

Information Disposal Guidelines

As a general rule most information and data do not need to be kept indefinitely, and in some instances, particularly for personal data, it can be illegal to retain information longer than necessary. Storage absorbs resources. The more you store the harder it is to find the particular item you want, and it becomes easier to lose track of where information is.

If there is a retention schedule on the University's Records Management web pages for your area you should ensure that you adhere to it. If your area doesn't have a retention schedule and requires one, please contact the Information Assurance Manager for advice. infoman@essex.ac.uk

These guidelines cover all **restricted** information in all formats. ("Restricted" is defined in the Information Security Policy and in the separate Information Classification Guidelines.)

Paper

Paper-based information should be shredded. Office-based shredders can be used. For large amounts of shredding please contact the EMS Helpdesk (ems-helpdesk@essex.ac.uk) and arrange to have the paper taken away for shredding.

Paper for shredding should be held securely until it is collected. It should not be left in bags in corridors or other public spaces.

Electronic information, including email, on your PC

Standard deletion tools are generally sufficient. You should remember to frequently clear out your desktop recycle bin and the deleted items folder in Outlook. It is possible to set up Outlook to automatically empty the deleted items folder when the application closes. You should also ensure that you regularly delete items from your sent items folder and from drafts.

Mobile storage

If you are intending to re-use a memory stick or similar yourself then it is sufficient just to delete items from it in the usual way. If you are passing the storage device on to someone else, then fully reformat the device before doing so.

Mobile devices

If you are getting rid of a mobile device (smartphone, iPad) you should follow the advice set out in the Mobile Device Guidelines.

PCs and hardware

If you are permanently disposing of a PC, hard disk, laptop or similar item or passing it on to another part of the University that should happen via IT services who will ensure that everything is properly deleted. If the item is for disposal they will also make sure that disposal complies with the WEEE regulations.

Help

For help with deleting electronic information please contact the IT Helpdesk.

Sara Stock

Information Assurance Manager

V1.0	Draft for discussion	14/07/2016
V1.1	Updated to include comments from RM, TR	01/11/2016
V2.0	Final version for publication approved by ICT SG	18/11/2016