**MUHIMBILI UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH AND ALLIED SCIENCES**

**POLICY AND GUIDELINES ON RETENTION AND DISPOSAL OF INFORMATION MATERIALS**

**30th March 2021**

**Postal Address; P.O.BOX 65001, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania**
**Telephone; 255 22 2150473 (Direct), 2150302-6 (General)**
**E-mail: dvcarc@muhas.ac.tz**

# Table of Contents

**Preface**

The Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) is experiencing a fast-growing number of obsolete documents and materials emanating from academic and research activities. The growth is outpacing the institutional capacity to store new and even more valuable materials, thus increasing storage, inventory, and auditing costs. The materials include paper, electronic and biological materials.

The method of disposal of materials is stipulated by the National Records and Archives Law (2002) and guidelines. Therefore, the proposed Policy builds upon these Laws and regulations and aligns with various materials and other MUHAS policies regarding other functions of the University.

This Policy establishes guidelines for ensuring that MUHAS implements effective records management, accounting for legislative, regulatory and best-practice requirements. It provides guidance on the retention and disposal of records held by MUHAS. It will help determine how best and which records to retain or dispose of when such records no longer exhibit partial or permanent, short- or long-term academic, research, administrative or historical value.

The Policy also seeks to establish an archiving unit that will be completely dedicated to the proper implementation of these policy procedures at MUHAS.


Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy (DVC-ARC)
**March 2021**

**Section 1.0 Introduction**

Proper records and archives management is important for the efficient running of operations in institutions, both private and public, and fosters accountability and transparency. Records and archives management is an important area that affects public service delivery. Developing a records retention and disposal schedule requires the development, implementation, and management of a credible policy that all staff are expected to follow. There are numerous risks associated with not adhering to an established schedule for information retention and disposal. The more records retained, the higher the associated risk when no retention schedule is used. The more information and records that an organization retains, the greater the responsibility is to identify, locate, and reference all documents within their legal compliance. Without an existing method to identify all records, the time and resources required to locate documents can be substantial. There is also increased added risk when an organization is unable to locate or unintentionally withhold required documents.

By developing and implementing a records retention schedule, an organization can improve its overall utilization of resources, control the growth of its records volume, demonstrate compliance with regulatory records keeping requirements, enforce consistent implementation of records keeping Policy, improve the ability to locate and retrieve records when required and reduce risks for litigation.

MUHAS, as a public institution, recognizes that it is obligated under the National Records and Archives Law (2002) to create a repository for information and records generated during implementations of its mandate. MUHAS is responsible for ensuring that the institution has a policy for archiving and managing the records it generates to realize efficiency and accountability in running its day-to-day activities. Documents that MUHAS owns include academic, research, consultancy, administrative, financial, legal and procurement documents. The duration for retention of these documents differs depending on the purpose of the documents.

**1.1. Purpose**

The purpose of this Policy is to set guidelines for retention and disposal schedules for different information resources and materials, including paper records, research data, biological samples, and important documents needed to smoothly run business at the MUHAS.

**1.2. Scope of the Policy**

This Policy shall apply to MUHAS faculty on tenure, new staff, collaborators, honorary staff, contractual and those who have retired but are willing and still have potential to contribute effectively to the advancement of science and knowledge or anyone working on behalf of MUHAS.

A small percentage of the MUHAS records shall be selected for permanent preservation as part of the University Archives for historical and evidential purposes and as an enduring record of the conduct and management of the University. Moreover, transcripts and student registers shall be permanently kept.

Generally, the initial ownership of documents shall be by users at the departments and units. These users shall have the major responsibility of handling the documents. The heads of departments or

units shall be responsible for ensuring that their staff are aware of this Policy and comply with its requirements. All staff members are responsible for ensuring that appropriate documentation of their work and records created or received are accurate and correctly managed according to the University guidelines and any legislative, statutory, and contractual requirements. The heads of departments shall ensure that when a member of staff leaves the University, responsibility for his records are transferred to another person or deleted if the information is redundant. Incorporation and design of a system for records management into project planning processes at the earliest possible stage of development is vital.

