

Records Retention Schedule

Children & Lifelong Learning
Adult and Community Learning Service



Information Governance Unit
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Staffordshire
County Council

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What is a Retention Schedule ?

- A retention schedule is a list of records which need to be retained by the County Council for a designated period of time. The Retention Schedule shows the title of each record, a time period for which records are to be retained, and identifies the reason (legislative, regulatory and / or operational) on which retention is based.
- The existence of this Retention Schedule is a requirement of Staffordshire County Council's Corporate Records Management Policy. It has been developed by the Information Governance Unit in collaboration with Business Unit / Section Managers, and in partnership with Legal Services.
- The Retention Schedule provides consistent instructions for all staff who deal with records, and a formal policy for records retention and disposal. It is not, however, immutable and divergences from the schedule may be appropriate in certain circumstances, so long as liaison is made with the Law & Governance Director.
- Official guidelines on the retention of records used by the majority of SCC Units (including Health & Safety, Personnel, Contractual and Financial Records) can be found in the Staffordshire County Council *General Retention Schedules*, available on the Corporate Intranet Site. The Information Governance Unit is currently working with individual Business Units to produce Retention Schedules which list records specific to each unit.

"A records management service should include the drawing up of retention schedules for all classes of the authority's records and the systematic disposal of those no longer of administrative use...."

Guidance on Section 224, Local Govt Act 1972
Issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, 2000

"Each department will require its respective business units to:

- *Ensure the capture of records (both paper and electronic) that provide evidence of its functional activities.*
- *Establish retention schedules for all areas of work."*

SCC Corporate Records Management Policy

Retention Schedules and the Freedom of Information Act 2000

- The Freedom of Information Act 2000 is intended to promote a culture of openness and accountability amongst public authorities by providing people with rights of access to records held by Staffordshire County Council.
- From 1 January 2005, the County Council must comply with requests for the information that it holds unless an exemption from disclosure applies. The Authority will normally have a maximum of twenty working days to respond to the request, however there are circumstances when this time limit can be extended.
- The Lord Chancellor has also issued a Code of Practice under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act, setting out his views on desirable practice for the keeping, management and disposal of public authority records. The Code of Practice includes a requirement to develop and apply Records Retention Schedules.
- Any freedom of information legislation is only as good as the quality of the records to which it provides access. Such rights are of little use if reliable records are not created in the first place, if they cannot be found when needed or if the arrangements for their disposal are inadequate.

“An appraisal documentation system will ensure consistency in records appraisal and disposal. It should show what records are designated for destruction, the authority under which they are to be destroyed and when they are to be destroyed.

It should also provide background information on the records, such as legislative provisions, functional context and physical arrangement.

Lord Chancellor’s Code of Practice on the Management of Records, issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000

“As from January 2005 , anyone will have a new legal right to request access to any information held by any public body.....My message to all public bodies is: Get your Act together. Prepare now. Don't panic later.”

Richard Thomas, Information Commissioner,
May 2003

Understanding the Retention Schedule

- The Information Governance Unit produces Records Retention Schedules for every Business Unit in Staffordshire County Council, and they all follow a similar format. The graphic below demonstrates how to interpret the schedule:

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Research				
Research & Analysis				
Strategic Corporate Issues	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Economic Research & Analysis	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Demographic Research & Analysis	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Traffic Data Collection & Analysis	Destroy	6 Years	After survey completion	Limitation Act 1980

Types of Record

Action(s) once record has exceeded its retention period

Amount of time for which record should be retained

Event that triggers the start of the retention period

Legal / Regulatory / Business need guiding retention

Description of process

Using the Retention Schedule

This Retention Schedule has been developed to be used in the following ways:



When new records are created

The Retention Schedule should be used as a point of reference in the day-to-day management of records. The most effective point to decide how long a record should be retained, and for what reason, is when that record is created.

When opening a new file, creating an electronic record, or typing a letter, this Retention Schedule will act as a guide to the conditions under which that Record should be managed, stored and ultimately disposed of.



When configuring an electronic records management system

Any Electronic Document & Records Management System should manage not only paper records, but ensure that all legal and business requirements are met in terms of the retention, security and disposal of all electronic records (including e-mail, electronic forms, web site content and images).

The integration of electronic records management into existing business systems must include proper consideration of Retention Schedules to provide a set of consistent legal and operational requirements.



When designing or implementing new paper filing systems.

Any new office system intended to improve the efficiency of paper filing should be designed with a clear understanding of the legal and business requirement for record keeping and when they should eventually be destroyed.

When transferring files to off-site storage



Office space is at a premium and it is rarely possible to retain files on-site for the length of time for which they have to be retained.

The Retention Schedule should always be consulted when transferring files to the Staffordshire County Council Records Centre at Friars Terrace.

When destroying files



In order to protect itself and minimise risk, all businesses should not maintain records longer than they need to; nor should they destroy records sooner than is required

The Retention Schedule provides consistent guidelines on the retention period of all Adult and Community Learning Service records.

Responsibility for Implementation

When a record has reached the end of its specified retention period, a designated person needs to be responsible as the signatory for the destruction process where destruction is the specified action.

