ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Policy for College Staff Relating to Electronic Records, File/Document Management

Contents

1. Introduction

This Guide is designed to provide some introductory policy on managing your electronic documents and records. Work is ongoing to determine the best way to manage electronic records in the long term, but this guide will provide information on what you can be doing now.
Following the policy in this guide will help ensure that the College can trust its electronic records and can ensure they have the qualities of authenticity, integrity, usability and reliability[1].

PART ONE - OVERVIEW

2. Which Drive Should I Use?

You should use the shared drive system for storing electronic records wherever possible. Your department has its own part of the shared network drive (M: and N: for your Department only & College wide files respectively). This means that other members of your department can access your records should you be on holiday or ill and it should help avoid unnecessary duplication.
Your own hard drive (C:) is **not** suitable as there are no back-ups made – the IT department does back up the shared drives regularly. Remember, anything stored on your C: drive is not protected should your machine crash.
Your own personal file space on the K: drive is also backed up, but this is only accessible to you, and if you are away from College unexpectedly or for a long period of time arrangements would need to be made to access your personal drive for the College records it contains.
Your departmental area of the shared drive can be set up with different permissions, i.e. folders can be given permissions so that only certain staff can access the records in them. For example, the head of the department may need a folder containing budget records that only they can access. Other folders can be set up which all members of the department can access. Please speak to the Computer Support in the IT Department (computer-support@joh.cam.ac.uk) for further guidance on how to set up permissions. The recommendation though is to always keep permissions as simple as possible.
University Information Services have now fully enabled the use of Microsoft's OneDrive for Business which is a feature of the University's Microsoft Enrolment for Education Solutions Agreement. This web-based service may be thought of as equivalent to your K: drive above. However as stated it is web-based and can be accessed from any device (e.g. Windows, Mac, Android, iPad, iPhone) from any location with an internet connection. Sharing of content with others is straightforward. It is very important to understand and apply the same security principles to this new service. For further information, see UIS website: http://www.uis.cam.ac.uk/initiatives/ees/onedrive and in particular the security guidance regarding what should and should not be stored:
http://www.uis.cam.ac.uk/initiatives/ees/onedrive/guidance/view

3. What Should Be Saved?

If it exists, use your Departmental Records Retention Schedule (see your Head of Department) to give you an idea of the documents that should be kept. Where important issues are discussed and major changes made, consider retaining drafts and exchanges between contributors.
There are legal obligations governing certain types of records – for example, many files documenting financial transactions needs to be saved for at least seven years. This means it is often helpful to store records in 'year' folders, e.g. all correspondence received in 2011 could be stored in a folder named *2011CorrespondenceReceived*. This applies equally to email, electronic documents and paper

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[1] ISO 15489-1:2001, clause 7.2

records. To ensure long-term preservation of documents, the best thing may be to print out any valuable documents and store them in the paper system.

Before printing, please consult the Archivist. She is always happy to help with questions about what should be kept. In some cases it may be possible to take electronic records deemed worthy of long term preservation out of your part of the Shared drive and store them elsewhere to aid preservation. If you have electronic records that need to be archived please contact the Archivist.

When deciding what a record is consider the following:

- Does this document contain work-related information?
- Is this document the primary source of the information?
- Will this document be used to justify or explain a course of action?
- Does this document record or approve formal policy?
- Does this document detail any liabilities or responsibilities of the College?
- Will this document be a basis for future decisions?
- Is this document evidence of actions?
- Does this document protect the rights and/or assets of the College?

If you answer 'yes' to any of these, the Records Retention Schedule will provide advice on how long the documents need to be kept for.

4. What Should Be Deleted?

There is a tendency to think of computers as having endless storage space. While it is true computers and servers can store a lot of data this should not lead us to try to keep everything. It is good professional practice to manage and keep track of data.

Documents that are no longer of use should be deleted (according to guidance in the Records Retention Schedule or following advice from the Archivist). For example, lists of students or Fellows should only be kept as long as they are administratively useful. Keeping personal data such as telephone numbers or addresses needs to be justified and data should not be kept just because it is easier to ignore than to take time to delete it. Think – do you need old versions of data when newer versions are available?

