

# Sentencing Information

*When information is no longer used regularly, decisions have to be made whether it can be destroyed or whether it has some continuing value. We use a disposal authority to issue this information with a 'sentence' that specifies the minimum amount of time the information needs to be kept before it can be approved by the University Archivist for destruction.*

## How do I prepare for sentencing?

If you have never sentenced information before you will need to attend the [Sentencing, Retention and Disposal of Information](#) workshop and also be trained in using the Inactive Records Transfer System (IRTS) section of the [Curtin Records & Information System \(CRIS\)](#).

- Group similar types of records together and tackle the easy records first e.g. examination papers, policies, student files, forms. Correspondence and case files need more thought as these can sometimes be a little harder to sentence.
- Separate out any folders that contain only low value information, such as copies, as these can be disposed of once reference ceases. Just make sure that all the information on the folder is low value before you dispose of it.
- Any folders that have not been used or referred to in 2 years or more should be part of your sentencing project as they have become "inactive" and can take up valuable space. We would quickly run out of space if we kept everything.
- Make sure you have the latest [disposal authorities](#).
- Make sure you have enough space to spread out and allow yourself plenty of time.
- Only use authorised boxes to store the files before, during and after sentencing, these can be ordered through Records & Information Management via the [online order form](#).
- You may wish to use a [Sentencing Register](#) to record what action you have taken.

## How do I sentence information?

If you have already been to sentencing training, the following steps will guide you through the process. Remember if you need any help call Records & Information Management.

- Always check the contents of the file to determine what the file is about.
- Search the disposal authorities for the subject matter of the file and the relevant code.
- Record the file and disposal authority details on your [Sentencing Register](#), if using one, completing each column of the register.

E.g.

- File description
- Date range of records on the file
- Disposal trigger date: 10/8/2008
- Disposal authority reference: GS65.2
- Retention period: D7 - (D indicates destroy & 7 indicates the 7 year retention period)
- Destruction date: 10/8/2015

**Please see over for an example of a Sentencing Register**

## Sentencing Register

Description of File / Folder Contents	Date Range	Box Number	Disposal Authority Reference	Retention Period	Disposal Trigger date	Destruction Date	Location
Staff Visa Reconciliations - Appleton – Keen - Original monthly corporate credit card usage statements detailing individual purchases with receipts and totals for the month in 2003	01/01/2001 - 18/12/2001	DJ14	SG24.2	D6	31/03/2002	31/03/2008	2 <sup>nd</sup> shelf, filing cabinet, Room 115, B100
Staff Visa Reconciliations - Lang – Vale - Original monthly corporate credit card usage statements detailing individual purchases with receipts and totals for the month in 2003	01/01/2001 - 18/12/2001	DJ14	SG24.2	D6	31/03/2002	31/03/2008	2 <sup>nd</sup> shelf, filing cabinet, Room 115, B100
Assessments UNIT 123456 - Psychology Concepts and Practice Semester 2 2011 - File contains working papers and lists students with grades for assessments in Psychology Concepts and Practice - Dr Joe Blogs lecturer	12/07/2011 - 23/11/2011	25112	WAUSDA 17.5.18	D5	23/11/2011	23/11/2016	Room 121, B100

## How do I pack the boxes?

- Group folders that are past their destruction date already together
- For folders yet to reach their destruction date try and box those that are due for destruction at about the same time, the range of destruction dates should not be more than 2-3 years in any one box. i.e. due for destruction between 2016—2018.
- Box up folders that are to be kept forever (ie Archival/Permanent records) separately from those that have a destruction date.
- If you can't find a code in the Disposal Authority for a particular folder, box it up separately and contact Records & Information Management for assistance.
- Records that are in lever arch or box files must be placed in manila folders or taken out of the files and tied up with string, as they are very bulky and take up space. In this case ensure you record the folder title either on the manila folder or on a sheet of paper with the papers tied up.
- Make sure boxes are folded with the striped side of the box facing in.
- Pack folders in the box on their spines vertically rather than on top of each other.
- Make sure the boxes are not over packed, you should be able to fit your hand into the box without damaging the records and the lid must be able to close properly.

## What do I do now?

After you have sentenced and boxed your records you will find that they fit into three categories:

- Records due for destruction
- Records not due for destruction yet (also known as inactive temporary records)
- Records that are archival or permanent

Refer to [Disposal of Information](#) for advice on how to dispose of and/or store these records.

## Quick tips

- If a folder has contents that cover multiple activities you'll need to apply the longest retention period of any one of the documents on the folder to the entire contents of the folder. Do not pull folders apart.
- Once folders are closed don't add any more documents to them.
- Use the [Disposal Authority Online Search](#) which searches across the various disposal authorities to find the right disposal code.
- If you find any folders or documents that are damaged or fragile contact the [University Archivist](#).

## What about electronic information?

- The legislation that applies to hard copy information also applies to electronic information.
- Electronic records must only be destroyed in accordance with approved [Disposal Authorities](#).
- Ephemeral information with no ongoing administrative, legal, evidential or historical value to the University can be destroyed once reference ceases. See [Keeping the Right Information](#).
- However, all University business information in electronic form must be preserved for as long as it is required for legislative and business reasons.
- Contact [Records & Information Management](#) if you wish to discuss sentencing electronic information.

## Need assistance?

Please see the following related procedures:

- [What are Disposal Authorities](#)
- [Disposal of Records](#)

Records & Information Management also provides practical training sessions. For more information about these sessions, go to our [training](#) page.

For more information in general on recordkeeping and record management please visit the Records & Information Management website at [rim.curtin.edu.au](http://rim.curtin.edu.au).

If you need assistance, please contact us by email at [rim@curtin.edu.au](mailto:rim@curtin.edu.au).