



ADMINISTRATION POLICY RECORDS MANAGEMENT & RETENTION POLICY

EFFECTIVE: January 2011
REVISED: April 2011 – Appendix 1
RELATED POLICIES: Organizational Chart

POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to develop commonly understood and efficient practice for the retention and disposition of College records.

PROCEDURE

- All College records have a reasonable retention period based on the legal or logical requirement for retention.
- The retention and destruction of records is the responsibility of the record holder. See the Record Retention Classification Grid below.
- Storage of records within the established retention period will take priority over storage of records that have exceeded the established record retention period.
- The Record Holder is responsible for ensuring that appropriate security measures are observed while retaining or disposing of College records.
- Employees leaving the College are required to leave all College records to their successors.

DEFINITIONS

- **Record Holder:** The office responsible for the documentation. For example, official financial records are the responsibility of the Finance Office, official Board records are the responsibility of the President's Office, and student records are the responsibility of the Registrar's Office.
- **Disposition:** The action taken regarding the disposition of inactive records. Disposition can include, but is not limited to, in-office shredding, purging of electronic records, recycling, or the use of commercial services for disposition.
- **Records:** The *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* defines records as "books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic or mechanical means." Records include all such materials created by College personnel on behalf of the College.

RECORD MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

- Employees will file or otherwise organize their college records in a manner that allows access and retrieval of records quickly and easily, when required.
- Employees will protect the privacy of individuals by ensuring that records containing personal information are stored in a secure environment while in the office, are protected from harm if designated as vital records, and are confidentially destroyed by shredding or incineration according to approved retention and disposal schedules.
- Supervisors will work to ensure compliance with privacy guidelines for the collection, storage and disposal of personal information records.
- Employees will follow the approved retention classification and disposal outlined below.

- Departments that create or maintain **vital** records will establish and follow procedures to ensure that such records are protected in the event of a disaster.
- Employees who leave the College or change positions will leave all official college records for their successors, subject to approved retention and disposal schedules.

RECORD RETENTION CLASSIFICATIONS

1. **In Perpetuity:** Records that are required by law or logic or to preserve the College's history are kept "in perpetuity". This category of records includes, but is not limited to, records of governance, audits and events of historical interest to Northern Lights College.
2. **Until Expiry:** Records that have a defined end date or conclusion. In some cases these records are licenses and permits that will be renewed or guarantees that simply conclude on a specific date. In some cases these are records of imposed student discipline for which a date has been identified for removal of discipline related information from a student file.
3. **More than One Year, Up to Ten Years:** Records identified under these categories are to be kept for the current year plus the number of years as classified below. For each retention period, records are kept to meet legislation or policy requirements, or for operational purposes.

10 Years:	WorkSafe BC Requirements
7 Years:	Legal & Financial
5 Years:	General College Records (ie. – course outlines)
1 Year:	Records required during the fiscal year

4. **Less than One Year:** Records that are kept for convenience but have no lasting impact on the College or on decisions made by the College. These records include email backups and resumes.

STORAGE OF RECORDS

- Each office is responsible for establishing reasonable file and storage procedures, including culling and storing files.
- Should space be required for storing essential files, the College's process for acquiring space should be followed.

DESTRUCTION OF FILES

- In most cases, office shredders can be used for destroying sensitive files and the recycle bins can be used for disposing of non-sensitive files.
- If a large number of files need destruction, then offices should coordinate with other offices/departments a commercial service for the destruction of the files.
- At all times, the record holder is responsible for ensuring sensitive files are appropriately handled.

NOTE:

- See Appendix 1 for *Student Records Retention Guidelines and Schedule*