RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Policy Statement

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) recognises that the effective management of records and documents is necessary to:

1. Support core business functions and decision making
2. Comply with legal and regulatory obligations
3. Contribute to the effective overall management of the organisation.

Records management applies to the creation of reliable, authentic and accessible records and the controlled retention and disposal.

UKRI therefore recognises records management as an essential corporate function and aims to ensure the necessary levels of organisational support to enable its effectiveness and public accountability.
Management Statement

The Records Management Policy and Procedure (the ‘Records Management Policy’ has been agreed with the Trade Union Side and complies with statutory legislation, and HM Revenue and Customs requirements. For the purposes of this policy the use of the word ‘employee’ covers UKRI employees, including those employed on temporary or fixed term contracts. It may also apply to non UKRI employees such as visitors, agency staff, and students. For advice on the application of the policy contact the UKRI HR team.

References

1. Public Records Act 1958
2. General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679
3. Data Protection Act 2018
5. Environmental Information Regulations 2004
6. Protection of Freedoms Act 2012
1. Principles

1.1 The aim of this policy is to define a framework for managing UKRI’s records to ensure that the organisation:

1.1.1 provides an effective framework for the management of corporate records and documents and delivery of systems and processes, including appropriate staff training

1.1.2 creates and captures accurate, authentic and reliable records that support decision-making processes and policy-making

1.1.3 maintains records to meet UKRI’s business needs and to support business as usual processes

1.1.4 maintains records to provide evidence of UKRI’s activities and decisions for accountability and transparency

1.1.5 disposes of records that are no longer required appropriately

1.1.6 identifies and protects vital records to support business continuity

1.1.7 conforms to all relevant legal and statutory requirements relating to record-keeping

1.1.8 supports information dissemination and sharing across the organisation, and where appropriate with external stakeholders

1.1.9 selects records that help capture and access the corporate memory to support greater understanding of UKRI’s history, research and structure

1.1.10 supports the efficient use of resources of UKRI, including staff and systems.

2. Scope

2.1 The aim of this policy is to provide a framework for managing UKRI’s records by setting out practices for the creation, maintenance and disposal of records regardless of the form they are in.

2.2 Effective records management ensures that UKRI has access to reliable, authentic and accessible information in a timely manner to support decision-making. UKRI aims to create an environment where:

2.2.1 records and information are created, managed and protected based on common processes and procedures to ensure quality, authenticity and consistency

2.2.2 records are held for as long as necessary for legal, regulatory and business reasons and are disposed of appropriately

2.2.3 records can be accessed by appropriate staff and shared securely over time

2.2.4 all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to record-keeping and are trained and supported to carry them out in accordance with this policy.
Records Management Policy

2.3 Records are defined as all information which provides evidence of business activity and for which there are legal, regulatory and business requirements for retention.

2.4 Documents are defined as information which is used on an operational or informational basis but that does not have corporate value.

2.5 These definitions apply regardless of format of records or documents. More detailed definitions are available in the Glossary of Records Management Terms.

2.6 UKRI is a body covered by the Public Records Acts of 1958 and 1967 and is required by law to manage its records in accordance with its legal and regulatory environment. UKRI adheres to the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on Records Management and other relevant records and information management related standards and regulations. These are detailed in the accompanying Guidance document.

2.7 This Policy applies to the management of UKRI corporate records in the head offices, Research England and the research establishments. The policy is supported by retention schedules relating to core business functions within head office, Research England and across the administrative structure throughout UKRI.
3. Records creation and maintenance

3.1 UKRI is committed to creating and maintaining relevant and accurate records in both paper and electronic format of business activities. Appropriate systems must be in place to document decisions and activities. The records management framework identifies classes of records that need to be captured to document the functions and activities of the organisation.

3.2 Records created by UKRI shall be arranged according to the agreed corporate file plan. Records must contain metadata in order to be identifiable and accessible, and in order to provide administrative context needed for the effective management of the records.

3.3 All records must be stored in an appropriate records management system. Within the records management system records must be registered and version controlled to ensure authenticity and reliability.

