

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT SERVICES

Records Management Principles

1. Introduction

Changes in record-keeping legislation have necessitated a greater awareness of the importance of records management within the University.

In 2004 a records management strategy was developed and subsequently endorsed by CMT. This procedural note explains what the University's record-keeping principles are and why we need them.

2. Why do we need records management?

Records form the life blood of any organisation. If records are not managed appropriately, an organisation cannot function efficiently and it runs the risk of failing to comply with its legal responsibilities.

As part of its obligations under the Data Protection Act 1998 and Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 the University is committed to effective, efficient and compliant records management practices. The record keeping principles as laid out below underpin that obligations and support the University's commitment to continuous improvement and quality as

Principle One: Facilitating the business functions of the University

The University is committed to sound record-keeping practices in all School and Service areas. This commitment will be manifest in staff induction and training and assisted by documented procedures for the management of paper-based and electronic records.

Principle Two: Ensuring Accountability

The University is committed to ensuring that the records it retains fairly represent the decision-making trail. This means ensuring that there are adequate work practices and safeguards to create an auditable trail enabling decisions to be recorded and linked to the documents or other source material relating to how a decision was arrived at.

Principle Three: Ensuring Legislative Compliance

The University is committed to ensuring that the necessary means are available for it to meet its statutory record keeping obligations so that:

- there are systems of record-keeping in place;
- public access is provided for information held by the University, commensurate with the University's legal obligations under the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002;
- no records are destroyed unless authorised by an approved Records Retention Schedule;
- there are correct methods for destroying records; and
- all members of staff understand their roles and responsibilities regarding the records disposal process.

Principle Four: Ensuring Continuous Improvement

The University is committed to ensuring that its record-keeping practices will continue to meet legislative, best practice and user requirements. This means ensuring that regular reviews of University practices will be undertaken.

Governance Officer (Records Manager)
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