

Canterbury Christ Church University

Retention Schedule for Documents Relating to Student Administration, Examinations, Course Approval and Review (updated November 2023)

Scope

1. The policy and procedures set out in this document apply to all undergraduate, taught postgraduate and research courses of the University.

Purpose

2. This document represents the Retention Schedule for documents relating to the student administration examination, course approval and review processes of the University. The Retention Schedule aims to establish how long records should be retained, grouped in categories to benefit academic and professional support departments, in order to meet statutory requirements regarding retaining and destroying documentation.¹ In the interests of transparency, the Schedule is openly published. It forms part of the [Student Privacy Notice](#).
3. Documentation is retained for the period set out in the Schedule, after which the documents are destroyed. A clear distinction is made with documents containing personal information.
4. The documents covered by the Retention Schedule may be kept in either paper or electronic form. As long as the documents are kept safely, there is no obligation to maintain records in both formats. They may be transferred from one medium to another. The term 'documents' refers to all documentation irrespective of the medium used for its retention.
5. Once a document category reaches the end of the retention period, all the relevant documents shall be disposed of by appropriate means.

Categories of Documentation

6. There are four broad categories used for retention periods:

¹ Limitation Act 1980. https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1980/58/pdfs/ukpga_19800058_en.pdf. Accessed 06/10/2023.

- (a) **Transactional Documentation.** Transactional documentation needs to be retained until after the period has passed for a student to lodge an academic appeal. It is to be for six months after the meeting of the Board of Examiners that makes an award. This information is used to administer the examination process (including the Board of Examiners). Once this process has been completed, there is no compelling argument for its retention. The six-month period is essential to enabling students to lodge a request for an appeal against a decision and for the departments concerned to produce the required documents.
- (b) **Formal for Reference.** Documentation that is formal in nature. The principal reason for retaining the documentation is for reference purposes. Such documentation is retained for three years after the conclusion of the relevant event.
- (c) **Formal for Action.** Documentation that is formal in nature but may be relevant in the event of an action involving the University and may need to be produced as part of the proceedings. Such documentation must be retained for six years after the relevant event, as governed by the Limitation Act 1980 ss 2 and 5.
- (d) **Fundamental Importance.** Documentation that is of fundamental importance should be retained in perpetuity. It is because there may be a need for reference to the documentation at any time in the future, and it is unknown which particular documents may be required.

Changes in a Category of Documentation

- 7. Documents that are transactional or formal may be required for another purpose, particularly concerning an academic appeal or a formal complaint. Such documents are to be transferred to the relevant case file as soon as notice is given by the student or the relevant professional support department of the need for further action. Such documents will be retained for six years after the proceedings relating to the appeal or complaint, irrespective of the retention period that might otherwise apply, except for documentation retained in perpetuity.
- 8. Where there are compelling reasons relating to the orderly conduct of University affairs or actions involving the University, documents may be retained for longer than is set out in the Schedule with the approval of the appropriate head of department or University Data Protection Officer. The retention period will be set on the event's conclusion.

The Schedule

- 9. The Schedule is divided into two sections:

- a. Section One concerns Materials Relating to Student Procedures and Assessments. These are the main kinds of material relating to the examination process in the widest sense. The section extends to representations that students might make through concessions requests, appeals and complaints, and disciplinary proceedings and academic records.
- b. Section Two concerns Materials Relating to Course Approval, Review and Policy. Such documents underpin the examination and quality assurance processes and are included for completeness.

Implementation

- 10. The Retention Schedule is effective from 15 July 2022. It was updated to reflect changes in terminology in October 2023.
- 11. The Retention Schedule covers existing documentation.

Canterbury Christ Church University

Retention Schedule

Section One: Materials Relating to Student Procedures and Assessments

Type of documentation	Retention Period	Reason for Retention Period	Where Definitive Copy Retained
Student Recruitment			
Enquiries and Expressions of interest in courses and open day information	Three years after the creation date in Salesforce	Responding to queries from applicants	Salesforce
Unsuccessful applicants and successful applicants who decline or do not respond to an offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application forms, • interview information, • interview notes 	One year after the end of the admission cycle	Responding to enquiries or complaints from applicants	Admissions
Successful applicants registering at the University <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • application forms • interview information • Interview notes • offer of a place and related correspondence • acceptance of a place and related correspondence • supporting references 	Six years after the student leaves	Limitation Act 1980 ss. 2,5	Registry Services