It is also important to bear in mind who else might have copies of documents. Also think about who is responsible for a document. If you have simply been sent something for information then it is unlikely you need to keep a copy for the long-term.

5. Security

Electronic documents need to be kept just as securely as paper ones. Always lock your computer, iPad, mobile phone and other devices when not in use or you are away from them. The following guidelines will help with computer and general office security:

✓ Think about who has access to your computer. Lock your computer (control + alt + delete) if you are leaving it unattended, even if it's just for a few minutes.

✓ If you have one, lock your office when you leave, even if it is just for a few minutes.

✓ Think about your use of data-sticks and other portable storage devices – what information are you saving to the device and where do you keep the device? **Only take the data you really need**. If it contains personal data about staff, students or Fellows or sensitive information about the College it **must be kept securely** and should be encrypted. You must delete this data as soon as it's no longer required.

✓ Take care with laptops, iPads and mobile phones if they contain personal or sensitive data – store them securely, especially when they are being taken out of the College. All devices should be encrypted or PIN protected. Again, you must delete this data as soon as it's no longer required.

✓ Passwords – ensure your passwords are "strong", try to use a mixture of numbers, letters (uppercase and lower case) and symbols and try to avoid using real words or names.

6. Remember:

- Your emails and electronic records are as valuable as your paper files, sometimes more so.
- Preserve our valuable file space - save on the shared drives (M: and N:) to avoid duplicating files held elsewhere and so all members of your department can access the files, and keep your personal file space (K:) for temporary use.
- When you complete a document or send an email, consider whether or not it needs to be retained.
- Consult the retention schedule and ask for advice.
- Keep your personal file space, email structure and shared drives well organised.
- Choose filenames which allow the information to be easily found by others.
- Think about deleting electronic records when they are no longer useful and do not have any long term historical value.
- Never save anything of value to the C: drive. This is not backed up by the IT Department.
- Keep your computer and other devices secure. Do not leave them unattended without locking.

PART TWO – DETAILED ADVICE

7. Structured Saving

Records should be saved into a folder structure on a shared drive (further discussion is required regarding email storage). Isolated records are of reduced administrative value as usually a wider context is required to understand them. Badly-organised records also greatly increase the time spent by you and other staff in searching for information and meeting the College's legal obligations to answer enquiries which fall under the Freedom of Information and Data Protection Acts. Documents should therefore be saved appropriately within a structured series of folders and sub-folders, making it easy to find specific documents without having to create long, complicated filenames. Generally speaking, document titles should not repeat elements which are already included in the folder name. Folders can be used to group documents into subject related categories which then sub-divide further, from the general down to the specific. However do not create more than say 3 levels of folders if possible to ease navigation. See section 8 for further guidance on naming electronic records.

For example:

- 📁 CommitteeMinutes
    - 📁 ITCommittee
        - 📁 2011-11-30
            - 📄 Agenda
            - 📄 Minutes
            - 📄 Item3Paper
        - 📁 2012-02-21
        - 📁 2012-06-12

Or:

- 📁 Invoices
    - 📁 2011Invoices
    - 📁 2012Invoices

If you are not using a folder structure or regularly send documents to colleagues some of the above examples would need to be re-named so that the file could be easily identified, e.g. *Agenda* would need to become *2010-01-29InformationManagementCtteAgenda.*

When naming folders and documents, try to keep it simple and consistent - remember it may not be just you who needs to access the information later, so set up your file structure and name your files so they would make sense to someone else. Give a unique title (and/or reference number) to each document and folder, one which reflects its content, and include dates where possible. It is also important to be aware of the links between paper files and electronic files. We work in a hybrid environment where some documents are available only in paper form and others in both electronic and paper formats, but there are always links between our paper and electronic files. It is important to try to capture the links between the paper and electronic records. The following are suggestions for capturing a link:

- · Name folders in the electronic and paper environments with the same title.
- · Make notes on documents or folders (electronic or paper) that they are to be looked at in conjunction with certain other folders.
- · Take the time to review paper and electronic files at the same time as part of your records management work, this means actions will happen to all related records and none will get left behind.

