Quality Assurance: Documentation Retention and Archiving Policy

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# Introduction

This policy sets out approved document retention periods in order that Kent may meet its obligations to students; comply with quality assurance requirements; reduce burdens on space and storage; and comply with the Data Protection Act by not retaining documentation longer than is justifiably necessary.

# Information

1. **Data Protection Act 2018:** the Act stipulates that personal data must only be used for the purpose for which it was obtained and kept for no longer than necessary. When personal data is no longer required to be retained, it must be destroyed. For further information, please refer to [Assurance and Data Compliance](https://www.kent.ac.uk/about/assurance-and-data-protection).
2. **Retention:** Documentation may be retained for a longer period of time than stated in this document, but the School or office must make explicit the reasons for doing so, e.g. to retain project work that includes original data and/or analysis; for surveys of trends in student achievement; to use as examples to future students. The documentation must be destroyed when the stated purpose has been fulfilled.
3. **Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies:** Where relevant, Schools should refer to PSRB guidance on the archiving of assessed work to ensure that they will comply with any specific requirements.
4. **Students:** The policy on the retention of student work and files should be made available to students, .e.g. via the course handbook or School/Division website.
5. **Formats:** Paper (e.g. files, forms, folders) or electronic (e.g. word processed documents, databases, spreadsheets, web, scanned images). Records held electronically must remain accessible and not lost in obsolete technology. Electronic storage should be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, arrangements made for it to be moved to new software. Long term data should be held on a central server to ensure that it is adequately backed up.
6. **Storage and Disposal:** If it is helpful to retain both paper and electronic copies as the official record, this may be done; if not the non-official copy should be destroyed as soon as the need for reference ceases.

In order to make disposal easier, make a note on folders or folder lists when they are due for disposal at the creation or closure of that folder.

For each area, there should be someone with responsibility for organising disposal of specific files/data.

Paper documentation with personal data should be shredded on disposal.

1. Before undertaking **permanent disposal** of student data it is **vital** to ensure that any student marks and results information, including pass lists, are retained by the Central Student Administration Office (CSAO), or on the Student Data System itself. If in doubt, please check with CSAO ([csao@kent.ac.uk](mailto:csao@kent.ac.uk)) before destroying files.
2. This policy will be a growing document as needs evolve. Any feedback or queries regarding document retention should be directed to [qaco@kent.ac.uk](mailto:qaco@kent.ac.uk).

