UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

POLICY ON RECORDS MANAGEMENT

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DEFINITION OF TERMS AND ACRONYMS

a) **TERMS:**

Accessibility – Availability and ease of access to records for consultation as a result of both legal authorization and the existence of retrieval tools.

Appraisal – Process of determining the value of records in order to establish the disposal action.

Classification Scheme – Systematic identification and arrangement of business activities and/or records into categories according to logically structured conventions, methods, and procedural rules represented in a classification system.

Continuum of Care - A consistent and coherent regime of management processes from the time of the creation of records (and before creation, in the design of recordkeeping systems) through to the preservation and use of records as archives.

Current Records – Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business of an agency, institution or organization or an individual.

Disaster Management Plan – Organized scheme of procedures for mitigating against natural or man-made disasters and facilitating recovery of records in the event of a disaster.

Document – Recorded information in any format which can be treated as a unit.

Electronic Record – Any combination of text, graphics, data, audio, pictorial, or other information representation in digital form that is created, modified, maintained, archived, retrieved, or distributed by a digital information system.

Electronic Records Management System - Any electronic system that manages the capture, storage, location and retrieval of records, either in paper or electronic format.

File - A group of related documents, fastened together within a file folder. A virtual file can be created for electronic documents.

Filing Systems - A logical and systematic arrangement for classifying records into subject groups or categories based on definite scheme of natural relationships representing numerals, prefixes, or key words for identification.

Information – Knowledge that is communicated and has facts, concepts, objects, events, ideas, processes, etc.

Information Management – Planning, controlling and exploitation of information sources within an organization.

Medium (Media) - The physical form of material on which information is recorded such as paper, film, CDs, magnetic tapes and disks, etc.

Non-current records – Records rarely needed by the office of origin to conduct current business.

Preservation – All measures taken, including financial and strategic decisions, to maintain the integrity and extend the life of records.

Record – Information created or received and maintained by an agency, organization or individual in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business.

Records Centre – Facility for the low-cost storage, maintenance, reference and use of semi-current records pending their ultimate disposal.

Records Disposal - The act of removal of records from their place of origin, whether for destruction or formal transfer to records storage centre or archives, of records that have reached the end of their retention period.

Records Management - The systematic control of all records from their creation or receipt through processing, retrieval, distribution and use, to their ultimate preservation and disposal.

Records Management Office – Division/section responsible for management of records in an organization.

Records Management Programme - The programme ensures that records are created in an organized manner, in a manageable quantity and in suitable formats. It allows records only to remain in offices only as long as they are current and describes procedures for the storage and disposal of non-current records.

Records Manager – Person trained in records management and responsible for achieving efficiency in the creation, maintenance, use, and disposal of records.

Records Retention Schedule – A control document describing the records of an organization establishing retention periods and providing legal authorization for their disposal.

Records Retrieval - Locating and delivering records for use.

Records Storage – Preservation measures for keeping records under defined conditions and permitting their retrieval or the information contained in them.

Records Survey – An exercise conducted to identify the size, scope, and complexity of an organization's records and evaluate the records management systems.

Records Value - The usefulness of records for operating, administrative, legal, fiscal, and historical purposes.

Retention Period – Period of time that records should be retained in their offices of origin or in records centre's before they are transferred to the Archives for preservation or otherwise destroyed.

Semi-Current Records – records occasionally required in the conduct of current business.

Vital Records - Records containing essential information necessary for the continuity or resumption of operations in the event of a disaster.

b) ACRONYMS:

KNADS: Kenya National Archives and Documentation Service.

RM: Records Management

ICT: Information Communication Technology.

1.0   Background

1.   The management of the records of The University of Nairobi shall be carried out in compliance with The University of Nairobi Act 1985, and other relevant statutes, rules and regulations that may be issued by the University Top Management and the Government of the Republic of Kenya.

The need to streamline records management into working processes, and the demands of ISO 9001 and ISO 15489 makes it imperative to have records policy framework in place to address the challenges experienced in the management of records and archives in the University.

1.1   Rationale

Records as a source of information are a basic resource which plays a vital role in the management of the University. Records play a key role in the preservation of the University's identity, and also contribute significantly in the realisation of good governance. Records ensure that the University has documented evidence of its own activities on which it can base its decisions.

