

Digitisation and disposal of source records policy

This is a mandated policy under the operational policy framework. Any edits to this policy must follow the process outlined on the [creating, updating and deleting operational policies](#) page.

Overview

The department is legally required under the [State Records Act 1997](#) to create, capture, classify, retain, preserve, dispose of, and manage documents and records for specific periods identified in approved disposal schedules. The department's goal is to ensure these documents and records are accurate, complete, reliable, and comply with the requirements of the [State Records Act 1997](#).

This policy provides guidance and strategies to enable appropriate digitisation, management, storage, and disposal of source records, removing the need for hard copy files.

Scope

This policy applies to all department source records received, created, or maintained by the department related to SA government and departmental activities, that are digitised using compliant practices and captured into the Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS). The current department EDRMS is Objective.

It also applies to all department employees, contractors, consultants, and external providers digitising and disposing of departmental source records.



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Detail

The Government of South Australia made a [Digital by Default declaration \(PDF 389KB\)](#) in 2014. This declaration committed the government to proactively transform services using digital technology, including the transition of paper-based processes to digital.

The Department for Education has also established a [Digital Strategy 2023 to 2026](#) that places emphasis on utilising digital technology to ensure a streamlined and modernised workplace, whilst also enabling people to use data to make informed and forward-thinking decisions.

To support these commitments, the Department for Education has established an Information Management program that focusses on the creation and capture of digital records and information by default. This has included the implementation of a dedicated Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) for official records, and an emphasis on the digitisation of source records wherever practical for capture into the EDRMS.

This policy has now been established to provide direction for the disposal of source records once digitised and captured into the EDRMS.

Source records of the Department for Education will be managed in accordance with the requirements of the [General Disposal Schedule 21 \(GDS 21\) v5 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) (as amended) issued by State Records of South Australia.

Source records identified as being in scope of [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) requirements will be managed, retained, and destroyed as directed by this policy.

No permanent retention original or source record, created prior to 1 January 2005 will be destroyed, and will instead be retained in line with [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#), other applicable Disposal Schedules and the relevant standards issued by State Records of South Australia.

The EDRMS will be managed and maintained to ensure the records, and their associated metadata are captured, to meet the requirements of [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) and the relevant standards issued by State Records of South Australia.

Identification and management of source records

Source records are hard copy records received or created by departmental staff during the course of business. Generally, any relevant records received are by way of mail - from stakeholders including clients, contractors, the public, Members of Parliament, and other government agencies (Commonwealth, State and Local).

These records are assessed by staff to determine their status as a record in line with the department's [information and records management policy \(PDF 614KB\)](#) and associated procedures. Those not requiring capture under the policy, such as non-business-related materials, are disseminated to the relevant staff member and retained until their use ceases.

Records requiring capture under the policy are to be scanned and the digitised versions of the records captured into the EDRMS. Within the EDRMS, the records are assigned the relevant metadata and can be assigned to the relevant staff member for action, if required.

Digitisation and validation of source records

Source records converted to digitised electronic record renditions must be digitised using an endorsed departmental device. This includes multi-function photocopier/scanners or equivalent document scanners connected to the department network that meets departmental minimum digitisation specification requirements (as detailed in the 'minimum mandatory digitisation standards' section of the [corporate record preservation quick reference guide \(PDF 754KB\)](#) (staff login required)).

As each source record is digitised, the digital rendition must be validated against the source record by the staff member undertaking the digitisation task, to ensure it is an equivalent 'one to one' or 'like for like' digital rendition. This ensures the digitised version is an accurate and equitable record to the source record. If a digitised record is found not to be a reliable rendition of the source record, the digitisation process should be repeated until a reliable digital rendition has been produced.

Capture of digitised source records

Digitised renditions of source records must be captured, managed, archived and disposed of within the EDRMS as electronic records in accordance with the department [information and records management policy \(PDF 614KB\)](#). Refer to the [corporate record preservation quick reference guide \(PDF 754KB\)](#) (staff login required) for further detail on digitising hardcopy records.

Digitised renditions captured into the EDRMS must include all relevant minimum mandatory metadata associated with the record, in line with relevant standards issued by State Records of South Australia. Minimum mandatory metadata elements are denoted as mandatory fields in the EDRMS and will be automatically captured where practical.

Retention and disposal of physical source records

Digitised renditions of source records must be retained and disposed of in accordance with the State Records of SA [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) for Management and Disposal of Source Documents and Digitised Versions after Digitisation. The State Records approved [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) permits the change of format of an official record from hardcopy to digital (with conditions).

[GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) also provides (with conditions) the means to dispose of source records after they have been converted into a digital format and captured into the EDRMS. If the conditions for record disposal set out in the [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) are not met, then the source records must be retained and managed as official records until the conditions set out in [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) are met, or until the source records are sentenced and disposed of in accordance with the provisions of the [State Records Act 1997](#).

Source record retention periods

Following digitisation, Department source records will be retained for the below periods:

Source Document Record Class	Disposal Schedules (GDS/RDS) item number(s)	Disposal Schedules (GDS/RDS) retention period(s)	Retention of source record after digitisation and capture
Permanent retention records created prior to 1 January 2005	Various	Permanent	Retain hardcopy permanently
Permanent retention records created on or after 1 January 2005	Various	Temporary	Destroy hardcopy using secure destruction methods 30 days after date of digitisation and capture of digitised rendition into the EDRMS
Temporary retention records	Various	Temporary	Destroy hardcopy using secure destruction methods 30 days after date of digitisation and capture of digitised rendition into the EDRMS
Temporary retention source records that are over 50 years of age at; a) the time of scanning; or b) the point at which the source record retention period expires.	Various	Refer to State Records for appropriate disposal authority	To be determined by appropriate disposal authority
Records omitted from any current, approved disposal authorities	Various	Unknown	Retain until an appropriate disposal authority is established and endorsed by State Records Council

Where identified, exceptions may dictate the ongoing retention of temporary source records beyond listed retention periods, and legal advice may be sought in relation to destruction of temporary records as required.

