# Records Management Vice-Chancellor’s Directive

## Abstract

UTS is required to comply with the [State Records Act 1998 (NSW)](https://www.uts.edu.au) and the standards, policies and guidelines issued under it. Good recordkeeping supports the University’s business needs, compliance requirements under legislative frameworks and the interests of stakeholders. This Directive aims to establish the framework in which these goals can be met.

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### 1. Purpose
The purpose of this Directive is to ensure that full and accurate records are created, captured, maintained and managed in an appropriate manner for all UTS activities.

### 2. Scope
This Directive applies to all UTS staff, including any appointed casual staff and contractors, support staff and academic staff, regardless of the nature of their appointment.

### 3. Definitions
**Born digital** refers to records that are created through digital means and are managed in their digital format as records. Born digital records must be managed in a digital recordkeeping system.

**Business unit** refers to a UTS department, faculty, unit, research centre and other centres, institute, school, office or branch.

**Digital recordkeeping system** refers to:
- a business system with recordkeeping functionality
- a business system linked with a dedicated records management or information asset management system, or
- a dedicated records management or information asset management system.

**Record** refers to any document or other source of information that is compiled, recorded or stored, in written form or on film, by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means (as defined under the State Records Act).

**Records contact** refers to staff who have been delegated records management responsibilities within their own, or another, business unit under the UTS Records Management Program (see section 5.2.4).
**Records database** refers to the enterprise-wide records management database administered by University Records. The current records database is TRIM.

**Official record** refers to documents and other records, whether physical or digital, that are made or received by or on behalf of UTS in the conduct of its business. Official records include, but are not limited to, letters, memos, faxes, emails, reports and forms that document activities, advice and decision-making processes. Official records can also include registers, books, maps, drawings, plans, photographs, film, computer records, sound and video recordings, web pages, blogs and data in social media and networking tools where they are used for official UTS business, or data held in business systems which support and provide evidence of UTS business activities. Official records are also referred to as State records under the State Records Act.

**Unofficial record** refers to records which are duplicates of other official records, reference material, some draft documents (excluding legal and policy documents) or documents of short-term value that are not required in any way to provide evidence of or explain the functions or activities of UTS.

### 4. Directive principles

UTS is committed to accountable business practices and compliance with the State Records Act and other legislative requirements, by implementing and maintaining good recordkeeping practices across all areas and functions of the University.

The proper creation, capture, management and protection of records supports and enhances the activities of the University, guides decision-making, protects the interests of the University and the public and provides a record of the University’s activities for future reference.

Recordkeeping systems and practices will be sustainable, efficient and effective, to support the University’s business whilst ensuring accountability and compliance requirements are not compromised. Recordkeeping is a standard practice across the University, embedded into processes, procedures and activities.

All staff participate in the UTS Records Management Program through the creation and capture of full and accurate records documenting the business activities of UTS in line with the principles of this Directive.

### 5. Directive statements

#### 5.1 UTS Records Management Program

UTS is required to establish and maintain a records management program that complies with the requirements of the State Records Act and its associated standards, policies and guidelines issued by State Records NSW. The UTS Records Management Program encompasses the management framework, the people and the recordkeeping systems required to manage full and accurate records over time. It covers all records and recordkeeping systems and includes the identification and protection of records that may be required as State archives.

The Records Management Program must be implemented in all UTS business units to support the requirements of this Directive. Recordkeeping practices within each business unit will be monitored and subject to mandatory self-assessment processes to ensure ongoing compliance and sustainability.
5.2 Responsibilities for records management

5.2.1 University Records, Governance Support Unit
University Records coordinates and maintains the Records Management Program at UTS. This includes:

- developing and reviewing recordkeeping policies and procedures, standards and guidelines
- monitoring the records program and the performance of business units against records management standards and procedures, and this Directive
- providing recordkeeping training and education programs
- providing advice on recordkeeping practices and issues as part of an advisory service to business units across the University
- coordinating the authorisation of record destruction activities in accordance with general retention and disposal authorities issued under the State Records Act
- managing the storage of and access to the UTS Archives
- planning disaster prevention, response and recovery operations relating to records.