Properly managed records will significantly contribute to efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery in the University. Furthermore, records are an important corporate asset that must be highly profiled. Records underpin business by supporting daily functions and operations. They contribute to policy formulation, decision-making, act as a reference point and uphold knowledge and evidence based governance. As evidence of official business, records have continuous use as a tool for management, accountability, risk management, operational continuity and legal evidence. When records become archives, they form the memory of the University, and are part of the societal memory and documentary heritage.

1.2   Vision

The vision of the Univesity is:

A world-Class University Committed to Scholarly Excellence

1.2.1 Records Management Unit's Vision

A Records Unit committed to excellent and effective records Management.

1.2.2 The Mission of the University

To provide quality university education and training to embody the aspirations of the Kenya people and the global community through creation, preservation, integration, transmission and utilization of knowledge.

1.2.3 Records Management Unit's Mission

To provide quality records management service for the entire University fraternity for provision of quality education and training and to ensure proper maintenance of standards through efficient creation, maintenance, preservation, transmission and utilization of information for knowledge.

2.0 Legal and Regulatory Framework

The records of The University of Nairobi shall be managed in compliance with The University of Nairobi Act, 1985, and other relevant statutes, rules and regulations that may be issued by the University Top Management and the Government of the Republic of Kenya (See appendix 1).

3.0 Policy Framework

3.1 *Purpose*

This policy seeks to facilitate standardization in the application of procedures and practices in the management of records of the University of Nairobi. It seeks to address the gaps and challenges that have undermined effective and efficient records management at the University. It further apportions staff responsibilities with regard to the management of records. The policy therefore lays a suitable institutional framework that will support effective management of records in the University. The policy will be consistent with the national records management policy and systems and procedures pertaining to the management of records as advanced by the Government and the University Management.

3.2 *Policy Statement*

The University of Nairobi is committed to effective records management systems, procedures and practices that meet legal standards for records creation, use, maintenance, retention and protection of privacy. A system that optimizes the use of space, minimizes the cost of record storage, and properly and systematically carries out records disposition. The policy applies to all records regardless of form, media (print or electronic) or in some other version.

3.3 Scope

The Policy applies to all records created, received, maintained, used and preserved by all departments of the University regardless of the form and media in which they are contained. It applies to all business activities performed by or on behalf of the University in whatever manner they are conducted.

3.4 Policy Objective

The objective is provide guidance in the management of the University records for the purpose of ensuring that accurate and reliable records are created, used, maintained, preserved and disposed as a continuum of care.

4.0 Records Management Systems and Procedures

4.1 Systems and Procedures

The University shall design systems and procedures to ensure that accurate and reliable records are created and maintained. The systems and procedures shall cover mail management, file/document management, records use and maintenance, and records disposal.

4.1.1 Mail Management

Management of mail shall be streamlined to support the University's business transactions. Receipt, registration, distribution, storage and dispatch of all incoming and outgoing mail shall be coordinated from designated records management offices (registries). Such mail shall be filed, arranged and indexed in an appropriate way for ease of use and retrieval.

4.1.2 File/Document Management

Movement of files and documents shall be controlled either manually by use of registers or through a records management information system

4.2 Records Use and Maintenance

Users of the university records shall include authorized University employees and other persons authorized in writing by University Top Management. Records shall be maintained and controlled to ensure adequate storage and protection in order to enhance accuracy and authenticity. This shall entail:-

- Developing procedures for receipt and distribution of mail

- Preparation and use of appropriate filing classification and indexing schemes
- Preparation and use of sound records retention disposal schedule
- Preparation and use of records operation manual
- Provision of registry rooms for management of current records
- Provision of departmental records storage rooms
- Provision of records centers in all colleges for housing and servicing of semi-current records
- Provision of modern equipment and facilities for storage and preservation of records
- Equipping university archive for housing and preservation of valuable records
- Enhanced use of ICT for management of records
- Putting in place disaster plan and recovery programme.

4.3   Records Disposal
The process of records disposal will be initiated at departmental level.

4.3.1 Semi-current records
Semi-current records shall be transferred from registries to designated storage rooms or records centers in the divisions and colleges.

