

# Policies and Procedures

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## University Organisation and Governance Policies & Procedures

### University Archives Policy

**Policy Number:** 1.6.4.05  
**Responsible Officer:** Vice-Chancellor and President  
**Policy Editor/Contact:** Manager, Records Management  
**Approving Authority:** Vice-Chancellor and President  
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**Audience:** All staff

#### 1. Purpose

The University has an obligation, in line with the Records Management policy, to implement good archiving procedures and processes to preserve original and unique records that document the history of the University, its constituent parts, academic interests, and to make them available for use by staff, students, the academic research community and the wider public. The University of the South Pacific's Archive (USP Archive) policy complements the University's Records Management policy. It manages the next stage in the life cycle of a record that is deemed worthy of permanent preservation.

#### 2. Objective

Archives provide a record of the corporate memory of the University. They are principally inactive records, although archival material may not necessarily be records in the general sense of the meaning.

The University will develop, preserve, exhibit and provide access to its archival collections for the purposes of preserving the University's own historical records, and supporting its teaching and research programs, community development and knowledge creation and transfer agenda. The policy provides parameters around the processes to identify and collect records of permanent legal, administrative, financial or historical value; sort and catalogue the records in order to maximise their value as an information and research resource; keep them safe whilst taking all necessary steps to ensure the preservation and conservation of the records, and encourage use of the material contained within the USP Archive.

This policy, in conjunction with the Records Management policy, applies to all aspects of the University's business, including all records created by, received by, sanctioned by, or proceeding from an individual acting within their designated capacity. Records created, whether hard copy or electronic (soft) copy, are to be managed as per the requirements of the Records Management policy and the sentencing of those records which will then be transferred to the University Archive by virtue of the USP Retention and Disposal Schedule.

Where records are recommended for transfer to the USP Archive, arrangements should be discussed with the Manager, Records Management in the first instance.

#### 3. Definitions

Word/Term	Definition
Archive	Archives contain records and ephemeral material that have been naturally and necessarily generated as a product of regular legal, commercial, administrative or social activities.
USP Archive	

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Word/Term	Definition
	<p>The USP Archive contains material created or received by a person in the conduct of their affairs on behalf of the University and “preserved because of the enduring value contained in the information they contain or as evidence of the functions and responsibilities of their creator, especially those materials maintained using the principles of provenance, original order, and collective control; permanent records”. Society of American Archivists</p>
Continuing value	<p>The value of a record beyond the immediate administrative purpose for future business needs, accountability, evidence and/or research.</p>
Disposal	<p>A controlled and authorised process by which records are either:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. destroyed in a secure way to ensure confidentiality up until the moment of destruction; or</li><li>2. transferred to the USP Archive.</li></ol> <p>NB: Disposal does not necessarily mean destruction; records can be disposed of either by destruction or transfer to the USP Archive.</p>
Inactive Record	<p>An Inactive Record refers to a record that is no longer required for administrative or other purposes on a regular basis and/or the subject matter is no longer current but the record is required to be retained under the USP Retention and Disposal Schedule.</p>
Metadata	<p>Metadata describe context, content and structure of records and their management through time. It enhances the usability of a record by providing information needed for an understanding of the transactions that created and used them.</p> <p>When used in the context to describe electronic records it includes the structure that supports the electronic record, e.g. directory tree or index or software information.</p>
Personal papers	<p>Records created by or received by a person which are not part of the University’s official recordkeeping systems (but which may include official University records or make reference to them).</p>
Provenance	<p>The authenticated origin of a record including ownership, who created and maintained it and for what purpose. Used as a guide for authenticity or quality.</p>
Record	<p>A record is recorded information in any form “created or received and maintained as evidence and information by an organisation or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business”. AS ISO 15489.1:2002 Records Management.</p>
Retention and Disposal Schedule	<p>Retention and Disposal Schedules are the control documents that set out the periods for which the University’s business records should be retained and the manner in which they may be disposed.</p> <p>The University operates under three retention and disposal schedules, i.e. the Functional Disposal Schedule; the Disposal Schedule for Financial and Accounting Records; and the Disposal Schedule for Human Resource Management Records. Collectively they form The USP Retention and Disposal Schedule.</p>

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Word/Term	Definition
Series	A group of records documenting the same process of University business which are maintained in a system, such as an alphabetical or numbered set of files.
University business	Includes all forms of University teaching, research, community service, administration, commercial or cultural activities.