Application data	Ten years after the application made	Identifying trend data; necessary for the performance of a task in the public interest: the provision of higher education and widening access	Planning & BI
Information relating to DBS disclosure and criminal convictions	Six months after checking, in line with DBS requirements. Record of undertaking the check for the duration of the student's registration	Responding to enquiries or complaints from applicants Record required to evidence to the undertaking of the check See also Policy Statement on the Use of Applicant and Student Special Category Personal Data and Criminal Records]	Admissions
Complaints about admissions service	Three years after the last action	Responding to enquiries or complaints from applicants; analysing trends	Admissions
Appeals against non-admission	Six years after the last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss. 2,5	Admissions

Student Academic Record			
School Records relating to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • induction, and events for new students • administration of the course • communications relating to course changes • clinical assessments 	Six months after the student leaves the course	Student Appeal or Complaint	School
Contents of student file, e.g. attendance date, e-mails etc	Six years after the student leaves	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	School
Records relating to a student's registration at the University, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student ID number • bibliographical information • student photograph • module registration • progression data • work placements, where a part of the course • change of course application • withdrawal / Interruption of studies • final transcript, including module results and final award 	Permanently	Confirmation of registration and study at the University; contractual relationship	Registry Services
Academic records, including classification of awards and module grades	Permanently	Confirmation of academic course and award	Registry Services

Student Finance			
Invoices and Fee payment	Six years after the discharge of debt	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Finance
Credit card and bank details relating to fees, charges and payments	Six years after the final payment	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Finance
Records relating to student debt	Six years after the discharge of debt	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Finance
Bursaries, maintenance grants and scholarships	Six years after completion of the programme	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Finance
Financial hardship records	Six years after completion of the programme	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Student Wellbeing, Community and Belonging
Disability allowance records	Six years after completion of the programme	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Student Wellbeing, Community and Belonging
Health and Safety Records			
Accidents, incidents and near misses	Three years after the occurrence of the date of knowledge of the person injured Specific occurrences are retained for longer if required by law.	Limitation Act 1980 s11 Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and relevant health and safety regulations	Human Resources
Student Wellbeing, Community and Belonging			
Student Case Files	Six years after the last entry	Limitation Act 1980 ss 2,5	Student Wellbeing, Community and Belonging

Materials Related to Examined Work			
Assessment briefs	Five years after the completion of the student's course	Office for Students (OfS) Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School
Coursework submissions (which include all forms of assessment, including examination scripts)	A copy of course work submitted by students is retained for five years after the completion of the student's course.	Office for Students (OfS) Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School
Assessment feedback	Five years after the completion of the student's course	OfS Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School
	Individual markers may retain comments for three years	Benchmarking performance	Individual Markers
Dissertations	MPhil/PhD - indefinitely		Library
	Masters dissertations - Five years after the completion of the student's course	OfS Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School
Examination scripts and comments	Five years after the completion of the student's course	OfS Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School
Examination question papers	Five years after the end of the year of examination	Reference purposes	Library
Coursework assessment descriptors and criteria	Five years after the completion of the student's course	OfS Requirement- necessary for compliance with a legal obligation to which the University is subject	School

Records relating to the administration of assessments, including reassessments, of a student at the University, including:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • organisation of assessments • attendance at assessments • special arrangements • assessments conducted at a distance • extensions 	One year after the completion of the course	Responding to enquiries or complaints from students and former students	School Registry Services
Placement, Exchange and Attendance Records			
Placement records	Six years after the Board of Examiners made the award	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Faculty, within the relevant placement and partnerships team
Student exchanges and year abroad	Six years after the Board of Examiners made the award	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Attendance records	Three years after the Board of Examiners made the award	UKVI and OfS audit requirement	School

Exceptional Circumstances Materials			
Exceptional Circumstances requests and outcomes where the final award is based on more than one level of study	Six months after the meeting of the Boards of Examiners approving the award (except where the student enters an appeal, in which case the materials are retained for six years)	Examination Process and Student Appeals	School
Exceptional Circumstances requests and outcomes where the outcome is based on one level of study	Six months after the meeting of the Boards of Examiners making the decision (except where the student enters an appeal, in which case the materials are retained for six years)	Examination Process and Student Appeals	School
Supporting Evidence for Exceptional Circumstances requests	Three months after the student is informed of a decision not to agree to a request. Where the request is agreed upon immediately following the communication of the decision, as it represents special category data.	Examination Process and Student Appeals	School

