

Records Retention Schedule

General Retention Schedule (GRS) 1 Financial Records



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 Corporate Director (Resources)
- 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.

"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

"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**

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

- Retention Schedules are updated annually by the Information Governance Unit in collaboration with officers from each Section.
- 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, when records should be transferred to the Staffordshire County Council records centre, 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 this Unit's 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:

Corporate Director (Resources)

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Financial Records Retention Schedule

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Activity: Accountancy / Financial				
Audit sheets - ledger postings	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Contracts, Costs & Purchasing Ledgers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Creditors Ledgers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Preparation of Statutory Accounts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Abstract of Accounts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Taxes Management Act 1970
Budgetary control records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Costing records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Estimate working papers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Financial Ledgers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Grant Claim records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Investment records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Journals	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Records re: closing ledgers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Telephone call records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
VAT Claims	Review	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	VAT Act 1994 Pending ruling re VAT claims period
VAT records	Review	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	VAT Act 1994 Pending ruling re VAT claims period
Voluntary fund accounts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Financial Audits	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
General Correspondence (further advances)	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Loan Applications - successful	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Loan Applications - unsuccessful	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Capital works tabulations	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Inventory records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Land Searches	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Members allowances (statutory registers)	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Postal remittance registers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Road fund licence registers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Stock lists	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Activity: Bank				

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Cheque Registers	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Dishonoured Cheques	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Fresh Cheques	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Paid / Presented Cheques	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Stoppage of cheque payment notices	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Unpaid cheque records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Bank deposit books / slips / butts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Bank statements	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Cancelled Cheques	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Cheque book / butts for all accounts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Loan records & correspondence	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Reconciliation files / sheets	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Returned cheque records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Bank deposit summaries	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Activity: Credit				
Copy orders	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	VAT Act 1994
Credit notes	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6	Date Closed	Limitation Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
		years		
Creditor Invoices	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Delivery notes	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	VAT Act 1994
Imprest records / receipts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Periodic Payment records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Details of Advances	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Repayment	Limitations Act 1980
Mortgage Application Forms	Destroy	6 months	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Recoveries documentation	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitation Act 1980
Car mileage records	Destroy	End of lease / repayment + 6 Y	Date Created	Limitation Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Expenses claims	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Travel warrants	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Activity: Income				
Cash books	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Debtor accounts	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Income correspondence	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Income posting slips and tabulations	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Periodic income records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Receipt books	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
		years		
Record of receipt books issued	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Registrar's quarterly returns	Destroy	End of current financial year + 2 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Till Rolls	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Activity: Payroll				
Claims for additional hours	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Correspondence re: changes affecting pay, hours, allowances, increments	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980
Jury Service Loss of Earnings Form	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitation Act 1980
Non-statutory payroll deductions	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Limitations Act 1980

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Notice of change to Bank Details	Destroy	Termination of employment + 7 Y	Date Created	SCC Business Need guided by Data Protection Act 1998
P11D Correspondence	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
Promotion / Pay Increase / Ext of Contract Correspondence	Destroy	Termination of employment + 7 Y	Date Created	SCC Business Need guided by Data Protection Act 1998
Relocation Correspondence	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Salary Advices	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Financial Services Act 1986
Statutory Maternity Pay	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	PA1.806
Statutory Maternity Pay records and calculations	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Statutory Maternity Pay (General) Regulations 1986
Statutory Sick Pay records and calculations	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Statutory Sick Pay records, calculations, certifications	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982
Working Family Tax Credit	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	SCC Financial Regulations
BACS ammendments and listings	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Copy payslips	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Monthly BACS listings	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
NI number changes	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Payroll adjustment documentation	Destroy	2 Y	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Prelists	Destroy	1 Y	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Salaries Correspondence	Destroy	3 Y	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
SSP variations	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Tax and NI Payments	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Tax code notifications	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Union documents (subs, records)	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Closed	Taxes Management Act 1970
Activity: Tax				
Expenses claims	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
General Correspondence	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Income Tax Returns	Destroy	End of current financial year + 3 years	Date Created	Income Tax (Employment) Regulations 1993
P38	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
		years		
P45	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
P46	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
P6	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
P60	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
P9	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Created	Taxes Management Act 1970
Activity: Technical Services				
Car leasing agreements	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	End of loan / repayment	Limitations Act 1980
Car loan records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	End of loan / repayment	SCC Financial Regulations

Records	Action	Retention Period	Trigger (event that prompts start of Retention Period)	Authority guiding record creation & retention
Leasing Records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	Limitations Act 1980
Leasing records	Destroy	End of lease / repayment + 6 Y	Date Closed	Limitation Act 1980
Cash management - Banking contract	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Termination of Contract	SCC Financial Regulations
Cash management - Bond issues		retain indefinitely		SCC Financial Regulations
Cash management - Investment Records	Destroy	End of current financial year + 6 years	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Pension fund investments - Investment Managers Contract Notes	Destroy	3 Y paper or 6 Y computer records	Date Closed	SCC Financial Regulations
Pension fund investments - Investment Managers Contracts	Destroy	6 Y after termination	Termination of Contract	SCC Financial Regulations