycle**

All retention periods indicated are the maximum required by law or by “best practice”. Records may be transferred to the University’s Records Management System rather than being retained within individual offices.

Where Permanent Retention is indicated, contact Heritage & Information Governance for advice on transferring records to the University Archive.

**1.0 Assessment Records**

| <b>1.0</b> | <b>Assessment Records</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Retention Period</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>Responsibility/Owner</b>                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Notes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Disposal Action</b> |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1.1        | <p>The following all have the same retention period</p> <p>a) Exam scripts, associated commentary and/or marks and grades</p> <p>b) Coursework scripts and in-course examination scripts which are <b>not</b> returned to students</p> <p>c) Student reports (including on work placements)</p> <p>Other records documenting the conduct and results of external reviews and audits of teaching quality and standards</p> | <p>‘Completion of event’ + 4 months; maximum 1 year</p> <p>Samples and other records required for review by accrediting body or quality review e.g. ELIR: completion of the following review.</p> <p>The Academic Registrar and HIG will be informed of the retention protocol as required for each accrediting body.</p> | <p>School</p> <p>Each School will agree a protocol with their accrediting bodies to retain a sample of between 5 and 20% of scripts or other examined work for the relevant quality review by that body.</p> | <p>‘Completion of event’ is the date of decision of the relevant Progression/Award/Resit Board or when the deadline for student appeals for the relevant diet has passed. Where a student has submitted an appeal, the retention policy for appeals applies.</p> <p>Schools are not required to retain copies of any coursework scripts that are routinely returned to students.</p> <p>SAS holds the central record of student marks and grades</p> | Destruction            |
| 1.2        | <p>Taught masters dissertations (see also 3.5 Academic Appeals)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>‘Completion of event’ + 1 year</p> <p>These records can then be destroyed or retained for reference purposes in Schools. Each School should have a written retention policy which is made known to all students and potential users.</p>                                                                               | School                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <p>‘Completion of event’ is the date of decision of the relevant Progression/Award/ Resit Board or when the deadline for student appeals for the relevant diet has passed. Where a student has submitted an appeal, the retention policy for appeals applies.</p> <p>HIG may liaise with Schools and Information Services to select a representative sample for the University Archive.</p>                                                          | Destruction            |

**Heriot-Watt University**  
**Retention Schedule: Records documenting applicant/student lifecycle**

**1.0 Assessment Records (continued)**

| <b>1.0</b> | <b>Assessment Records</b>                                                                                                                                    | <b>Retention Period</b>                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Responsibility/Owner</b>                  | <b>Notes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Disposal Action</b>                                                                                                     |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.3        | Exam papers (written examination questions answered by students sitting a formal University examination)                                                     | Permanent - Samples?                                                                                                                                                          | School<br>IS: Library                        | Originals to be stored in the University Library. Duplicate collections of examination papers may be retained by School for up to 6 years                                                                                                                                                 | Permanent Retention                                                                                                        |
| 1.4        | External examiners' reports on courses and/or programmes:<br><br>a) Summary Report to University's Quality and Standards Committee<br><br>b) detailed report | a) permanently as part of QSC records<br><br>b) To be agreed with AR and Head of Academic Quality: CAY+ 6 or Completion of course + 5 years/ Following subsequent ELIR report | Academic Registrar                           | Originals retained by Academic Registrar/Head of Academic Quality:<br>Shared with Schools, Deans and the Deputy Principal (Learning and Teaching), and Chief External Examiner<br>Part of Advance Information Set, submitted to QAA for HWU's ELIR (Enhancement-Led Institutional Review) | a) Permanent Retention<br><br>b) Destruction                                                                               |
| 1.5        | Reports of supervisors, internal & external examiners on theses for degrees by research for individual students                                              | End of relationship + 1 year                                                                                                                                                  | School                                       | Some reports may be selected for permanent preservation                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Review<br>Copies are currently retained within individual student files                                                    |
| 1.6        | Theses for degrees by research: all Doctoral and Masters research awards*                                                                                    | Successful Students:<br>Permanent<br><br>Unsuccessful Students                                                                                                                | IS: Library<br><br>Registry Services, School | Students must now submit both an electronic and a print copy of their thesis. Both copies are retained permanently at present<br><br>Business need? 6 years max?                                                                                                                          | Research Output Service (ROS, the University's institutional repository for published research outputs)<br><br>Destruction |
| 1.7        | Awards Records including issue of awards letters, prize letters, transcripts, etc.                                                                           | Permanent*                                                                                                                                                                    | Registry Services, School, HIG               | Part of Core Student Record<br><br>NB: Only the most recent transcript needs to be retained.                                                                                                                                                                                              | Permanent Retention                                                                                                        |

