

Using the Common Records Schedule to Manage Your Records (and other handy tips)

January 2015



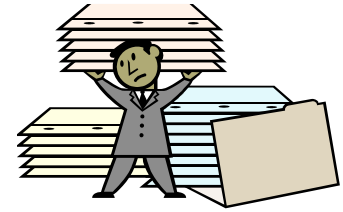
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Overview

- Records:
 - are an asset that should be managed like any other asset
 - provide evidence of activities accomplished, decisions taken, legal rights and obligations
 - document statutory, regulatory, and policy compliance



Why manage records?



1) Meet legal and regulatory requirements

- statutory obligations on the University (e.g., *Income Tax Act*, *MTCU Act*, *Occupational Health & Safety Act*, *FIPPA*)
- evidence of York's legal rights and entitlements and obligations (e.g., contracts and agreements)

2) Achieve operational efficiency

- have access to information when we need it because it is: organized, kept only as long as required, discarded when no longer of use
- leads to: better decision-making and customer service; more efficient use of staff time; improved space management (physical and computer resources)

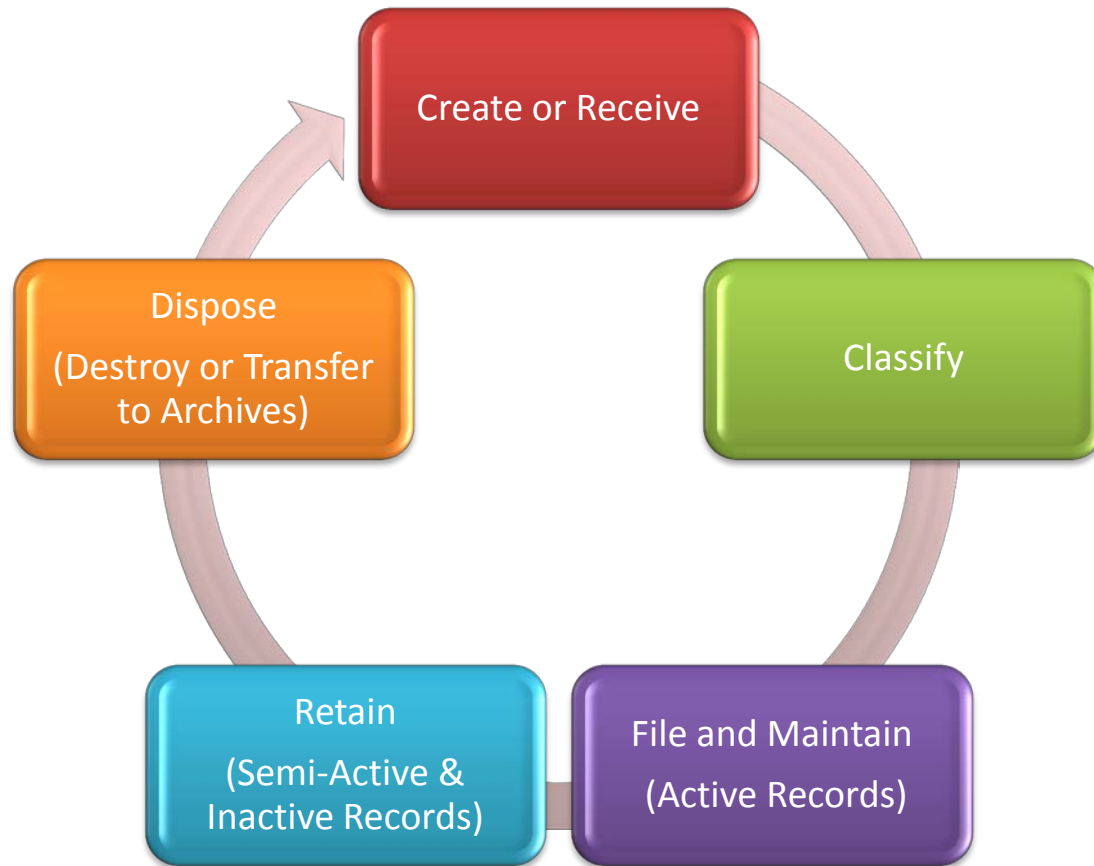
3) Preserve records of historical value

- identify records of long-term historical value to document York's place in the world