### 1.3. The Guiding Laws
The implementation of this Policy and guideline will abide by the laws (in this section) and related policies in section 1.4
   i.    The Tanzania Records and Archives Management Act, 2002, which requires all Public institutions to establish a system for proper management of archives and records
   ii.   The Tanzania Access to Information Act, 2016
   i.    E-Government Act No 10 of 2019 and its regulations
   ii.   Public Procurement Act 2011
   iii.  The Public Procurement Regulations, 2016
   iv.   The Public Procurement Regulations, 2016


### 1.4. Related Policies
This Policy shall be considered in relation to the following other University Policies
   v.     UTUMISHI, Circular No. 6 of 2009 on storage and disposal of information on ICT devices
   vi.    MUHAS ICT Policy and Guidelines 2017
   vii.   MUHAS ICT Security Policy and Guidelines 2017
   viii.  MUHAS ICT Disaster Recovery Plan 2020
   ix.    MUHAS Library Policy and guidelines
   x.     MUHAS Data Sharing Policy
   xi.    MUHAS Intellectual Rights Policy and guidelines
   xii.   MUHAS Institutional Repository Policy
   xiii.  MUHAS Biobank Policy
   xiv.   MUHAS Library Weeding Policy
   xv.    MUHAS Prospectus 2020/2021-2021/2022


### 1.5. Objectives of the Policy
This Policy has the following objectives:
   i.    To preserve the history of the University
   ii.   To abide by legal and regulatory requirements
   iii.  To provide guidance for retention and disposal schedules of different information resources and materials

iv.    To guide infrastructure requirements and other needs for the policy implementation

v.    To stimulate the evolution of innovative methods for disposal, e.g., paper recycling

vi.    To outline destruction and retention of electronic materials on computers, servers and repository

vii.    To guide data retention and disposal

viii.    To support modalities for biological samples retention and disposal

ix.    To create links with industry, the private sector, and the community to ensure that research conducted positively impacts the country's social and economic life.

## Section 2: Definitions

| Term | Meaning |
|---|---|
| Advisory Committee | Records and Archives Advisory Committee |
| Archival repository | A building or part of a building in which archives are preserved and made available for consultation |
| Archives | Records of the enduring value selected for permanent preservation |
| Current records | Records regularly used for the conduct of the current business of an institution or individual |
| Department | A unit in the institution |
| Inactive Records | Records that are not currently needed for use by originating department and that have not reached the end of their retention period |
| National Archives | The archival repository in which archives of the central institutions of the United Republic of Tanzania are saved and made available for consultation |
| Non-current records | Records no longer needed for current business |
| Public records | The records specified in the Schedule in the Tanzania Records and Archives Management Act, 2002 |
| Records | Recorded information regardless of form or medium created, received and maintained by the institution or individual in the pursuance of its legal obligations or in the transaction of its business and providing evidence of the performance of those obligations or that business |
| Records center | A building designated for the low-cost storage, maintenance and communication of semi-current records pending their eventual disposal |
| Retention and disposal schedule | A document describing the recurrent records of an institution or an administrative unit thereof, specifying which records should be preserved permanently as having enduring values as archives and authorizing on a continuing basis and after the lapse of retention periods or the occurrence of specified actions or events, the disposal by destruction or other means of the remaining records |
| Semi-current records: | Records required only infrequently for current business conduct; for files and other assemblies of records on which no action has been recorded for three years shall be regarded as semi-current records. |

**Section 3: Policy Statements**

**3.1. Creation of a University Archival Repository Unit**

The Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences generates paper and electronic records on an annual basis from academic, examinations and administrative transactions. Currently, the University has a registry for administrative files, including both confidential and non-confidential files. Given the demand for information retention and disposal, the University shall elevate what is now a registry to a unit to deal with archival and disposal of all University records.

**3.1.1 Policy Statement 1:** *The University shall establish a unit responsible for information archival and disposal*

**3.1.2. Procedures**

i. The University shall expand the current registry's role to that of a University Archival Repository, which shall be a unit with an appointed head under The Deputy Vice-Chancellor's office – Planning Finance and Administration (DVC-PFA).
ii. The University shall constitute an Archives Advisory Committee
iii. The University Archival Repository shall manage part of the information centrally and partly under departments of the University
iv. The DRP shall establish a Research Data Center which shall serve as the Archival Repository for all research-related information
v. A University Museum shall be established to keep important historical information of the University that shall maintain permanent records
vi. The University shall employ a Museum curator responsible for maintaining historical information of the University
vii. Archival records maintained shall be designated as current, semi-current, active, or inactive records
viii. The University Archival Repository shall develop a retention and disposal schedule for all types of information archived by the Archival Repository
ix. Access to the Archival Repository shall be according to provisions by the Tanzania Access to Information Act, 2016.
x. There shall be central indexing of all archival documents around the University, which shall be in electronic and paper form, facilitating easy retrieval and restoration of documents after use.
xi. The archived material shall be checked for integrity and need for polishing every two years, and a schedule shall be maintained for the same.