### 4. Policy provisions

The University's archive seeks to acquire records based on the following criteria:

- (a) Provenance,
- (b) Continuing value, and
- (c) Format and condition.

#### 4.1 Provenance

The provenance of records the USP Archive seeks to acquire can be broadly stated as:

- Official records of the University
- Records of academic and administrative staff
- Records of University organisations and societies
- Records of people closely associated with the University
- Records of local significance (which are not included in the USP Pacific Collection and/or being collected by other institutions).

These broadly stated collection domains are explored below, in Section 5.

#### 4.2 Continuing value

Continuing value will be based on historical value to the University that maintains a clear account of University life and achievements, administrative policy and actions and educational programs. This materials reinforces an image of the University that encourages an appreciation of the University's past and its role in the history of higher education among students, faculty, and alumni. It also contains samples of current records that will in time represent the look and feel of the University life in the 21st Century and beyond.

#### 4.3 Format and condition

As the records of the University will inevitably become voluminous it is important that consideration is given to format and condition of archival material and prospective archival material. The University must have confidence in its ability to appropriately maintain and store archival records to the appropriate standard, hence format and condition (and ongoing maintenance costs) will be a consideration before accepting records into the collection.; this is particularly pertinent when considering audio-visual material, unreadable electronic formats and records with limited or no obvious associated metadata.

### 5. Collection

The USP Archive is responsible for the University's own historical records and will develop, preserve, exhibit and provide access to its collection in support of the University's teaching and research programs and community development agenda wherever possible. As noted, our prime responsibilities are to support the teaching and research goals of the University, and to preserve its own corporate memory; we do this within the context of relevant legislation, available space and resources.

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The principal domains of the collection can be described therefore, as:

### 5.1 Official University records

The official records of the University include those of the Council and its committees, the Senate and its committees, the executive, faculties, schools, centres and institutes, divisions, offices and units. They include those records of institutions subsequently subsumed by the University, as well as separately constituted USP enterprises. Official University records which will pass to the USP Archive are those records which are identified through the application of:

- (a) the USP Retention and Disposal Schedule, or
- (b) a specific disposal authority,

and will result in regular transfers of records to the custody of the USP Archive following their application.

### 5.2 Other University-related records

The USP Archive holds collections of records of student and staff clubs, societies and organisations, our ideal being to secure their core materials such as minute books, key files, photographs and sets of newsletters. Our aim is a broad representation of the life of the University community since its beginning, rather than a complete archival record of every club and society that has operated since that time.

### 5.3 Personal archives of students

Two sharply-contrasting realities guide us here. Firstly the process of teaching, as opposed to the preparation of materials and the taking of notes, tends to generate little documentation. Secondly, the University has over 40,000 former students spread across the region and around the globe. Only in very exceptional circumstances would their mementos of attending the University such as study diaries, lecture notes, ephemera of campus life such as copies of newsletters warrant permanent preservation. Those of interest include student leaders, those people who attended the first classes of a new program, and anyone whose subsequent career achieves distinction.

### 5.4 Personal archives of (academic and administrative) staff

There has been thousands of staff employed by the University. These hardly compare with the number of former students, though we must be equally discriminating about who and what we collect. Several factors guide decisions as to whom to approach and when responding to offers. The personal and semi-official papers of chancellors, pro-chancellors, vice-chancellors and senior staff are potentially of interest, especially cases when their tenures coincide with beginnings and/or major change, and are preceded by long academic careers at this University.

The records of academic staff document primary functions of research and teaching, and these functions are not routinely documented on official files. In addition, academic staff may collect primary source materials in the course of their research. To be of interest there must be more than a distinguished teaching and research and publishing record, for example significant national or international involvements in areas such as public policy development and community debate. As for what documentation is of possible interest, we look for those files, minutes and the like which compensate where the official records is thin, rather than duplication of departmental papers.

The University will develop, preserve, exhibit and provide access to its archival collections for the purposes of preserving the University's own historical records, and supporting its teaching and research programs, community development and knowledge creation and transfer agenda.

### 6. Collection Development and Acquisition

The USP Archive, within the context of relevant legislation, available space and resources, and being cognisant of the collections of other institutions, must be astute when considering the expansion of the archives through accession activities.

Consistent with the above, the primary focus of collection development will be:

- archived University records,
- other records that documents the development and supports the teaching and research goals of the University,
- working and personal papers of USP senior staff;
- records that relate to the University's role within the local community, or
- records that are consistent with and complement existing collection strengths or identified priorities.

