1. Definition of terms

A record is any information captured in a reproducible format.

Records management is the creation, maintenance, control and disposal of records in a way which facilitates their most appropriate, efficient and effective use.

All records management programmes are based upon the concept of the records’ 'lifecycle' - a system for describing the various stages of existence through which information in recorded form passes. Records are 'current' from their creation and for as long as their administrative value remains at its highest. They become 'semi-current' when their administrative value declines and reference to them becomes less frequent and irregular. When a record has ceased to have any administrative value at all it is 'non-current'.

'Vital' records are those without which the University would cease to be able to function properly. All other records are 'non-vital'.

2. Aims

- To ensure that records of vital importance for the continuing operations of the University of Bath are identified and managed systematically.

- To dispose of the University's non-vital records in an organised, efficient and where necessary confidential way.
• To monitor and offer advice on the creation, maintenance and disposition of records throughout the University.

• To ensure compliance with legislation relevant to the creation and processing of records.

• To facilitate the identification and selection of material suitable for permanent preservation in the University archives.

3. Responsibility

The University Archivist/Records Manager is responsible for the overall development and maintenance of records management throughout of the University.

All records within a department should have an identified owner ultimately responsible for their classification and management whilst in regular use (ie during their currency).

Departmental liaison officers should be nominated to provide a recognised point of contact within each department, and to ensure the integration of records management practice throughout the University.

Wherever possible members of staff should receive an introductory briefing on records management procedures.

4. Storage

All records should be stored with due regard for appropriateness, efficiency, cost-effectiveness and security.

Confidential and sensitive records should be stored and accessed appropriately.

5. Access

Non-current records are only available for consultation to the creating department, unless the head of that department gives express permission otherwise.

6. Disposal

Each department should have an approved and officially ratified retention schedule. All departmental retention schedules should be reviewed regularly and adjusted if necessary.

Records should be disposed of in accordance with agreed retention schedules. At the expiration of their currency records should be destroyed, transferred to the University Records Centre or, if they have lasting historical value, added to the University archives.

Footnote: This policy is intended to be inclusive of all types of records management. Additional procedures for the management of electronic records will be compiled in collaboration with the University Computing Services.