

Good Practice Guidance

Filing and Storage Solutions

Use appropriate stationery

Always ensure that you have appropriate stationery to store your paper files – particularly those which have to be retained beyond the current year. The following advice should be followed:

- Don't use post-it notes to record information in a file – they are easily removed and lost.
- Never use rubber bands to hold files or papers together – they dry out and stick to the papers. If feel that you need to use a rubber band, you should be opening a new file.
- Never sellotape papers to the outside of a file or to papers within a file. Plastic or brass paperclips should be used.
- Avoid using metal bulldog clips. If there is a large amount of paper which needs to be kept together, use plastic treasury tags.
- Plastic and brass paperclips are generally preferable to staples.
- Avoid plastic A4 wallets and covers. They cause ink to transfer from the paper to the wallet or the page in front, making the records difficult to read.
- Do not use files with metal fastenings. Not only do they rust over time, but files in such folders cannot be destroyed through the University's confidential waste procedures. Files with plastic fastenings are available.

You should also bear in mind that if your records are stored at the [University Records Centre](#) (URC) they must fit the standard banker's box size. Large files should be avoided, as they take up a lot of room in the box.

Select appropriate storage solutions

Departments should have appropriate storage facilities for records on the office floor. When deciding upon filing equipment, the following should be taken into consideration:

- The types of records to be stored, e.g. A4 documents in file covers or ring binders, computer printouts, ledgers, or plans;
- Any security requirements, e.g. access to be restricted to certain staff;
- How often the records will be accessed;
- The floor space available for the equipment; and
- What would contribute to a pleasant working environment.

At present, the most commonly used piece of storage equipment across the University is the four drawer filing cabinet. These cabinets are not, however, the most efficient in terms of storage available for floor space used. They can also create an "out of sight, out of mind" attitude. This leads to overloaded filing cabinets in which records are difficult to find.

A more efficient storage option is the lateral filing cabinet, where the contents can be clearly visible when appropriate, and there is no need to allow additional surrounding space for a drawer opening in front of the cabinet.

Further advice

For further advice on filing and storage equipment please contact the:

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