When we consider material for collection, we will also take note of the long standing roles and responsibilities of other libraries and archives, including the USP Library - Pacific Collection, and as appropriate, we will consult with them. Every effort will be made to avoid conflict and duplication with the collecting policies of other archive repositories but we will consider housing records of an educational nature of historical interest for which no other suitable home can be found, and which is in danger of neglect or destruction. Copies of published articles, newspapers and books will not be accepted where these are readily available elsewhere, such as in the University Library, or national libraries and archives.

All types of media including paper, photographs, electronic records and sound records by internal transfer, gift or purchase of permanent value created by the University will be collected.

**Audio-visual** records such as audiotapes and cassettes, film, videocassettes, and compact disks will be accepted where they are in playable condition. The content will be migrated to a more stable medium where possible to ensure the preservation and accessibility of the content, and digital copies made.

**Photographs** in the form of contact prints, negatives, slides and digital images (either on compact disk or in electronic form) are accepted. Digital images will be stored with appropriate metadata attached.

**Electronic files** transferred to the USP Archive will be held digitally with appropriate metadata and access controls where appropriate.

The USP Archive will accept significant objects and memorabilia associated with the University, such as ceremonial objects, medals, trophies, plaques, academic dress, and commemorative merchandise as a record of the activities of the University.

#### 6.1 Acquisition

When considering an offer or deciding on an organisation or person to approach, we will be guided by the following values:

- the University's own archives aside, our ultimate consideration must be to maximise a benefit to teaching and research;
- it is easy, but irresponsible, to accept any offer of material; there must be a compelling reason to add to the collection;
- inevitably, resource capacity must limit collecting ambitions;
- we will not encourage splitting collections, although we will consider accepting components of collections whose unity is already lost;
- we are an archives, not a library or museum; only in very exceptional circumstances will we take in non-archival material;
- we will collect to complement our own, and the University's, other collection strengths;

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- our strong preference is for gifts over loans; originals over copies; no access restrictions; and donors who make a contribution to reduce our costs.

We aim to collect pro-actively, preferring targeting based on macro analysis frameworks and schedules over 'case-by-case' and re-active approaches.

Note: The University will determine the suitability of a donated collection, and the right to decline acceptance of material. It would be irresponsible to accept any offer, and it is important for the public to be aware that the University may politely decline an offer. The University will insist upon a "Deed of Gift" that formalises the ownership of archives gifted to the University; with an unambiguous preference for gifts over loans, and unimpeded management and exhibition control.

The University Archives does not seek to collect artworks or research collections such as geological or botanical specimens which are more appropriately placed in other institutional collections. When files and office materials are transferred to the University Archive, they become part of the permanent record of USP and *cannot* be recalled by the department or office that transferred them. Transfer of records to the University Archive from offices and departments of the University is considered permanent and irreversible.

## 7. Access

In order to maintain security, confidentiality and to comply with relevant legislative requirements (for example Privacy Acts, Freedom of Information Acts, and Public Records Acts) the USP Archive office and storage area may not be accessed unless a staff member, student or member of the public has been given express permission by the Manager, Records Management (in the absence of a University Archivist). The material held in the archives may only be accessed / used under certain conditions.

Records held within the USP Archive may contain information of a sensitive nature, such as personal information, private correspondence, internal reports, health records, minutes which record private administrative and managerial decisions. Other material may be of a more public nature. In recognition of the need to differentiate between the different types of records held in the archives, in order to maintain discretion and security where appropriate, all material in the archives is classified according to one of the following three access conditions:

### a) Open

This is generally for material which has been published. This material may be viewed without restriction, and used subject to privacy and copyright provisions.

### b) Restricted

This material may only be accessed by the creator, or successor, senior University staff such as members of the senior management team, and others approved after application. A student is deemed to be the 'creator' of their student records. Family members wishing to gain access to a family member's student information must indicate the reason(s) for access and must show proof of relationship to access before an application to access will be considered. Anyone else wishing to gain access to this material must apply in writing to the Manager, Records Management.

### c) Closed

May only be accessed by the Vice-Chancellor and/or delegated officers. Records designated as 'Closed' will remain so for a period of (thirty) 30 years after the last date of creation, after which time they will be subject to a 'Restricted' Classification. For example, records in a file showing a 'last date' of October 2015 will be deemed 'Restricted' as of January 2046.

