

# PUBLIC SECTOR

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## What to keep: Guide to managing information

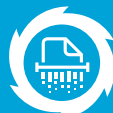
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Records



Digital



Datashred



Relocation



Technology

# Guide to managing information

This guide relates to all corporate information held by public sector establishments. Separate guides are available detailing operational information for specific government departments via

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/records-management-policy](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/records-management-policy)

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# Contents

<b>Public Sector Procurement Framework</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>Ministerial Business</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Records &amp; Information Management</b>		<b>Projects &amp; Research</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>What is it and why is it important?</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Stakeholder Management</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>What is a Record</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>Administration</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Policy, governance and development</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>Disposal Checklist</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Information Requests</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>What to Keep Guidance</b>	<b>14</b>

# Public Sector Procurement Frameworks & Direct Award

Restore Document Management are a listed supplier for the following services:

## Service

Document Storage and Retrieval Service

Document Scanning

Confidential Destruction

Electronic Document and Records Management Software

Clinical and Digital Information Services

Document Managed Services

Details of Restore Document Management individual Frameworks and Direct Award agreements can be found at:

[www.restore.co.uk/frameworks](http://www.restore.co.uk/frameworks)

# Records & Information Management

## What is it and why is it important?

### What is it?

To make sure we understand correctly what constitutes material that legally must be kept for specific lengths of time before being destroyed or stored in perpetuity, let's be clear on the meaning of the word 'record'. Here's what the Collins Dictionary has to say.

#### A record is:

- an account in permanent form, especially in writing, preserving knowledge or information about facts or events
- a written account of some transaction that serves as legal evidence of the transaction
- a written official report of the proceedings of a court of justice or legislative body, including the judgements given or enactments made
- anything serving as evidence or as a memorial.

In our 21st-century world, records are considered binding in both material (paper) and digital (back-up discs, clouds, email, telephone communications, scans, etc) forms.

That being understood, there are many pieces of UK and European legislation that govern why certain records have to be kept and cared for, but the most overarching of these are the Data Protection Act and, in the UK, the BS ISO 15489:2001, which is the leading standard for records retention and management.

This is where your corporate responsibilities come in as, to comply with the eight principles of the Data Protection Act and points contained with the ISO 15489 standards, records containing personal data must be:

- stored appropriately, having regard to the sensitivity and confidentiality of the material recorded, as well as providing procedures and protection against damage, theft or disaster

- accessible and easily traced, even if systems change or records are moved
- retained for only as long as legally necessary
- disposed of correctly to ensure that copyrights are not breached and to prevent them from falling into the hands of unauthorised personnel.

### Why is it important?

In addition to the legal and ethical requirements outlined above, there are potential negative outcomes for your business if you do not manage your records correctly.

- careless management leaves you open to prosecution and financial penalties
- damage to your reputation
- inefficiency – time equals money
- lack of space

If, on the other hand, you plan, organise and control the different stages in a record's life – from its creation, through its active and inactive periods through to its destruction or permanent storage, depending on retention and disposal regulations – there are certainly benefits that will be felt company-wide. These include:

- cost savings
- being in control and able to focus on doing your business
- enhancing your reputation
- keeping your, and your customers', information private and secure from theft or disaster.

# What is a Record

How to identify a record	Is it a record?
Does the content of the item contribute to <b>policy or decision making process</b> ?	Yes
Does the content of the item contribute to an <b>action taken or decision made</b> ?	Yes
Does the content of the item contribute to a <b>change to organisation policy or procedure</b> ?	Yes
Does the content have <b>financial or legal implications</b> (e.g. a contract, a grievance case)?	Yes
Is the content needed to <b>support and help the running of MoJ business</b> (e.g. team budgets, purchase orders of IT systems, business continuity management)?	Yes
Does the content need to be <b>approved by, or reported to, another individual or internal or external body</b> (e.g. Permanent Secretary, approved by spending team)?	Yes
Does it set a <b>precedent</b> or contain <b>something unique of historical interest</b> (e.g. an intranet snapshot, audio clip or video file)?	Yes
Does it have to be created as a <b>result of specific legislation</b> (e.g. a contract, a grievance case)?	Yes
If it is none of the above, it is <b>not</b> a record and can be destroyed when it is no longer required?	Yes

# Policy, Governance and Development

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Policy drafts for comment	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	When superseded
Policy drafts of significant changes in approach: major	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	15 years review
Policy drafts of significant changes in approach: minor	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	7 years destroy
Final policy versions: major	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	15 years review
Final policy versions: minor	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	7 years destroy
Board record sets (mtgs/papers): minor	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	7 years review
Board record sets (mtgs/papers): major	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	15 years destroy
Board admin	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy after 5 years