5.2.2 Senior Executive
Members of the Senior Executive are responsible for ensuring business units under their portfolio follow the requirements of this Directive. As the head of areas in relation to their own office, they are also covered by section 5.2.3 below.

5.2.3 Deans, directors, and heads of areas
All business units across all divisions must implement the requirements of the Records Management Program.

Deans, directors, and heads of individual business units are accountable for the management of records within their respective faculties and units, and are required to ensure that:

- they are aware of recordkeeping requirements and advocate good recordkeeping practices across the business units and staff under their direction
- business units and staff under their direction comply with UTS recordkeeping policies and procedures, and have implemented sustainable recordkeeping systems
- scheduled records assessment and planning activities are completed as required, with agreed action plans supported and implemented, and
- business units have appropriately delegated the following records contact roles.

5.2.4 Records contact roles
Records contact roles are delegated to staff within faculties and units to facilitate recordkeeping.

- **Primary Records Contacts** are senior staff who are delegated responsibility at a faculty or unit level. This staff member is the point of contact for University Records in relation to faculty- or unit-wide recordkeeping activities and issues. The Primary Records Contact role must be included in the responsible staff member’s position description and work plan.
Where this role has not been formally delegated, it will default to the relevant faculty manager or unit director.

- **Records Program Contacts** are responsible for assessment and planning activities. This role needs to be assigned to a staff member who has sufficient authority to assess recordkeeping and plan and implement changes within their area where required. The Records Program Contact role must be included in the responsible staff member’s position description and/or work plan.

Each business unit within a faculty is required to have one delegated Records Program Contact, delegated by the responsible head of area. Each non-faculty unit is required to have one Records Program Contact delegated by the responsible director to cover the unit as a whole. Arrangements can be made to vary this requirement in consultation with University Records (for example, several business units within a faculty may agree to centralise the management of their records and have one contact between them, or a large non-faculty unit may require more than one contact).

Where this role has not been formally delegated, it will default to the relevant head of area.

- **Local Records Contacts** are responsible for day-to-day recordkeeping activities, such as file creation and registration, organising disposal activities and archival storage.

Each business unit must have at least one trained Local Records Contact delegated by the head of area or the Records Program Contact. The Local Records Contact role must be included in the responsible staff member’s position description and/or work plan. As with Records Program Contacts, a Local Records Contact may be delegated as a contact for multiple business units where several business units agree to centralise the resourcing of recordkeeping activities between them.

University Records must be informed when these contacts change. Training for new records contacts, refresher sessions and access to the records database can be organised with University Records.

Where a business unit is being restructured, University Records should be consulted in advance to plan and facilitate the transition of records to other business units or to the UTS Archives as required.

### 5.2.5 Establishment, administration and closure of business units

A compliant recordkeeping system must be implemented when a business unit is first established and sustained over the life of the business unit.

Where a business unit has no administrative support, the Local Records Contact role may be provided by a supporting business unit by mutual agreement. Otherwise, staff within the business unit will need to take on this role to ensure full and accurate records of the unit’s activities are appropriately managed. University Records should be informed of arrangements in place.

Where a business unit is expected to restructure or close, University Records should be consulted well in advance so that the unit can plan and facilitate the transition of records to other business units or to the UTS Archives as required.
5.2.6 Staff
All UTS staff must be aware of the UTS Records Management Program and their responsibilities to it. Staff are responsible for ensuring that records supporting and documenting their business activities are created, captured and protected in line with the provisions of this Directive and recordkeeping procedures, regardless of format.

Staff must also be aware of and comply with data protection principles, privacy and confidentiality requirements specified in relevant legislation and the University’s Code of Conduct.

Awareness sessions are run on a regular basis by University Records to provide an overview of recordkeeping requirements at UTS and inform staff of their responsibilities.

5.3 File creation and management
5.3.1 Creating an official file
An official file must be created to capture official records as close to the commencement of a business activity or issue as practical. Official files must be named using the UTS File Classification System and registered accurately within the University’s records database.

