

## CORPORATE POLICY ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out Education Leeds' requirements for the effective and efficient management of records in compliance with Part 1, Section 6 of the Lord Chancellor's Code of Practice on the Management of Records issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

It is intended that this policy will provide a basic framework sufficient for Education Leeds to be able to meet its legal and regulatory obligations as well as professional standards relevant to records management.

- 1.2 Education Leeds recognises that records are corporate assets, since they reflect the business requirements of the organisation. Such records require proper management throughout their life; from creation to disposal. Compliance with this policy will ensure that Education Leeds can demonstrate evidence and accountability in addition to providing information about decisions and activities for as long as is required. The role of records management is to ensure that Education Leeds is supported in its aim to be a well managed organisation.

- 1.3 "Records management is the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence and information of business activities and transactions in the form of records." (ISO 15489)

### 2 Statement of Policy

- 2.1 It is the policy of Education Leeds that authentic, reliable and useable records are created, which are capable of supporting business functions and activities for as long as they are required.

- 2.2 This will be achieved by creating a policy and procedural framework which ensures that:

- 2.2.1 Records are made accessible to enable well informed and proper judgements to be made
- 2.2.2 Records are kept securely and protected from accidental loss, and destruction.
- 2.2.3 Records are kept for no longer than is necessary, in accordance with legal and professional obligations and the Education Leeds "Record Retention Policy".

- 2.2.4 Records are disposed of appropriately, in accordance with legal and regulatory obligations

- 2.2.5 Staff are made aware of and trained in, the management of records within their service area

- 2.3 Education Leeds will ensure that the appropriate technical, organisational and human resource elements exist to make this possible.

### 3. Legislative Background

- 3.1 The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 have a significant effect on the record keeping arrangements of public authorities.

- 3.2 Under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the Lord Chancellor has a duty to issue a code of practice on records management. Compliance with this code will ensure that public authorities are able to meet their legislative obligations under the Freedom of Information Act

Of particular importance is that Education Leeds is able to respond to requests for access to information within 20 working days; 15 school days where the information relates to an individual's educational record or 40 days where the information relates to other personal information.

## 4. Scope

4.1 For the purposes of this policy, records are to be defined as:

“recorded information, in any form, created or received and maintained by Education Leeds or any employee thereof in the transaction of business or conduct of affairs and retained as evidence”.

This policy encompasses all records created by Education Leeds regardless of media type (including paper, electronic, e-mail, audio-visual etc.).

4.2 Records Management is a corporate issue. This policy therefore applies to all Services, Teams, Sections and employees of Education Leeds.

## 5. Aims

5.1 The policy aims to define a framework for managing Education Leeds records in order to ensure that:

- 5.1.1 Records are present for as long as they are required, in order that an audit trail is available of the decisions and transactions of Education Leeds.
- 5.1.2 Records can be easily accessed by those of appropriate authority
- 5.1.3 Records can be interpreted with ease to establish the context of the record, who created the document, during which business process and how the record is related to other records;
- 5.1.4 Records can be trusted to reliably represent the information that was actually used in, or created by, the business process and its integrity and authenticity can be demonstrated
- 5.1.5 The qualities of the record can be maintained through time so that accessibility, interpretation and trustworthiness can be maintained for as long as the record is needed. This is particularly important for electronic records

## 6. Roles & Responsibilities

6.1 All staff who create, receive and use records will have records management responsibilities at some level depending on the nature of the role they fulfil.

### 6.2 Information Management Team - Information Policy Section

The Information Policy Section will hold functional responsibility for corporate records management initiatives in compliance with Part 1, Section 5 of the Lord Chancellor’s Code of Practice on the Management of Records.

- 6.2.1 Responsible for creating a corporate framework for the management of records within Education Leeds, as set out in this policy.
- 6.2.2 Responsible for ensuring that the records of Education Leeds comply with legal and professional obligations
- 6.2.3 Responsible for issuing advice and guidance to members of staff
- 6.2.4 Responsible for complying with requests for information in satisfaction of statutory rights

### 6.3 Service and Team Management

- 6.3.1 Responsible for ensuring that policies agreed by Education Leeds Board are implemented within the Team/Sections
- 6.3.2 Responsible for ensuring that appropriate staff are designated to assist with the implementation

- of Records Management procedures within the Team/Sections.
- 6.3.3 Responsible for ensuring that staff are supported in terms of training and development in adhering to Records Management policy and procedures.
- 6.3.4 Responsible for ensuring that concerns are brought to the attention of Team Management and the Information Policy Section at the earliest opportunity.
- 6.3.5 Responsible for the undertaking of an information audit to identify current information assets and to enable the swift response to requests for information made under statutory rights