\* HIG to send a paper to PSC relating to this area

**Heriot-Watt University**  
**Retention Schedule: Records documenting applicant/student lifecycle**  
**2.0 Teaching Records**

| <b>2.0</b> | <b>Teaching Records</b>                                                                                                                                                  | <b>Retention Period</b>                                                                      | <b>Responsibility/Owner</b>                                                                                 | <b>Notes</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>Disposal Action</b>                                                                                                                                         |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2.1        | Collaborative programmes including Memoranda of Understanding and Memoranda of Accreditation                                                                             | 'Life of programme' + 5 years                                                                | Academic Registrar                                                                                          | 'Life of programme' is the duration of time for which a course is in existence                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Destruction                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2.2        | Programme and course approval information, including:<br>a) Proposals<br>b) Business Plans*<br>c) Consultation Forms*<br>d) Scrutiny group reports*<br>e) Specifications | 'Life of programme' + 5 years<br><br>Approved courses and/or programmes: Permanent retention | Academic Registrar, Schools, School Studies Committee, USC or PSC<br><br>School approves, then HWU approves | 'Life of programme' is the duration of time for which a programme is in existence<br><br>Records held in Programme Approvals Management System. (PAMS)                                                                                                                                                                                      | Destruction<br><br>Purge of records from PAMS to be agreed<br><br>PAMS archiving plan to be agreed for records to be retained permanently from session 2015/16 |
| 2.3        | Course delivery information, including:<br>a) Course Hand-outs<br>a) Presentations<br>b) Lecture Notes<br>c) Workshop/ Seminar Documents<br>d) Course Content Documents  | Until superseded by another version                                                          | School<br>HIG                                                                                               | Samples of delivery information may be retained permanently in the University Archive for historical purposes by arrangement with HIG. Schools should only retain the most recent version of course delivery information, except where there is a reason to retain previous versions locally (such as external accreditation requirements). | Review                                                                                                                                                         |
| 2.4        | Lists of students registered on a course provided to an academic and/or photographs of students on a course generated from Banner                                        | Current academic session                                                                     | School                                                                                                      | This refers to documents, <b>not</b> the original data which is retained within Banner                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Destruction                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2.5        | Appointment of External Examiners and/or Approved Teachers/Tutors/Markers (including ALPs)                                                                               | End of appointment + 1 year                                                                  | Registry Services, Schools                                                                                  | Original documents held by Registry Services. Copies may be retained by Schools to meet their own needs.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Destruction                                                                                                                                                    |
| 2.6        | Internal Academic Reviews                                                                                                                                                | Completion of next review                                                                    | Registry Services, Schools                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Destruction                                                                                                                                                    |

\* these records are not retained within PAMS

**Heriot-Watt University**  
**Retention Schedule: Records documenting applicant/student lifecycle**  
**3.0 Administrative Records**

