

# Lingnan University Archives and Records Management Policy

*Endorsed by TLIS on 18 February 2016*

*Approved by UAPC on 21 March 2016*

## 1. Purpose

Through the Lingnan Archives (LA), Lingnan University recognizes the importance of the proper retention and disposition of all historically significant University records. This policy provides a framework for the definition of “University records” and how these records are collected, retained, or disposed of. Our objective is to establish and maintain a consistent and effective process for record management across the University.

## 2. Scope

This policy applies to all University records created, received or maintained by University staff in the normal course of conducting educational and other related-activities. It covers all formats, including but not limited to print, electronic, born-digital or digital surrogates, and audio-visual materials or artifacts.

## 3. Definitions of Terms

**University Records** - Any information or material created, received and maintained by all academic or administrative staff during the course of performing official functions on behalf of the University is considered a University record. This includes evidence that reflects its historical development, academic, business operations and other related activities. Records may exist in any format, including but not limited to paper, analog, electronic, born-digital or digital surrogates, and audio-visual materials or artifacts. Records include but are not limited to official University publications, administrative files, fiscal data, correspondence, meeting documents, academic records, and student and personnel files. Records may change status during their life-cycle:

i. **Archival (Historical) Records**

Records with historical, administrative or research value related to the origin and development of Lingnan University and its predecessors, which would be maintained indefinitely.

ii. **Active Records**

Records that are frequently used or needed to support the current business activities of a Department or Unit.

iii. **Inactive Records**

Records that have not been used for at least one year or that may be needed for retention purposes only.

iv. **Non-Records**

Records created for ease of access or quick reference only, e.g. duplicates or convenience copies of records. These records may be destroyed once they are no longer needed.

**Record Retention Schedule** – A document describing categories of records, stating the period they should be retained and providing instructions for disposition.

**Retention Period** – the minimum length of time before records are disposed of or archived.

**Records Disposition** – final treatment of records, either destroyed or archived in the LA.

#### 4. Records Management Procedures and Guideline

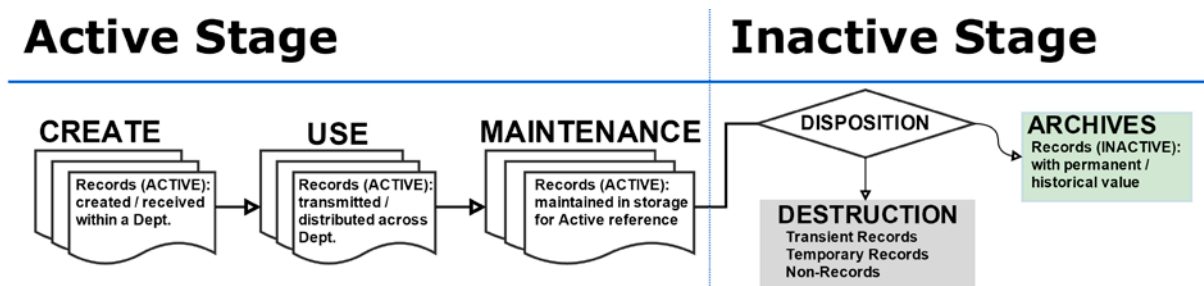
University records created or received at all levels across the University should be stored and disposed of with proper policies and guidelines. Records, once created, have a life span progressing through *Active* to *Inactive* in their office of origin. By the time that records become inactive, they will either be retained as *Archival records*, or be designated for disposal by appropriate means as outlined in the *General Record Retention Schedule*. General procedures follow:

**4.1 Record Creation** – All University departments or units create records documenting their core functions and activities.

**4.2 Record Use and Maintenance** – Records are used or disseminated upon creation. Departments or Units have full custody of their Active records and should store them in a safe, stable and secure manner that supports their timely and effective while applying appropriate controls on their accessibility. The General Records Retention Schedule will provide guidance for records commonly created across the University. It may be supplemented with (but not supplant) Department or Unit-specific schedules as necessary in order to handle records that are unique within that office.

**4.3 Records Disposition** – When records reach their inactive stage, Departments or Units, should consult the Record Retention Schedule to determine the appropriate disposition of records.

**4.4 Archival Records** – Records with enduring values will be preserved as archival records. The records will be retained at the Departmental level or transferred to the Archives for appropriate processing.



#### 5. Other Records

Apart from University records, the LA will also handle other records generated or owned by individual staff, students, alumnus or other Lingnians that originated from non-official source(s) and are of significant relevance to Lingnan University. These records will usually be transferred to the LA under an agreed deed of gift. The donor(s) will ensure they are the valid owners of the records, and will simultaneously transfer both the ownership and copyright to the LA.

The LA will not accept the deposit of records for loan or for temporary storage purposes. Wherever possible and with mutual agreement with the donor or records' owner, LA may replicate documents through electronic or other feasible means to preserve the intellectual content of the records for archival purposes.

LA will not purchase records unless they are historically significant and no alternate source is available for their acquisition.

## 6. Records Access Arrangement

Records transferred to the LA shall be categorized based according to their level of sensitivity and confidentiality as it applies to University's history, policies and activities. Following international archival standards, access to LA records will be handled by request with the following practices (we recommend that Departments that retain records should adopt similar practices):

Access Categories	Details	Access Restriction & Arrangement
Historical Records:	Records that document the history of the University, unless otherwise stated, are open for access to all members of the University and other interested scholars.	Except for records that have been digitized for open access through the Digital Repository, physical access to these records would be restricted within the Lingnan Archives Room.
Public Records:	Records intended for public.	Open Access via electronic or other practical means.
Closed Records:	Records that document the discussions and issues related to the formulation of University policies are considered closed records.	<p>Generally Closed for 25 years from the creation date.</p> <p>During the restricted period: The Department / Unit, or its succeeding body (in case of name change, merging or change of organization) or officer(s) that carries on the central function of that Department, can have access to the records they generated.</p> <p>Other departments or external parties who wish to access Closed records, must have prior consent in writing by the respective administrative head of that department / unit.</p>
Confidential Records:	Records that contain personal information, e.g. personnel records, student records, disciplinary records, etc.,	Generally Closed for 75 years from their creation date, unless with prior consent of the donor / record owner or with approval granted by The President or his designated representative.

*Draft by Lingnan University Archives for TLIS Endorsement - March 2014, rev. June 2015; February 2016  
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