| **Document Type** | **Retention Period** | **Held By** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Quality and Standards | | |
| QAA HE Review/Institutional Audit/Collaborative Audit documentation - evidence | Electronic - permanent archive  Paper - end of Review/Audit year plus six years | (Quality Assurance and Compliance Office) QACO |
| QAA HE Review/Institutional Audit/Collaborative Audit documentation - process | End of Review/Audit year plus six years | QACO |
| QAA HE Review/Institutional Audit/Collaborative Audit documentation – response to the results and follow up | Electronic - permanent archive  Paper - end of Review/Audit year plus six years | QACO |
| Kent Code of Practice | Permanent archive – electronic | QACO |
| Kent Credit Framework | Permanent archive – electronic | QACO |
| Periodic Review – documentation for panel | End of the current academic year plus six years | School |
| Periodic Review – report and response | End of the current academic year plus six years | Division |
| Course (previously Programme) specifications | Permanent electronic archive – published on website | On Division website |
| Module specifications | Permanent electronic archive – published on website | On Division website |
| External Examiners reports and responses | (From 2009 reports) permanent archive on Sharepoint | QACO |
| School annual course/module monitoring reports | End of the current academic year plus six years | School |
| Division annual monitoring reports | End of the current academic year plus six years | Division |
| Board of Examiner minutes | End of the current academic year plus six years | School |
| Division Review Panel | End of the current academic year plus six years | Division |
| All School committee minutes and supporting documentation | Electronic – permanent archive  Paper - end of current academic year plus six years | School |
| All Division committee minutes and supporting documentation | Electronic – permanent archive  Paper - end of current academic year plus six years | Division |
| Sub-committee minutes and supporting documentation | Electronic – permanent archive  Paper - end of current academic year plus six years | As per ownership of sub-committee |
| PASC/CASC course approval minutes and supporting documentation | Paper - end of current academic year plus six years  Minutes – permanent electronic archive | QACO |
| Working Group for Regulations and Conventions minutes and supporting papers (to 2019-20) | Electronic - permanent archive  Paper - end of current academic year plus six years | QACO |
| Learning and Teaching Board (to 2015-16)/Academic Standards and Quality Committee/Education Board/ Graduate School Board (all to 2019-20) minutes and supporting documentation  Education and Academic Standards Committee/ Education and Student Experience Board/Graduate and Researcher College Board (all from 2020-21) minutes and supporting documentation | Electronic – permanent archive  Paper - end of current academic year plus six years | QACO |
| Collaborative Partnerships | | |
| Collaborative Partnerships approval panel documentation | End of the current academic year plus six years | QACO |
| Formal agreements with partner organisations (MoU/MoA) | Life of collaboration plus six years | QACO |
| Register of Collaborative Partnerships | Permanent electronic archive | QACO |
| Student Records | | |
| *Note: The recording on the online data system of information relating to marks and results etc is the responsibility of the relevant Division/School/Centre where the data was generated. The Central Student Administration Office* *is responsible for the records on the online data system once they have been entered.* | | |
| Core student data from registration | Permanent electronic archive  Paper - end of last year of registered student relationship with university plus six years | (Central Student Administration Office) CSAO |
| Core student data from studies | Permanent electronic archive  Paper - end of last year of registered student relationship with university plus six years | CSAO |
| Lists of students registered to a course and photographs of students | Permanent electronic archive | CSAO |
| Composite mark sheets | Permanent electronic archive | CSAO |
| Pass lists | Permanent electronic archive | CSAO |
| Student prizes | Permanent electronic archive  Paper - end of last year of registered student relationship with university plus six years | Division |
| Attendance registers/sheets | Paper - normally, to end of relevant academic year. Note that this requirement will be superseded where there is an additional specific need to retain paper copies, e.g. for UKBA purposes.  Above data transferred to online data system – permanent electronic archive | School  CSAO |
| Records of requests for confirmation of student awards, attendance or conduct from employers or other HEIs | Electronic - end of current academic year plus six years | CSAO |
| Records of student requests for confirmation of results/ transcripts | Electronic - end of current academic year plus six years | CSAO |
| Records of letters despatched to students | Electronic - end of current academic year plus six years | CSAO |
| Concessionary/medical evidence | Last action on case plus six years | School |
| Records of disciplinary/misconduct proceedings against a student | Last action on case plus six years | School |
| Records of appeals/grievance hearings | Last action on case plus six years | Dependent on level case reaches |
| Records of analyses and summaries of NSS | End of current academic year plus six years  Published report – permanent electronic archive | Planning Office |
| Student Assessment | | |
| ***Note 1:*** *In all cases where an appeal has been submitted by a student, coursework/exam scripts should be retained until the appeal has been concluded (up to and including appeal to the OIA).*  ***Note 2:*** *Work submitted electronically to Turnitin is not stored on University of Kent servers and work submitted via Moodle Assignments becomes inaccessible when students are changed to Status X. Turnitin and/or Moodle should not be used as an archival mechanism and Schools are advised to ensure that work is stored locally and securely (e.g. on CD, DVD, in network folder or as hard copy).*  ***Note 3:*** *Recordings on KentPlayer, including student presentations and performances (audio or visual) are purged after two years, therefore, longer term storage of such assessed work must be made in a suitable format.*  ***Note 4:*** *Paper versions of composite mark sheets and pass lists must be* *sent to CSAO for permanent electronic archive, as set out in Section C above. Once permanent archiving has taken place the paper copies can be destroyed.*  ***Note 5:*** *Where relevant, Schools should verify Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies' guidance on the archiving of assessed work to ensure that they are meeting any specific PSRB requirements.* | | |
| Teaching materials placed on Moodle (VLE) | Electronic - end of current academic year plus six years | School (on Moodle) |
| Educational recordings on KentPlayer *(see Note 3 above)* | Electronic - end of current academic year plus one year | School (on KentPlayer) |
| Assessed coursework | Retained as per local policies for doing so (e.g. by Schools or by students themselves) until the end of the academic year in which the student completes their course with the University plus three months, except in cases of an appeal being submitted by the student *(see Note 1 above)* |  |
| Examination papers | Permanent electronic archive – may be published on library website | School/may be published on library website |
| Examination scripts and associated commentary for Foundation Year/Stage 1 (not leading to a separate award) *(also refer to Note 4)* | Foundation Year/Stage plus one year | School |
| Examination scripts and associated commentary (other than above) *(also refer to Note 4)* | End of the academic year in which the student completes their course with the University plus three months, except in cases of an appeal being submitted by the student *(see Note 1 above)* | School |
| Taught undergraduate/masters dissertations | Graduation/leaving plus one year  MA dissertations may be deposited in the library - permanent | School  Library |
| Theses for degrees by research | Permanent electronic archive  Library deposit - permanent | School  Library |
| Supervisors/Examiners | | |
| Reports of supervisors and examiners on theses for degrees by research | End of current academic year plus six years | School |
| Appointment forms/CVs relating to selection and appointment of External Examiners | End of appointment plus one year | QACO |
| Expenses claim forms from External Examiners | End of the current tax year plus three tax years | Pay Office |

# Appendix 1

Records which may be routinely destroyed

As a rule, the following types of records have no significant operational, informational or evidential value. They can, therefore, be destroyed as soon as they have served their primary purpose.

* Announcements and notices of meetings and other events, and notifications of acceptance or apologies
* Requests for stock information such as maps and travel directions, brochures etc
* Requests for, and confirmations of, reservations for internal services (e.g. meeting rooms, car parking spaces, pool cars) where no internal charges are made
* Requests for, and confirmations of, reservations with third parties (e.g. travel, hotel accommodation, restaurants) when invoices have been received
* Transmission documents: letters, fax cover sheets, email messages, compliments slips and similar items which accompany documents **but do not add any value to them**
* Message slips
* Superseded address lists, distribution lists etc.
* Duplicate documents such as:
  + ‘CC’ and ‘FYI’ copies
  + drafts
  + ‘Snapshot’ printouts or extracts from databases
  + ‘Day Files’ (chronological copies of correspondence)
* Personal diaries, address books etc.
* Working papers, where the results have been written into an official document and which are not required to support it
* Stocks of in-house publications which are obsolete, superseded or otherwise useless e.g. magazines, marketing materials, prospectuses, catalogues, manuals, directories, forms, and other material produced for wide distribution
* Published or reference materials received from other parts of the institution or from vendors or other external organisations which require no action and are not needed for ‘record’ purposes, e.g. trade magazines, vendor catalogues, flyers, newsletters

(Source: JISC)