

Digital Preservation for Business Records Policy IGP-06

Summary			
This Policy provides guidance on the preservation of the University's digital records, accounting for technical and retention requirements.			
Scope			
The Policy applies to all staff handling digital records.			
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Related documents	All Information Governance Policies – see http://www.bristol.ac.uk/secretary/		

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy sets out guidance and considerations for the preservation of the University's electronic records in line with the University's retention obligations. This policy has been developed within the context of the University's overall Information Governance strategy.
- 1.2 Digital Preservation is a set of policies, processes and technologies designed to ensure that digital information of continuing value remains accessible and usable over significant, and potentially indefinite, timescales.
- 1.3 As part of its normal administrative functions, the University takes on certain obligations for retaining, and making available, records for significant periods of time. Most of these records are nowadays created and manipulated through digital media, which require more active intervention in their management than older analogue formats – to ensure that the information they contain remains accessible, secure and authentic throughout their lifecycle.

2. Purpose and Scope

- 2.1 This policy defines the approach for the preservation of the University's electronic records in line with the University's retention and disposal policies.
- 2.2 It is concerned with preservation of and access to administrative records to meet the University's obligations – whether digital documents or structured data managed within business systems, and whether “born digital” or digitised from an original physical format.
- 2.3 Preservation of digital material for historical collection / archival purposes, and of research data¹, is out of scope of this policy.

¹ See the Research Data Management and Open Data Policy at http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/university/documents/governance/UOB_RDM_Policy.pdf

- 2.4 It is noted, however, that for some records there may be drivers to preserve both due to University obligations and for historical collection / archival. In these cases, consideration could be given to a single preservation of the same asset for both purposes, but this dual purpose must be explicitly managed.
- 2.5 The University's Records Retention Schedule defines the retention obligations for each type of record, based on University need and regulatory and legal constraints.
- 2.6 The University's Information Security policies define the security controls that should be applied to managing information. These apply equally throughout the records lifecycle, and so apply to any information being treated under this Digital Preservation Policy.

3. Audience

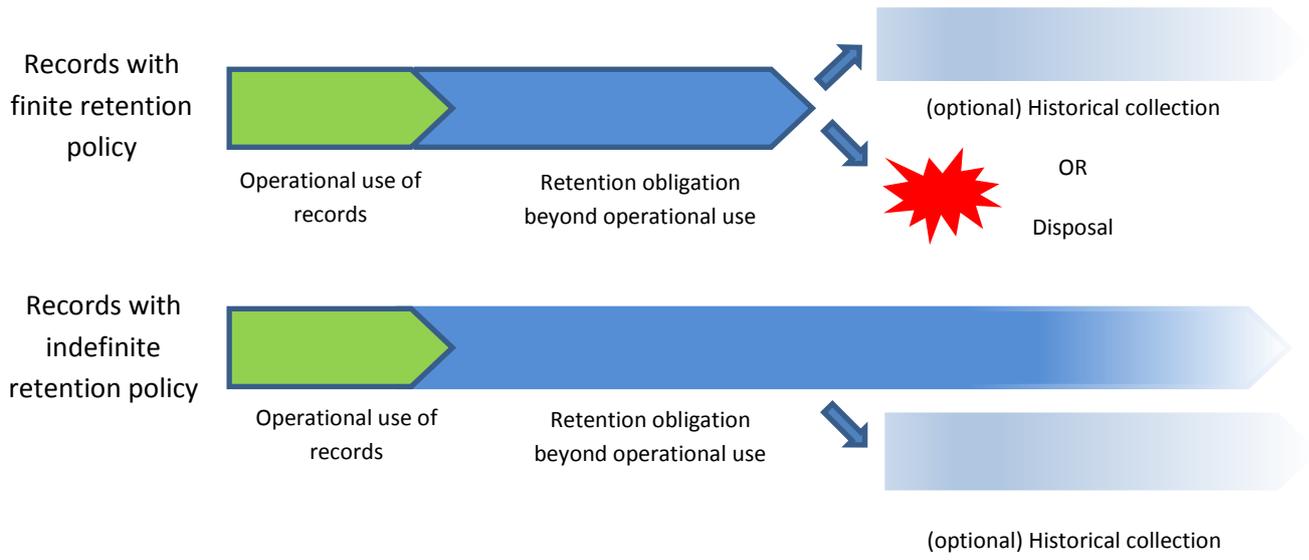
- 3.1 Information Asset Owners who are accountable for ensuring that University records are retained in line with the University's retention policy
- 3.2 Individuals who are involved in manual processes involving digital records held as documents.
- 3.3 Individuals involved in specifying requirements and / or implementing systems which manage records that have Digital Preservation needs.

