



Records disposal schedule
Standards Directorate
Policy Ethics

Last updated: 9 April 2009

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Purpose

The records disposal schedule which follows will form part of a set of procedures setting out minimum standards for records management in the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). They will provide evidence of compliance with legislation such as the [Data Protection Act 1998](#), our Freedom of Information [Code of Practice](#) and eventually the [Freedom of Information Act 2000](#), as well as adherence to best practice standards.

The schedule will assist the SRA to:

- Reduce multiple sets of identical records and data.
- Remove obsolete or inaccurate information.
- Improve business processes.
- Meet legislative compliance standards in record keeping.
- Create corporate rules for records disposal as part of new system implementation.

Scope

This version of the schedule covers the operational records (paper and electronic) of the Policy Ethics unit. It supersedes section 1 of an earlier schedule for Professional Ethics.

To dispose of administrative records generated by the unit (electronic and paper), staff should refer to the general records disposal schedule: records documenting functions and activities common to most business units. This schedule recommends retention periods for the administrative records which business units create or use in the course of their business.

To implement disposal rules for records managed by the unit (paper or electronic) which are not covered by the above schedules, the directorate's records officer should be contacted. S/he will liaise with the SRA records manager for the production of an updated version of the schedule to include those records.

Disposal of records

There are only two ways to dispose of records:

1. Destroy them *or*
2. Keep them permanently

Records of permanent value should be as a rule transferred to the corporate archives. This is currently located in the Law Society's Library at Chancery Lane.

Hard copy (paper) records which have to be kept for a period of time before destruction (e.g. longer than 1-3 months after action completed) should be transferred to the Midlands archive store.

The provisions of this schedule were formally approved via e-mail on 9 April 2009 by Bronwen Still, Head of Policy Ethics.

Destruction of records should be suspended if it becomes apparent that there is any possibility of anticipated litigation or regulatory investigation. Deliberate destruction of relevant records in such cases could involve the criminal offence of obstructing or perverting the course of justice. A court is also likely to draw adverse inferences from such an exercise and it is unlikely that a court would be satisfied with any explanation for deliberate record destruction after the commencement of proceedings

The schedule							
Standards Directorate – Policy Ethics Unit (last updated 9 April 2009) version 1.0 records covering the setting of regulatory rules and standards for professional behaviour							
For disposal of administrative, housekeeping or project records and reference material refer to the general records disposal schedule							
Contents list:							
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Developing rules and standards for professional behaviour 2. Promoting compliance with rules and standards 							
Disposal class number	Function	Activity	Record type/ sub-type	Medium/format / storage location	Recommended disposal	Statutory retention requirement or best practice	Notes
1.	Developing rules and standards for professional behaviour						
1.1		Developing regulatory policy, codes and rules					

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1. Developing rules and standards for professional behaviour
2. Promoting compliance with rules and standards

Disposal class number	Function	Activity	Record type/ sub-type	Medium/format / storage location	Recommended disposal	Statutory retention requirement or best practice	Notes
1.1.1			Rules and Ethics Committee: agenda, minutes and papers	Hard copy and electronic (group folder) Public documents also available on SRA website	Transfer hard copy to Corporate Historical Archive as convenient* One electronic copy should be retained in the group folder as a permanent record+ Destroy drafts, spare electronic versions and paper sets as convenient e.g. after 1 year Disposal of website material managed by TLS web editorial team	Law Society General Regulations: Regulation 57; Corporate Archive Policy version 2.0	*Papers may be accepted in electronic format other than signed minutes. Tabled papers should be included +A central electronic archive for SRA records of permanent value is needed

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Disposal class number	Function	Activity	Record type/ sub-type	Medium/format / storage location	Recommended disposal	Statutory retention requirement or best practice	Notes
1.1.2			Policy files, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correspondence • Drafts • Information material • Policy development 	Hard copy and electronic (group folder)	Transfer hard copy files to Midlands archive store 2 years after action completed Review 20 years after action completed		Used for long-term reference

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Disposal class number	Function	Activity	Record type/ sub-type	Medium/format / storage location	Recommended disposal	Statutory retention requirement or best practice	Notes
1.1.3			Published codes and rules (current and obsolete) e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicitors' Code of Conduct • Solicitors Accounts Rules; • Solicitors' Practice Rules 1990 and associated rules and codes • Solicitors' Financial Services (Scope) Rules • Solicitors' Financial Services (Conduct of Business) Rules • Solicitors' Recognised Body Regulations • SRA Recognised Body Regulations • SRA Practising Regulations 	Hard copy and electronic (group folder) Current and some archived versions on SRA website	Transfer one final version of each published document to Corporate Historical Archive as convenient One electronic copy should be retained in the group folder as a permanent record* Destroy drafts, spare electronic versions and paper sets as convenient e.g. after 1 year Disposal of website material managed by TLS web editorial team	Corporate Archive Policy version 2.0	* A central electronic archive for SRA records of permanent value is needed

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2.	Promoting compliance with rules and standards						
2.1		Responding to requests for guidance or consultation					

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Disposal class number	Function	Activity	Record type/sub-type	Medium/format / storage location	Recommended disposal	Statutory retention requirement or best practice	Notes
2.1.1			Published guidelines or consultation documents	Hard copy and electronic (group folder) Current and some archived versions on SRA website	Transfer one final version of each published document to Corporate Historical Archive as convenient One electronic copy should be retained in the group folder as a permanent record* Destroy drafts, spare electronic versions and paper sets as convenient e.g. after 1 year Disposal of website material managed by TLS web editorial team	Corporate Archive Policy version 2.0	* A central electronic archive for SRA records of permanent value is needed

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2.1.2			Code of Conduct FAQs	Electronic (group folder) SRA website	Destroy as superseded Disposal of website material managed by TLS web editorial team		

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