**3.2. Creation and Retention of Paper Records**

MUHAS has in its custody a number of documents emanating from academic, research, administrative, estates, finance and procurement activities. The growth is outpacing the institutional capacity to store new and even more valuable materials, thus increasing the cost of storage, inventory and auditing, and maybe a risk to the University.

**3.2.1. Policy Statement 2:** *The University shall maintain archives for paper records for as long as there is a continuing need for the information in accordance with other existing policies.*

**3.2.2. Procedures**

    i.   This Policy shall recognize the existing documents registry as part of the University archives

    ii.   All documents on administrative transactions and staff files shall remain in the custody of the current registry

    iii.   The Admissions Office shall maintain a permanent archive of admission records, academic transcripts, student registers and examination results under the supervision of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy

    iv.   Host departments shall retain student examination scripts for a period of 5 years, after which the department shall seek permission to destroy them from the National Archives Department

    v.   Upon issuance of permits, the University shall seek the guidance of the National Archives Department to destroy any of the documents which are no longer needed in accordance with the archiving principles

### 3.3. Creation and Retention of Electronic Records

MUHAS creates electronic records in all areas of its operations, including admission of students, examination results, research, management transactions, procurement, finance and other areas. It is important to develop the capacity to assure proper archiving of such records that support long-term maintenance and easy retrieval. MUHAS has developed policies to guide the implementation and use of ICT in its operations. Creation and retention of electronic records shall adhere to the existing MUHAS ICT policies and the e-Government Act 2019, its regulations, standards and guidelines.

**3.3.1 Policy Statement 3:** *The University shall create capability for long-term retention of electronic records in a safe and easily retrievable format.*

**3.3.2. Procedures**

    i.   The Directorate of ICT shall support departments, administrative and academic units of the University in safely maintaining well backed-up electronic records that they generate in conducting their daily activities

    ii.   Multiple backup devices and multiple locations shall be created to assure the security of electronic archives

    iii.   Electronic copies of important paper records shall be part of the electronic records

    iv.   The liaison shall be made with e-Government to secure space for backup of electronic records

    v.   The National Records and Archives Department shall be requested permission and support to destroy electronic records two years old or longer, as the case may be.

    vi.   Certain electronic records such as transcripts and student registers shall be kept permanently using the current technology for archiving records

vii. The duration for retention or erasure of e-mails generated within the University electronic systems shall be in accordance with guidelines of the MUHAS ICT policies and the e-Government Act 2019.
viii. MUHAS staff shall be encouraged to create records of important e-mails needed for their use beyond two years of retention in MUHAS mail servers
ix. The University shall endeavor to develop capacity for cloud storage of electronic records
x. A guided procedure shall be instituted in ensuring that disposal of electronic records in computers is effective and does not expose the University to any residual risk.
xi. The MUHAS Institutional Repository Policy shall be used as one mechanism for managing electronic records and reports

## 3.4. Management of Research and Clinical Data

MUHAS, through its mandate of teaching, research, and providing clinical services, creates data of various forms that, if properly archived, can inform future research, health interventions, Policy and product development. The University needs to ensure that it manages and maintains easily retrievable archives of these records.

**3.4.1 Policy Statement 4**: *The Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences shall create archives of information generated from or during the conduct of research for future utilization*

### 3.4.2. Procedures

i. MUHAS shall own and maintain records of all research data generated from projects in paper or electronic form
ii. Research information to be archived shall include patient epidemiological and medical records, filled in questionnaires/surveys data, audiovisuals, videos, x-rays, medical images and biological specimens
iii. The MUHAS Research Data Center shall oversee and organize archived data sets to facilitate re-analysis or meta-analysis
iv. The MUHAS Biorepository Policy shall apply for all matters related to biological samples retention and disposal
v. Academic departments shall properly manage research data generated by its staff and support the Directorate of Research and Publications in ensuring that no research data generated by academic staff is wasted

## 3.5. Retention and Disposal of Research Ethics Committee (REC) Documents

The Research Ethics Committee or IRB of the Directorate of Research and Publications receives, reviews, and recommends award of ethical clearance for researches and clinical trials conducted by MUHAS faculty, local and international students and collaborators. After award of ethical clearance, they retain copies of proposals awarded ethical clearance. It is important to stipulate

the duration for storage and modalities for disposal of such information.

