



**CARLOW
COLLEGE**
ST. PATRICK'S

TITLE: RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

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Approved By	Management Board	Date Approved	17 January 2018
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Superseded or Obsolete Policy / Procedure(s)		Owner	
01 – <i>Interim Records Management Policy</i>		Archivist	

1. Purpose of Policy

Carlow College, St. Patrick's (hereafter Carlow College) processes vast amounts of information and records daily. Records are a valuable source of knowledge and comprise evidence of College functions and activities. The effective management of records is necessary to ensure informed decision-making and forward planning, and the promotion of accountability and transparency.

The purpose of this *Records Management Policy* is to set down the high-level principles and precepts which underpin how Carlow College manages records within its custody and control. Work on the implementation of a comprehensive records management system is ongoing. This Policy will be at the centre of a framework of related and more explicit policies and procedures, including a records classification scheme and records retention schedules. These policies and procedures will be contained in a Records Management Manual.

Various regulations, legislation and quality assurance guidelines require Carlow College to create and keep records, and manage them effectively. Such imperatives include, but are not limited to, quality assurance guidelines issued by Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI); the *Freedom of Information Act 2014* and the *Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003*; and legislation and regulations which apply to the College as a registered charity. All policies and procedures which form part of the records management framework will accord with regulatory and legislative requirements, best practice and standards such as *ISO 15489 Records Management*. Existing policies, such as the College's *Data Protection Policy*, will be reviewed in order to bring them in line with the forthcoming *General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*; effective on 25 May 2018).

A further motivation for a quality records management system is to support the business needs of Carlow College; to ensure that the College creates and keeps records which are authentic, reliable, complete and available for as long as they are required, and capable of supporting the College's functions and activities.

2. Definitions

Records are documents in all formats and media created and received in the course of official duties, and constitute evidence of Carlow College's functions and activities. Examples of records include, but are not limited to, emails, letters, minutes of meetings, spreadsheets, databases, photographs, maps, drawings, voice messages and recordings, text messages, social media postings, closed-circuit television (CCTV) and other film footage, examination scripts, and information held in systems such as those used for student information and financial management.

Records management is the application of documented policies and procedures to the creation, maintenance, use and disposal of records, and includes areas such as correspondence / email and forms management, version control, the relationship between electronic and hard copy records, records classification, retention scheduling, disaster management, vital records protection, records storage and security, the management of records conversion programmes, destruction of records and transfer to the archive service.

Archives are documents in all formats and media which merit permanent retention due to ongoing administrative, legal, financial, historical or intrinsic importance. Some 2-8% of records are retained as archives. A separate suite of policies, approved by the Delany Archive Trust, refers to the management of archival records owned by Carlow College.

3. Scope of Policy

This Policy applies to all records created and received by College Governors, Trustees and employees in the course of their official duties. Such records are owned by Carlow College and persons leaving the College or changing position within it, are required to leave all records for their successors.

With regard to employees, except in exceptional circumstances, all College records are to be captured within official systems. Where records are created or received in non-official systems, they are to be copied to official systems. It is acknowledged that College Governors and Trustees may be based externally to the College premises and capture within official systems in the same way is not possible. However, College Governors and Trustees are to use their Carlow College email accounts for College business.

Due to the requirements of legislation, including the *Freedom of Information Act 2014* and *Data Protection Acts 1988 and 2003* (to be superseded by *GDPR*), records held by Carlow College service providers may also fall within the scope of this Policy.

4. Policy Statement

The principles that underpin this Policy are the promotion of accountability and transparency; compliance with regulatory, legislative and quality assurance requirements; and facilitation of efficient and informed administration and management.

The implementation of a comprehensive and quality records management system has numerous benefits:

- Carlow College is in receipt of public moneys and is a registered charity. The application of documented policies and procedures to recordkeeping promotes accountability and transparency, and enhances stakeholder confidence as to how the College manages its affairs;
- The maintenance of quality information and records systems promotes ease of adherence to oversight requirements, including audit and quality assurance;

- Effective records management permits the College to protect its own interests as well as those of stakeholders, including learners, employees, oversight bodies and the wider community;
- To support both protection of privacy and freedom of information services.

A quality records management system also has internal drivers as it will assist the College to:

- Conduct business in an orderly and efficient manner;
- Ensure that adequate records documenting core functions and activities are kept;
- Deliver services in a consistent and equitable manner;
- Support and document decision-making, policy formulation and forward planning;
- Promote certainty for employees as to how to administer records, including what records are to be created and kept, and for how long;
- Preserve the heritage and corporate memory of the College.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

Specific and detailed responsibilities will be delineated in further policies and procedures which form part of the records management framework, but in general:

- All employees who create and keep records as part of their official duties are responsible for them in a wide sense. The general replacement of centralised departmental recordkeeping systems with more individual ‘systems’, including email accounts and personal computer drives enhances the level of responsibility of all employees;
- Line managers have operational responsibility for records relating to their functional areas;
- It is the responsibility of the Archivist to: devise policies and procedures for consultation with operational employees and for relevant approval; report on compliance; and advise on records and archival issues;
- The Records Management Group is a cross-functional committee which acts as a sounding board for proposed developments in records management issues;
- Carlow College’s archives are cared for by the Delany Archive Trust. The Delany Archive is located in Carlow College’s premises. The College is represented by two trustees, who direct and approve the Archive’s activities and policies.

6. Associated Documentation

It is not possible to list all regulations and legislation which require Carlow College to create and keep records, and to which the College must comply. However, overarching and important requirements include regulations issued by QQI in connection with the College’s core function, the provision of third level education; audit rules; Freedom of Information and Data Protection legislation; and the College’s responsibilities as an employer. The records management framework will also be in accordance with relevant international standards such as *ISO 15489 Records Management*.

The *Records Management Policy* will be at the centre of a framework of related and more explicit policies and procedures, including a records classification scheme and records retention schedules. These policies and procedures will be contained in a Records Management Manual.

Many records are created and kept electronically and the College has a discrete suite of policies owned by the Information Technology (hereafter IT) Office. The IT Officer is a member of the Records Management Group in order to ensure that related policies complement each other.

7. Referenced Policies

- Data Protection Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy (forthcoming)
- IT Policy
- Policies of the Delany Archive Trust

8. Monitoring and Review

The *Records Management Policy* is approved by Management Board. The Archivist, in consultation with the Records Management Group, will monitor this Policy annually with a policy review scheduled three years after the effective date.