3.4 The records management team provides guidance on naming conventions, metadata, indexing, and protective marking of records and the application of corporate value to documents.

3.5 Where the same records are held at both UKRI head office and UKRI research establishments, it is the record held at UKRI head office that is declared as the original and the record held at UKRI establishment that is declared a copy.

4. Records creation and disposal

4.1 Records must only be retained for as long as they are needed to meet UKRI’s business need, relevant legal and regulatory requirements and appropriate resources. Records retention schedules for each of UKRI’s functions specify the period of time for which each class of records needs to be retained to fulfil these requirements.

4.2 Retention schedules cover each of the core areas of UKRI business and have been established for the following functions and can be found on the UKRI EDRMS:

4.2.1 Communications and Engagement
4.2.2 Governance, Assurance, Risk and Information Governance
4.2.3 Office Estate (non-scientific)
4.2.4 Finance
4.2.5 Commercial / Procurement
4.2.6 Health and Safety
4.2.7 Human Resources
4.2.8 Digital and Technology
4.2.9 Private Office
4.2.10 Research Funding Delivery
4.2.11 Legal
4.2.12 Strategy, Policy and Analysis

4.2.13 Research Establishment Management

4.3 Records which demonstrate the significance of the functions and activities of UKRI and which provide information relevant to the public are transferred to The National Archives (TNA) for permanent preservation in time to meet the requirements of the 20-year rule. In addition to corporate governance records and grant files, these records also include proposals relating to the grant or unit funding for major scientific breakthroughs, major investments such as the establishment, review and closure of establishments, files relating to scientific leaders (e.g. Nobel Prize winners, Unit Directors and members of the executive team), and policy development and review. The selection and transfer of corporate records is handled in line with TNA’s Appraisal Policy and its general guidelines for the selection of records.

4.4 Records that have been selected for permanent preservation at TNA are reviewed, prior to transfer, for sensitivity in regard to UKRI’s obligations under the General Data Protection Regulations 2016/679 (GDPR), the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR) and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

4.5 In compliance with the retention periods stated in the retention schedules, business records that are no longer needed to support business activities, and which are not selected for permanent preservation will be destroyed appropriately, subject to an internal approval process.

5. Access to records

5.1 All records, both in paper and electronic form, must be maintained and stored in such a way that they can be easily identified and located to support business activities, including access or audit purposes, using established procedures for secure storage and access.

5.2 Any movement of physical or electronic records needs to be controlled and documented to ensure a full audit trail and the ability to access records at all times.

5.3 All UKRI records must be accessible and retrievable to support the office in responding to requests from individuals who have a legitimate right of access.

6. Responsibilities

6.1 The senior manager with overall responsibility for this policy is Deputy Director, GARI.

6.2 The Departmental Record Officer (DRO) is responsible for the policy, high level principles and objectives.

6.3 The UKRI Knowledge and Information Manager is responsible for implementation and the monitoring of compliance across UKRI including the development of departmental/group retention schedules and procedures, and the training of staff, and for advising UKRI facilities locally.

6.4 Directors are responsible for the compliance of the policy and the application of its principles in their areas.

6.5 All members of staff are responsible for the proper management of the records they create and use in accordance with UKRI Records Management Policy and guidance relating to records management.

7. Communication and dissemination
7.1 This policy must be provided directly to all staff likely to work with corporate records as part of their induction and training programme.

7.2 The policy is available to all staff via the UKRI Hub.

7.3 UKRI Hub contains a records management section where all key records management policies, procedures and guidance are published and regularly updated by the records management team.

8. Records management and assurance

8.1 Control mechanisms in place to ensure that UKRI records management policy is correctly applied and processes are implemented appropriately are further outlined in this section.

8.2 Records retention schedules are developed in consultation with stakeholders across UKRI. Retention schedules provide clear guidance on how long to retain corporate information based on legal and business requirements.

