Chester Beatty Library

Records Management

Policy

ABSTRACT:
This document sets out the Chester Beatty Library's policy on the management of all corporate records.

Contents

1. Introduction

The role of the Chester Beatty Library is to protect, preserve and make available to the public in the form of exhibitions, popular publications, lectures and other events, the heritage enshrined in the collections of the late Chester Beatty and to provide the world of scholarship access to this internationally important resource. As a body relying principally on public funding, the Trust is obliged to pay particular attention to the needs of the general public.

The Chester Beatty Library is committed to ensuring that its information, and in particular its corporate records, are managed to the highest standards and in accordance with legislative and regulatory requirements such as the Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to set out the Chester Beatty Library's policy on the management of corporate records, regardless of format**.** The objective of this policy is to govern the creation, maintenance and disposition of all official records created, managed and maintained by the library.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all sections of the Chester Beatty Library, to all records held in any media (including paper, electronic and other media), and to all employees who create, receive or maintain records as part of their work on behalf of the Chester Beatty Library. It also includes all staff who are working offsite, mobile working, including but not limited to volunteers, permanent and temporary employees, contractors and those on work experience or student placements.

All staff within the organisation that create, receive, store and use records, have a responsibility for records management. This records management policy was produced to advise and support all staff within the organisation. This policy will ensure that the library and its staff members are aware of their obligations when creating and maintaining records in accordance with applicable regulations, legislation and the library's policies. All staff are responsible, in line with the current records management policies and procedures, for the records generated by their section, to ensure that they are managed efficiently and effectively to meet legal, administrative and operational requirements.

The Chester Beatty Library has a particular responsibility to ensure that the Library meets its legal responsibilities, and internal and external governance and accountability requirements. This will ensure the retention of a corporate memory of transactions, decisions and actions taken by, or on behalf of the organisation.

4. Staff Responsibilities

All library staff that creates, receives and uses records have records management responsibilities. In particular all staff must ensure that they keep appropriate records of their

work in the library and manage those records in keeping with this policy and with any other relevant guidance produced.

The Director and Management Team are responsible for ensuring that their staff comply with this policy and the related procedures.

5. Importance of Records Management

Why is Records Management Important?

Effective and efficient management of corporate information supports fast, accurate and reliable access to records, ensuring the timely destruction of redundant information and the identification of and protection of vital and historically important records.

The records of the Chester Beatty Library must be managed as a valuable resource and corporate asset. Appropriate records management is a vital aspect of maintaining and enhancing the value of this asset as well as demonstrating transparency and accountability for all organisational activities and actions in line with Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

Records are required to support the continuing conduct of business, ensure legal compliance, to provide necessary accountability, and the development of the 'corporate memory'.

Records are kept to provide:

- ✓ **Information** – as support for operations and decision-making
- ✓ **Evidence** – for accountability in the event of a legal challenge
- ✓ **Legal Compliance** – as proof that regulations have been met
- ✓ **Corporate Memory** – history for future generations

6. Ownership of records

All records produced by staff in the course of conducting official business of the Chester Beatty Library are regarded as corporate/official records, and are the property of the organisation and subject to its policies and procedures.

7. Management of records

The Chester Beatty is fully committed to the implementation of efficient and effective records management policies and procedures throughout the organisation. The same records management principles, policies and procedures applicable to paper records must also govern the management of all electronic records created and maintained by library staff. Electronic documents must be managed from the initial creation stage to final disposition. These records (both paper and electronic format) should be managed in line with the following records management resources:

7.1 Retention and Disposal

Retention and Disposal Schedules:
These apply various appraisal criteria, including legal, administrative, operations and historical requirements, to determine how long a particular record series needs to be retained for. All staff should consult the retention schedule applicable.

Records Destruction Certificate and Records Transfer Form:
The Chester Beatty Library is committed to ensuring a paper trail is in place in relation to the disposition of organisational records. In line with the records retention and disposal schedule, records identified for confidential destruction will be recorded on a record destruction certificate, similarly any records transferred offsite or to the archives will be recorded on a records transfer form. These forms will be retained in line with the schedule recommendations.

7.2 Naming of Electronic Documents

Naming Conventions and Version Control
This document is intended for all employees who create and maintain electronic records within the Chester Beatty Library. It is intended to provide a common set of rules to apply to the naming of electronic documents.

7.3 Email Management

Email Policy
This document provides brief, practical guidance on how to manage email messages, particularly in relation to the management of emails as corporate records of the Chester Beatty Library.

8. Preservation of records

In order to protect and make available the corporate memory of the organisation to all stakeholders and for future generations, the library recognises the importance of the long-term preservation and conservation of its archives. A small percentage of the Chester Beatty Library's records will be selected for permanent preservation due to their long-term reference, administrative or historical value.

9. Compliance - Internal & External Accountability

The Chester Beatty Library is committed to the effective and efficient management of records. The records management policies and procedures employed by the library ensure legislative, regulatory and statutory compliance.

