

## PHYSICAL RECORDS DISPOSITION PROCEDURE

This procedure is governed by its parent policy. Questions regarding this procedure are to be directed to the identified Procedure Administrator.

<b>Functional Category:</b>	Operations
<b>Parent Policy:</b>	Records Management Policy
<b>Approval Date:</b>	December 5, 2017
<b>Effective Date:</b>	December 5, 2017
<b>Procedure Owner:</b>	Vice President, People
<b>Procedure Administrator:</b>	Manager, Compliance

### Overview:

The purpose of this procedure is to provide information for the NorQuest College (College) staff assigned with responsibility for disposing of records from onsite or offsite storage. It provides instructions for preparing records for final disposition that are located offsite and that are located onsite.

Authority to establish this procedure is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governors Policy No. 5](#), which delegates authority to the President and CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

### Procedures:

#### General Conditions

- All records in the custody and control of the college shall be managed in accordance with the Records Management Policy and the Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (Retention Schedule).
- Physical records must be disposed of according to this procedure.
- Executive or Divisional Head approval is required to dispose of records. Divisional Heads will sign off on records created by a department or a division. Executive Heads will sign off on records created at the portfolio level. If necessary, Executive Heads may sign off on department or divisional records, in lieu of a Divisional Head.
  - Approval is to be based on the approved Records Retention and Disposition Schedule as well as consideration for legal purposes, audit purposes, investigations, student appeals, active requests for access to information, or other matters that may necessitate the retention of records to deal with issues affecting the college.
  - Official records will not be destroyed, selectively retained, or permanently preserved without written authorization.

Official college records must be retained for the full duration of their retention period, as defined by the Retention Schedule. Once the retention period has elapsed, the record is eligible for destruction or transfer to an archives. The Retention Period begins to count down only after the Trigger Event defined in the Retention Schedule has occurred.

Records Management will biannually initiate the offsite disposition of records. Departments are responsible for annually initiating the onsite disposition of records.

The procedure for official records depends on where the records are located.

- See **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS LOCATED ONSITE** for records that are on campus
- See **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS LOCATED OFFSITE** for records that are off campus

## **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS LOCATED OFFSITE**

### **Step 1 - Evaluation**

Records located offsite that are eligible for disposition will be noted in the NorQuest Semi-active and Inactive Box Tracking Database. Records Management will retrieve the boxes eligible for destruction from offsite storage.

### **Step 2 – Certification**

Once the records have been retrieved, an internal Records Destruction Certificate will be prepared by Records Management. The certificate will list the box numbers, file descriptions, and scheduled destruction dates of the material.

### **Step 3- Authorization**

The Executive or Divisional Head will be presented with the Records Destruction Certificate and Records Inventory for final signoff. Departments are responsible for reviewing the documentation and alerting Records Management if there are any records that require further care before disposition.

#### Approval Denied

Where the Executive or Divisional Head has identified files that cannot be destroyed according to the Retention Schedule, the Executive or Divisional Head is to describe the reason in the "Approval Denied" and "Denial Description" columns of the Records Inventory, according to the criteria listed below:

- Legal issue
- Audit purposes
- Investigations
- Student Appeals
- FOIP Request
- Other valid reasons

Provide details and send all of the forms to Records Management.

Regarding disposition exceptions, Records Management will remove selected files from the box, and process the files as instructed (e.g. box for additional offsite storage or provide for inclusion in active records) and resubmit the modified Records Inventory and Records Destruction Certificate to the Executive or Divisional Head for approval.

#### Retention Series Code requires Amending

Where the Executive or Divisional Head has identified that a Retention Series Code Change is Required, Records Management will update the Record Inventory for all changes identified by the Executive or Divisional Head, remove selected files from the boxes, re-box files, and resubmit the modified record inventory to the Executive or Divisional Head for approval.

### **Step 4 – Transfer**

After the department has signed off on the disposition, it is sent to Records Management for review. Files that are scheduled for archival selection or permanent will be physically reviewed to determine if the

records hold any historical value to the institution. Any records deemed to have historical value are incorporated into an archive for preservation. All other files will be shredded by a third-party shredding company.

### **Step 5 - Destruction**

#### Onsite Destruction

Records Management will:

- contact the service provider to initiate onsite confidential shredding of records,
- observe service provider loading and shredding of boxes,
- obtain a destruction certificate from the shredding company, showing that the records have been destroyed and,
- file and manage all related records

Once destruction has occurred, Records Management maintains the internal Records Destruction Certificate and the shredding company's destruction certificate as a permanent record of the destruction of the records.

### **DESTRUCTION OF RECORDS LOCATED ONSITE**

#### **Step 1 - Evaluation**

Records located onsite that are eligible for disposition will be noted in the Retention Schedule. If these records were not transferred offsite, they will not be detailed in the NorQuest Semi-active and Inactive Box Tracking Database. Departments are responsible for monitoring onsite records that are eligible for destruction.

#### **Step 2 – Preparation**

Contact Records Management to ask for a current copy of the NorQuest Retention Schedule, the Records Inventory, and boxes to pack up the material.

#### **Step 3 – Retention Schedule Review**

Determine whether or not there is an approved Retention Schedule that covers the records being destroyed. Consult the Retention and Disposition Schedule. Records will not be disposed of without an approved Retention Schedule.

#### **Step 4 – Records and Box Preparation**

Gather records, files, and boxes.