4. Roles and Responsibilities

- 4.1 Information Asset Owner – responsible for understanding how the University's Records Retention Schedule applies to the records within their remit, and ensuring processes and / or technical solutions are put in place to comply with the appropriate retention periods.
- 4.2 Individuals involved in records management processes – responsible for ensuring they follow the guidelines and / or utilise the technical solutions established for the records they are processing, to ensure that the records are preserved in line with the defined retention policy.
- 4.3 IT Services staff providing technical support and IT solutions to meet retention and digital preservation needs.

5. Preservation Approaches

- 5.1 Each type of record may have a finite retention period, after which it is destroyed or passed into a historical collection or archive, or it may have to be held and accessible in perpetuity.
- 5.2 These two different lifecycles are shown in the following diagram:



5.3 Information Asset Owners should give consideration, with support from IT Services, to the mechanism for ensuring that records are preserved, and access provided, in each of the stages of the lifecycle.

5.4 The following table provides considerations and options for addressing preservation for both digital documents and structured data managed within business systems

Lifecycle Stage	Preservation considerations and options – by Type of Record	
	Digital documents within manual process	Structured records managed through business systems
Operational use of records	Through operational process(es)	In line with operational system service level
Retention obligation beyond operational use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A preservation process must be put in place Consideration must be given to file formats to ensure continued accessibility. Recommended formats are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDF/A Microsoft Office documents are not recommended but may be acceptable in certain circumstances Other formats will need explicit consideration and processes put in place Regular review of content and potential format conversion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If retention period is short enough and / or volume of retained data is small enough, may be possible to retain within operational system If significant volume for retention beyond core operational need, there may be a business case for designing and implementing a separate archive and access system / module that records can be moved into When systems are being replaced consideration needs to be given to retention of historical records. Options include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Migrate records in to new system

Lifecycle Stage	Preservation considerations and options – by Type of Record	
	Digital documents within manual process	Structured records managed through business systems
	<p>must be included in the process – in line with annual review of Information Assets to ensure the Information Asset Register is kept up to date</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mechanism must be put in place to validate integrity of records periodically – e.g. validation against a generated checksum • Consideration must be given to storage location given required retention timelines. This should align with the IT Services Data Storage Strategy. Consult with IT Services if there are significant (>2 years) retention requirements. • It may be possible to handover to one of the University Collections to meet extended retention responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep legacy with reduced functionality as archive system ○ Archive to separate archive system • When determining approach, consideration should be given to the SLA and access requirements for retained records, which are likely to be less than for operational records
At end of retention period (if applicable)	Consider for handover to one of the University Collections	Consider for handover to one of the University Collections

5.5 As the volume of digital records requiring preservation increases, there may be a business case for generic archive / retention solutions to fulfil retention obligations which can be made available as a generic service to multiple departments.

5.6 For digital document preservation, this should be aligned with the historical archive / collections strategy for digital preservation and associated technical solutions.

5.7 For structured records managed through business systems this could drive a requirement for a generic database archiving service.

5.8 Certain record sets may be a hybrid, consisting of a period of paper records which will have been superseded by digital records.

5.9 For hybrid record sets which must be kept in perpetuity, these should be consolidated into an all-digital set, through digitisation of the physical records, to ease management in to the future.

5.10 For hybrid record sets which have a finite retention period, the physical records can be kept without digitisation until they roll out of the retention window, resulting in an all-digital record set.

Appendix 1: Document history

Version	Author / Primary reviewer	Details of changes	Date	Approved by	Approved date
d0.1 Draft	Information Architect	Drafted	Apr 2018		
d0.2 Draft	Information Architect	Amends to initial draft	April 2018	IGSAB – subject to amendments	19/04/2018
v1.0 Approved	Information Architect	IGSAB comments incorporated	April 2018	IGSAB	19/04/2018