**3.5.1 Policy Statement 5:** *The Institutional Review Board under the Directorate of Research and Publications shall create capacity for a retrievable archive of research proposals and ethical clearance letters of all proposals handled by the Directorate.*

### 3.5.2. Procedures
i. The IRB unit of the Directorate of Research and Publications shall create an electronic archive and backup of research proposals and ethical clearance letters for a minimum period of 10 years.
ii. All department heads at MUHAS shall ensure the archival of copies of research proposals implemented by their faculty in the IRB repository.
iii. Ethical approval letters for high-risk researches and clinical trials shall be permanently preserved

### 3.6. Archival of Biological Samples Generated from Research

MUHAS collects different types of biological material, including tissues and blood samples, some of which are archived in storage freezers within the University, but the repository is not yet recognized as an archival resource which should be given special attention

**3.6.1. Policy Statement 6:** *MUHAS shall include the biological samples repository in its inventory of archived material*

### 3.6.2 Procedures
i. MUHAS shall officially recognize the biological samples bank as a part of the MUHAS Archival Repository
ii. The MUHAS Biorepository Policy shall guide all procedures related to this area.

### 3.7. Retention and Disposal of Financial and related Records
The University generates numerous paper and electronic records related to Finance, Payroll, Personnel, Insurance, Tax Management, Investments/Treasury, Rent and Lease Administration and Estates Management. In respect to these areas, the University has approved Financial Regulations, which also cover guidelines for Retention and Disposal of paper and electronic records.

**3.7.1. Policy Statement 7**: *The University shall retain and dispose of its financial documents and records in compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and standards to aid the University in*

*complying with legal and fiscal requirements, increasing operational effectiveness, and preserving records of permanent historical value.*

### 3.7.2. Procedures
Procedures stipulated in the MUHAS Financial Regulations covering retention and disposal of Finance, Payroll, Personnel, Insurance, Tax Management, Investments/Treasury, Rent and Lease Administration and Estates Management paper and electronic records shall be the guiding principle regarding classification of records, retention period and disposal.

### 3.8. Disposal of Library Print and Electronic Resources
The MUHAS Library Policy specifies guidelines and procedures for weeding outdated resources, including books and print journals.

### 3.8.1. Policy Statement 8: *The MUHAS Library shall be recognized among official archival repositories of MUHAS publications, published books, dissertations and student proposals*

### 3.8.2 Procedures
i. The MUHAS Library shall continue to maintain paper and electronic archives of theses and papers published by the MUHAS Community.
ii. The Library shall house the University Museum for preserving Institutional memories, including history and knowledge of MUHAS communities and their creative output from students, faculty, and researchers and shall create a special area for this purpose.
iii. The Library shall include in its budget a component for maintenance of the Museum and the Institutional Repository.
iv. The Library shall continue with the current practice of weeding out old books and print journals based on the existing weeding Policy, guidelines and procedures while adhering to the set retention schedules.
v. Without jeopardizing intellectual copyrights, the weeded local content materials with an Institutional value shall be scanned. The electronic copies are archived indefinitely in well backed-up servers in both physical and cloud servers.

### 3.9. Disposal of Procurement Management Unit Print and Electronic Resources
According to this Policy, the MUHAS Procurement Management Unit (PMU) shall dispose of its print and electronic documents as specified in section 3.1-3.3 of these guidelines and procedures.

**3.9.1. Policy Statement 8:** *The MUHAS PMU documents shall be recognized among official documents to be handled in accordance with the Public Procurement Act 2011 and the Public Procurement Regulations, 2016.*

**3.9.2 Procedures**
  i.   The MUHAS PMU shall continue to maintain paper and electronic archives of University tenders and all procurement documents.
 ii.   According to the Regulation 15 sub-regulation 6 of 2016, "The records under this regulation shall be kept for a period of not less than five years from the date of completion of the contract and may be available within a reasonable time during that period to the Minister and the Controller Auditor General, the Authority or any other officer authorized  by the Accounting Officer;  provided that where special circumstances demand such records may be kept for not less than seven years."

### 3.10. Funds and Resource Mobilization

According to the Tanzania Records and Archives Management Act, 2002, maintaining an institutional archives repository is a mandatory responsibility.