8.3 Agreed retention schedules are applied to all UKRI's corporate records.

8.4 Compliance with records management policies and procedures is reported annually and through external audits.

9. Compliance

9.1 Breaches of this Policy will be investigated, and appropriate actions taken.
Appendix A  Overview of Retention schedules

Records retention schedules are created for the following UKRI functions and can be found on the UKRI EDRMS. Level one summaries are provided below.

Communications and Engagement
The communications retention schedule relates to the function of raising and maintaining UKRI’s public profile and of publishing information about or relating to UKRI for the public and/or internally. The schedule includes publications, internal and external relations records.

Governance, Assurance, Risk and Information governance
The corporate governance retention schedule relates to the function of strategic management and planning for the delivery of UKRI and Councils business objectives. The schedule includes retention periods for the UKRI Board and sub-committees, Council and Council sub-committees and Research Board meeting records as well as UKRI corporate policy and planning documentation.

Office Estate (non-scientific)
The office estate retention schedule relates to the function of managing the working, storage and living space within premises as well as the acquiring, constructing, maintaining and disposing of property. The schedule includes property maintenance, management and evaluation records, facilities management and project management records.

Finance
The financial management retention schedule relates to the function of managing UKRI’s financial resources. The schedule includes contractual records, management, statutory and financial accounting records, audit and asset management records as well as payroll records.

Commercial Procurement
The procurement retention schedule relates to the function of providing favourable conditions under which goods, services or construction projects can be obtained from third parties. The schedule includes tendering, contract operation and monitoring records.

Health and Safety
The health and safety retention schedule relates to the function of implementing and co-ordinating health and safety standards and requirements to which UKRI is either subject or voluntarily abides. The schedule includes accidents and incidents, reporting, training, occupational health, audit and inspection, scientific premises and plant and equipment records.

Human Resources
The human resources retention schedule relates to the function of managing all employee matters at UKRI. The schedule includes personnel files, recruitment, contracts, absence, occupational health, employee relations, rewards and pensions records.

Digital & Technology
The information management retention schedule relates to the function of managing UKRI’s information resources. The schedule includes Data Protection and Freedom of Information, ERP and science reporting, IT service delivery, knowledge management and records and archives management records.

Private Office
The Private Office retention schedule relates to the management of the Chief Executive’s and Chief Operating Officer’s diary, correspondence and meetings. The schedule contains diaries, correspondence, and meeting and project records.
**Research Funding Delivery**
The research programme management retention schedule relates to the function of assessing, awarding and monitoring funding for scientific research, units, centres and institutes. The schedule includes grants and research training management, units and large scale-investment records.

**Legal**
The Legal retention schedule relates to Legal Casework, Intellectual Property Rights Management and Commercialisation and Technology Transfer.

**Strategy, Evaluation and International Policy**
The strategy, evaluation and international policy retention schedule relates to the function of developing, maintaining and evaluating UKRI corporate strategy and international policy. The schedule includes research strategy, corporate reports and analysis as well as overseas office administration records.

**Research Establishment Management**
The unit research management retention schedule relates to the function of managing primary research records and of applying for funding. The schedule includes various types of primary research records, applications to and agreements with funders.
Appendix B - Application of retention process at head office

Retention period will be applied to UK Research and Innovation’s corporate records, both paper and electronic, as described in the retention schedules and when a retention period comes to an end, the following process will be initiated:

[Diagram of retention process]

- Retention end date is triggered
  - Retention Action
    - Destroy
    - Archive
    - Transfer to TNA
    - Appraise
      - Appraisal team: RM rep, FOI rep, Subject specialists
      - Make decision based on appraisal criteria, e.g., PI expertise, Research subject, historical value, continued business value
      - This triggers the approval process for appraisal decisions as detailed in Annex 3 above

- TNA Approval of selection and destruction
  - Accept
    - Accept
    - TNA Approval of sensitivity review
      - Sign off decision or action
      - Carry out decision: Destroy and transfer to TNA
      - Catalogue and package to TNA standard
      - TNA Approval of transfer material
        - Transfer
  - Reject

### Appendix C - Document Control Sheet

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### 10. Policy Review

10.1 This policy should be regularly reviewed and agreed upon by management and Trade Unions, to incorporate any legislative change.