| <b>3.0</b>                              | <b>Administrative Records</b>                                                                                         | <b>Retention Period</b>                               | <b>Responsibility/Owner</b>                   | <b>Notes</b>                                                                                                                                                | <b>Disposal Action</b>                                                                                                                                               |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.1<br>Recruitment                      | Recruitment: Handling enquiries from prospective students who do not apply                                            | Proposed year of enrolment + 1 year                   | Student Recruitment                           | Meets UKVI audit requirements to retain CAS and Visa records                                                                                                | Deletion/Destruction                                                                                                                                                 |
|                                         | Recruitment: Handling of applications for admission: unsuccessful applicants (for whatever reason)                    | Current Academic Year + 1 year                        | Student Recruitment, Registry Services        | Purge of records held in Student Recruitment Customer Relationship Management System (SR CRM) , SAS Document Upload Facility and any ancillary systems      | Destruction                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                         | Anonymised data extracted for reporting purposes                                                                      | Current Academic Year + 1 year                        | Student Recruitment                           |                                                                                                                                                             | Destruction?                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3.2<br>Admissions                       | Admissions: Development & establishment of admissions criteria                                                        | Superseded + 10 years<br>Admissions policy: permanent | UGC, PSC, Schools                             | Should be reported to Senate and recorded there [is this so?]                                                                                               | Destruction                                                                                                                                                          |
|                                         | Admissions: Handling of applications for admission: successful applicants                                             | Permanent*                                            | Registry Services (Admissions), School<br>HIG | Records in SR CRM, SAS and DUF - transferred to School on enrolment - part of Core Student Record. To be agreed with Systems Manager                        | Permanent Retention                                                                                                                                                  |
| 3.3<br>Student<br>Records<br>Management | Enrolment of individual students on programmes                                                                        | Permanent*                                            | Registry Services, School, HIG                | All indicated for permanent retention form part of the Core Student Record. This comprises records in SAS and official student record file held by School** | Permanent Retention<br>SAS: electronic archiving to Archive version of SAS: timing to be agreed (6 years after leave date in tandem with purge of ephemeral records) |
|                                         | Academic progress of individual students & formal action taken by the University to deal with unsatisfactory progress | Permanent*                                            | Registry Services, School, HIG                | Banner record starts when the application process completes i.e. when prospects are enrolled.                                                               | Schools to transfer paper or e-student files to HIG one year after leave date                                                                                        |
|                                         | Transfer of individual student to a new programme or course within the programme or between campuses                  | Permanent*                                            | Registry Services, School, HIG                | 'End of relationship' is the date on which the relationship ends, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason                                    |                                                                                                                                                                      |
|                                         | Withdrawal of individual students from University                                                                     | Permanent*                                            | Registry Services, School, HIG                |                                                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                      |

| 3.0                                        | Administrative Records                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Retention Period                                                | Responsibility/Owner                                   | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | Disposal Action     |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 3.3 Student Records Management (continued) | Schools records of individual student progress and administration that do not affect the final award                                                                                                                                                      | Permanent                                                       | Registry Services<br>School<br>HIG                     | Only retain if this differs from the information held centrally on Banner                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Permanent Retention |
|                                            | Confirmation of ability to pay fees, submitted as part of the application process (see also 3.7 Finance)                                                                                                                                                  | 'End of relationship' plus 6 years                              | Finance Office<br>Academic Registrar<br>HIG            | Before transferring student files to HIG, School Directors of Administration will ensure that all such information is filed in a separate and clearly identified sub-folder of the main file or in a separate sealed envelope. HIG staff will then remove these sub-folders or envelopes and arrange for their confidential destruction 6 years after the student has left the University. | Destruction         |
|                                            | Attendance records, including compliance with mandatory Home Office Tier 4 contact points where relevant                                                                                                                                                  | Permanent*                                                      | Registry Services<br>Schools                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Permanent Retention |
|                                            | Information on any matter relating to attendance, progress or discipline which does not result in a student being required to withdraw or have their award rescinded, including correspondence with the student (see also 3.4 Discipline and 3.5 Appeals) | 'End of relationship' plus 6 years                              | Registry Services<br>Schools                           | Records in SAS: destruction in annual purge each November                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Destruction         |
|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Includes TSS, TVW and change of mode                            |                                                        |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                     |
|                                            | Information on health and welfare, inc. correspondence with the student                                                                                                                                                                                   | 'End of relationship' plus 6 years<br>e.g. Medical Certificates | Registry Services<br>Schools<br>Student Service Centre | HESA Questions<br>Protected characteristics<br>Visa/Passport - Tier 4<br><br>Email? Email account deleted after 1 year.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Destruction         |
|                                            | Mentoring records (provided by academic mentors at year end) including PhD Annual Appraisals                                                                                                                                                              | 'End of relationship' plus 6 years                              | Schools                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Destruction         |

