

# SENTENCING INFORMATION

When information is no longer used regularly (*e.g. becomes inactive*), decisions need to be made as to whether it can be destroyed or if it has continuing value to the University. We use a disposal authority to issue inactive information with a 'sentence' that specifies the minimum amount of time that it needs to be kept before it can be approved for destruction.

## How do I prepare to sentence information?

You can start preparing by:

- Identifying any folders that have not been used or referred in the past 2 years or more, as these should be part of your sentencing project.
- Grouping similar types of records together (*e.g. examination papers, policies, student files, forms etc.*).
- Separating any folders that contain only low value information (*ephemeral*), such as copies or duplicates, as these can be disposed of once reference ceases, however please make sure that all of the information on the folder is of low value before you securely dispose of it.
- Only using authorised boxes to store inactive information before, during and after sentencing (*these can be ordered through RIM using the [Online Order Form](#)*).
- Using a [Sentencing Register](#) to record what action you have taken (*this step is optional*).

## How do I sentence information?

Only staff who have been specifically trained to process records should sentence information. If there is no-one in your area that has received training from RIM, then please contact RIM for further assistance.

Once your information has been sentenced, however, you will find that it can be classified into one of the following categories:

- Information due for destruction.
- Information not yet due for destruction (*also known as inactive temporary records*).
- Information that is archival (*kept permanently*).

Regardless of the category type the sentenced information will need to be stored in your area temporarily until such time as authorisation has been received that it can be transferred to RIM. You may wish to refer to our advice sheets on [Destruction of Information](#) and [Care and Preservation of Paper Records](#), for additional support in this regard.

## What about electronic information?

All electronic information regardless of format (*i.e. electronic documents, emails and/or data in legacy systems*), is bound by the same requirements as hard copy information. Therefore all electronic information must be preserved for as long as it is required for legislative and business reasons.

Additionally:

- Electronic records must only be destroyed in accordance with approved [Disposal Authorities](#).
- Ephemeral information with no ongoing administrative, legal, evidential or historical value can be destroyed once reference ceases. Refer to our advice sheet: [Keeping the Right Information](#) for additional support.

If you wish to discuss sentencing electronic information, please contact RIM.

## Additional information and useful links.

- [Managing Legacy Information](#).
- [What are Disposal Authorities?](#)
- [Scanning and Source Records](#).

## Need further assistance?

Please do not hesitate to contact us via phone on 9266 7050, or by email at: [rim@curtin.edu.au](mailto:rim@curtin.edu.au), should you require additional assistance with sentencing information.

For information management advice of a general nature, you may wish to visit our website at: [rim.curtin.edu.au](http://rim.curtin.edu.au).

This advice sheet is made under and supports the [Records and Information Management Policy](#) and associated [Procedures](#).