

Fact Sheet - 9

Using an IT Supported Shared Server to Manage University Records

Introduction

University records in electronic format need to be managed in a way that ensures they are accessible and available for as long as they are required. In the absence of an electronic document records management system (EDRMS), University staff members need to ensure that steps are taken to create, capture, manage and dispose of electronic records in an authorised manner.

What is a shared server area?

- ◆ A local IT supported, authorised and managed shared server provides electronic storage space for authorised users in work areas
- ◆ Also referred to as a network drive, J:Drive or shared work space
- ◆ It is not a substitute for a controlled record-keeping system
- ◆ Interim measure until the University has acquired and implemented an EDRMS

Benefits in using a shared server area

- ◆ Common processes and standards for managing University electronic records can be developed
- ◆ Staff members within work areas know where to access information
- ◆ It provides a central space for storing University records in electronic form for the work area
- ◆ Likely to be backed up daily by local IT Support
- ◆ Supports records disposal processes if University classification scheme is used to name electronic folders
- ◆ Can assign recordkeeping responsibilities for tasks
- ◆ Reduces duplication by having one central space for the work area in which to store University records
- ◆ University records are not lost when staff members leave the work area

- ◆ Electronic records relating to one business activity/subject are kept together
- ◆ Electronic records can be linked to paper files if a consistent naming scheme is used (eg the University classification scheme)
- ◆ Supports management of versions, drafts and working documents
- ◆ A controlled hierarchy of electronic folders and document titles supports retrieval

Risks and issues in using an IT supported shared server

- ◆ It is easy to develop a confusing, uncontrolled hierarchy of folders if the area is not managed properly—need to establish written processes and guidelines
- ◆ Lack of recordkeeping functionality. The shared server is not an EDRMS
- ◆ Security settings that permit users to save documents to the folder also give users the ability to delete a document
- ◆ Ease of alteration to records presents record-keeping challenges

Responsibilities in managing a shared server

- ◆ Plan and manage the change process from the current to the new system of storing University records
- ◆ Establish a directory structure map that identifies required folders
- ◆ Liaise with staff members within the work area about their requirements
- ◆ Set up the actual folder system
- ◆ Determine which records will be transferred to the shared server area
- ◆ Transfer records from the current storage location to the new location
- ◆ Determine how records will be transferred and who is responsible (decisions will depend on

- ◆ where the records are currently held)
- ◆ Ongoing management of the shared server area
- ◆ Maintenance of folders and documents—naming, duplication checks, etc
- ◆ Establish who will be able to set up folders in the area on an ongoing basis
- ◆ Train staff in the use of the shared server area
- ◆ Establish written processes and guidelines for the work area
- ◆ Determine and set up access and security requirements in liaison with local IT

Linking electronic folders to paper files

- ◆ Name electronic folders in a similar manner to hard copy files that contain records dealing with the same subject
- ◆ Include a link to the electronic folder on the paper file and vice versa
- ◆ Store only University records in the allocated shared area

Access and security

- ◆ Work in collaboration with local IT Support to ensure that access and security is managed
- ◆ Identify records that require access restrictions in both paper and electronic format
- ◆ Limit access to authorised staff members
- ◆ Identify how access and security will be managed on an ongoing basis
- ◆ Keep it simple—avoid creating a complicated system that is hard to manage

University records and working documents folders

- ◆ Establish clear written guidelines in the use of University records folders and working documents folder
- ◆ Identify where and how working documents folders will be stored and managed
- ◆ Keeping working documents folders on the shared server allows for the sharing of information as documents are developed or modified
- ◆ Determine at what point a document is transferred to University records folders

Folder naming conventions

- ◆ Electronic folder naming conventions should be known and used consistently by all staff within the work area
- ◆ Examples of naming conventions include:
 - Capital letters for functions (top level folders)
 - Capital letters for each main word for

- 2nd to 4th level folders
- No punctuation
- ◆ 256 character limitation for folder and document names

Benefits in using the University classification scheme to name electronic folders

- ◆ There are tools already in existence (that is, the University classification scheme)
- ◆ Training and support is available in using the classification scheme
- ◆ Supports a smoother transition to an EDRMS

Retrieval and navigation

- ◆ Navigate down through folder structure
- ◆ Conduct a search on the shared drive
- ◆ Create short cuts to access frequently used folders within the hierarchy
- ◆ Use desktop search applications (eg Google desktop or MSN Search Toolbar)
- ◆ Explore function (Windows)

Backing up records

- ◆ IT supported shared servers should be backed up daily—check with your local IT Support

Disposal requirements for electronic records kept on the shared server

- ◆ Legislation that applies to hard copy records also applies to electronic records
- ◆ Electronic records must be only be destroyed in accordance with approved Disposal Authorities
- ◆ Ephemeral records, that is, those having no ongoing administrative, legal, evidential or historical value to the University, can be destroyed once reference ceases
- ◆ All University records in electronic form must be preserved for as long as they are required for legislative and business reasons.

Further Assistance

For more information contact the Records and Archives Office:

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Email: records@curtin.edu.au

Or visit our website:

records.curtin.edu.au