In implementing retention policy reference should be made to both generic schedules, for records used by several directorates (which cover corporate contractual, financial, health & safety and personnel records*) and the specific schedules, pertaining to only one particular Department/Service.

The schedules should be regularly updated to account for any changes to business practice and must be reviewed annually as a matter of course.

The responsible authority for this schedule is:

Director (Law & Governance)

Retention Schedule Contents

Function/ Activity	Page	Function Ref.
Adult learner and family learning support	1	CLL/ACL/1
Advice and support provision	1	CLL/ACL/1/1
Advice provision	1	CLL/ACL/1/1/1
Support provision	1	CLL/ACL/1/1/2
Financial support	1	CLL/ACL/12
Grant provision	1	CLL/ACL/1/2/1
Grant application administration	1	CLL/ACL/1/2/1/1
Grant application appeals processing	2	CLL/ACL/1/2/1/2

Grants recovery	2	CLL/ACL/1/2/1/3
Grant monitoring	2	CLL/ACL/1/2/1/4
Learning and activities provision	2	CLL/ACL/2
Consultation and needs analysis assessment	2	CLL/ACL/2/1
Learning provision	2	CLL/ACL/2/2
Learning programme development	2	CLL/ACL/2/2/1
Programme development	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/1/1
Course development and evaluation	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/2
Course risk assessment	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/2/1
Learning venue and resource booking administration	3	CLLACL/2/2/3
Course booking administration	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/4
Course delivery	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/5

Attainment assessment	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/6
Awards administration	3	CLL/ACL/2/2/7
Event management	4	CLL/ACL/2/3
Programme development	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/1
Event portfolio development	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/2
Event planning	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/3
Planning	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/3/1
Event risk assessment	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/3/2
Delegate information pack production	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/4
Delegate booking administration	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/5
Event delivery	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/6
Event evaluation	4	CLL/ACL/2/3/7
Marketing	5	CLL/ACL/3
Human resources management	5	CLL/ACL/4

Recruitment	5	CLL/ACL/4/1
Tutor recruitment	5	CLL/ACL/4/1/1
Volunteer recruitment	5	CLL/ACL/4/1/2
Training	6	CLL/ACL/4/2
Tutor training	6	CLL/ACL/4/2/1

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Adult Learner and Family Learning Support				CLL/ACL/1
Advice and Support Provision				CLL/ACL/1/1
Advice provision				CLL/ACL/1/1/1
Advice provision	Destroy	6 years	Date created	Limitation Act 1980
Support provision				CLL/ACL/1/1/2
Support provision	Destroy	6 years	Date created	Limitation Act 1980
Financial Support				CLL/ACL/1/2
Grant provision				CLL/ACL/1/2/1
Grant application administration	Destroy	6 years (unless longer period specified by external)	End of current financial year	SCC Financial regulations

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
		grant funding body)		
Grant application appeals processing	Destroy	6 years	Date closed	SCC Financial regulations
Grants recovery	Destroy	6 years	End of current financial year	SCC Financial regulations
Grant monitoring	Destroy	6 years	Date closed	SCC Financial regulations
Learning and activities provision				CLL/ACL/2
Consultation and needs analysis assessment				CLL/ACL/2/1
Consultation and needs analysis assessment	Destroy	1 year	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Supporting research material	Destroy	1 year	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Learning provision				CLL/ACL/2/2
Learning programme development	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Programme development	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Course development and evaluation	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Course risk assessment	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	Limitation Act 1980
Learning venue and resource booking administration	Destroy	6 years	Date closed (date of learning course/event)	SCC Business Need SCC Financial regulations
Course booking administration	Destroy	6 years	Date closed (date of learning course/event)	SCC Business Need SCC Financial regulations
Course delivery	Destroy	6 years	Course competition	SCC Business Need
Attainment assessment	Destroy	6 years	Date of course	SCC Business Need
Awards administration	Destroy	6 years	Date of course	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Event management				CLL/ACL/2/3
Programme development	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Events portfolio development	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business Need
Event planning				CLL/ACL/2/3/3
Planning	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	SCC Business need
Event risk assessment	Destroy	6 years	After superseded	Limitation Act 1980
Delegate information pack production	Destroy	6 years	Following one-off event or superseded	SCC Business Need
Delegate booking administration	Destroy	6 years	Date closed (date of learning course)	SCC Business Need
Event delivery	Destroy	6 years	Event competition	SCC Business Need
Event evaluation	Destroy	6 years	Date closed (date event)	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Marketing				CLL/ACL/3
Publication of press releases and editorial	Destroy	6 years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Advertising and media buying	Destroy	6 years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Advertising distribution	Destroy	1 year	After end of year	SCC Business Need
Directorate Activity: Human Resources Management				CLL/ACL/4
Recruitment				CLL/ACL/4/1
Tutor recruitment	Review	6 years	Following termination of contract	Limitation Act 1980
Volunteer recruitment	Review	6 years	Following termination of contract/resignation	Limitation Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Training				CLL/ACL/4/2
Tutor training	Review	6 years	Following termination of contract	Limitation Act 1980