

SAINT MARY'S UNIVERSITY RECORDS CENTRE

Frequently Asked Questions

Where is the Records Centre Located?

The Records Centre is a part of the University Archives, located on the 3rd floor of the Patrick Power Library.

What kind of material is sent to the Records Centre?

The records centre is the place to send your semi-active records. These are records that are no longer in day-to-day use by your department but may need to be accessed from time to time. After a record is no longer used at all it is considered to be inactive. It will usually be kept on file for a while after it becomes inactive for a variety of reasons (i.e. legal necessity). This is its retention period. **No record stays in the Records Centre permanently.**

Examples of the kind of semi-active records that can be sent to the Records Centre include: student records for students no longer involved with your department, staff files for recent former employees, official correspondence from previous years, etc.

Should I send my files to the Archival Collection instead of the Records Centre?

The Archival Collection is for inactive records that have a permanent historical value. It is not expected that these records will need to be used by the department, though they are still available. Archival material will be available to researchers using the archives, subject to any restrictions put on them by the department.

Do I lose access to files I send to you?

No. Each department retains control of any material deposited with the records centre. They can request material from the records centre at any time Using the Record Access Request Form. Please fill out a Department Retrieval Authorization Form if you want people other than the person whose name is on the Transfer Form to have access to the material.

Who can look at material in the Records Centre?

Material in the Records Centre is considered to be restricted, and people from other departments and researchers will not be able to access the material without getting permission from your department first.

How are Freedom of Information/Protection of Privacy (FOIPOP) requests handled?

The Records Centre does not directly handle FOIPOP requests for material deposited with us. Formal FOIPOP requests are subject to formal procedures and regulations, and are handled in confidence in consultation with the appropriate departments and individuals. The current FOIPOP Administrator is Madeleine Lefebvre, University Librarian. She can be reached at 420-5532.

How do I prepare material for delivery to the Records Centre?

All loose material should be in clearly identified files, with everything packed in file boxes. Ideally, the boxes should be 15"x12"x10" file boxes ("banker's boxes"). Each box should have a packing list attached indicating its contents. Bound volumes and binders do not need to be in file folders but do need to be clearly identified.

There is a more detailed description of the transfer process elsewhere on the Records Centre

website, as well as copies of the required forms. These forms can be found on the Archives web site (click on Records Centre) or by calling us at 420-5508.

How do I get access to my material?

Consult our **records retrieval procedures**, fill out a Record Access Request Form and send it to the Archives. The material will be retrieved from the Records Centre and made available to the department. If you do not have a copy of the form you can get one from the archives web site (click on "Records Centre") or by calling the Archives at 420-5508.

Can I change the retention period of material in the Centre, or request that material be permanently returned to us?

Absolutely. If you wish to change retention schedule(s) simply fill out a new Record Disposition Schedule and forward it to us.

Does material stay in the Records Centre indefinitely?

No. All material, at the end of its retention period, is disposed of. Disposal can mean transfer to the Archival Collection (for permanent records of long term historical value) or destruction of the material. The decision on how to dispose of the records will be made by the department, in consultation with the Archives if needed. Nothing will be destroyed without the department being given advance notice.