

Glossary

This is a short list of some common Records Management and Archives terminology. Other sources to consult include glossaries by the [University of Toronto Archives & Records Management Services](#) and the [Society of American Archivists](#).

If you'd like to see a term added to our glossary, please [contact us](#)!

Active Records

Those records that are in frequent use (more than once a month) by the administrative unit in which they were created, received, or maintained. These are stored by the office using them.

Archival Records

Those inactive records that are of permanent or enduring value to the University. These records document the University's history, organization, structure, programs, and functions.

Archival Value

Consistent with the definition in the University of Toronto's Archives and Records Management Glossary, *Archival Value* is the permanent and continuing worth of records based on legal/individual rights value (value that protects the rights of the University and of individuals associated with the University), evidential value (value in documenting activities of the University), or informational value (value that contributes to research).

Archives

The office responsible for maintaining and providing access to the institution's records of permanent, enduring value.

Disposition

The final action to be taken on records at the end of their retention periods. At Victoria, this is usually either destruction or transfer to the Archives for permanent retention.

File Plan

A classification system that describes different kinds of files, how to organize them, and where to store them. File plans can also include information on disposition.

Inactive Records

Those records that are no longer required for the day-to-day operations they once supported.

Metadata

"Data about data." Metadata can be administrative, descriptive, or technical. Among other things metadata can provide data on identification, management, location, nature, or use of an information resource (data).

Office of Primary Responsibility (OPR)

The University office that is responsible and accountable for the maintenance of University records. At Victoria, OPRs include President's Office, Bursar's Office, Dean of Students, etc.

Personal Information

Recorded information about an **identifiable individual**. A few common examples of personal

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information are:

- Information about an individual's race, religion, sex, marital status
- An individual's education, medical, criminal, or employment history
- Financial transactions an individual has been involved in
- Identifying numbers (like student numbers) assigned to an individual
- Correspondence sent to an institution by an individual that is explicitly or implicitly private or confidential

Personal Records

All records other than University Records. This can include research and study notes, teaching materials, manuscripts, publications, and personal communications of individual faculty members, staff, and students that are not created in the context of the University's administrative work.

Retention Period

The period of time University Records must be kept before final disposition. This period is determined by legislative, regulatory, and operational requirements.

Semi-active Records

Those records that are infrequently used in day-to-day operations (less than once a month). These are stored by the office using them.

Series

A series is a group of related records (created/received/used in the same activity) arranged in a filing system together.

Transitory Records

Records created or received that are temporarily useful. These records will have no further value beyond: Completing a simple transaction, Using to prepare a University Record, Acting as a convenient reference copy for an office or individual that does not have primary responsibility for that record.

University Records

Any recorded information, regardless of format, created, received, or maintained by University academic, administrative, and governing bodies in order to support legal obligations or other University business operations and transactions.

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