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### 8. Responsibilities

The University of the South Pacific will ensure that the storing and keeping of personal data will be protected and will be aware of its obligations to its students and staff, both past and present, when storing and keeping archival records. The University will adopt appropriate and adequate security measures for storage of and access to archival records in whatever format, dependant on the record type. There will be an adequate and appropriate allocation of resources by the University to maintain its archival records, specifically in terms of staff time, storage space and equipment.

The University, operating in twelve independent countries, is cognizant of the need to meet local legislative requirements with regards to access to archival materials and records and, in particular, Freedom of Information legislation and Public Records Acts, or equivalent (where it exists).

To achieve effective USP Archive collection management, the University has assigned responsibilities to designated individuals and/or groups. The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring that the University meets its statutory and accountability requirements. The oversight of the administration of the USP Archive is vested in the Records Management office through this policy, and associated documents, to support the University's strategic goals and ensure that the University is compliant with relevant legislation and best practices for effective archival collection management.

The Records Management office will support the policy through the provision of procedures, good practice guides, education, training and advice and assistance. The implementation and interpretation of the policy will be monitored and there will be regular planned audits to assess how the policy is being put into practice.

<b>Role/Office</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Vice-Chancellor & President	The Vice-Chancellor has overall responsibility for ensuring that the University fulfils its legal and business obligations in relation to record keeping and that adequate resources are available for managing and maintaining University records and archival material.
Senior Management Team	Responsible for policy implementation for areas within their respective portfolios. This includes making available appropriate resources to manage and maintain University records and transfer of archival material
Heads of Schools/ Sections/ Institutes/ University business units, and Campus Directors	Heads are required to facilitate and promote the establishment and resourcing of appropriate record keeping systems in accordance with this policy and the Records Management policy. They are accountable for ensuring that staff adhere to the provisions of this policy and identify and transfer archival material as per the USP Retention and Disposal Schedule.
University staff	All staff have a responsibility to ensure that University records that they create, receive and use as part of their business role are complete, accurate and managed in accordance with this policy and the Records Management policy.  All staff are responsible for preventing any unauthorised access to records and ensuring that personal or sensitive information is protected
Records Management staff	The Records Management office manages and operates the USP Archive on behalf of the University.

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Role/Office	Responsibility
	The office is responsible for issuing policy, procedures and guidelines, education, training and advice to assist areas to conform to the requirements for University record keeping and to facilitate access to and use of the USP Archive.
IT Services	ITS is responsible for maintaining technology that supports the University's records management framework, USP Archive databases and systems on which records and information is stored including developing and maintaining appropriate system accessibility, security, backup and disaster recovery, planning and testing.

### 9. Compliance

The Records Management office will conduct periodic compliance reviews across the University. A review is conducted to identify and assist staff to:

- (a) appreciate their role in identification of archival material and records sentenced to be transferred to the USP Archive,
- (b) identify education or training needs,
- (c) alert the Records Management office to inconsistencies in either
  - (i) archival management or records management practices, across the University, or
  - (ii) vagueness or otherwise in the USP Archives policy and/or the Records Management policy and related documents,
- (d) identify good practice examples for sharing across the University, and
- (e) identify policy breaches.

A compliance review is not conducted as a punitive exercise.

### 10. Related documents

#### USP Policy, Procedure, Schedule documents

Records Management policy

Records Management procedure

USP Retention and Disposal Schedule

Part I – USP Functional Disposal Schedule (FDS)

Part II – USP Disposal Schedule for Financial and Accounting Records (DSFAR)

Part III – USP Disposal Schedule for Human Resource Management Records (DSHRM)

#### USP Forms

Records Disposal Notification form

#### Legislation and external supporting documents

The University will comply with relevant legislation that applies to records in each member country, in particular Public Records Acts, Freedom of Information Acts, and/or Archive Acts, or their equivalent. In the absence of local legislation the University's policies will preside for the purposes of University record keeping and identification and preservation of archival material.

Bettington, J., Eberhard, K., Loo, R., & Smith, C. (Eds.). 2008. *Keeping archives* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Canberra, ACT: Australian Society of Archivists, Inc.

AS ISO 15489 (.1), (.2), & (.3) – 2002: Records Management  
ISO 30300 – 2012: Management systems for recordkeeping

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### *Acknowledgement*

The University of the South Pacific thanks those universities whose documents have contributed to the content of this policy, and The University of Melbourne: *Collection Development Policy*.