



Records, Archives and Museum Management Policy

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RECORDS, ARCHIVES AND MUSEUM MANAGEMENT POLICY

Preamble

Against the background of the dream to be an internationally recognised university in Africa, distinguished for engaged scholarship, social responsiveness and an ethic of care, the Council of the North-West University (NWU) has adopted this Records, Archives and Museum Management policy on 23 June 2022.

This policy replaces all previous versions of Records Management Policy and Policy on Archives, Museums and Special Collections that were adopted by the NWU or any of its components.

1 Interpretation and application

1.1 This policy must be interpreted and applied in a manner consistent with—

- 1.1.1 the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996;
- 1.1.2 the Higher Education Act, 101 of 1997;
- 1.1.3 the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000 (PAIA);
- 1.1.4 the Protection of Personal Information Act, 4 of 2013 (POPIA);
- 1.1.5 the National Archives and Records Services Act, 43 of 1996 (NARS);
- 1.1.6 the International Standards for Records Management (ISO 15489);
- 1.1.7 the Statute of the North-West University;
- 1.1.8 the Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 36 of 2005;
- 1.1.9 any other legislation and amendments to legislation relating to Archives-, and Records Management and Electronic Transactions and Communication and Information Management as promulgated and updated or published from time to time;
- 1.1.10 all other policies, guidelines, processes, and standard operating procedures relating to records, archives and museum management of the NWU;
- 1.1.11 relevant ISO standards, amongst others, ISO 15489, ISO 9001, ISO 1675, ISO 1799, ISO 21127, and
- 1.1.12 the NWU Information Strategy and Framework for Information Governance.

2 Definitions

In this policy –

“archives” refers to those records, as indicated in the NWU File Plan and Disposal Schedule, as having continuing and historical value and that are kept permanently as part of the university’s archives collections. It can also refer to the physical facility in which these are located;

“artifact” refers to an object as being a man-made, physical object;

“business continuity” means the capability of the NWU to continue to deliver services within acceptable time frames at a predefined capacity during disruption or a disaster;

“business entity” refers to all faculties, schools, units, and departments of the NWU;

“data” means the representation of facts, concepts or instructions in a formal manner, suitable for communication, interpretation or processing by human or by automatic means;

“digitisation” is the process of converting records and information into a digital format;

“disposal” means that records and information are either destroyed or archived in accordance with an approved procedure after the expiry of the retention period indicated in the NWU File Plan and Disposal Schedule;

“information” means knowledge concerning objects such as facts, events, things, processes or ideas, including concepts that have a particular meaning within a certain context;

“museum management” refers to the area of management concerned with the running of the museum's administrative business, being concerned with the acquisition, care, and maintenance of museum objects and historical artifacts;

“NWU File Plan and Disposal Schedule” is a pre-determined and logical structure into which NWU records are arranged and stored according to subjects to facilitate efficient retrieval and disposal of records;

“records management” refers to establishing and implementing policies, systems, and procedures to capture, create, access, distribute, use, store, secure, retrieve, and ensure disposition of the university's information as captured in the NWU's records;

“record” refers to anything in any medium or format that is produced due to the undertaking of a business activity or legislative requirement, including electronic documents, emails, texts, and social media channels, and is evidence of the fact that a process or procedure has taken place in support of the activity or requirement;

“retention” refers to the period an official NWU record has administrative or operational value to the NWU and should be kept in safe and secure custody in records storage areas or on the network drive, approved electronic system, or space by the relevant record owner until a disposal action is undertaken;

“special collection” is a group of items, which are usually either irreplaceable or unusually rare and valuable, such as rare books, documents, physical objects or photographs, and other items that are of unique value and importance to the study of material culture, history, literature, and other subjects, and;

“student leadership” refers to all leadership and management structures to which students may be elected or appointed including the Student Representative Council (SRC), Student Campus Councils (SCC), academic student societies, house committees, sports committees, and any other subordinate student leadership structure(s).

3 Scope of the application

This policy applies to all NWU records in the complete record lifecycle (capture, create, access, distribute, use, store, secure, retrieve, and disposal) by all NWU employees or members of student leadership in the course of carrying out business activities.

