Module 2: Organise
Introduction

Organising information involves sorting it according to its subject and bringing related information together. Organising information consistently across Curtin helps everyone to find, use and share information, and helps make decisions as to whether that information should be kept or destroyed.

On successful completion of this module you will be able to organise information.
**How do we organise information?**

Folders are the primary means of organising information at Curtin. Grouping together information on the same topic makes it easier to find, use, share, keep and where appropriate, destroy that information. This relates to electronic folders and hard copy folders which are sometimes referred to as files.

Folders should only contain one subject at a time and they should be created at the start of the subject or when new business is received, so that documents can be stored as they are created and can be viewed and retrieved when requested.
Curtin Common Vocabulary

The key tool for naming both paper and electronic folders at Curtin is the Curtin Common Vocabulary. PLEASE NOTE THAT THE CURTIN COMMON VOCABULARY IS CURRENTLY BEING REDEVELOPED.

An easier and better way to organise your information!

Information should be organised according to the subject of that information and not by the organisational structure. Organisational structures change over time making it difficult to find information that has been organised in this way.

The Curtin Common Vocabulary provides a consistent language for organising and describing Curtin's information. It is used to title both electronic folders and paper folders and to organise some of Curtin's online information, such as policies and forms.

What are the benefits of using the a common vocabulary?

- Folders are named in a consistent and standard way across the University.
- Information relating to similar subjects is grouped and stored together.
- Finding and storing information is easier.
So, what does the Curtin Common Vocabulary look like?

The Curtin Common Vocabulary consists of 12 top terms which describe Curtin’s business. Each term is further broken down into individual subjects or topics.

Descriptions have been provided under each term to guide you on how the term must be interpreted and used.

The 12 top level terms are:

- Campus Life
- Community Relations
- Facilities
- Finance
- Human Resources
- Information Management
- Legal
- Library Services
- Research
- Strategic Management
- Students
- Teaching & Learning

Second level terms have been defined for each of the top terms and further levels will be developed in the future.

To ensure that the Curtin Common Vocabulary remains relevant it will be maintained by adding and revising terms.

For more information visit our [Curtin Common Vocabulary](http://www.curtincommonvocabulary.com) webpage or attend our [Creating and Keeping Information](http://www.creatingandkeepinginformation.com) training session.
How should folders be named?

When a new folder is created it should be given a specific rather than general title to restrict the contents to a particular subject topic and distinguish it from all other folders on related matters.

Titles should start with the appropriate top term of the Curtin Common Vocabulary followed by the relevant second level term. Further levels of descriptors will be developed over time.

Here are three examples:

- Human Resources \ Recruitment & Employment \ Position files \ Information officer
- Facilities \ Consumables \ Stationery
- Teaching & Learning \ Courses \ Masters in Information Management \ Information Studies 501

'Catch-all' terms such as 'miscellaneous', 'general' or 'correspondence' must never be used in folder titles because this makes the information difficult to find.

Where acronyms are used in folder names make sure both the acronym and the full name are used, for example, Flexible Learning Environment for Curtin Students (FLECS). This will make it easier to locate the folder in the future if the meaning of the acronym is lost.

**Tips**

- Folders must only contain one subject.
- Create folders at the start of the subject so that documents can be filed as you work.
- File as you go - leaving filing until the project or subject matter is finished, creates more work and means that others may not be able to find information easily. Sometimes documents may never find their way into the correct folder if they are not filed as they are created.
Organise this information

In this exercise you will need to analyse **three different documents** and decide on the most appropriate place to organise them using the Curtin Common Vocabulary.

![Organise this information](image)

**EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING AWARD 2009**

Nomination form - Lecturer/Tutor (UNDERGRADUATE)

This award recognises the contributions and efforts of a lecturer or tutor who has enriched your learning experience, and whom you believe meets the selection criteria outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOMINATED LECTURER/TUTOR:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIVISION: Business ☐  Humanities ☐  Health Sciences ☐  Science and Engineering ☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHOOL:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNIT:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Please respond with use of examples to show how your lecturer/tutor meets the criteria.

Where would you logically store (or search for) the above document?

Click on the appropriate folder directory below.

1. Students
   - Awards & Prizes
2. Human Resources
   - Staff Development
3. Finance
   - Payroll
What about folder numbering?

Folder numbers provide a simple reference to easily locate and track folders. It is also a useful reference to include on individual documents to help people locate the original document and related information.

It is important that folder numbers are unique. Different folder numbering is for different types of folder. For example, student folders use the student ID and staff folders use the staff ID.

In the meantime please contact Records & Information Management for help with a numbering system.
When should a folder be closed?

In some cases a folder will need to be closed, such as when:

- a project has ended
- you have not referred to the folder for two years
- the file is full and requires a new volume.

When a folder is closed it can still be accessed and doesn’t have to be removed from the filing system. It simply means that you can no longer place additional documents to that folder. If that folder’s subject matter arises again, a new folder should be created and the folders should be cross-referenced or marked as related.

For more information please read the [Using Paper Files](#) advice sheet.
How should individual documents be named?

Meaningful document names are important as they make information easier to find. Here are some tips for naming documents at Curtin:

- Use terms that accurately describe the document’s contents.
- Be specific and concise, but most importantly ensure your file name is meaningful for others, now and in the future.
- Start with the broader terms and end with the more specific ones.

For example, let's say you wanted to save a copy of the minutes from your Faculty's Teaching and Learning Committee. A good name would be 'Humanities Teaching & Learning Committee Minutes 27 April 2009' as this indicates the name of the Faculty, the type of document (minutes) and its date.

For more hints and tips on naming your documents, read the Document Naming Guidelines.
How should email messages be organised?

To make it easier to store email messages, your area can have a **shared mailbox** created with folders that mirror the folders that you currently use on your shared drive. This shared mailbox can be used by everyone in your team. Each person with access can drag and drop items into the relevant shared folders.
Using a shared mailbox means that everyone in your team can access the same collection of messages which reduces duplication.

Records & Information Management also offers an information session on **Managing your email**, which provides practical tips for managing your inbox and demonstrates how the shared mailbox works.

Records & Information Management can provide you with more tools and advice for organisation information. To find out about our face to face training sessions, browse through the RIM **Training**.