



What are Disposal Authorities

Disposal Authorities are documents approved by the State Records Commission that define the minimum periods of time that different classes of records must be kept (retention periods) and how they are to be disposed, whether that be by destruction or retaining them permanently. University information can only be disposed of in accordance with the approved disposal authorities.

Disposal authorities used at Curtin

Curtin currently uses two disposal authorities:

- **The General Disposal Authority for State Government Information (GDASGI)**
The GDASGI is produced by the State Records Office and includes records that are common across all WA state government agencies – eg administrative, human resource management, financial and accounting records.
- **The Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority (WAUSDA)**
The WAUSDA was developed by the four public Universities in Western Australia to cover university information that is specific to business functions that aren't covered by the GDASGI, such as student records, examination records, assessment records, course records, health service records as well as research records and collections.

Both disposal authorities have been approved by the State Records Commission. They are also periodically reviewed and amended to include any new classes of records.

How do I use disposal authorities?

There are specific steps that need to be taken when using the disposal authorities to sentence University records. See: [Sentencing Information](#), for further information.

The following points need to be considered:

- Records are sentenced at the folder or file level.
- If there are different sorts of records in the folder, then the whole folder is to be sentenced according to the record that contains the highest retention value and period.
- The information must be retained for the minimum amount of time specified.
- Records should remain in the work area for at least two years after becoming inactive before being transferred to Records & Information Management to ensure that they are not transferred prematurely.

A small percentage of information will be archival - meaning it will need to be kept forever, but most information will be able to be destroyed after a given time period as documented in the disposal authorities.

Please see over the page to find out how to read a disposal authority.

How to read a disposal authority?

Disposal authorities are generally organised so that records related to a particular business function are grouped together.

Below is page 130 of the Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority (WAUSDA).

No	Function/Activity	Description	Disposal Action	Custody
STUDENT ADMINISTRATION				
17.0.0	STUDENT ADMINISTRATION	The function of managing students through process of recruitment, applications, admission, enrolment, progression through courses and final accreditation by the university, including qualification for and awarding of degrees. Also includes planning, administering and setting procedures for, exchange programs, misconduct and graduation of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Note: Where records are created and maintained by international campuses, there may be instances where the records may need to be retained over and above the minimum retention outlined in this document due to local legislation.		
17.1.0	Academic Record	The complete record of a student studies including final grades, details of the courses completed, the awards conferred and the majors, minors, program, and streams completed as part of each course, awards conferred and prizes awarded.		
17.1.1		Academic Record - The official record of the marks or grades achieved by a student during the course of the degree, diploma or other award.	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then transfer to Archives	A
17.1.2		Letters of completion which is notification that a course of study has been completed.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy	D
17.1.3		Records relating to the authority to release results.	Retain minimum of 7 years after action completed, then destroy	D

Function/Activity
Function describes the broad business function. Activity describes the key activity that relates to the classes or types of records that are listed below it in the table

Reference Number
Provides the disposal authority number for the particular type of record described. When recording the reference number it is necessary to prefix it according to the disposal authority that it comes from – eg WAUSDA17.1.0.

Description of the class of record
Provides detail of the class or type of records that belong to the Function and Activity.

Disposal Action and Custody (Retention)
Explains how long the record is to be retained and what action is to be taken with the record after that time period has passed. These columns indicate if the record is to be kept:

- forever (A = Archival or R = Retain in the University permanently), or
- temporarily (D= Destroy after allocated time period)

Retention Code (RD)
Sometimes disposal authorities will include a Retention Code. This is the Disposal Action and Custody abbreviated into a code – eg D5.

Need assistance?

Please see the following related procedures:

- [Sentencing Information](#)
- [Disposal of Information](#)
- [Care and Preservation of Records](#)

Records & Information Management also provides practical [training sessions](#).

For more information please visit our website at rim.curtin.edu.au

If you need assistance, please contact us by email at rim@curtin.edu.au