

Records Retention Schedule

Education & Lifelong Learning Directorate
Schools Property unit



Information Governance Unit
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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 identified 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 Director Law & Governance.
- Official guidelines on the retention of records used by the majority of SCC Units (including Health & Safety, Personnel, 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

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 in the life-cycle of any record at which to decide how long it 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 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 Development Services 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 covering corporate, 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)

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School Property Unit Retention Schedule

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Programme Management				
Programme development, monitoring and review	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Financial Regulations
Capital Programme Delivery: annual performance report	Retain Permanently: Destroy copies after 6 years			
Capital Programme – School site development	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Early Years new build & remodelling	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Capital Programme – new build and refurbishment	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Asset Management				
Development & maintenance of Asset Management Plan	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
CAD Drawings	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Record of suitability assessment	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Condition assessment	Destroy	21 Years	Date Created	Limitation Act 1980
Sale & lease of land and buildings – approval of terms	Destroy	1 Year	Sale or end of lease	SCC Business Need
School Premises Liaison	Destroy	12 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Estate management – Site identification and acquisition	Destroy	12 Years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Land acquisition, licensees, easements & leases – approval of terms	Destroy	1 Year	Following end of agreement / license period	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Directorate Activity: Project Management				
Client liaison, stakeholder feedback & complaints	Destroy	6 Years	Date Created	SCC Business Need
Design Feedback	Destroy	6 Years	From end of contract maintenance period	SCC Business Need
Project CDM health & safety file compilation	Destroy	6 Years	Following end of life of structure / development	SCC Business Need guided by Limitation Act 1980 and Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Contract Review (inc. conceptual design)	Destroy	6 Years	From end of contract maintenance period	SCC Business Need
Project feasibility study	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Project estimate preparation	Destroy	6 Years	Date created	SCC Business Need
Project review	Destroy	6 Years	From end of contract maintenance period	SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Revised technical specification	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of	SCC liabilities / interests		SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Drawing summary register	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of	SCC liabilities / interests		SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Technical Studies and reports	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of	SCC liabilities / interests		SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Revised drawings (as built)	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of	SCC liabilities / interests		SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance)

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
				Regulations 1994
Technical Approval	Destroy	6 Years	End of life of structure or development	SCC Business Need guided by Limitation Act 1980 and Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Project supervision – design phase	Destroy	6 Years	End of contract maintenance period	Limitation Act 1980
Pre-tender Health & Safety Plan (design phase)	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of SCC liabilities / interests			SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Risk Assessments (design phase)	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of SCC liabilities / interests			SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Risk assessment (construction phase)	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of SCC liabilities / interests			SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Record of approval (construction phase)	Retain until end of life of structure / redevelopment of site / end of SCC liabilities / interests			SCC Business Need guided by Construction (Design and Maintenance) Regulations 1994
Site management – record of fault and action	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Site management – record of sampling, testing and approval of terms	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Site management – Site management – record of changes to design and approval (as built)	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Site management – Completion certificate	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Site management – Record of test results	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Site management – Photographic record of construction / works	Review	6 Years	End of project	SCC Business Need
Site management – Maintenance certificate	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Site management – Record of changes to specifications and approval (as built)	Transfer to CDM Health & Safety file on practical completion			SCC Business Need
Directorate Activity: Maintenance				
Building Maintenance	Destroy	21 Years	Date Created	Limitation Act 1980
Site Maintenance	Destroy	21 Years	Date Created	Limitation Act 1980
Directorate Activity: Improvement of Disabled Access to Schools				
Strategic Development: access audit report	Retain whilst building is in SCC ownership, interests or liability			SCC Business Need
Reactive improvement	Retain whilst building is in SCC ownership, interests or liability			SCC Business Need

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Aids and equipment	Destroy	*	*end of life of aid / equipment	SCC Business Need
Directorate Activity: Information Provision				
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
Finished copies of publications	Retain Permanently			SCC Business Need
Records of communication with printer	Destroy	*	*following publication	SCC Business Need
Final text, artwork and layout plan	Destroy	*	*when superseded	SCC Business Need
Advice – general enquiries	Destroy	1 Year	Date created	SCC Business Need