



Home Office

Knowledge and Information Management Unit (KIMU) - Policy

What to Keep – Corporate Retention Schedules

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1 Introduction

This schema details how long all Home Office units, including Migration and Borders, His Majesty's Passport Office, and General Register Office, will keep its corporate information. It is recommended that all arms length and non departmental bodies follow these instructions.

2 Scope

This schema relates to all corporate information held by the department. A separate schema covers Operational Information. It helps clarify what information should be kept for business, legislative and historical reasons as well as indicating when it should be deleted. Information that could be selected for permanent preservation at The National Archives will be subject to a review at the end of its retention period. Information that is not in this category can be destroyed at the end of its retention period.

There is a standard approach of the following periods, which begin when the record is closed or from the date last modified –

- 2 years - destroy
- 5 years - review/destroy
- 7 years - review/destroy
- 15 years - review/destroy
- 100 years from birth - destroy

The application of this policy is mandatory. Failure to comply with the requirements as outlined may result in disciplinary action.

Note: A blanket moratorium to prevent the destruction of all Home Office business information, including all operational records and case files, was introduced in 2015 as a result of the Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse (IICSA).

Although the requirement to preserve information for IICSA no longer exists, the mechanisms to prevent the destruction of information will remain until replaced by targeted moratoria, to meet the requirements of the current independent inquiries.

3 Corporate Records

3.1 Policy, Governance & Development

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Policy Drafts for Comment	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	When superseded
Policy Drafts of significant changes in approach • Major (impacts on society or reflects main Home Office objectives) • Minor	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after last modification Destroy 7 years after last modification
Final Policy Versions • Major (impacts on society or reflects main Home Office objectives) • Minor	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after last modification Destroy 7 years last modification
Board Record sets (mtgs/papers) • Major • Minor	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after record closed Destroy 7 years after record closed
Board Admin	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed

3.2 Information Requests

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Responses to Information request Under FOI investigated by ICO	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Responses to Information request Under FOI - routine leading to precedent	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Responses routine FOI requests	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Responses routine SAR requests	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 2 years after record closed
Responses routine Environmental Information requests	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Responses to Inquiries-e-Discovery Searches	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 7 years after end of Inquiry
Responses to inquiries Nuix searches	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	FOI lead/Team	Destroy 7 years after end of Inquiry

3.3 Ministerial Business

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Parliamentary Questions (replies)	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Ministerial correspondence Ensure systems for recording incoming correspondence and replies are adequate, including where correspondence is managed centrally.	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Briefings for Ministerial visits/visitors	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Ministers' Notebooks and aide memoires Ministers' notebooks are public records. Tell ministers that they may be transferred to The National Archives after 20 years. Keep ministers' aides-memoire and notes, whether handwritten or digital.	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Review 15 years after record closed
Official Diaries Keep the final version showing what actually took place (rather than what was planned)	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Review 15 years after record closed
Submissions Keep submissions with ministers'/permanent secretary's comments. Keep correspondence reporting ministers' responses along with background provided to ministers'/permanent secretary.	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Private Office	Review 15 years after record closed

3.4 Projects and Research

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Large scale (Gateway) projects – closed (one or more of the following applies: public facing, involves national security implications (protects the interest of national security and reduces illegal entry to the UK, crime and/or counter terrorism; holds data above official), processes financial payments, has potential political implications (required as a result of government legislation, meets legal obligations, has a high public profile))	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after closure
Large scale projects - rejected	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after closure
Test Management / Evidence Large Project (one or more of the following applies: public facing, involves national security implications (protects the interest of national security and reduces illegal entry to the UK, crime and/or counter terrorism; holds data above official), has over 10,000 users, processes financial payments, has potential political implications (required as a result of government legislation, meets legal obligations, has a high public profile)) Small Project (falling outside the definition given above of high profile projects)	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 7 years after closure (Large Project) Destroy 5 years after closure (Small Project)

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Routine (Small) Projects/committees/groups	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 7 years after record closed
High profile research/reports	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after record closed

3.5 Stakeholder Management

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Dealing with the media and public: Press releases Press conferences Correspondence	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Prep work for publications	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Consultations	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Other Stakeholder Correspondence	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed

3.6 Administration

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
Directorate Mgt Information: Risk Registers, Asset Registers, Staff Resource registers	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 5 years after record closed
Directorate Mgt Information: meetings, events, etc	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy when no longer required or superseded but retain no longer than 5 years
All process guides	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 7 years after last modification
All Building Architectural, Structural reports, surveys plans, inspections, Maps & Drawings, certificates, photographic, legal, contracts etc		Originator	Covered under Ministry of Justice schema as a Shared Service
All Maintenance logs, reports, contractor	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Review 15 years after record closed
Finance (not relating to building, fraud, theft) (Relating to building, Fraud, theft)	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 7 years after record closed Review 15 years after record closed
Contracts (Not relating to building)	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	N/A	Review 7 years after contract closed
All Audit	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 7 years after record closed

What to keep	Where to keep it	Who should save it	When should it be deleted
HR Lifecycle records (record of service for pay and pension purposes. HR Performance Management paper files	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy when subject aged 100 years Destroy 7 years after the performance year for which it was recorded.
Litigation	Accredited corporate storage/Registered Paper File	Originator	Destroy 7 years after record closed
Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA)	Accredited corporate storage	Originator	Destroy 7 years after the processing has ceased

End of document

This schema has been created or is managed by the Home Office Knowledge & Information Management Unit.

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