Records and Information Management Policy

- The University shall:
 - promote orderly and efficient **creation, use, maintenance, retention and disposition** of records, and provide for records to be retained and preserved or destroyed according to legal, fiscal and statutory requirements, archival value and administrative or operational needs
 - provide for the **preservation** of those records which will document its activities and history
 - develop **practical guidelines** for records and information management at the University, including a general framework for managing records that are common to university offices
 - take the necessary steps to maintain its records, including personal information, with sufficient **security to protect privacy and confidentiality**, and **permit disclosure of records and information where appropriate** (see *York University Policy on Access to Information and Protection of Privacy* and *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*)
- Units shall:
 - create , receive, use and maintain records that relate to the administration or operation of the University; these records are and remain the **property of the University**

The records lifecycle



Key tool: Common Records Schedule

- Common Records Schedule (<http://crs.apps06.yorku.ca/>):
 - applies uniform classification, organization, retention and disposition rules to University records
 - applies to records in all areas of the University
 - applies regardless of how records are created or organized
 - applies to records in all formats and media
 - does **not** apply to:
 - teaching and research materials
 - records of separate corporations (e.g., YFS, YUDC)
 - “personal” or transitory records

Functions and file classes

- Common Records Schedule is organized into 11 functional areas:

ADG Administration and Governance

CAM Campus Services

CPR Communications and Public Relations

EQP Equipment and Supplies

FCL Facilities and Property

FIN Finance

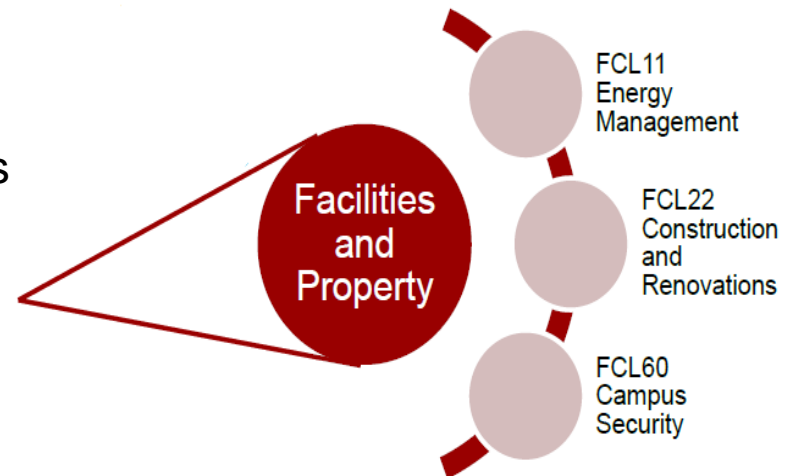
HRS Human Resources

INF Information Technology and Information Management

RES Research

STU Students

TCH Teaching and Learning



File classes

- Each function (e.g., FIN Finance) is broken down into file classes:
 - File class is a group of related records that support and document activities, related tasks and transactions
 - Each file class has a code and title

File Class Code	File Class Title
ADG35	Contracts and Agreements
FIN18	Student Accounts
FCL21	Lease Administration

- Each function also has five standard file classes:
 - 00 Policies, Procedures, Standards
 - 01 General
 - 02 Reports and Statistics
 - 03 Committees
 - 99 Reference and Information

Structure of the CRS

- File class is the basic unit of the CRS
- CRS names OPR for each file class of records with specific retention/disposition
- Offices that are not OPR have “other copies”

ABC00	Title of File Class	
Three letter code for function area plus number code for each file class	Description of file class and examples of types of records that fit into this group	
	(1) Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR) Office responsible for keeping official or legal copy of record	(2) Retention: retention period for official record in office of primary responsibility
		(3) Disposition: whether record should be retained permanently by the unit, destroyed or transferred to the University Archives
	(4) Other Copies Copies kept by units other than the Office of Primary Responsibility for operational use or convenience, as well as alternate formats in OPR	Retention: retention period for copies (no longer than retention period for OPR)
		Disposition: method of destruction
	(5) See Also A cross-reference to other similar or related file classes	
	(6) Retention Rationale A brief explanation of the underlying principles behind the retention periods. Often retention is based on legislation, regulation, anticipated operational use and/or current practice.	
	(7) Filing Guidelines A brief description of any special filing considerations. These guidelines may more fully describe which records can be removed from a file and what is to be done with records once the retention period has ended.	

