

## VITAL RECORDS

Vital Records are those that protect the University's rights and entitlements. In particular they are those documents that provide the information the University needs to conduct business in the event of a disaster and assist the University to resume normal business afterwards.

They are deemed essential (vital) to resume or continue operations of the University, and include records necessary to recreate the organization's legal and financial position. In essence they establish and protect the rights and interests of the University and its employees, students, customers and stakeholders at all times.

*Examples include, but are not limited to:*

Collaboration Agreements, Deeds of Variation, Grant Agreements, IP Agreements, Lease and/or License Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding, Contracts, Patents, Share Certificates, Commercialisation and/or Research Agreements, Deeds of Covenant and/or Settlement, definitive Maps and/or Plans, Insurance policies and schedules, Certificates of Registration, Council and Senate records, Scholarship Agreements, Consultancy Agreements, Inter/multi – institution Agreements, Student transcripts, the University's Charter, Bank Guarantees, and the policies and procedures of the University including, importantly, the University's Disaster Recovery policy and procedures.

The Records Management office maintains a register of Vital Records. This register is populated from data provided by business units and the record itself. As such, all Vital Records are to be entered into the University's record management system (*Records Manager*) by the business unit, and the Records Management office advised of their existence.

The following practices are being implemented across the University to ensure that our Vital Records are protected. In the event of a disaster the following practices will assist the University to have confidence that its Vital Records are protected, recoverable and accessible.

- All vital records are entered into the USP record management system (Records Manager) by the business unit;
- It is suggested that a photocopy & scanned image of the Vital Record is placed on an official file to facilitate easy access to the document for routine business matters;
- The original (signed/endorsed) hardcopy Vital Record is to be forwarded to Records Management using the **Vital Record Lodgement form** (available on our website). There are exceptions and these will be discussed on a case-by-case basis;
- The original Vital Record is transferred and held in a secure facility until it no longer needs to be retained;
- USP owners/custodians of Vital Records are notified six months before the expiry of a Vital Record (for further action if they wish to extend, renegotiate, etc.); and

- If a record becomes no longer vital (that is, it has expired) the original document is returned to the USP owner/custodian to be placed within the official file (that is, those documents that reflect progress of negotiations, reports, etc.) to form a complete record of that activity.

If you are unsure whether something is a Vital Record or not, please err on the side of caution and/or contact the Records Management office.

### Vital Records storage facility

At such time as the University provides a secure storage facility Vital Records will be lodged with the Records Management office to enable quarantine in a single repository, under protection and with appropriate access. This will enable the University to have confidence that its Vital Records are protected, recoverable and accessible. At this time:

- The original (signed/endorsed) hardcopy Vital Record is to be forwarded to the Records Management office using the *Vital Record Lodgement form* (there are exceptions and these can be discussed on a case-by-case basis. It is suggested that a photocopy & scanned image of the Vital Record is placed on an official file to facilitate easy access to the document for routine business matters);
- The original Vital Record is transferred and held in a secure facility;
- The USP owner of Vital Records are notified six months before the expiry of a Vital Record (for further action if they wish to extend, renegotiate, etc.); and

Once (if) a record is no longer vital (that is, it has expired [a lease or an agreement, for example]) the original document is returned to the USP owner to be placed within the official file (that is, those documents that reflect progress of negotiations, reports, etc.) to form a complete record of that activity. Appropriate retention and disposal action would then follow.

**PLEASE DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS VIA MAIL.** Please hand-deliver them to the Records Management office at B318 Laucala Campus or call or email us and we can discuss collection options.

The USP Records Management policy outlines the responsibilities and accountabilities for record keeping and can be viewed at [www.usp.ac.fj/records](http://www.usp.ac.fj/records)

For further information or for advice please do not hesitate to contact the Records Management office.