These guidelines have been prepared in order to assist with arranging and naming electronic folders and files (individual documents) consistently to make it easier for staff to find electronic records but also to help with the identification of records to be deleted, preserved for the medium term or archived. All staff are now asked to adhere to these naming conventions as they are the key to maintaining well organised records. Feedback on these guidelines is welcomed; let us know what works well and which points are less useful (email computer-support@joh.cam.ac.uk).

8.1. Folder and File names should be short but clear

Please avoid the use of initials, non-standard or uncommon abbreviations, codes or personal acronyms. Stick to letters (A-Z or a-z) and numbers (0-9). Avoid 'The' or 'A' at the start of file names as they do not add much to a title except to lengthen it.

Good file names	Bad file names
NamingConventionsGuidelines	The_ABC_guidance_on_naming_conventions
EducationCommitteeTermsOfReference	Terms of reference for the Education Committee

8.2. Avoid repetition and redundancy in file names

Repetition and redundancy increase the length of file names. A record should not contain information that is already present in the folder in which it is filed. However, if you are unhappy at very short titles which rely on documents being placed on the correct folder, elements may be repeated (this may be the case for committee minutes and papers).

Good file names	Bad file names
Folder: 2010PurchaseOrders File title: CocaCola20100202 *or* 2010-02-02CocaCola	Folder: Purchase Orders For 2010 File title: 2_Feb_10_Purchase Order To Coca Cola
Folder: PolicyDocuments File title: RecordsManagement	Folder: PolicyDocuments File title: Policy on Records Management
Folder: BuildingsCommittee File title: 20091002Agenda *or* 20091002BuildingsCommitteeAgenda	Folder: Buildings Committee File title: Agenda for the 2nd Oct Meeting

8.3. Date and Number Formats

To maintain chronological order use the formula YearMonthDay. Years should be expressed fully as 4 digits, months and days as two digits.

Good file names	Bad file names

2009-03-31-EducationCommitteeAgenda	31st March 09 Agenda for Education Committee
20090216BusinessPlan	16 Feb 2009 Business Plan
2011-03Invoices	Mar 2011 Invoices

And remember to include a leading zero for numbers 0-9. Use *02* rather than just *2,* or *002* when you know it will be a long sequence.

8.4. Use Capital Letters to delimit words, rather than spaces or underscores

Some software packages have difficulty recognising files names with spaces. Using spaces and underscores also lengthens the file name. Where capitalised common acronyms are used in file names, the acronym should appear in capitals as well as the first letter of the word following.

Good file names	Bad file names
CUPContract	Contract_with_CUP
RiskManagementStrategyDraft	Risk Management Strategy draft version

8.5. Avoid using words like 'draft', 'letter' or 'memo' at the start of file names

Describe what the document is at the end of the title to facilitate ordering within the folder, allowing documents relating to a subject to sit together.

Good file names	Bad file names
BudgetDeadlineMemo	Memo on the budget deadline
BudgetDeadlinePolicy	Policy on the budget deadline
RecordsManagementPolicyDraft	Draft_Records_Management_Policy

8.6. Version control

It is important to signify which is the most recent version of a record. Use 'v' at the end of the description followed by a number. Good practice to follow is to change the number before the decimal point when really significant changes occur and the number after the decimal point when minor changes occur. Or use *draft* for documents in progress and *final* when the finished document is ready.

Good file names	Bad file names
ContractV1.0	Contract version number 1
RecordsManagementPolicyV.03	Records Management Policy version 3

Budget2009Final	2009_Budget_Final_Version

Important Note: the above is really only necessary prior to use of any formal document management product. When using such a product, version control is provided as in integral part of the system.

8.7. Correspondence files

Conventions across the College will vary but you should aim for consistency within your own department. File names may include the name of the sender, date, whether sent or received and sometimes the subject. Details of the sender will vary: Surname and initial (e.g. WhiteR), Firm name (e.g. TaylorVinters), or Firm name and correspondent (e.g. TaylorVintersWhiteR). The details will differ according to where you save the file. In a folder labelled *TaylorVintersCorrespondence2009* there will be no need to use the firm name when saving items there. Within a large project folder, the firm name may be more useful. As regards subject, if the documents are filed in subject folders, there is no need to repeat this in the document name.