Standard approved file covers are to be used for the storage of official records. Other non-standard formats may only be used following consultation with University Records.

5.3.2 Registering official file details
Metadata captured within the University’s records database must meet minimum standards issued under the State Records Act. Standard metadata required for official files is defined in the UTS official file metadata scheme (see University Records: File data entry creation requirements).

5.3.3 File tracking
The location of official files must be documented, especially when records move outside the responsible business unit. When a staff member leaves a business unit, all files marked to them must be returned or reassigned and file location details must be updated in the records database.

5.4 Documents
Documents must be placed into an official file as soon as is practical to ensure a full and accurate record is captured and maintained. This includes, but is not limited to, printed emails and other records created digitally (ie born digital records), unless they are managed using an approved digital recordkeeping system (see section 5.8).

Verbal decisions and advice must be documented and filed on an official file. Where a document does not exist, a file note should be generated to record the decision or action taken.

To preserve the integrity of the University’s records, no additions or alterations of any kind are to be made to documents on a file. This includes purging, annotating, adding or removing documents. If there is a need to record future developments or a change in circumstances, or otherwise reflect inaccurate information or deficiencies, a further document can be generated and attached, as appropriate, to the file or to a new part of a file and cross-referenced.
5.5 Security and access

5.5.1 Security classification
All official files must be allocated an appropriate security classification — either unclassified or confidential — in the University’s records database and on the official file cover.

- **Unclassified** is a default security classification and indicates that all UTS staff can access this file.
- **Confidential** indicates that a file contains information that should not be accessed by all staff and may include commercial, legal, staff or student matters.

Access to confidential files may vary. Some confidential files may be accessible by specific groups across the University, while others may be more sensitive and have more limited access. The names of relevant positions or business units who are authorised to access a file must be noted in the records database or in procedures governing that type of record.

5.5.2 Access to records by UTS staff
Staff should only access records that they have a legitimate business need to access. Staff can access a confidential file if they are an authorised user or where an authorised user has granted permission for them to access the file.

An authorised user refers to a staff member who has been delegated the right to access or provide access to a record. This is defined as part of the security classification of individual files or it may be allocated to whole groups of records.

The Senior Executive, UTS Legal Services, University Records staff, Right to Information Officers and the UTS Privacy Officer are considered authorised users where access to specific records is required for the purpose of undertaking their functions.

5.5.3 Access to records by external parties
Access to records is not to be provided to parties external to UTS unless authorised by a UTS policy, directive, guideline or procedure, or where required by law.

Where the provision of records to an external party is approved, only copies of documents are to be provided. The only exception to this is where copies of documents are not legally acceptable. If the provision of original records to an external party is mandatory, the provision must be authorised, with copies retained on-site where practical. The return of original official records must be monitored and the records checked against copies to ensure all records have been returned and that they have not been altered.

Access to UTS Archives that are over 30 years old is governed by UTS access directions lodged with State Records NSW.

The provision of access to personal or health information is governed by the UTS Privacy Management Plan and the currently approved privacy policy and/or directive.

5.5.4 Access to records via subpoena or warrant
Access to records via subpoena or legal warrant is to be managed by UTS Legal Services. If a subpoena or legal warrant addressed to UTS is received by a faculty or
unit, it should immediately be referred to UTS Legal Services. The recipient should note and advise UTS Legal Services of the date of receipt. No information should be supplied in reply to the subpoena or legal warrant without the approval of UTS Legal Services.

5.5.5 Access to records via the GIPA Act
Release of information under the Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 (NSW) — as part of mandatory proactive release (excluding contract reporting), authorised proactive release, or in response to an informal request or a formal access application — is managed and approved by the Right to Information Coordinator, as delegated by the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor may provide additional delegations for the release of information under the GIPA Act, where appropriate, including decisions relating to formal internal reviews under this Act.

Release of information under contract reporting requirements of the GIPA Act is managed and approved by the Financial Services Unit.