4 Policy statement

The NWU views the information contained in records as an indispensable strategic asset and enabler to improve operational effectiveness and efficiency and to ensure a competitive advantage.

It is therefore the policy of the NWU to –

- 4.1 regard records generated by the NWU as vital assets and to ensure the implementation of records, archives and museum management practices that support good decision-making, integrity, accountability, and transparency which are essential to delivering good business outcomes;
- 4.2 Implement records, archives and museum management practices in a fully integrated way, with the understanding that business value in regard to information assets is created in the relevant business process or line-management environment;
- 4.3 provide records of high quality, accurate and relevant, accessible and supported by appropriate technical and administrative systems; and to
- 4.4 enable an environment for the optimal records, archives and museum management processes and systems levels.

5 Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Information officer and deputy information officers

The vice-chancellor is in terms of section 1 of the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 the information officer of the NWU, and the Registrar and Deputy Vice-Chancellor: Research and Innovation are in terms of section 17 of the Act the deputy information officers of the university.

5.2 University Management Committee (UMC)

The UMC oversees, on the advice of a subcommittee, the Information Management Committee, the university's implementation and monitoring of records, archives and museum management in accordance with the NWU Information Strategy and Framework for Information Governance.

5.3 NWU employees

5.3.1 All employees of the NWU are responsible for day-to-day administration and effective records management.

5.3.2 Any employee who creates, stores, shares, and disposes of records has a responsibility to adhere to the relevant rules as contemplated in the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

5.4 Student leadership

All levels of student leadership who create, store, share and dispose of records are responsible to adhere to the relevant rules as contemplated in the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

5.5 Records management representatives

Records management representatives in each business entity of the university are responsible for implementing the records, archives and museum management practices as contemplated in the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

5.6 Records, Archives and Museums department

The Records, Archives and Museums department is responsible to –

5.6.1 establish records, archives and museum management practices to be implemented consistently;

5.6.2 put measures in place to ensure the appropriate level of understanding and engagement in records, archives and museum management through discussion, training, and reporting; and to

5.6.3 to establish a business continuity framework for records, archives and museum management to ensure that possible disruptions and risks threatening the ongoing operations of the NWU are effectively countered and managed.

6 Archives management

6.1 The university recognises archival records as the corporate memory of the institution.

6.2 The university values archival records as a vital asset in supporting its daily functions and operations and must provide systems and support for this purpose as contemplated in the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

7 Museum management

7.1 The university's museum is concerned with the development and use of information about the objects within a museum collection and the procedures, which support the management of the collections, exhibitions, and donations as contemplated in the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

7.2 This policy encompasses all records created by the museum in the course of its business, including records related to the object collection.

7.3 The museum may maintain collections acquired from external sources (sometimes also known as collected archives or special collections).

8 Digitisation management

The NWU must –

- 8.1 ensure that all digitisation projects undertaken will incorporate digital preservation planning to ensure the long-term accessibility of the records, and
- 8.2 in a systematic and sustained fashion, digitise records in accordance with the rules contemplated in paragraph 9.

9 Rules for records, archives and museum management

The implementation of this policy takes place in accordance with rules for records, archives and museum management approved by the UMC, which must include the following elements:

9.1 Records management

- Records management representatives
- Creation of records
- Classification
- Records storage (paper-based and electronic)
- Electronic records management systems
- Retention
- Disposal
- Training and awareness

9.2 Archives management

- Identification/Acquisition/Sourcing of archival records
- Description of the archival records
- Preservation of the archival records

9.3 Museum management

- Identification/Acquisition/Sourcing of museum objects/artefacts
- Description of the museum objects/artifacts
- Maintenance and preservation of the museum objects/artifacts
- Display or use of the museum objects/artifacts

9.4 Digitisation management

- Records preparation
- Scanning and data capture
- Quality assurance
- Digital upload and storage
- Disposal

10 Standard operating procedures

Standard operating procedures must be developed and made available by the Records, Archives and Museum department for all records, archives and museum management practices intending to achieve efficiency, quality output and uniformity.