File Class Example

FIN18

Student Accounts

Consists of records relating to collection and management of tuition and other fees payable by York students. Records may include student accounts statements, records dealing with invoicing, payments and recoveries of tuition fees, issue of receipts for tax purposes or tuition or other fees.

Office of Primary Responsibility

Student Financial Services

Retention

7 years after payment of account or closing of file

Disposition

Destroy

Other Copies

Retention

2 years after last action

Disposition

Destroy

See Also

[FIN18-05 - Student Accounts - Tuition Fees History](#)

Retention Rationale

The Income Tax Act, R.S.C. 1985, c. 1 (5th Supp.) s.230 (4)(b) requires that books and records be kept until the expiration of six years from the end of the last taxation year.

File classes and sub-classes

- There are a few instances where records within a file class require a different retention and/or disposition – in this case, sub-classes have been created

File Class	Retention
FCL22 Construction and Renovations	7 years after completion of the project
FCL22-05 Construction & Renovations – Building Plans	Retain for life of the building

- ! Units should not create new file class or sub-class numbers. If you think your unit requires a new file class or sub-class, contact the IPO immediately.
- No need to rename all existing unit files and folders to match the CRS, but important to map files to the correct CRS file class code, e.g.,
 - **Financial Accounts of Students** rather than **Student Accounts** is ok, but file should be managed under/mapped to FIN18

4 steps for managing University records



- **Step 1: Classify records** using the records classification framework.
- **Step 2: File and maintain records.**
- **Step 3: Retain records** for the length of time specified in the Common Records Schedule.
- **Step 4: Dispose of records** as specified in the Common Records Schedule once the retention period has ended.

Best practice: create a Records and Information Management (RIM) protocol and assign one person to coordinate RIM activities

Step 1: Classify records

- A classification framework is used to organize your records and aid in retrieval
- Each unit should have its own **file plan** based on the CRS classification framework that lists the record types in an office and describes
 - How they are organized (file structure)
 - How they are maintained (according to CRS)
- To create a file plan using the CRS:
 - Take inventory of current records
 - Determine which function applies to the records
 - Classify the records by assigning a file class that best fits the records
 - Determine whether your office is the OPR for the record
- The completed file plan
 - Instructs unit staff where to file paper and electronic documents
 - Assists in creating a shared directory structure for the working unit and a folder structure for email
 - Assists in creating labels for file folders in a paper filing system
- Sample file plan on [IPO website](#)



Identify University records

- **University records:**

- Are in the University's custody or control
- Include records relating to the University's operation and administration and records containing information relating to individual faculty, staff and students
 - Keep and file in the recordkeeping system

- **Transitory records:**

- Have no ongoing operational, informational, evidential or historical value
 - Delete or destroy when of no further use

- **“Personal” records:**

- Can be truly personal, or may have a professional dimension to them
 - Keep them separate from University records

Step 2: File and maintain records

- File active records appropriately using the file plan
- Decide which is the official format (hardcopy, electronic, or more than one format) and apply this decision consistently to all files in a file class
- Track files and folders by keeping a list of files opened and closed (in table, spreadsheet, database, or other format)
 - Tells you what files have already been created
 - Allows you to search for files that have been sent to storage
 - Assists in quickly preparing a listing of files in order to implement retention and disposition
 - Include the following information for each file in the listing:
 - file class code (from CRS), file title, date range (required)
 - contents/description, file number, location, status (open or closed), keywords/ names (optional)

