Guide for Transferring Records

1. Contact an Archivist

Records must be appraised by a UMA Archivist before they will be accepted for deposit. Following appraisal, the proposed deposit will be considered by the acquisitions committee. If it is agreed that the records will be accepted, a Certificate of Transfer will be negotiated and records can be prepared for transfer.

Contact UMA: suzannef@unimelb.edu.au (email) and (03) 9035 4282 (phone)

Ideally, deposits should be authorised by a senior staff member within the transferring organization.

2. What should be kept?

These guidelines will help the responsible officer of an organization to assess the records being considered for deposit. UMA staff can also provide advice about disposal and retention schedules.

Records to transfer
In general, organisations should preserve:

- Records of their policy and decision making bodies

- Records shedding light on major issues and the way they were dealt with

- For financial records, annual and semi-annual financial statements are the most important to keep

- Correspondence

- Operational records, unique to the industry

- Photographs and other images, preferably these will be identified

- Maps, plans, technical drawings

Records not to transfer
Types of records not to transfer include:

- Records of short term value which can legally be destroyed after 5-10 years, such as low-level financial records (cheque books, bank statements, receipt books, membership application forms)

- Administrative files of no long-term value, such as those relating to hiring vehicles, subscribing to journals and so on

- Duplicates, such as extra copies of official conference papers, circulars, chronological copies of outward letters which are duplicated in files

- Publications not written by the depositor

Some exceptions

- If very little remains of the early records of an organisation, UMA will consider keeping all remaining records

- Publications: books, pamphlets, technical manuals etc published by organisations whose records we hold

- Non-archival material that is integral to the collection

Please note:

- Unsorted bundles of loose papers and unidentified files may not be accepted at UMA. These records should be assessed and identified by the organisation to assess if they are worth keeping

- Some formats may only be accepted for deposit if supported by a monetary donation to cover associated costs

3. Preparing Records for Transfer to UMA

UMA requires that records are sent with a **box list** prepared by the depositor. The following information should be included on the list

Listing the records of organisations

- The list should record the name of the organisation which created the records and a brief description of the purpose of the organisation

- If possible, also note the department or person within the organisation who was responsible for the records (e.g., industrial officer, company secretariat, personnel department)

- If the records clearly predate a recent administrative change, the name will be that of the original body, e.g., records created by the Printing and Kindred Industries Union, now the Amalgamated Manufacturing Workers Union, would still be named the PKIU records

- Where there is no clear distinction between the old and new names within files or records use the current name of the organisation

- Give each series or group of records a title, eg., 'minute books', 'administrative files', 'client files'

- List the title and date range of each file or volume, an electronic list is preferred

- Files should be listed in the order in which they were kept in the office, eg, alphabetically by subject, by classification number or so on. Where there was a well defined classification scheme or index of the files, include a paper and electronic copy with the files if possible

- Number boxes from 1 to x and record the number of the box against the file title on the list

Listing the records of individuals

- Note the name of the person who created the records, and provide some information about the person

- If possible, give each series or type of record a title, eg., 'personal correspondence', 'research papers', 'student correspondence'

- List the title and date range of each file

- Files should be listed in the order in which they were kept by the creator, eg, alphabetically by subject. Where there was a well defined classification scheme or index of the files, include a paper and electronic copy with the files if possible

- Where there is no remaining discernable order within the files, list them as they are packed into boxes as described above

- Number boxes from 1 to x and record the number of the box against the file title on the list

Packing and transfer

- For smaller collections UMA may be able to provide suitable boxes in which records will be transferred – please discuss with Archivist. Larger collections can be transferred in cartons provided by the donor

- Boxes must not be larger than a standard archive box (400 x 320 x 260mm) and must not be overfilled.

- Only the name of the organization or creator of the records and the box number should be written on boxes in pencil

- It is preferable that boxes are couriered or delivered to UMA at the depositor's expense

Further resources

The Trade Union Records Disposal Guide and Schedule is a guide to appraising trade union records. It was published in 1998 by the University of Melbourne Archives and the Noel Butlin Archives Centre in conjunction with Trade Unions. It is available from both institutions in paper or electronic form.

Online resources:
Advice on **electronic records** (including management of electronic records including: preservation and migration, managing email, and appraising records for disposal and permanent retention) is available from the National Archives of Australia at http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/secure-and-store/index.aspx

Guides for the disposal and retention of common **administrative records** are available on the web sites of most state government archives.

For National Archives of Australia (NAA) see:
http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/keep-destroy-transfer/authorities/GDAs/index.aspx and
http://www.naa.gov.au/records-management/keep-destroy-transfer/NAP/index.aspx

In Victoria see http://www.prov.vic.gov.au/records/dispschl.asp
These schedules available are easily adapted to cover administrative records in non-government organisations.

Professional help:

In Victoria there are many businesses which can offer records management support and advice, as well as providing professional project or permanent staff. UMA does not recommend any business in particular, nor are we responsible for their performance. Nevertheless, the following three are available as a starting point:

- Enterprise Knowledge Pty Ltd
- Records Solutions Pty Ltd
- The One Umbrella