# Information Requests

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Responses to information request under freedom of information (FOI) investigated by the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	FOI lead/team	Destroy after 5 years record closed
Responses to information request under FOI: routine leading to precedent	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	FOI lead/team	Destroy after 5 years record closed
Responses to routine FOI requests	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	FOI lead/team	Destroy after 5 years record closed
Responses to routine subject access requests (SAR)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	FOI lead/team	Destroy after 5 years record closed
Responses to routine environmental information requests	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	FOI lead/team	Destroy after 5 years record closed



# Ministerial Business

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Parliamentary questions (replies)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy after 5 years
Ministerial correspondence	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator and recipient	Destroy after 5 years
Briefings for ministerial visits/visitors	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator and recipient	Destroy after 5 years
Minister notebooks	Private Office	Private Office	Review at 15 years
Submissions: major	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator and recipient	15 years review
Submissions (minor)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator and recipient	5 years review
Policy decisions	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator and recipient	Review at 15 years

# Projects & Research

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Large scale (gateway) projects: closed	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Review at 15 years
Large scale projects: rejected	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Review at 15 years
Test management/evidence (large project)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy after 7 years
Test management/evidence (small project)	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy after 7 years
Routine projects/ committees/groups	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy 7 years after record closed
High profile research/ reports	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Review at 15 years

# Stakeholder Management

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Dealing with the media and public: press releases, press conferences, correspondence	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Internal publications	Intranet	Originator	ISBN classified not covered by retention copy to KIMU library
External publications	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	KIMU library	ISBN classified not covered by retention copy to KIMU library
Prep work for publications	Private Office	Originator	Destroy after 5 years
Other stakeholder correspondence	Restore Document Management/ registered paper file	Originator	Destroy after 5 years

# Administration

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When it should be deleted
Directorate mgt information: risk registers, asset registers, staff resource registers	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Directorate mgt information: meetings, events, etc	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	When no longer required or superseded but no longer than 5 years
All process guides	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Destroy at 7 years
All building architectural, structural reports, surveys plans, inspections, maps and drawings, certificates, photographic, legal, contracts etc	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Covered under Ministry of Justice schema as a shared service
All maintenance logs, reports, contractor	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Review at 15 years
Finance (not relating to building, fraud, theft)	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Destroy at 7 years
Finance (building, fraud, theft)	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Review at 15 years
Contracts (not related to building)	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Review at 7 years
All audit	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Destroy at 7 years
HR records	Restore Document Management/registered paper file	Originator	Subject aged 100 years

# Disposal Checklist

Task	Things to remember	Tips
Get senior management support	Highlight the benefits to the organisation such as increased efficiency and cost reduction	Inform Senior Management what could go wrong (or indeed has gone wrong). Highlighting the risks is often a more effective approach.
Get support from the business	Highlight the benefits to the business area such as making it easier to find, use and share the information they need	It may help to 'brand' the work in a slightly different way to gain interest and increase understanding, for example, instead of 'disposal' you might want to use the phrase 'What to keep'
Understand what your organisation does	Pay particular attention to core or statutory function	Use websites, for example .gov.uk, annual reports, mission statements and talk to business areas
Find out what information your organisation has	It is essential to work closely with business areas as they have knowledge of business processes and the information that they create/hold	Ask information representatives within business areas to help with this work if you have them
Find out where your information is held	Consider all digital sources and don't forget the lifecycle of the technology used and any interdependencies between systems	Ask your IT department for help with this
Document what you know in a spreadsheet or database	Appoint an owner and keep it up to date	It may make sense to have all this information in one place rather than in multiple spreadsheets
Understand the value of your information	Consider legislative record keeping requirements, business, historical and potential re-use value	Talk to business areas – their knowledge is vital
Decide how long it should be kept for	Certain types of information are subject to legislative record keeping requirements	You could consider having a catch all retention period that covers most information and then longer/shorter retention periods for the rest – an 80/20 approach
Ensure that staff across the organisation know what information they should be keeping and where	Build this into staff training in particular induction sessions for new staff Keep promoting this – it is not a one off activity	Use materials such as desk guides, leaflets and posters and make use of the intranet

# What to Keep Guidance

Task	Things to remember	Tips
Decide on the trigger point for disposal	If closure of a folder is a trigger point then you need to actually close the folders in question or disposal cannot take place when required	Use simple trigger points such 'closure of folder' as they will be easier to implement
Where possible build disposal into your digital systems	The extent to which you can automate disposal will depend on the systems you use	When procuring digital systems always make sure that they can 'do' disposal
Start disposing of information	Disposal can mean 'delete' but it can also mean transferring information to another organisation, for example, The National Archives	Consider putting together a policy on deletion

## Disclaimer

Restore give you no warranty or assurance about this guide. In particular, information may be incorrect or out of date, and may not constitute a definitive or complete statement of the law in any sector. The contents of this guide are not intended to constitute advice in any specific situation. You should take legal advice in specific situations. All implied warranties and conditions are excluded, to the maximum extent permitted by law.

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Records



Digital



Datashred



Relocation



Technology

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