How to manage files and folders

- Opening files and folders
 - Check the unit's file list to ensure that a similar file does not already exist
 - Label each file or electronic folder with the file class code
 - Assign a title that accurately reflects the contents
 - Name files and folders consistently (see next slide)
- Using documents and folders
 - Develop unit protocols to identify different versions of documents
 - Use a check in/out system for paper folders removed from the filing system
- Manage paper and electronic records together
- Don't forget to file email records
 - Set up folders in your email system that mirror your unit's file plan

See Tip Sheet #5:
Email Management

Name files and folders consistently

- Develop file naming conventions and version control protocols for your office
- When naming files and using version numbers, be aware of how they will sort
- The key is to be consistent in developing and using protocols!

**See Tip Sheet #6:
Naming Conventions
for Electronic Files and
Folders**

This	Not This
2007-03-24 Agenda	1 April 07 Minutes
2007-03-24 Minutes	24 March 07 Minutes
2007-04-01 Agenda	April 1, 2007 Agenda
2007-04-01 Minutes	March 24, 2006 Agenda

This	Not This
Office Procedures v01	Office Procedures v1
Office Procedures v02	Office Procedures v10
Office Procedures v10	Office Procedures v2

Step 3: Retain records

- CRS retention periods are:
 - Based on University and external policies, statutes and regulations, professional records management best practices and operational use
 - **Approved by designated university officials**
- Retention has a trigger, or start point (e.g., after last action) and specific time period (e.g., 2 years) when file is closed and retention begins
- Once retention has expired, files are either destroyed or transferred to University Archives per CRS
- Units are responsible for proper storage of records retained on or off campus

Records retention periods

- Retention period for Office of Primary Responsibility is very specific and stated in CRS
- Some files with continuing value to OPR have permanent retention
 - Retain electronic records with long or permanent retention on university networks to ensure viability through system upgrades
- Units that are not the OPR hold “other copies”
 - Retention period is most often left to unit’s discretion and usually states “until operational use ceases”
 - “Operational use” = the day-to-day use of a record to facilitate the ongoing business of an office or unit
 - Retention for other copies is always less than for the OPR and most often based on operational need




Keep confidential records secure and protect personal information

- Implement a clean desk policy
- Store records in locked cabinets
- Save confidential records in a restricted folder
- Protect information on portable devices
- Selectively mark records “CONFIDENTIAL”
- Limit access to those who need to know (s.42(1)(d) FIPPA)
- Retain records containing personal information for at least one year after last use, and only so long as there is operational need for them
- Destroy confidentially (e.g., confidential bins, cross-cut shredding)

**See Tip Sheet #2:
Confidential Records**

Step 4: Dispose of records

- When retention period expires, dispose of records per the CRS
 - **Destroy** = shred, throw out, or recycle
 - **Destroy after Archives Review** = contact University Archives
 - **Transfer to Archives** = contact University Archives
- Destroy confidential records appropriately
 - Use the confidential destruction bins or an office cross-cut shredder
- Maintain documentation of the disposition
 - List records to be transferred to Archives or to be destroyed and complete the appropriate approval form
-  **Do not dispose of records subject to legal hold or FIPPA request, even when retention has expired**



Discard transitory records regularly

**See Tip Sheet #3:
Transitory Records**

- Examples of transitory records are:
 - announcements and notices of a general nature
 - drafts (usually)
 - convenience or duplicate copies
 - messages where the information has no operational value
 - superseded lists
 - stocks of in-house publications, blank forms
- Discard transitory records as soon as they have fulfilled their function

Make time to manage your records

- Remember to create an office RIM protocol to assist in managing the unit's records and information
- Set aside a regular time for managing your email
- Hold periodic Records Clean-Up Days for your unit

See Tip Sheet #9:
Records Clean-Up Day

Getting started

- Review the CRS and the accompanying User Guide at <http://crs.apps06.yorku.ca/>
- Read the Tip Sheets on the IPO website
- Invite the IPO to address your staff meeting
- Ask the IPO for hands-on assistance
- Contacts:
 - Website: ipo.info.yorku.ca
 - Email: info.privacy@yorku.ca