5.5.6 Access to records via Commonwealth or NSW privacy legislation
The provision of access to records in response to a request from an individual to access their own personal information is governed by the UTS Privacy Management Plan and the currently approved UTS privacy policy and/or directive.

5.6 Storage
5.6.1 Assessment and approval
Locations used to store official records must be assessed to ensure they meet the standards issued under the State Records Act, and monitored on a regular basis. Use of storage areas and facilities for records storage must be approved by University Records.

5.6.2 Storage locations
Pending assessment and approval, current records should be stored in the business unit, faculty or unit that is responsible for the records. Non-current records and archives can be stored in the business unit, faculty or unit that is responsible for the records, in University Records or other approved secondary storage area.

5.6.3 Security and accessibility
Records must be stored in a secure area with access limited to authorised users based on the applied security classification level. Records stored with individual staff must be able to be accessed at all times by authorised users.

5.6.4 Off-site storage of records
No records are to be stored outside the University’s premises without prior consultation with, and approval by, University Records.

5.7 Records disposal
Records disposal refers to any method of removing records from the University’s control, such as archiving or destruction.

5.7.1 Temporary retention of records
Records must be retained for the minimum retention timeframe specified in relevant retention and disposal authorities issued under the State Records Act. Any additional retention requirements specified or implied in other legislation must also be satisfied. This includes official records, whether paper or digital, as well as any associated
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5.7 Recordkeeping metadata. These requirements will also apply to official records held outside formal recordkeeping systems.

Additional retention timeframes may apply to satisfy the University’s administrative, legal or financial needs. Such decisions need to be justified and documented and must take into account storage issues as well as any related privacy issues.

5.7.2 Long-term and permanent retention of records
Archives are records that have continuing value but are no longer required for current use.

Archives are to be handled with due care to prevent deterioration and damage, including storing records in approved storage locations.

Decisions to retain records permanently as State archives will be based on an appraisal of the records in line with relevant retention and disposal authorities issued under the State Records Act. Other records may be assessed as having continuing value to UTS and will be retained as UTS Archives in line with the UTS Archives Collection Guidelines (see appendix one).

Decisions to retain additional records as permanent archives outside the scope of the above requirements must be approved by the Director, Governance Support Unit.

5.7.3 Destruction of records
No official records or associated recordkeeping metadata are to be destroyed without the authorisation of the responsible business unit, University Records and the Director, Governance Support Unit (or the Director, Governance Support Unit's nominated delegate), through the completion of a Records Destruction Authorisation form.

Local approval processes may be permitted to cover paper official records that have been scanned and held in an approved digital recordkeeping system, where a compliance assessment has been completed and associated procedures are approved by University Records (see section 5.8.5).

Where the responsible business unit or parent faculty or unit cannot be identified, or has ceased to exist, the relevant member of the Senior Executive will undertake the role of the responsible business unit for the purposes of destruction authorisation. Where this cannot be determined, this role will default to the Director, Governance Support Unit (or the Director, Governance Support Unit’s nominated delegate).

Destruction of all records, whether official or unofficial, paper or digital, must be undertaken in a secure manner.

Records that document destruction activities must be retained on an official file.

5.8 Digital recordkeeping

5.8.1 Keeping official records digitally
Official records can only be created and held digitally in a University Records’ approved digital recordkeeping system. In the absence of an approved digital recordkeeping system, records must be printed and filed on an official file, or captured in another approved system where appropriate.

5.8.2 Business systems/databases
Where official records are to be held within a business system, system owners are responsible for assessing their systems and consulting with University Records regarding compliance with digital recordkeeping requirements.
For new systems, recordkeeping requirements need to be included during the developmental stage to ensure compliance requirements are met as part of the project.

Business systems need to be re-assessed for recordkeeping compliance if they undergo major upgrades or changes in functionality. Where systems are to be replaced, recordkeeping requirements need to be considered during the planning stage to ensure compliance requirements continue to be met with the new system, and records are appropriately migrated.