Framework
The management of the Chester Beatty Library's records is undertaken in line with the following legislative, regulatory and statutory framework. Organisation adherence to this

Records Management Policy will facilitate compliance. This list does not purport to be exhaustive:

- ➢ Freedom of Information Act, 2014 (repeal of the 1997 and 2003 Acts)
- ➢ Data Protection Act, 1988
- ➢ Data Protection (Amendment Act), 2003
- ➢ Companies Act, 1963, 1990
- ➢ Finance Acts, 1950,2006
- ➢ Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997
- ➢ Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997,2001
- ➢ Electronic Commerce Act, 2000
- ➢ Statute of Limitations Act, 1957
- ➢ Statute of Limitations (Amendment) Act, 1991
- ➢ Value Added Tax Acts, 1972,2005
- ➢ Industrial Relations Act, 1946,1990

10. Related Polices

The records management policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies and guidance:

- ▪ *Retention and Disposal Schedules*
- ▪ *Electronic Naming Conventions and Version Control*
- ▪ *Email Management Guidelines*
- ▪ *Email Etiquette Policy*
- ▪ *Computer/Information Technology Usage Policy*

Approval/Revision History

This Records Management Policy was prepared for the Chester Beatty Library by Lisa McCarthy, Archivist/Records Manager, Eneclann Ltd. (2014-2015) and reviewed by the Library's Record Management Steering Committee. It was formally approved by the Trustees on 17 June 2015. This policy will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Records Manager and a full revision will take place every five years.

Date	Revision Description	Rev. Change
17 June 2015	Formal approval given by Trustees, following presentation of the policy to the Trustees Working Group on 9 June 2015.	1.0

Definitions/Glossary of terms

❖ **Records Management**
This term refers to the field of management responsible for the efficient and systematic control of the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposition of and organisation's records, throughout their life cycle, in order to meet operational business needs, statutory and fiscal requirements, and community expectations. Effective management of corporate information allows fast, accurate and reliable access to records, ensuring the timely destruction of redundant information and the identification and protection of vital and historically important records.

❖ **Document**
A document is the smallest unit of filing. It can be a single letter, form, report, email message, an excel file or other item housed in a filing system. It is discrete and identifiable from other documents and there are logical relationships between each of the textual elements of which it is composed.

Not all documents are records. For a document to become a record it must have participated in a business activity and should be placed into an official filing/records management system. Some documents will be of very short-term value for the organisation (for example invitations to lunch, or meetings etc.), while others will need to be kept as evidence of important business transactions, decisions or activities. Once these have been captured into a records management system, they become records.
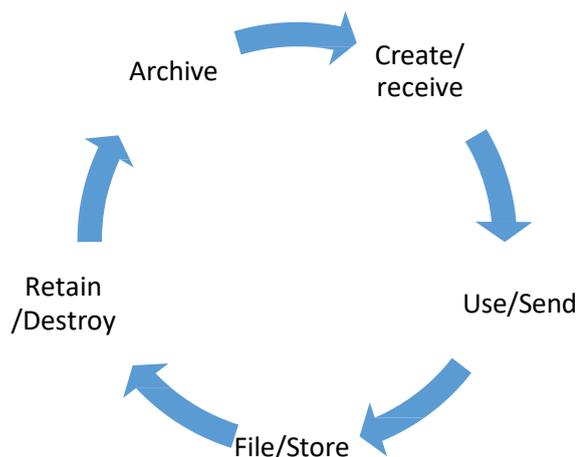
❖ **Records**
These can be defined as *"…information created, received, and maintained as evidence and information by an organization or person, in pursuance of legal obligations or in the transaction of business."* (ISO 15489: 2001). A **Record** is information created or received that provides <u>recorded evidence</u> of functions, activities and transactions.

❖ A **Record Series** or 'record category' is a level of description used for repeated instances of records with similar characteristics produced by the same function.

❖ The term *Records Life Cycle* describes the life of a record from its creation/receipt through the period of its 'active' use, then into a period of 'inactive' retention (such as closed files which may still be referred to occasionally) and finally either confidential disposal or archival preservation.

Records Life-Cycle:

- ❖ **Electronic records**

    Electronic records refer to any information created in electronic form e.g. inputted onto a computer system or electronic device. Electronic records can be created and maintained in the following forms – email messages, word-processed files (e.g. MS Word), databases, electronic spreadsheets (e.g. MS Excel) and imaged documents. These records may be held in various locations on network drives, email inboxes, hard drives, or on external media e.g. CDs/DVDs etc.

- ❖ **Retention and Disposal Schedule**

    A retention schedule lists record series and the appropriate length of time that the records need to be retained <u>beyond their current use in the office</u>. The retention schedule also indicates disposition actions in terms of continued preservation or confidential destruction.

- ❖ **Disposition**

    Range of processes associated with implementing records retention, destruction or transfer decisions, which are documented in disposition authorities or other instruments.

- ❖ **Archives** are records of enduring long-term value.