WHAT IS A RECORD

The State Records Act 1998 defines a record as:
"Record means any document or other source of information compiled, recorded or stored in written form or on film, or by electronic process, or in any other manner or by any other means. State record means any record made and kept, or received and kept, by any person in the course of the exercise of official functions in a public office, or for any purpose of a public office, or for the use of a public office, whether before or after the commencement of this act.

Official Records

University records are one of its major assets and like any corporate asset we need to protect them and make the most of them – managed properly they underpin our effectiveness and time savings practices. Good record keeping makes it easier for all of us to do our job.

Records are a tangible product of our work and to recreate them in the event of a total loss would cost millions of dollars. The loss of University's records, or even a part of them, could destroy the evidence of students' achievements, staff entitlements and jeopardise the University's rights and interests.

An official record is the University's record of its business activities. Official records should be captured in the compliant records management system – TRIM9 (Content Manager).

Why do we need to keep records

• Records provide evidence of business activities of an individual staff member, faculty or unit, or of the University as a whole;
• Records provide a history of decisions, decision-making processes, advice and/or direction;
• Records support the corporate memory of an individual area, a faculty or unit, and/or the University as a whole.
HOW TO DETERMINE IF A RECORD IS OFFICIAL

Originality of the records
Determine whether or not the information is duplicated elsewhere. If it is already captured as a record, then you don’t need to keep your copies.

If your records provide evidence to support an official record, then they need to be managed as an official records and stored in TRIM9.

Responsibilities
Determine who is responsible for keeping the official record. Many areas may hold copies of this information, but is your area responsible for keeping the official record? Are you responsible, or is your supervisor responsible?

If you are the originator of the records or your area is responsible for the functions the records support, create an official file and store these records in TRIM9.

Evidence
Determine whether the records are evidence of transactions that the University, your area or you could be accountable for. If so, they must be stored in TRIM9.

Got a question, contact the Records Management Office records@newcastle.edu.au or (492) 15306
HOW TO DETERMINE IF A RECORD IS OFFICIAL

If you are still uncertain as to whether your records are an official University records apply the following tests:

- Is the record of interest or importance to others outside of your immediate working environment?
- Does the ‘transaction’ have to be approved by a more senior officer, committee or specialist unit?
- Has a decision been made which needs or may need supporting evidence or a record of the decision-making processes?
- Has a decision been made which will have an impact on another individual, office or the University as a whole and which sets a precedent?
- Will the record document a change to policy, procedure or methodology?
- Is there a statutory requirement to make or keep particular records?
- Are there financial or legal implications which may come under scrutiny to ensure accountability, (by the Auditor-General or the Ombudsman)?
- Do you require the record so as to be able to report to internal or external bodies?

If the answer is yes, then you must store these records in TRIM9.

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