

Records Retention Schedule

The Records Retention Schedule is a list of records managed and retained as part of business, research and academic activities at King's. Alongside each entry is an indication of how long the record should be kept; most records will ultimately be destroyed or deleted although the schedule also identifies records suitable for transfer to Archives & Research Collections for long term preservation.

The retention schedule supports the efficient management of records in all formats, both paper and digital, and promotes consistent practice by ensuring similar types of records are kept for the same amount of time, no matter where in the university they are held. The schedule also underscores compliance with legislative record keeping requirements including UK GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018) and the Code of Practice on the management of records issued under Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I. How are retention rules set?

Retention rules for all university records are set according to legal, regulatory and business requirements and best practice across the HE sector. The retention schedule includes recommendations from Jisc (formerly the Joint Information Systems Committee) and is benchmarked against retention policies at comparable institutions including other Russell Group universities, the NHS, the National Archives and the Information Commissioner's Office. The schedule is maintained by Corporate Records Management and approved by University Executive.

II. How to use the retention schedule

An eight-column layout provides:

- a *reference* number for each record
- a *description* for each record
- the name of the department with *responsibility* for management of the record
- the *legal reference* (where applicable) citing any statutory or regulatory requirement that underscores the retention rule
- the *retention rule*, the number of years a record should be retained within a department before it is destroyed or deleted
- *archive*, confirmation of whether the record is suitable for transfer to [King's College London Archives](#). This is for records with permanent historical, research or business value to the university
- *classification* reflects intended dissemination of university information in line with the [Information Classification Procedures](#):
 - External – intended to reach the widest possible audience
 - Internal – intended to reach staff and students
 - Restricted – intended for use by a limited group of users
 - Highly restricted – for use by a strictly defined group of users
- Additional *notes* to help manage the record.

This section of the retention schedule was last updated in **December 2024**. The schedule will be regularly reviewed to reflect changes to business and legal record keeping requirements. For further information, please contact Corporate Records Management; email records-management@kcl.ac.uk.

Records Retention Schedule

Section D: Research

Contents

- [D.01: Research governance](#)
- [D.02: Quality management](#)
- [D.03: Performance management](#)
- [D.04: Business management](#)
- [D.05: Research Excellence Framework](#)
- [D.06: Pre-award administration](#)
- [D.07: Post-award administration](#)
- [D.08: Research ethics](#)
- [D.09: Research data – unfunded](#)
- [D.10: Research data – funded](#)
- [D.11: Clinical trials and health research](#)
- [D.12: Research involving animals](#)
- [D.13: Research misconduct](#)
- [D.14: Security sensitive research](#)
- [D.15: Research support](#)

Item	Record Description	Responsibility	Legal Reference	Retention Rule	Archive	Classification	Notes
D.01.01	Institutional research policies and procedures	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Permanent retention	Yes	External	Published on Policy Hub
D.01.02	Institutional research strategies	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Permanent retention	Yes	External	Published on Policy Hub and external web pages
D.02	Quality management						

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D.02.01	Quality assurance processes and procedures	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Retain until superseded + 5 years	No	Restricted	
D.02.02	Conduct and results of internal reviews of research quality	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	End of academic year + 5 years	No	Restricted	
D.02.03	Conduct and results of external reviews of research quality	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	End of academic year + 5 years	No	Restricted	
D.03	Performance management						
D.03.01	Lists and summaries of grants awarded	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Permanent retention	No	Restricted	
D.03.02	Annual reports on activities of research students	Centre for Doctoral Studies	Institutional business requirements	2 years	Yes	Restricted	
D.03.03	Statistics of successful funding applications	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Permanent retention	No	External	
D.04	Business management						

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D.04.01	Liaison with research sponsors, including monitoring of their policies and requirements	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	5 years	No	Restricted	
D.04.02	Formation and management of research partnerships and collaborations	Research Management & Innovation	Limitation Act 1980	Life of partnership or collaboration + 6 years	No	Restricted	
D.04.03	Research project proposals – including correspondence with academics and licensing agencies	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Proposal outcome + 1 year	No	Restricted	Successful proposals subsequently handled by Post Award Team
D.05	Research Excellence Framework (REF)						
D.05.01	Final submissions / unit of assessment submissions	Research Management & Innovation Faculties	Institutional business requirements	RMID – permanent retention Faculty – 10 years	Yes	Restricted until final submission	
D.05.02	Internal REF papers, including processes and preparations for submission	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Final submission + 5 years	No	Restricted	

