

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

Name of department/division	Records, Archives and Museums		
Title	Procedure and guidelines for the maintenance of storage areas for physical records		
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1 COMPILATION AND AUTHORISATION

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2 DISTRIBUTION

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All staff members	@NWU and Intranet		20-04-2021

3 DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version no	Reason for revision
April 2021	0.001	First SOP developed from previous Procedure manual for inclusion in Records Management Policy

4 PURPOSE OF THE SOP

The purpose of this SOP is to provide a framework for the maintenance of all physical storage areas of the University. Important procedures and processes should be documented to ensure standard and uniform practices.

This SOP supports the rules in the NWU Records Management Policy.

5 SCOPE

The scope of this document covers the maintenance and management of all physical storage areas of the NWU. It covers the responsibilities and procedure(s) to be followed, the essential elements to be included as well as template(s) to be used for these procedures and processes where applicable.

This SOP applies to all physical storage areas of the NWU.

6 ABBREVIATIONS AND/OR DEFINITIONS

Abbreviation/definition	Description
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
RAM	Records, Archives and Museums division
CIGS	Corporate and Information Governance Services
NWU	North-West University
Disposal	The action taken when an official record of the NWU is either destroyed or transferred to the NWU Archives for permanent preservation. In this SOP disposal and destroy will be used interchangeably.
POPIA	The Protection of Personal Information Act, 3 of 2013
Storage areas	All areas/rooms/offices in buildings designated for the safe and secure storage of official NWU records for the duration of the retention period as determined in the NWU File plan and disposal schedule.
Archives	Buildings especially constructed or renovated to act as official Archives of the NWU and are used solely for the permanent preservation of archival material.

7 RESPONSIBILITIES

- It is the responsibility of all **NWU staff members** to ensure that records are stored in safe and secure storage areas until transfer to the NWU archives and/or destruction occurs as contemplated in the NWU File plan and Disposal Schedule.
- It is the responsibility of all **line managers** to ensure that their offices adhere to these rules and procedures.
- It is the responsibility of the **record owner** as determined in the NWU File plan and disposal schedule to ensure that all official records must be maintained and managed in keeping with the Records Management Policy and the NWU File plan and Disposal schedule.
- It is the responsibility of the RAM office to compile and manage a centralised list of all physical storage areas of the NWU.
- The NWU Records Management Policy makes provision for the undertaking of sporadic assessment and monitoring reviews. During these visits the storage area will be assessed in terms of all the guidelines, rules and procedures as contemplated in this SOP and the Records Management Policy.

8 PROCEDURE/S

8.1 Database of physical records storage areas

A database of records storage areas, derived from the HEMIS space facilities statistics as a basis, is kept by RAM. This database contains information relating to the various storage areas in each building of the NWU as well as the staff member responsible for the specific storage area.

1. RAM will request the HEMIS space usage list from the Facilities Department and save the list in a safe and secure platform.
2. RAM will inform staff members to update the details of the storage areas at least twice a year by means of entering data in an electronic form.
3. A notice will be placed on the @NWU, as well as a mass e-mail to all staff members listed in the database to update the details.
4. The details will be updated by means of a web-form and the data from this webform will be exported to database to ensure proper control of the storage area.
5. The data received from the storage area update will be compared to the HEMIS data.

6. Any discrepancies will be addressed and corrected on the database.

8.2 Physical conditions of records storage areas

All records storage areas must be maintained as contemplated in this procedure. It is the responsibility of the relevant staff member appointed to manage the storage area to ensure compliance.

8.2.1 Shelving and cabinets

- Cabinets/shelves can be either fixed to the wall mobile. Should the shelves be wood, please ensure that the records storage area is fumigated often.
- Ensure that the bottom shelf is raised at least 15cm from the floor and have an open space between the top shelf and the ceiling. This helps preserve the records in the event of water damage.

8.2.2 Flooring and walls

- Tile or apply sealant to the floor.
- Avoid carpets as far as possible.
- The floor must be swept at least once a month.
- Walls must be painted.

8.2.3 Lighting

- Instal fluorescent lights or switch to lower wattage bulbs.
- Shade or apply blinds to all windows to guard against sunlight damage.

8.2.4 Temperature and humidity

- Keep records storage areas cool either by means of extraction fans or air conditioners if the temperature is constantly above 21°C .
- In humid storage areas, inspect the records at regular intervals for mould and contact the University Archivist to assist in such cases.

8.2.5 Fire and waterproofing

- It is advisable not to store records and flammable liquids in the same area.
- Fire extinguishers should be fitted on strategic areas inside or close to the entrance of the storage areas.
- Ensure that the roof is leak free by conducting regular inspections which include unblocking of gutters, drains and pipes.

8.2.6 Security

- Install steel doors instead of wooden doors if possible or install a security door.
- Ensure that all windows are fitted with burglar bars if the storage area is on a ground level.
- All keys to the storage area should be stored in lockable drawers or cabinets of the staff members in charge of the record storage areas.
- Access to these areas should be controlled by the staff member in charge of the record storage area and no other staff member or student should be allowed uncontrolled entry into these areas.

8.2.7 Dust and insects

- No food is to be taken into record storage areas.
- Fumigate record storage areas at least once a year.
- Inspect regularly for insect infestations.
- Ensure that the storage area is dust free.

8.2.8 Archival records corner

- Records earmarked for archival transfer should be kept separate from records earmarked for destruction.
- Records for archival transfer should be sent in archival boxes that can be requested from the NWU Archives.

8.2.9 Labelling of boxes and/or files in physical storage areas

All files and/boxes in the storage area must be affixed a standardised label as made available by the RAM office.

8.3 Essential records

Essential records are records that the University absolutely must have in order to:

- document legal authorities, rights and responsibilities;
- resume or maintain operations in case of a disaster or emergency; and
- document the rights of individuals.

Records storage areas housing the following records need special care and attention as these records are viewed as essential records of the University.

- Minutes of meetings
- Annual reports and managerial reports
- Legal records
- Financial records
- Staff files
- Student records and faculty calendars.

All the conditions listed in this SOP must strictly be adhered to.

8.4 Assessment and review of physical storage areas

The RAM division will sporadically and as part of the ongoing records management assessment and monitoring process schedule visits to these physical storage areas.

During these visits the storage area will be assessed in terms of all the guidelines, rules and procedures as contemplated in this SOP and the Records Management Policy.

8.5 Classification of records in storage areas

Records in records storage areas must be classified according to the NWU File plan and Disposal Schedule and must display the correct reference number visibly and identifiably.

Records should also indicate the disposal instruction and date on which the retention expires.

Templates for boxes in record storage areas can be requested from RAM.

9 POPIA COMPLIANCE

Personal information relating to this procedure will be collected by means of a webform/electronic form. The information will be stored in safe and secure electronic storage.

The purpose for collection will be to communicate with the relevant staff members as well as compiling the central database for physical storage areas.

Personal information collected as part of this process will be processed only for the purpose of managing the physical storage areas and related tasks.

No personal information will be generated in this process.

Personal information will be stored in secure electronic platforms supported by the NWU.

Personal information will only be shared with parties who have a legal right to access the information, and/or allowed/obligated by legislation.

Personal information relating to this process will be destroyed annually after the update of the central database.

10 REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

[NWU File plan and Disposal Schedule](#)

[Website – RAM department](#)

11 ADDENDA

No	Document name

Original details: (11664754) C:\Users\11664754\Documents\SOP-Test.docm
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