

WHAT ARE DISPOSAL AUTHORITIES?

Disposal Authorities are documents that outline the minimum periods of time that different classes of records must be kept (*i.e. retention periods*). University records can only be disposed of in accordance with approved disposal authorities.

At Curtin we use two disposal authorities:

- [The General Disposal Authority for State Government Information \(GDASG\)](#).

The GDASGI provides information on general administrative records (*e.g. HR, financial and accounting records*), and is used by all WA state government organisations.

- [The Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority \(WAUSDA\)](#).

The WAUSDA provides information on University specific records such as research data, student files, enrolment and assessment records etc.

Both disposal authorities are periodically reviewed and amended to include any new classes of records, and are formally approved by the State Records Commission.

How are disposal authorities used?

The process of using a disposal authority to identify how long information needs to be kept is known as 'Sentencing'.

Not everyone needs to know the detailed process of how to sentence information. However we all need a basic understanding of what to do with records that we are no longer using. It is recommended that you work with staff in your area who have been specifically trained to process information. If there is no-one in your area that has received specialised training from RIM, then please contact us for further assistance.

Additionally, for more detailed information you may wish to review our advice sheet on [Sentencing Information](#).

It is important to note that once your information has been sentenced, it will need to be stored in your area temporarily until such time as you have received authorisation that it can be transferred to us for either long-term storage or destruction. Only RIM staff have the authority to destroy University records.

How to read a disposal authority?

Disposal authorities are generally organised so that records relating to a particular business function are grouped together.

The following diagram (*overleaf*) is an extract taken from the Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority (*WAUSDA*). We have provided a brief explanation for each of the key areas to assist you with understanding the information that is displayed:

No.	Function / Activity	Description	Disposal Action	Custody
STUDENT ADMINISTRATION				
17.0.0	STUDENT ADMINISTRATION	The function of managing students through the process of recruitment, applications, admission, enrolment, progression through courses and final accreditation by the University, including qualification for and awarding of degrees. Also includes planning, administering and setting procedures for exchange programs, misconduct and graduation of undergraduate and postgraduate students. Note: Where records are created and maintained by international campuses, there may be instances where the records may need to be retained over and above the minimum retention outlined in this document due to local legislation.		
17.1.0	Academic Record	The complete record of a student studies including final grades, details of the courses completed, the awards conferred and the majors, minors, program, and streams completed as part of each course, awards conferred and prizes awarded.		
17.1.1		Academic Record - The official record of the marks or grades achieved by a student during the course of the degree, diploma or other award.	Retain minimum of 5 years after action completed, then transfer to Archives.	A
17.1.2		Letters of completion which is notification that a course of study has been completed.	Retain minimum of 10 years after action completed, then destroy.	D
17.1.3		Records relating to the authority to release results.	Retain minimum of 7 years after action completed, then destroy.	D

REFERENCE NUMBER: provides the disposal authority number for the particular type of record described. When recording the reference number it is necessary to prefix it according to the disposal authority that it comes from. For example: WAUSDA 17.1.3.

DESCRIPTION: provides details of the class or type of records that belong to the Function and Activity.

DISPOSAL ACTION AND CUSTODY (RETENTION): explains how long the record is to be retained and what action is to be taken after that time period has passed. These columns indicate if the record is to be kept:
 - Permanently (*A= Archival or R= Retain in the University permanently*)
 - Temporarily (*D= Destroy after allocated time period*)
RETENTION CODE (RD): sometimes disposal authorities will include a retention code. This is the Disposal Action and Custody abbreviated into a code. For example: D7.

Additional information and useful links.

- [Disposal Authorities Online Search Tool.](#)
- [Care and Preservation of Paper Records.](#)
- [Destruction of Information.](#)

Need further assistance?

Please do not hesitate to contact us via phone on 9266 7050, or by email at: rim@curtin.edu.au, should you require additional support.

For information management advice of a general nature, you may wish to visit our website at: rim.curtin.edu.au.

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