

# What to Do with Papers in Your Office

Planning an office move or tidy-up? When facing the papers in your space remember: if there are University records there are rules for what to do with them.

## So what should I do first?

### 1. Plan ahead

Make a note to contact Records Services as soon as you know the office move or tidy-up will go ahead. Whether it is a little or a lot of paperwork, the team can provide advice and support to ensure it is managed in keeping with University policy.

To get the most out of the consultation process, before you contact Records Services:

- Identify **what you have**  
Make an initial assessment of the documents included in the move or tidy-up – the 'what', 'where' and 'how much'.
- Think about **how you use** what is there (if you use it at all)  
Does it include day-to-day records you may need to keep on hand, or records you only look at a couple of times a year? Could some be sent to off-site storage? Or, if appropriate, even destroyed?
- If you are moving offices, think about how much **storage room** you will have in your new space

### 2. Do not throw any papers out

Not yet, anyway. Because if what you have turns out to include University records, you will need approval from the University Archivist before the records can be destroyed.

### 3. Contact Records Services

Once you know the office move or tidy-up is going ahead and you have a good idea about your current and (if you are moving) prospective records situations, contact Records Services as soon as possible.

The team can:

- give advice tailored to your situation
- provide an overview of what happens next
- identify any resources you might need
- answer any questions you might have.

Letting Records Services know sooner is better than later to give them enough time to help you prepare for the activity with as little stress as possible.

## What happens next?

Once you know the move or tidy-up is going ahead:

### 1. Set aside time

Book out time in your calendar in advance for preparing yourself and the papers in your office.

Scheduling in time for yourself will reduce the stress of last minute sorting and documentation. It will also minimise the risk of mistakenly losing or destroying records.

When your office is filled with paperwork, **do not** attempt to do all your area at once, as that can be quite overwhelming. Instead, schedule a few hours over the course of a few weeks.

### 2. List what you have and seek advice

It is now time for you to capture the details of your initial assessment from the 'Plan ahead' step above into an **Archival-disposal authorisation** spreadsheet.

This tool will help both you and Records Services identify what can be kept, archived or destroyed.

- You can find the spreadsheet on the 'Forms and Templates' page of the Records Services website: [www.adelaide.edu.au/library/library-services/records-services/forms-templates](http://www.adelaide.edu.au/library/library-services/records-services/forms-templates).
- Email your completed spreadsheet to Records Services, who will assess your listing and contact you to discuss what happens next: [records.services@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:records.services@adelaide.edu.au).

### 3. Action advice

Records Services will return your archival-disposal spreadsheet to you, complete with instructions for those records that:

- can be immediately **destroyed** if approved by the Head of your area  
All University records must be confidentially destroyed.
- can be boxed and transferred for **off-site storage**.  
Records Services will provide you with instructions on how to process the records for transfer to off-site storage; and supply you with the appropriate quantity of boxes. It is your responsibility to take care of the packing and provide them with a box listing.

From the 'Forms and Templates' page of the Records Services website you can download the:

- 'Archival box listing' spreadsheet
- 'Archiving records: instructions for transferring records to off-site storage' fact sheet

### 4. Review

Once the physical move or tidy-up is complete, you can use your archival-disposal authorisation spreadsheet to check off that everything has been actioned according to plan.

If you have concerns regarding your current recordkeeping practices or would like to improve access and management of your records, contact Records Services for assistance:

- (08) 8313 5334
- [records.services@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:records.services@adelaide.edu.au)