### 5.8.3 Social Media

Social media tools used by the University may generate official records, in particular where:

- they are used for official UTS business, including communicating with students, staff, members of the public and other stakeholders
- they document decisions or advice
- management direction is given, or
- they document transactions between parties that provide evidence of an activity.

Similar to business systems, activities conducted using social media technologies need to be assessed to identify any recordkeeping requirements that may exist. In some cases, records held in social media applications may need to be captured within the University’s formal recordkeeping system. Business units who use social media technologies are responsible for assessing their activities and consulting with University Records regarding compliance with digital recordkeeping requirements.

### 5.8.4 Electronic mail (email) and messaging systems

Emails and instant messages (including SMS), sent or received, can be official records, in particular where:

- they are used for official UTS business
- they document decisions or advice
- management direction is given, or
- they document transactions between parties that provide evidence of an activity.

Official emails or messages are to be captured in an approved digital recordkeeping system, where available, or printed and captured on the appropriate official file.

### 5.8.5 Scanning official records

Where a business unit wishes to scan paper documents and retain the digital image as the official record, an assessment against the relevant retention and disposal authority for scanned records is required. Destruction of the original paper record can only be undertaken where the destruction is permitted under the relevant retention and disposal authority, and where procedures for the scanning, retention and destruction of the affected records have been approved by University Records (see section 5.7.3).

### 5.9 Quality and risk management

#### 5.9.1 Quality control

Audits and self-assessment activities will be undertaken on recordkeeping systems within business units to review them against the University’s Records Management...
Program and to plan for ongoing improvements and sustainability in accordance with the UTS Planning and Improvement Framework.

5.9.2 Disaster prevention, response and recovery
Disaster prevention and response and recovery strategies for records and recordkeeping systems must be implemented across UTS through the Risk Management Framework and Disaster Recovery Plan for records and recordkeeping systems (see risk and disaster management on the University Records website).

The Risk Management Framework, Disaster Recovery Plan and other related documents, together are deemed to be a specialised emergency plan under the UTS Crisis Management Plan.

Areas managing local and central storage locations must be trained in the Risk Management Framework and Disaster Recovery Plan and its implementation, and are required to ensure appropriate local mechanisms to respond to a disaster are in place in line with the Plan.

5.9.3 Vital records program
Vital records are records that are essential for the ongoing business of the University, without which UTS could not continue to function effectively or protect its interests. These include, but are not limited to, contracts, deeds, memoranda of understanding, licences, evidence of ownership of physical and intellectual property, and other records documenting the legal authority or rights of the University.

Original vital records must be lodged in person with University Records with a completed Vital Records Lodgement form (Word). A copy of the record must be filed onto the business unit’s official file dealing with that activity or issue, along with all relevant background and supporting documentation.

Access to vital records will be provided under the requirements of section 5.5.2. Copies will be provided in the first instance. Access to an original vital record will be provided only where the need for the original is proven. In such cases, retrieval costs will be borne by the requesting business unit.

5.10 Ownership, custody and control of records and archives
5.10.1 Ownership
All records created or received by UTS staff in the course of the University’s operations and activities are owned by UTS. This includes records of outsourced activities. Ownership of records and the University’s access to records is to be included in contractual arrangements for outsourced activities.

5.10.2 Custody and control of archives
Control of records assessed as being State archives, under the retention and disposal authorities issued under the State Records Act, will eventually transfer to State Records NSW. The custody of these State archives will remain with UTS, in line with any distributed management agreement with State Records NSW.

UTS will retain both custody and control of any other records assessed as having continuing value.

5.11 Standard operating procedures
Recordkeeping requirements should be embedded within other UTS processes, procedures and plans by the staff member responsible for those processes,
procedures and plans. Your Records Contact and University Records can provide advice and assistance.

5.12 Breaches
Breaches of this Directive will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant Enterprise Agreement and the Code of Conduct.

6. Roles and responsibilities

Vice-Chancellor
The Vice-Chancellor is responsible for ensuring that UTS complies with legislative recordkeeping requirements, in particular the State Records Act and compliance standards issued under it. The ultimate responsibility for records management rests with the Vice-Chancellor.