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D.05.03	External REF papers, including consultations and correspondence with UKRI	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Final submission + 5 years	No	Restricted	
D.05.04	REF Steering Group – agendas, minutes and papers	Research Management & Innovation	Institutional business requirements	Final submission + 5 years	No	Restricted	
D.06	Pre-award administration						
D.06.01	Monitoring and promotion of research funding opportunities	Pre-Award Team	Institutional business requirements	7 years	No	Restricted	
D.06.02	Register of academic staff and research interests	Pre-Award Team	UK GDPR	Retain while current	No	Restricted	
D.06.03	Successful grant applications, including CVs, references, costings, etc.	Pre-Award Team	UK GDPR	Transferred to Post-Award Team	No	Restricted	
D.06.04	Unsuccessful grant applications	Pre-Award Team	UK GDPR	Notification + 1 year	No	Restricted	
D.07	Post-award administration						

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D.07.01	Project planning and monitoring files, including RGA forms, notification of award, contracts, invoices and correspondence	Post-Award Unit	UK GDPR	Completion of project + 6 years	No	Restricted	
D.07.02	EU funded project files	Post-Award Unit	European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)	Completion of project + 10 years	No	Restricted	See Interreg Europe Programme Manual
D.08	Research ethics						
D.08.01	College Research Ethics Committee – agendas, minutes and papers, including terms of reference	Research Ethics Office	Institutional business requirements	Permanent retention	Yes	Restricted	Transfer one set of papers from each meeting to Corporate Records Management
D.08.02	Membership of College Research Ethics Committee, Research Ethics Subcommittees and Research Ethics Panels – successful applications	Research Ethics Office	UK GDPR	Duration of membership + 6 months	No	Restricted	

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D.08.03	Memberships of College Research Ethics Committee, Research Ethics Subcommittees and Research Ethics Panels – unsuccessful applications	Research Ethics Office	UK GDPR	Notification of outcome + 6 months	No	Restricted	
D.08.04	Applications for ethical approval submitted to Research Ethics Subcommittees and Research Ethics Panels	Research Ethics Office	UK GDPR	End of academic year + 15 years	No	Highly restricted	Further information is available from the Research Ethics Office
D.08.05	Applications to NHS Research Ethics Committees	Principal Investigator	NHS HRA Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures	Conclusion or termination of research study + 3 years	No	Highly restricted	
D.09	Research data – Unfunded projects						
D.09.01	Staff and research students (PhD/MPhil) – non-clinical or overseas research	Principal Investigator	UKRI Concordat on Open Research Data	Publication of results + 10 years (unless a longer period is	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance

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	studies that do not require Health Research Authority approval			specified by research funder)			from the Research Governance Office
D.09.02	Taught students (postgraduate and undergraduate) – non-clinical or overseas research studies that do not require Health Research Authority approval	Principal Investigator	Institutional business requirements	No intention to publish – date of award + 1 month Pre-publication – date of award + 1 year Post publication – publication + 5 years (unless a longer period is specified by research funder or journal)	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office Retention for a longer period must be discussed and agreed with the Research Governance Office
D.10	Research data – Funded projects						
D.10.01	Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC)	Principal Investigator	UKRI Concordat on open research data Guidance on best practice in the management of research data	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections

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D.10.02	Biotechnology & Biological Sciences Research Council (BBSRC)	Principal Investigator	BBSRC Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.03	Economic & Social Research Council (ESRC)	Principal Investigator	UKRI Concordat on open research data Guidance on best practice in the management of research data	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.04	Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)	Principal Investigator	EPSRC Policy Framework on Research Data – Expectations	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.05	Innovate UK	Principal Investigator	UKRI	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance

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			Concordat on open research data Guidance on best practice in the management of research data				from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.06	Natural Environment Research Council (NERC)	Principal Investigator	UKRI Concordat on open research data Guidance on best practice in the management of research data	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.07	Research England	Principal Investigator	UKRI Concordat on open research data Guidance on best practice in the management of research data	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.08	Science & Technology Facilities Council (STFC)	Principal Investigator	STFC Concordat on open research data	Completion of research study + 10 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office

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			Guidance on best practice in the management of research data				and advice on managing research data from Libraries & Collections
D.10.09	Other funders and sponsors	Principal Investigator	UK GDPR	Retain in line with requirements of research sponsor	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office or contact Corporate Records Management for study specific advice
D.11	Clinical trials and health research						
D.11.01	Advanced Therapy Investigational Medicinal Product (ATIMP) – Research trial master files	Principal Investigator	European Medicines Agency Guideline on quality, non-clinical and clinical requirements for investigational advanced therapy medicinal products in clinical trials Guideline for good clinical practice	Completion of trial + 30 years (minimum), plus 2 years after last marketing authorisation (includes paediatric studies) Source data and Investigator Site File (ISF) – Completion of trial + 5 years (destroy only with sponsor permission)	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections

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D.11.02	NHS clinical trials (CTIMP) - Master files 'Clinical trials' includes any studies that involve the investigation of an investigational medicinal product (CTIMP), including combined IMP/device studies. See Clinical Trials Regulation 536/2014 for full definitions.	Principal Investigator	Clinical Trials Regulations EU 536/2014 NHS Trust requirements Sponsor requirements	Refer to requirements of NHS Trust or sponsor. Where KCL is the sponsor: Completion of trial + 25 years (minimum), plus two years after last marketing authorisation (includes paediatric studies) Source data and Investigator Site File (ISF) – Completion of trial + 5 years (destroy only with sponsor permission)	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.11.03	Clinical or social care studies not falling under the above categories	Principal Investigator	Medicines for Human Use (Clinical Trials) Amendment Regulations 2006 NHS Trust requirements	Refer to requirements of NHS Trust or sponsor. Where KCL is the sponsor: Completion of trial + 5 years, unless a longer period has been stipulated by the funder	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections

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			Sponsor requirements	and approved by regulatory bodies Research involving children – completion of trial + 5 years or 3 years after the youngest subject reaches 18 years of age (whichever is longest) Research involving those who lack capacity to consent – 25 years			
D.11.04	Commercial clinical trials or health research	Principal Investigator	Sponsor requirements	Refer to requirements of research sponsor	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.11.05	Medical Research Council (MRC)	Principal Investigator	MRC Good research practice: principles and guidelines	Basic research – 10 years (minimum)	No Studies which directly inform national policy making should	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on

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				Population health and clinical studies – 20 years Longitudinal studies – 20 years +	be permanently preserved in an appropriate archive		managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.11.06	Cancer Research UK (CRUK)	Principal Investigator	CRUK Research integrity: guidelines for research conduct	Research data – 10 years + Clinical or public health studies – 20 years +	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.11.07	National Institute of Health Research (NIHR)	Principal Investigator	Records Management Code of Practice	Advanced medical therapy research master files – 20 years Clinical trials master files – 25 years Research datasets – 20 years (maximum)	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.11.08	Wellcome Trust	Principal Investigator	Wellcome Trust	Research data – 10 years +	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research

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			Good Research Practice Guidelines	Clinical or public health studies – 20 years			Governance Office and advice on managing health data from Libraries & Collections
D.12	Research involving animals						
D.12.01	Research involving use of animals, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project licences - Personal licences - ASPA inspectors reports - Records of regulated procedures - Numbers and species of animals used in procedures - Origins of animals and dates acquired - Records of all animals on which procedures have been carried out - Numbers and species of animals 	Licence holder	Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 Directive 2010/63/EU on the protection of animals used for scientific procedures Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (Home Office, 2014)	Completion of research + 5 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office

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	<p>that have died</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Records of all animal disposals (death, discharge, rehoming or export) - Records of the source, use and disposal of protected animals - Lab books 						
D.12.02	Individual history files for dogs, cats and non-human primates	Licence holder	Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (Home Office, 2014)	Date of death, transfer to another institution, release or rehoming + 5 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office
D.12.03	Advice given by Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Body (AWERB) and any actions taken as a result	Licence holder	Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (Home Office, 2014)	3 years	No	Highly restricted	See additional retention guidance from the Research Governance Office
D.13	Research misconduct						

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D.13.01	Case files on investigation and resolution of allegations of research misconduct	Research Governance, Ethics & Integrity	UK GDPR Limitation Act 1980	Last action on case + 6 years Records must also be retained in line with the retention period for the research project where this exceeds six years since last action on case	No	Highly restricted	Further information is available from Research Integrity
D.14	Security sensitive research						
D.14.01	Security Sensitive Research Activities – Policy and procedures	Research Governance, Ethics & Integrity	Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015	Permanent retention	Yes	External	Available on Policy Hub
D.14.02	Security Sensitive Research Panel – Agendas, minutes and papers	Research Governance, Ethics & Integrity	Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015	End of academic year + 15 years	No	Highly restricted	Further information is available from Research Governance
D.14.03	Security Sensitive Research Register	Research Governance, Ethics & Integrity	Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015	Permanent retention	No	Highly restricted	Further information is available from Research Governance
D.14.04	Security Sensitive Research Registration Forms	Research Governance, Ethics & Integrity	Counter-Terrorism & Security Act 2015	End of academic year + 15 years	No	Highly restricted	Further information is available from Research Governance

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D.15	Research support						
D.15.01	Research data held in King's Open Research Data System (KORDS)	Libraries & Collections	Research funder compliance and institutional requirements	Permanent retention	No	External	Further information on KORDS is available from Research Support
D.15.02	Research publications held in King's Research Portal (PURE)	Libraries & Collections	Research funder compliance and institutional requirements	Permanent retention	No	External	Further information is available on King's Research Portal