

Opening Paper Records

Paper records should be created as soon as the first document relevant to the record is received or created so as to ensure that all relating documents can be stored together without the risk of loss. For instance, if a letter of appeal is received, that letter triggers the creation of a folder relating to that appeal. All subsequent paper documents (letters, handwritten notes, printed emails etc) that relate to that appeal can then be added to the folder as and when required.

As each item is added to the folder, a number should be written onto the bottom of the page to help keep a record of the order in which they were created and to assist in ensuring that pages are not lost or misplaced.

All paper records should include a 'Paper Record Cover Sheet' on/at the front of the folder. The cover sheet provides a clear point of reference for users looking for the record and is used to manage the longer term retention of the record. The cover sheet should also clearly indicate the level of sensitivity of the record which in turn details the level of security to be applied to it. Security will be:

Low – information that is available or will be made available to the public e.g. procedures, organisational charts, anything on the website

Medium – information is not readily made available but may be disclosed under consideration e.g. certain strategy documents, contains basic personal information such as class lists

High – information that contains sensitive identifiable personal information, financial, confidential or commercially sensitive information

A blank coversheet and guidance on how to complete it is available at the end of this guide.

Storing Paper Records

Paper Records should be stored in a manner that enables ease of access to authorised members of staff and at the same time provide a sufficient level of secure storage in order to prevent unauthorised individuals obtaining access to them. i.e. locked filing cabinets or office doors.

Records should be grouped with similar records and logically organised within their storage device to aid their retrieval using the most suitable method i.e. chronologically, alphabetically etc

They should be stored in a manner that maintains the quality and integrity of the record for as long as they are required both from a day to day management perspective and long term preservation where required. i.e. stored to prevent water damage or away from flammable materials. Cabinets or boxes should not be overfilled to the point that would cause tears or other problems when removing them. Boxes should be stored off the ground and should not be stacked to the point that the lower boxes are crushed under the weight.

Paper records should be stored locally whilst they remain ‘active’ and then transferred to the University’s offsite storage facility for the duration of their specified retention period. Details should be kept showing the location of a particular record for the life of that record.

Managing Hybrid Files (Paper & Electronic)

Wherever possible a record should be managed in one format - Paper or Electronic. It is however possible that for legitimate reasons, a record will be created across both formats, for example if the paper record is a signed copy or it is not available in electronic format. It may also be that the

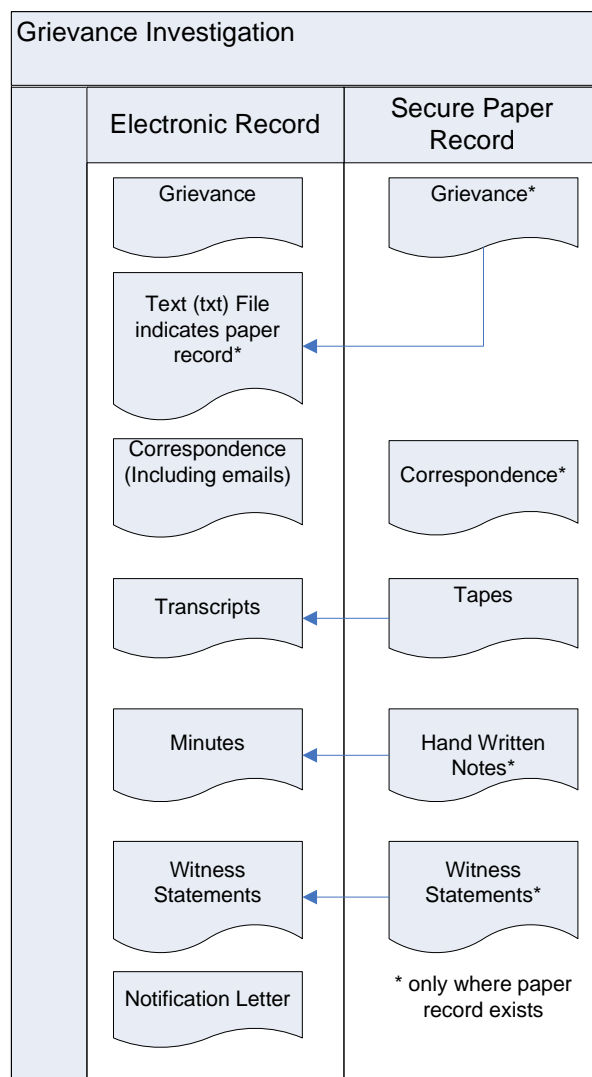
Whilst the information may physically be stored separately, it should still be classed and managed as one complete record. It is therefore important to ensure that the name (and reference) of the record is identical across both formats.

Example Hybrid file

It is important to make sure that existence of the electronic version is indicated within the paper folder (and visa-versa) so that someone accessing the record knows that they need to locate the rest of it for a complete record. Within the paper record this is recorded on the ‘Paper Record Cover Sheet’. Within the electronic folder this can be achieved by creating a ‘marker’ text document:

- Right click within the electronic folder
- Select ‘New’ and ‘Text Document’
- Name the document
- Open the document and provide a suitable description i.e ‘Paper copy’ or ‘tape’*

***if the information is only available on (or is partly contained on) video, DVD, CD or tape, then that element of the record should be managed in the same way as the paper record, including the use of the cover sheet.**



Closing Paper Records

Records that are no longer considered 'active' should not be retained locally for an indefinite period (see retention schedule for definition of 'active' records) but should instead be sent to the University off site storage facility for the duration of their defined retention period, detail of which should be recorded on the 'Paper Record Cover Sheet'. The closure trigger/time will differ from record to record but will be the point where the recognised 'last document' is added to the record.

Note: Working personal copies of records which duplicate information already held in electronic or 'official' paper records should not be retained as these are not official records. These should be checked to ensure that no original copies are mixed in them and then disposed of in the appropriate manner.

PAPER RECORD COVERSHEET			
Record Title*	A meaningful description of the contents of the folder. I.e. John Doe personnel record		
Reference*	Unique reference number i.e. student number or staff number or equivalent unique reference where available		
School or Service Department*	Originating School or Department. Provides ownership of the record		
Created by	Name of person creating the record. Provides a point of contact whilst the record is active.	Associated Electronic Files*	Yes/No Used to let people know that the file is only part of the complete record. Can be yes/no
Sensitivity*	Low/Medium/High Provides a point of contact whilst the record is active.		
Open Date*	Indicates earliest entry in the file	Close Date#	Indicates last entry in the file. Used to calculate retention
Retention Date#	Actual date on which retention period ends	Action#	Review/Destroy
Review Retention Decision~	If at the end of the retention period the review decision is to retain for longer, the reasoning for the longer retention can be added to this form so that anyone looking at the record in the future understands why it has been retained.		
Revised Retention Date~		Action~	Review/Destroy

*Completed upon creation of the record

Completed upon closure and archive of the record

~ Completed if review concludes retention beyond original date