**3.10.1 Policy statement 9:** *MUHAS management shall devise innovative mechanisms for ensuring the availability of adequate resources to facilitate maintenance of the University repositories*

**3.10.2 Procedures**
   i.   The University shall mobilize resources internally and externally from the Government, the private sector, and industry in the form of grants or endowments to fund retention and disposal of the materials outlined in this Policy.
  ii.   MUHAS management shall work closely with and seek support from the Department of National Archives for the management of its records
 iii.   MUHAS shall include in its annual budgets a component for supporting retention and disposal of records and documents
  iv.   MUHAS shall work closely with e-Government to support the creation, maintenance, and erasure of electronic records/systems

### 4.0. Administrative process

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic, Research and Consultancy (DVC-ARC) shall be the overall University Authority responsible for Records maintenance and the custodian of this Policy.

**5.0 Approval Details**

The University Council approved the Policy on ……………………2021

**6.0 Effective Date for the Policy**

Unless otherwise determined by the approving body, the Policy shall become effective from the date it is approved by the Council.

**7.0 Next Review Date**

Five years after approval and when deemed necessary

**8.0 Policy Version:** Draft Version 30th March 2021

**Annex 1: RECORDS DISPOSAL FORM**

| RECORDS DISPOSAL FORM | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Department/School/Directorate/Institute/ Unit:** | | | | | |
| | **Name** | | | | |
| **Information Asset Owner (name and role):** | **Email** | | | | |
| | **Telephone** | | | | |
| **Record title/description:** | | | | | |
| **Record format:** | | | | | |
| **Classification:** (tick as appropriate) | **Public** | | **Open** | | **Confidential** |
| | **Strictly Confidential** | | **Secret** | | |
| **Reason for disposal:** | | | | | |
| **Method of disposal:** (tick as appropriate) | **Destruction:** | | **Transferred to Archives:** | | |
| **Method of destruction:** (tick if applicable) | **Non-confidential waste or recycling** | | **Confidential shredding** | | |
| | **Digital deletion from University network (e.g. central file store, database etc.)** | | **Digital deletion from other locations (e.g., cloud service, mobile device etc.)** | | |
| **Approximate number of records:** | | | | | |
| **Date of disposal:** | | | | | |

**Annex 2: RECORD RETENTION SCHEDULE FOR FINANCIAL AND RELATED DOCUMENTS**

|     | Document type | Retention period |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Finance** | |
| *1.1* | *Financial Planning:* | |
|     | Financial Forecasts and Budgetary Working Papers. | Current Financial Year plus six years |
|     | Final Estimates. | Permanent |
|     | Financial Strategy: 5-year plan. | Permanent |
| *1.2* | *Financial Reporting:* | |
|     | Closing papers and notes related to year end accounts. | Current Financial Year plus ten years |
|     | Financial Statements and Detailed Accounts | Permanent |
| *1.3* | *Ordering* | |
|     | Tendering documentation (RFPs, invitations, bids, evaluations, etc.). | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Official Orders. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Delivery Notes, Goods Received Notes. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
| *1.4* | *Purchasing* | |
|     | Purchase invoices, credit notes, including expense claims, petty cash floats, etc. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Cheque authorization reports. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Management of relationships with suppliers. | termination dates plus two years |
| *1.5* | *Sales* | |
|     | Sales Invoices/Credit Notes. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Sales Receipts documentation, till rolls, etc. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Sales Ledgers | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|     | Statements | Audit plus two years |
| *1.6* | *Management of Bank Accounts* | |
|     | Paying-in Books. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |

|  | Document type | Retention period |
|---|---|---|
|  | Bank Statements. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|  | Canceled Cheques. | Current Financial Year plus seven years |
|  |  |  |
| 2. | **Payroll** | |
|  | Payroll amendment notifications. | Permanent |
|  | Deduction authorities. | Permanent |
|  | Tax Code notifications. | Permanent |
|  | Salary advices. | Permanent |
|  | Bank transfer reports. | Permanent |
|  |  |  |
| 3. | **Personnel** | |
|  | Individual staff files. | date of leaving plus ten years |
|  | Redundancy records -< 20 | redundancy date plus three years |
|  | Redundancy records > 20 | redundancy date plus 12 years |
|  | Organisational Development: Staffing Structures. | Permanent |
|  | Staff Performance Appraisal Reports. | Six years from the end of employment |
|  | Application forms/interview notes | interview date plus one year |
|  |  |  |
| 4. | **Insurance** | |
|  | Insurance management. | policy termination plus six years |
|  | Insurance claims. | settlement plus seven years |
|  |  |  |