| 3.0                                        | Administrative Records                                                                                                                                                    | Retention Period                                                                                                          | Responsibility/Owner                                                 | Notes                                                                                                                    | Disposal Action                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 3.3 Student Records Management (continued) | Home and term addresses and contact information, other than those provided at application and the last known address at the point of the award; emergency contact details | 'End of relationship' + 6 years                                                                                           | Registry Services<br>Schools                                         | 'End of relationship' is the date on which the relationship ends, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason | Destruction                                                                          |
| 3.4 Discipline                             | Conduct and results of disciplinary proceedings against individual students (Category A offences)                                                                         | 'Last action on case' + 6 years                                                                                           | Academic Registrar<br>IS (for IT-related)<br>Estate Office (traffic) | 'Last action on case' is the date on which proceedings end, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason       | Destruction                                                                          |
|                                            | Conduct and results of disciplinary proceedings against individual students (Category B offences)                                                                         | 'Last action on case' + 6 years                                                                                           | Schools                                                              |                                                                                                                          | Destruction                                                                          |
| 3.5 Appeals                                | Academic Appeals: Stage 1 academic appeals and their result.                                                                                                              | 'Last action on case' + 6 years                                                                                           | Schools                                                              | 'Last action on case' is the date on which proceedings end, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason       | Permanent retention for successful appeals, otherwise destroy after retention period |
|                                            | Stage 2 academic appeals and their results                                                                                                                                | 'Last action on case' + 6 years                                                                                           | Academic Registrar                                                   |                                                                                                                          | As above                                                                             |
| 3.6 Complaints                             | Academic Registrar: Handling of complaints by individual students                                                                                                         | 'Last action on case' + 6 years                                                                                           | Academic Registrar<br>Student Service Centre                         | 'Last action on case' is the date on which proceedings end, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason       | Destruction                                                                          |
| 3.7 Finance                                | Financial Records: Including but not only Accommodation Fees, Bursaries, Financial Guarantees, Hardship Funds, Scholarships, Sponsorships, Tuition Fees                   | Successful applications: 'Last action on case' + 6 years<br><br>Unsuccessful applications: 'Last action on case' + 1 year | Finance Office<br>Student Service Centre                             | 'Last action on case' is the date on which the relationship ends, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason | Destruction                                                                          |
|                                            |                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                           |                                                                      |                                                                                                                          | Destruction                                                                          |
|                                            | External Examiners Expenses                                                                                                                                               | Current Financial Year + 6 years                                                                                          | Registry Services                                                    | Limitation Act 1980 c58 s5<br>Prescription and Limitation (Scotland) Act 1973 c.52 s6                                    | Destruction                                                                          |

| 3.0                            | Administrative Records                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Retention Period                                                                                                           | Responsibility/Owner                                                     | Notes                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Disposal Action                |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 3.8<br>Student Services        | Student Services Records including records of dealings with International Student Office, Student Service Centre, Student Support and Accommodation Service, Counselling, Disability Advice, Careers Service etc.                                    | Routine customer enquiries: end of academic year plus 2 years<br><br>Individual case files: Last action on case + 6 years* | School<br>Careers Service<br>Registry Services<br>Student Service Centre | 'Last action on case' is the date on which the relationship ends, whether through graduation, withdrawal or other reason<br><br>Definitions of <i>routine</i> and <i>case files</i> to be agreed with AR services                                                           | Destruction<br><br>Destruction |
| 3.9<br>Quality Audit & Reviews | Quality & Standards Audits and Reviews<br><br>Conduct & results of internal Quality Audits and action taken to address issues raised<br><br>Attainment & maintenance of the institution's accreditation under established quality management schemes | Completion of Audit + 3 years<br><br>Termination of accreditation + 1 year                                                 | Senate<br>PSC, UGSC, QSC<br>DP L&T, Registry Services<br>Schools         | Senate has ultimate responsibility for these processes and has delegated the operational aspects to 3 key committees viz. Quality & Standards, Postgraduate Studies and Undergraduate Studies. Registry Services should hold the 'golden copies' of all audits and reviews. | Destruction<br><br>Destruction |

\*See Student Records Management Policy for definitions <http://www1.hw.ac.uk/registry/resources/studentrecordsmanagement.pdf>