## 6.4 Individual Employees

Any and all records created by employees of Education Leeds are corporate records and as such are the property of Education Leeds. Individual employees are therefore responsible for ensuring that:

- 6.4.1 The policy is adhered to
- 6.4.2 Actions and decisions taken in the course of Education Leeds business are properly recorded in a legible manner, using professional language
- 6.4.3 Catalogue information is recorded in the properties of each electronic document, including subject, author, keywords and category together with a brief summary of the document's content
- 6.4.4 Version control is used to ensure that latest revisions of documents are clearly evident, including the month and year as well as version number
- 6.4.5 Records are kept and stored in a manner accessible by all employees with appropriate authority
- 6.4.6 Records are kept in a secure manner appropriate to the sensitivity of their content
- 6.4.7 Where records are essential to the day to day business of Education Leeds, contingency plans are in place to ensure that functions of the company can continue in the event of a disaster type incident
- 6.4.8 Where records need to be locally archived that a log is kept of the content of each storage box including a schedule of when records can be disposed of. Also that records are stored in a manner compliant with Health and Safety legislation and considerate of other users of archive storage facilities.
- 6.4.9 Records are disposed of in accordance with the corporate record retention policy ensuring that this is done to confidential standards where appropriate
- 6.4.10 Records of historical interest are transferred to the West Yorkshire Archive Service (as set out in the record retention policy) at the end of their useful life.

## 7 **Document and Records Management Programme**

- 7.1 The Information Policy Section will implement the policy by developing a Document and Records Management Programme that will include the creation of a series of corporate standards, guidance notes, and procedures.
- 7.2 Since all employees have responsibility for records management at some level it is essential that everyone understands their record management responsibilities as set out in this policy and associated guidance.
- 7.3 Senior managers will ensure that staff responsible for managing records are appropriately trained and that all staff understand the need for effective records management.
- 7.4 A training programme will be established to ensure that all staff are aware of their obligations in relation to Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Records Management.

## 8. **Policy Monitoring and Review**

- 8.1 Compliance with the policy and related standards and guidance will be monitored by the Information Policy Section in collaboration with a nominated individual from each Service/Team/Section.
- 8.2 This policy will be reviewed two years after implementation by the Information Policy Section and then on a programme of review in line with associated policies such as those dealing with the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts.

## ANNEX A

### Key Definitions

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#### Catalogue Information

Information which describes the document's content at a glance. Usually includes a subject heading, name of the author, keywords relevant to the document's content (separated by commas), category (i.e. guidance, report, policy etc.) and a brief summary of the document's purpose.

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#### Classification

Systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logical structured conventions, methods and procedural rules represented in a classification system.

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#### Destruction

Process of eliminating or deleting records beyond any possible reconstruction

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#### Document

A document is usually taken to be "the smallest unit of filing, generally a single letter, form, report" (Robek, Brown and Stephens 1995).

For example forms, picture postcards, advertising posters and reference books are all documents

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#### Electronic Document

An electronic document is a document that has been captured within any Education Leeds ICT system i.e. office applications such as Word, Excel, Lotus Notes, Shared Network Drives etc. and any electronic document management system. It therefore applies to documents generated, scanned images of paper documents and emails.

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#### File

A file is a collection of documents – either a physical file of paper documents or a notional collection of electronic documents with a common theme.

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#### Indexing

The process of establishing access points to facilitate retrieval of records and/or information

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#### Metadata

Data describing context, content and structure of records and their management through time

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#### Record

A record is information created, received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

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## Records Management

field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of records, including processes for capturing and maintaining evidence of and information about business activities and transaction in the form of records.

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## Retention Schedule

A retention schedule is a timetable detailing the period of time for which records must be kept before final disposal.

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## Version Control

Method by which the latest version of a document and the date that the revision was made can be derived (e.g. Guidance for Record Creation Ver 1 Sep 04)

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## ANNEX B

### Related Legislation, Standards and Policies

#### Legislation

- [Data Protection Act 1998](#),
  - [Environmental Information Regulations 1992](#)
  - [Freedom of Information 2000](#),
    - Code of Practice on the discharge of public authorities functions under Part I of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 - dealing with requests for information
    - Code of Practice on the management of records
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#### Professional Standards

- ISO 15489 standard on best practice in records management
  - ISO 176699 standard on Information Security Management
  - DISC PD 0008:1999 Code of practice for legal admissibility and evidential weight of information stored electronically
  - DISC PD 0010:1997 The principles of good practice for information management
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#### Internal Policy

- Email Use Policy
  - Record Retention Policy
  - Personal Data Handling Policy
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#### Professional Guidance

- [Public Record Office Standards](#):
  - [Retention Guidelines for Local Authorities issued by the Records Management Society of Great Britain \(2002\)](#)
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