4.3.2 Valuable records
- Valuable records for preservation shall be transferred from the records centers to the University Archive

- The University may keep backup copies of valuable records in electronic format in any other place within the University as may be approved by the University Top Management or at the Kenya National Archives

4.3.3 Destruction of valueless records
The records of the University shall be destroyed in accordance with the following existing laws and regulations,
- The University of Nairobi Act, 1985
- The Public Archives and Documentation Service Act (Cap 19)
- The Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2003
- Personnel General Letter No. 1/2008 Ref. No. DPM.12/6A. Vol. 1(71)
- Records retention and disposal schedule of the University – (covering all forms and categories of records).
- Any other relevant statute of the Republic of Kenya

Destruction of valueless records shall be witnessed and certified by the Records Manager in consultation and approval by the Vice Chancellor. Valueless records shall be destroyed through: shredding, pulping or incineration.

5.0   Electronic Records Management

5.1   Electronic records generated or received by various officers/offices within the University in the course of official business are official records of the University. As records of the University, electronic records, like records in other formats, are subject to statutory and regulatory requirements. To maintain integrity, accuracy and authenticity of electronic records, officers shall ensure that:

- Electronic records are managed effectively as part of a comprehensive records management programme
- Electronic records are maintained in reliable recordkeeping systems
- Maintenance and provision of authorised access to electronic records shall be a shared responsibility between the records creators and ICT department
- Electronic records which may be required in future as evidence shall comply with metadata requirements, which should include content, context and structure
- Practical strategies shall be taken for the long-term preservation of electronic records in view of technological obsolescence.

6.0   Security of Records

6.1   All categories of University records shall be protected against:

- Unauthorised access
- Unauthorised removal from their place of custody
- Leakage of information
- Mishandling
- Malicious damage
- Exposure to physical, biological and chemical damage
- Technological obsolescence
- Alteration, manipulation and loss.

6.2   Records shall be kept in appropriate storage equipment that guarantees security.

6.3   The University shall develop a Disaster Management Plan for the protection of all records. The plan shall identify and give special attention to vital records that could be used for continuity of business in the event of a disaster.

6.4   Security of archival materials shall be enhanced through use of modern preservation methods and technology – including digitization and microfilming.

6.5   **Access to Records**

6.5.1 Access to records and information shall be provided within the existing University regulatory framework.

6.5.2 After transfer of records to the archive, the security classification therein identified as top secret, secret, confidential and restricted shall be maintained until such time that the same will be downgraded by the creating department.

6.5.3 Records management rules and regulations and operation manual shall specify appropriate levels of access or restrictions and control mechanisms for handling records.

6.5.4 Security status/restrictions on records shall be reviewed periodically to determine the need for additional control measures or for de-classification of information by the creating office.

6.5.5 Access to archival records by researchers shall be subject to the provisions of Cap.19 of the laws of Kenya and relevant University regulations.

7.0   Statement of Responsibilities

7.1   Record Creation and Receipt:

All records created or received by various offices/departments in the course of official transactions are deemed to be University records. The entire workforce of the University shall be responsible and accountable for official records in their possession. On vacation of the office, officers shall hand over the official records in their possession to the registry or to the immediate supervisor.

7.2   Staff Responsibility:

The policy identifies the following office holders as key in issuance of the policy; implementation and review:

- The Vice Chancellor
- Deputy Vice Chancellors
- College Principals
- Director SWA
- Administration and Academic Registrars
- Deans, Directors and Heads of Departments
- Records Manager

8.0   Procedure for Review of the Policy

The Records Manager shall monitor and evaluate the implementation of this policy annually with a view to forming a basis for review.

8.1 Review

This policy document will be reviewed within a period of five years unless otherwise directed by the Vice Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor will appoint a committee to review the policy.

APPENDIX (I) - LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Management of the University records will be carried out in compliance with the law, rules and regulations. The statutes, regulations listed below have relevance in the management of the University records.

- The University of Nairobi Act, 1985.

- Public Archives and Documentation Service Act, Cap. 19, 1965 (Revised 2003)

- Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act, 2003

- Public Procurement and Disposal Act, 2005

- Public Audit Act, 2003

- Financial Management Act, 2004

- Directorate of National Security Intelligence Service Act, 1998

- The Evidence Act, Cap. 80 (Revised 1989)

- Kenya Information and Communication Act, 2009

- Government Financial Regulations and Procedures,

- Ministry of State for Public Service - Personnel letter No. 1/2008 (DPM.12/6A Vol.1 (71)

- ISO 15489: Information and Documentation - Records Management

- Government of Kenya Security Manual, 2005