Good file names	Bad file names
Folder: EnquiriesEnglish File title: 20080721-SmithM-Sent	Letter sent to M Smith about reading English at Johns 21 July 2008
2009-03-31RobertsMRecd	Received letter from M Roberts 31 Mar 2009
RobertsJ20090331InvoicePaymentsSent	Letter sent to John Roberts re Invoice Payments 31 March
Folder: SwimmingPoolDevelopment File title: 20091011BluePoolsSmithRSent	R Smith from Blue Pools letter sent on the 11th October '09

Note: Full first name may be required when you have multiple people with the same surname and initial:

2009-03-31SmithMarkRecd   and   2009-03-31SmithMabelRecd

Any files that include a personal name should be in the format Surname followed by Initial (e.g. WebsterR)

8.8. List the components of a file name in the most appropriate way to retrieve the record

The elements in a filename should be ordered according to the way in which the record will be most commonly retrieved and this will vary between users. If it is easier to retrieve

documents by date, start titles with the date, to retrieve by subject start titles with the subject.

Good file names	Bad file names
20090824Agenda	24 Aug 09 Agenda
GeographyAlumniEvent20081203	Alumni event for Geographers 3 12 08

8.9. Consider adding 'Vital' to the title of files and folders that have been identified as your department's vital records

The Archivist is meeting with all departments to identify the College's vital records (i.e. those that are needed for the College to continue functioning in the event of a disaster). For those electronic records identified as vital, a signpost such as adding 'Vital' to the title is useful if a person is trying to locate important records in stressful circumstances.

9. Final Versions

Once a document is completed try to create a 'final version' as a .pdf file (and name it *Final* or *FinalVersion*). From a Microsoft Office document this can easily be done by selecting the **Save As …** option and selecting **PDF** from the **Save as type:** drop-down menu. PDFs cannot easily be altered and therefore other people will know it really is the final version. This also helps to create authentic records as we know they cannot easily be altered. The .pdf format is also recognised as having longevity and so the College will still be able to access the document in years to come, unlike documents created in some other formats.
Important Note: the above are only really only necessary prior to use of any formal document management product. When using such a product, version control is provided as in integral part of the system.

10. Email

The College has recently upgraded its Exchange email and collaboration service. Part of this upgrade has enabled us to discontinue the need to archive email using so-called "PST" files which might reside in a number of locations including your C: drive. College staff have often been frustrated when PST files are corrupted seemingly at random, or lost when they switch computers. And of course information in PST files is often unable to be discovered, searched, or secured.

Every staff member now has a separate online Archive mailbox, which by definition is available, searchable and secure just like your main mailbox. The policy for when emails are moved into your Archive mailbox and how long they are retained is as follows:

- All data in PST files has been moved into the central Archive.
- All data in the live mailbox older than three years will be shifted into the user's archive folder.
- All data in the Archive mailbox older than seven years will be automatically permanently deleted.
- Any items in any Deleted Items folder in any location (live or Archive) will be permanently deleted after six months.

11. Document Properties

Always complete the Document Properties panel. In Microsoft Office this is found via the **File > Info > Properties** menu. Enter as much information as possible, but at least items such as Title, Author(s), comments etc. This helps to ensure that searching will return more relevant results.

Properties ▾

Size	183KB
Pages	9
Words	3031
Total Editing Time	28 Minutes
Title	Document & Records Manag...
Comments	This document is reproduce...

Related Dates

Last Modified	06/02/2014 11:14
Created	06/02/2014 11:14
Last Printed	Never

Related People

Author	Geoff Bouch
	Add an author
Last Modified By	Geoff Bouch

Related Documents

Open File Location

Show All Properties

Important Note: the above is particularly important when using a formal document management product. When using such a product, well completed document properties (metadata) yields better search results, and documents can be grouped and/or filtered for more appropriate display.

12. Contacts

IT Department:
E-mail: computer-support@joh.cam.ac.uk
Phone: 38751
Records Archivist/Manager:
Ms Tracy Wilkinson, E-mail: t.wilkinson@joh.cam.ac.uk
Phone: 38361

13. Useful Links

University Information Services – Information Compliance advice - http://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/

University Information Services – Information Management advice - http://www.information-management.uis.cam.ac.uk/