Accountable Officer
The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Services) has organisational responsibility for the Records Management Program at UTS. This role ensures that recordkeeping systems support organisational and public accountability.

Implementation Officer
The Director, Governance Support Unit is the Implementation Officer for this Directive and is responsible for ensuring the Records Management Program is implemented and managed by staff with the appropriate skills.

Other roles and responsibilities
University Records is responsible for managing the UTS Records Management Program and implementing the requirements of this Directive on behalf of the Implementation Officer.

Roles and responsibilities of the senior executive, deans, directors, heads of areas, and all other staff, are defined under section 5.2.

7. Acknowledgements
Standards issued under the State Records Act.

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Appendix 1

UTS Archives Collection Guidelines

The following records form part of the UTS Archives:

• records classified as State archives under current general disposal authorities issued by State Records under the State Records Act
• records that are assessed to have historical or research value, including:
  o records documenting strategic planning and organisational structure of major functional areas
  o records documenting the social history of the institutions, staff and students
• official publications bearing the UTS logo and emblem
• plaques, certificates, etc, symbolising recognition of UTS
• selected items of memorabilia closely associated with UTS and its predecessors.

Records retained by UTS Archives cover UTS and its predecessor institutions, including:

• NSW Institute of Technology (NSWIT)
• Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education (KCAE)
• Balmain Teachers' College (BTC) and William Balmain College (WBC)
• Sydney College of Advanced Education (SCAE), Institute of Technical and Adult Education (ITATE)
• Sydney College of the Arts (SCA), School of Design
• Acupuncture College of Australia (ACA).

UTS Archives is maintained by University Records which is responsible for:

• managing the UTS Archives’ collection, including UTS and State archives
• appraising and capturing records of continuing value in accordance with these collection guidelines
• ongoing preservation and conservation of the collection, and
• providing authorised access to the collection.

Donating archives to the collection

UTS Archives does not generally collect records for retention as archives outside the above guidelines. However, UTS may, from time to time, be requested to take receipt of and manage donated collections, such as: papers of prominent academics, administrators, individuals or agencies closely associated with UTS or its predecessor institutions.

Requests to donate records to UTS must be addressed to the Registrar, detailing: the nature of the records, the volume, the condition, to what extent the records have been managed and an assessment of future access expectations. The requestor must have the legal capacity to make the donation.

Each request will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the details provided in the application, and the University's space and resource limitations. If a donation is approved, a deposit agreement must be negotiated and entered into by UTS and the donating party. Deposited items then become the property of UTS, to be managed in accordance with the terms and conditions of the deposit agreement. If a deposit agreement cannot be reached between UTS and the donating party, the records will not be accepted.
CREATE

• All staff are required to capture records on their activities in an official recordkeeping system.¹

• A new official file should be created at the beginning of an activity (e.g., a new project, new matter or new client).²

CAPTURE

• Capture relevant documents on the file to explain: advice given or received, decisions made and the basis of decisions, actions and outcomes.³

PROTECT

• Protect from loss by informing the Local Record Contact when the file is moved to a new location.⁴

• Lodge documents identified as vital records with University Records.

• Protect record security by locking away confidential files when not in use.

DISPOSAL

• Authorisation is required before destroying official files.⁵

• Official files not ready for destruction can be stored with University Records, if not regularly accessed.

¹ Official recordkeeping systems include hard copy files registered in TRIM, digital records captured in TRIM and digital records stored in business systems assessed as compliant with the NSW State Records Standard on Digital Recordkeeping.

² Contact your Local Records Contact to arrange for a new file to be created in TRIM.

³ Documents can be hard copy or digital (including email). Where using a hard copy recordkeeping system, digital documents are to be printed for file.

⁴ Your Local Records Contact will update the file’s location in TRIM or in the local file-tracking tool.

⁵ Authorisation is required from the head of the area responsible for the records, the Coordinator, Records Management and Director, Governance Support Unit.

Note: UTS is required to comply with the State Records Act (1998).