- Place records in files. Name files appropriately.
- Order files according to alphabetical listing, date, or subject.
- Place files in boxes.
- Using the Retention Schedule, group records from the same retention schedule and same record series.
- All material should be boxed according to: destruction, archival selection, or permanent record status.
- Remove and destroy transitory records. Transitory records do not need to be inventoried and formally destroyed.
- Remove records and files from binders, binding cases, or hanging file folders.
- Elastics or colored paper can be used to subdivide each file, and separate contents if necessary.
- Do not write on the box.
- Ensure boxes are as full as possible.

### **Step 5 – Records Inventory Creation**

Create a Records Inventory.

- Unless otherwise indicated, all fields are required.
- List each description in its designated area.
- Add all files to the Inventory in the same order as they are in the boxes.
- File titles listed on the Inventory should identically match the titles on the physical files.
- Enter dates as MM/DD/YYYY
- Use the Retention Schedule to determine the:
  - Series code (ex. SA001)
  - Final status or disposition (Destroy, Archival Selection, Permanent)
  - Eligible disposal date

After filing and inventorying, ensure that all titles, descriptions, and codes are accurate.

### **Step 6 – Records Inventory Review and Authorization Request**

Contact Records Management to review and approve the populated Records Inventory.

Contact Records Management with the following information:

- Date of the request
- Your contact information
- The room and area the boxes are located in
- The number of boxes for pick up and the number of bar codes required
- Clearly indicate that the boxes are to be destroyed and/or transferred to an archives for preservation

Upon approval, Records Management will provide a Unique Bar Code for each box.

- When you have entered the information about your records into the Records Inventory, print off the form and put it into the box.

### **Step 7 – Authorization on Records Inventory**

Seek approval on records inventory from an Executive Head or Divisional Head. The Executive Head or Divisional Head will review and sign.

### **Step 8 – Certification**

Once the records have been inventoried and approved, a Records Destruction Certificate will be prepared by Records Management. The certificate will list the box numbers, file descriptions, and scheduled destruction dates of the material.

### **Step 9 - Authorization on Destruction**

The Executive or Divisional Head will be presented both with the Records Destruction Certificate and Records Inventory for final signoff. Departments are responsible for reviewing the documentation and alerting Records Management if there are any records that require further care before disposition.

#### Approval Denied

Where the Executive or Divisional Head has identified files that cannot be destroyed according to the Retention Schedule, the Executive or Divisional Head is to annotate the reason in the "Approval Denied" and

"Denial Description" columns of the Records Inventory, according to the criteria listed below:

- Legal issue
- Audit purposes
- Investigations
- Student Appeals
- FOIP Request
- Other valid reasons

Provide details and send all of the forms to Records Management.

Regarding disposition exceptions, Records Management will remove selected files from the box, and process the files as instructed (e.g. box for additional offsite storage or provide for inclusion in active records) and resubmit the modified Records Inventory and Records Destruction Certificate to the Executive or Divisional Head for approval.

#### Retention Series Code requires Amending

Where the Executive or Divisional Head has identified that a Retention Series Code Change is Required, Records Management will update the Record Inventory for all changes identified by the Executive or Divisional Head, remove selected files from the boxes, re-box files and resubmit the modified record inventory to the Executive or Divisional Head for approval.

#### **Step 10 – Transfer**

After the department has signed off on the disposition, it is sent to Records Management for review. Files that are scheduled for archival selection or permanent retention will be physically reviewed by Records Management to determine if the records hold any historical value to the institution. Any records deemed to have historical value are transferred to an archives for preservation. All other files will be shredded by a third-party shredding company.

#### **Step 11 - Destruction**

##### Onsite Destruction

Records Management will:

- contact the service provider to initiate onsite confidential shredding of records,
- observe service provider load and shred boxes,
- obtain a destruction certificate from the shredding company, showing that the records have been destroyed and,
- file and manage all related records

Once destruction has occurred, Records Management maintains the internal Records Destruction Certificate and the shredding company's destruction certificate as a permanent record of the destruction of the records.

#### **Definitions:**

**Archives:** a place where records selected for permanent preservation are kept.

**Archivist:** a professional educated in archival science and responsible for the administration of archives.

**Division Head:** means anyone who manages a division or multiple divisions. Division Head is responsible for a division(s) reporting directly to an executive and typically includes deans and directors.

**Executive Head:** means anyone who manages groups of divisions. Executive Heads include executive directors, members of the executive, and the President and CEO.

**File:** a group of records related by use or topic, typically housed in a folder (or a group of folders for a large file).

**Inactive Record:** a record that is no longer used in the day-to-day course of business, but which may be kept and occasionally used for legal, historical, or operational purposes.

**Official Record:** a complete, final, and authorized version of a record. Provides evidence of business transactions, is required by legislation, provides evidence of compliance with business requirements, and contributes to the building of NorQuest College’s memory for scientific, cultural, or historical purposes.

**Semi-active Record:** a record which is no longer needed for the purpose of carrying out the action for which it was created, but which is needed by the records creator for reference. Semi active records are only referred to on an infrequent basis (e.g. seasonally, annually).

**Transitory Record:** are records in any format that are of short-term value, with no further uses beyond their primary purpose.



**Related NorQuest College Information:**

- Box Identification Label (please contact Compliance for details)
- [NorQuest College Retention and Disposition Schedule](#)
- Records Destruction Certificate (please contact Compliance for details)
- [Records Inventory & Records Inventory Guidelines](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Records Management Toolkit](#)

**Related External Information:**

- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#)

**Next Review Date:**

March 2021

**Revision History:**

April 2017: new  
 December 2017: updates to box preparation and inventory creation sections  
 August 2019: Compliance Office template & reorganization update