Temporary Learning Agreements /Learning Support Plans	Six months after the meeting of the Boards of Examiners making the decision (except where the student enters an appeal or complaint, in which case the Temporary Learning Agreements are retained for six years)	In a three-year full-time degree course, the award is based on the second and third years of the course. The Temporary Learning Agreements for the first year are to be retained for six months after the Board meeting at the end of the first year.	School
Learning Support Plans	Six months after the meeting of the Boards of Examiners making the decision (except where the student enters an appeal or complaint, in which case the Learning Support Plans are retained for six years)	In a three-year full-time degree course, the award is based on the second and third years of the course. The Learning Support Plans for the first year are to be retained for six months after the Board meeting at the end of the first year.	Student Wellbeing, Community and Belonging
Board of Examiners Proceedings			
External examiner nominations	Six years after the end of the term of office	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office
Papers relating to submission or resubmission of work	Six months after Notification to Students of the Board's Decision	Examination Process and Student Appeals	School
Mark Sheets	One year after Notification to Students of the Board's Decision	Examination Process and Student Appeals, and to track students in the preparation of the following Board for continuing students	School
Minutes of Board of Examiners	Six years after the Board of Examiners made the award	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School and Student Records Team

Correspondence informing students about outcomes of Board of Examiners decisions	One year after the Board of Examiners made the award	Examination Process and Student Appeals, and to track students in the preparation of the following Board for continuing students	School
Records documenting marks/grades given to submitted/completed summative assessments and, where appropriate, awards and classifications	Six years after the Board of Examiners made the award	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Registry Services
Decision Sheets	Six Years after the Board of Examiners made the award	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Registry Services
External examiner reports	Six years after the date of the report	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office
Disciplinary Procedures			
Procedures Documentation	Six years after the last changes	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Academic Misconduct Investigations	Six years after the last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Formal Disciplinary Proceedings	Six years after the last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Student Fitness to Practise/Professional Suitability Panel Papers, including case log	Six years after the last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Faculty
Any disciplinary proceedings not leading to formal proceedings	Six months after the last action	Student Appeal	School or department undertaking investigation
Cause for concern letters/ correspondence/records of meetings	Six months after the last action	Student Appeal	School or department undertaking investigation

Appeals and Complaints			
Academic Appeals papers	Six years after the last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Office of the Independent Adjudicator papers (OIA)	Six years after the last formal OIA event associated with the appeal or complaint Formal OIA Complaint Outcomes retained for ten years to allow us to identify trends and themes in complaints	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Formal Complaints	Six years after last action	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Student Protection and Student Resolution
Research Students			
Records documenting the conduct of formal assessments of work undertaken by research students.	Six years after the student has left the course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Graduate College
Records documenting academic advice and guidance to individual students on selecting research subjects and the progress and standard of their work.	Six years after the student has left the course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Graduate College
Records documenting the appointment of supervisors and examiners for research students.	Six years after the student has left the course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Graduate College

Section Two: Materials Relating to Validation, Review and Policy

Type of documentation	Retention Period	Reason for Retention Period	Where Definitive Copy Retained
Policy Materials			
Policy Documentation	A minimum of six years after the last changed or withdrawal	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office
Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body Approval and Monitoring Information	Six years after the date of documentation or end date of approval	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Planning Forms	Six years after the last cohort	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Planning & BI - Schools hold copies as working documents for the duration of the Course
Final Course Specification and Course Document	Permanently	Archive Purposes and Confirmation of academic course and award	Quality and Standards Office - Schools hold copies as working documents during the finalisation of validation document
Course approval minutes	Six years after Panel by the Quality and Standards Office	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office
Course approval evaluation forms	Six months after Panel	Evaluation purposes	Quality and Standards Office
Course approval and External expenses claims	In line with Finance Requirements	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office

Course change documentation	Permanently	Archive Purposes and Confirmation of academic course and award	Quality and Standards Office - Schools hold copies as working documents during the finalisation of course documents
Short courses	Six years after the last cohort	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office - Schools hold copies as working documents during the finalisation of course documents
Materials Relating to Partnerships			
Memorandum of Agreement	Six years after the last cohort	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Faculty
Memorandum of Understanding	Six years after the last cohort	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Faculty
Financial Arrangements for Collaborative Partnerships	Six years after the last cohort	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Faculty
School and Departmental Reviews			
Periodic Course Review Reports	Six years after Approval of the Report	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	Quality and Standards Office
Course Performance Plans	Six years after Approval of the Report	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School

Handbooks			
Student Handbook Template	Maintained in real-time	Provide the latest version	Quality and Standards Office
Course Handbooks	Six years after the year of course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Placement Handbooks	Six years after the year of course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Module Handbooks	Six years after the year of course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Course and Module Evaluations			
Evaluation Forms	Three months after completion of the report	Evaluation purposes in the legitimate interests of the University	School
Evaluation Report	Six years after the year of course	Limitation Act 1980 ss2,5	School
Student Surveys			
Pseudonymised data	Ten years after the completion of the survey	Data processed for scientific, statistical and historical purposes	Student Survey Unit