Roles and responsibilities

Employees

Be responsible and accountable for the accurate digitisation of source records in line with compliant digitisation processes and ensure records are effectively captured into the EDRMS for ongoing retention.

Employees must also be responsible and accountable for the compliant disposal of source records upon their effective digitisation and capture into the EDRMS.

This is in line with the requirements of the:

- [State Records Act 1997](#)
- [GDS 21 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#) (as amended) – For disposal of hardcopy source records after digitisation
- [information and records management policy \(PDF 614KB\)](#)
- [corporate record preservation quick reference guide \(PDF 754KB\)](#) (staff login required).

Chief Executive

Ensure records of business activities are created and maintained in the required format and assume accountability for such.

Chief Operating Officer

Ensure resources and governance mechanisms are in place to allow the Department to comply with the requirements of the [State Records Act 1997](#) and any other relevant standards and requirements issued by State Records of South Australia.

Represent information and records management interests on Executive Committees.

Executive directors, directors, education directors, managers and site leaders

Maintain appropriate record keeping practices within their business area/site and ensure employees under their leadership are aware of their individual record keeping obligations and the accountability associated with those obligations.

Manager, Information Management and Release

Make sure corporate information and records management policies, systems, procedures, and practices are developed and maintained.

Ensure compliance with record keeping policies, procedures, standards, and legislation, including

requirements under the [State Records Act 1997](#).

Team Leader, Information Management

Make sure the business systems and operational processes that generate and maintain corporate information and records are reliable and accessible for as long as they're required.

Information Management Team

Provide advice on the development, implementation, and maintenance of all information and records management policies, procedures, and practices to ensure their relevancy and currency.

Monitor compliance with information and records management policies and directives.

Ensure ongoing management of official corporate records in all formats.

Provide employees with training, advice, general information, and support in relation to information and records management.

Create, develop, acquire, and implement records management products, tools, including systems to help create and capture complete and accurate records.

Coordinate disposal of official records to ensure appropriate retention and storage.

Report records management trends and any risks associated with non-compliance to the Chief Executive, executives, and senior management.

Report and monitor use and compliance of the EDRMS.

Definitions

access

Right, opportunity, means of finding, using, or retrieving information.

business system

Large-scale or small-scale, integrated information systems that support processes, information flows, reporting and data analytics across the department. Typically, business systems are viewed as top tier applications requiring 24-hour, 7 day per week availability and technical support.

The departmental EDRMS is an example of a business system.

capture

A deliberate action that results in the registration of a record into a recordkeeping system. For certain business activities, this action may be designed into electronic business systems to capture records upon their creation.

destruction

Process of eliminating or deleting information including data and records, beyond any possible reconstruction. Information carrying a protective marking must be destroyed in line with the information security management framework.

digitisation

A deliberate action that results in the electronic copying, conversion, or migration of a physical document into an equivalent digital rendition and file-format to be captured into an electronic repository.

disposal

The process where official records of agencies are either destroyed, retained, or transferred between agencies.

disposal schedule

Identifies which records have temporary value, and the minimum time they must be kept before an agency can destroy them.

document

Structured units of recorded information published or unpublished, in hard copy or electronic format, and managed as discrete units in information systems.

Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS)

An automated system used to manage the creation, use, management, storage and disposal of physical and electronic documents and records. It improves an organisation's workflow and provides evidence of business activities.

The current Department for Education EDRMS is Objective.

format

Includes hard copy, digital, audio, video, photographic and multi-media.

metadata

Data describing the context, content and/or structure of records and their management over time.

official record

A record made or received by an agency when conducting its business.

permanent record

A record that has archival value and is retained permanently in line with an approved disposal schedule. It will be available for research by the general community subject to appropriate access conditions.

record

Includes:

- written, graphic or pictorial matter
- a disk, tape, film or other object.

It's considered a record when the above contains information or has information that can be reproduced (with or without the aid of another object or device).

sentence

The process used to determine the disposal action for a record by using an approved disposal schedule. It determines whether a record needs to be retained permanently or temporarily, and for how long.

source record

A rendition of a record that has been copied, converted, or migrated or will be the input for such a process. A source record may be an original record, or it may be a reproduction that was generated earlier by a copying, conversion, or migration process.

temporary record

A record with no archival value that can be sentenced (determine the disposal action) for destruction.

Supporting information

[Corporate record preservation quick reference guide \(PDF 754KB\)](#) (staff login required)

[General Disposal Schedule 21 v5 \(PDF 2.3MB\)](#)

[General Disposal Schedule 30 v2 \(PDF 1.6MB\)](#)

[Operational Records Disposal Schedule RDS 2023/14 v1 \(PDF 501KB\)](#)

Related legislation

[State Records Act 1997](#)

Related policies

[Information and records management policy \(PDF 614KB\)](#)

[Recordkeeping metadata policy \(PDF 148KB\)](#)

[Information and records management for corporate office procedure](#) (staff login required)

[Information and records management for schools and preschools procedure](#) (staff login required)

[State Records of South Australia – Standard: Managing digital records in systems \(PDF 398KB\)](#)

[State Records of South Australia – Standard: Minimum Recordkeeping Metadata Requirements \(PDF 503KB\)](#)

[State Records policies and guidelines](#)

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