



# Adult Learning Kirklees & Kirklees Council

## Record Retention & Disposal Policy

2022-2024

Adult Learning Kirklees is part of Kirklees Council and as such follows all KC policies, procedures, and guidance.

All policies will be reviewed annually by the ALK Advisory Board unless there are in year changes required according to legislation or policy change.

Providers will be made aware of any new policies or changes to inform and amend their own policies and guidance. Policies highlighted will need to be devised, reviewed, and revised by the provider annually.

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# Records Management Guideline 3: Record Retention and Disposal

This guideline provides guidance on the retention and disposal of records. It covers the use of retention schedules and disposal logs.

All records should have a retention period associated with them that dictates how long we should keep the record; this also dictates how the record is to be disposed of (archived for long term storage or destroyed). The disposal of a record should be recorded in a Disposal Log.

<b>Intended Audience</b>	<b>All employees</b>
<b>Linked Policy</b>	<b>Records Management Policy Corporate Standards for Retention and Disposal</b>

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## 1. Why do we need to dispose of or archive records?

The reasons for keeping records are presented in **Records Management Guideline 1: Identifying and Capturing Records**. Of these, the most prominent is the need to retain evidence of the business actions or decisions we take.

The life cycle of a record leads to a point where it is no longer required for current business use. In many cases it may be necessary to keep the record (due to legal obligation) and store it in a different location. In others it may be appropriate to destroy the record.

Why do we need to ensure that this stage of the life cycle is managed effectively?

### 1.1 Destroying records earlier than necessary

This exposes the Council to the following risks:

- The Council will not be able to access records that are needed for legal or audit requirements e.g., contract and tender documents.
- The public will not be able to access records that make the council accountable for its decisions and actions.
- Failure to follow the retention periods, procedures and keeping insufficient records can result in confusion as to the records that the council holds and where. This can mean that time is wasted looking for information that has been destroyed.

### 1.2 Keeping records for longer than necessary, or in inappropriate conditions

This exposes the Council to the following risks:

- The records will unnecessarily occupy valuable business space. This is true across all formats of records: Paper may take up large amounts of valuable office accommodation or storage space. Electronic files can quickly fill the Council's network file servers.
- Keeping out of date records in the same locations as current records may lead to staff using incorrect information as the basis for a decision, or in a response to a request for information.
- If we do not store records in appropriate environmental and secure conditions, they may be accessed inappropriately or even lost.
- Personal data should only be kept as long as is necessary – failure to stick to the retention periods set down in the retention schedules could result in the Council breaching the Data Protection legislation and being subject to a monetary fine.

**Therefore, we must archive or destroy records when the time is right to do so – not before or after the time.**

**Records of the disposal action must be kept in a Disposal Log.** Please click on [Disposal Log](#) for a template that can be used by Services

## **2. Decide at the point of creation.**

We must decide at the beginning of a record's life cycle what must happen once it ceases to be of current business use. i.e., when we create a record, we need to be clear about the answers to the following questions:

- How long must our records be kept?
- Under what conditions must our records be kept or destroyed?

### **For example**

From the outset you may be clear that your records must be kept for a period of 50 years in secure, clean storage conditions that will support occasional access. Alternatively, you may decide that your paper records must be destroyed (through cross-cut shredding) after 5 years and disposed of through environmentally responsible means.

**If your Service has Service Retention Schedules in place**, then these should be used to attach the retention period to each type of records – this will also associate details of the appropriate disposal actions to be taken for that group of records. Your Service Retention Schedules should be a subset of the Corporate Retention Schedules and as such there will be no difference in retention periods between the two. However, the use of your Service Retention Schedules should be easier as it only relates to the types of records held within your service – so you don't have to wade through the list of record types held by other Services.

**If your Service does not have Service Retention Schedules in place or they are in the early stages of development**, then there may not be an appropriate retention period for you to associate with your group of records. In this case you should use the Corporate Retention Schedules to identify these details. Advice on this should be sought from either your Service IG lead, Service Information Asset Coordinator, or a member of the IG team, it is important that they are aware of any gaps in your Service Retention Schedules or the Corporate Retention Schedules so you must notify them of this even if you do not require advice.

### 3. Further information

The '**Corporate Standards for Retention and Disposal**' provides detailed information on the types of records we must retain, the types we must destroy, the importance of retention schedules, how to make a decision to archive or destroy a set of records, and specific support on how to destroy records.

**Records Management Guideline 4: Records Storage - Options and standards** provides guidance on the range of facilities available to Council Services for longer term storage of records, in temporary or permanent archive.