

The purpose of this guidance note is to advise staff of what information can be routinely destroyed in the normal course of business.

Discretionary records are low-value short-term information generated in the normal course of business. Discretionary records: Are of temporary usefulness to SGUL, do not have defined retention periods, and are not intended for long-term storage. Discretionary records should be disposed of once they have served their purpose. Some examples of discretionary records are routine internal and external correspondence such as memoranda, notes and letters, whether formal or informal, drafts and works-in-progress, magazines and similar external publications

This type of information doesn't have a set retention period and therefore isn't covered in the retention schedules and can therefore be destroyed once it is no longer needed.

The benefits of regularly purging such information include reduced storage costs and our resources can be deployed to manage the information assets we are required to retain in order to meet legal and regulatory requirements and the requirements of the University.

This guidance note should be used in association with the SGUL records management framework which can be accessed → <https://www.sgul.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies>

This guidance applies to information produced in any format including e-mails, voice messages, and data in business systems i.e. network drives, hard-drives, desktop, and databases.

What to destroy

Information that can be destroyed as soon as they are no longer needed includes but is not limited to:

- Duplicates for records when official copies are stored by Finance, Human Resources, and Registry. There is no requirement to keep local copies of records that are held centrally. Duplicates such as meeting packs, drafts, extracts from databases.
- Ephemera.
- Non-business information such as personal e-mails or spam.
- Calendars, diaries, and invitations.
- Reminders and alerts.
- Draft and working papers.
- Message slips.
- Superseded address or distribution lists.
- External publications i.e. newspapers, magazines, catalogues.
- Reference copies of newsletters, procedures, policies.

Contact the [Records Manager](#) if you have any questions about what can be destroyed.