Managing electronic data deletion

Guidance for staff

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), the timeliness principle, Data Protection principle 5, requires the destruction of personal data that is no longer necessary. This includes data that has reached the end of its retention period. This guidance takes you through how to ensure that electronic data due for deletion is destroyed.

How to destroy electronic data

The following are the ways in which electronic data can be destroyed.

Simple deletion

For emails and other electronic files stored on the network drives or in OneDrive/SharePoint, using the normal delete function will delete the email/document and send it to the relevant recycle bin.

Emptying the Recycling bin

The time it takes to empty out of the Recycle bin is below. If you want to ensure that you do not hold the email/file anymore, you should empty the Recycle bin so the document is no longer stored anywhere.

Storage space	Time in Recycling bin or Deleted Items/Junk Mail folders
Network drives	1 week on the back up tapes
OneDrive	93 days
SharePoint	93 days
Email	The Junk mail folder contents are deleted when 30 days old. The Deleted Items folder contents are not deleted unless you manually delete them.

Items in the Recycling Bin can be recovered for up to 30 days after deletion. If you want to ensure that a document is deleted, you also need to empty the Recycling Bin.

Electronic data held on storage devices

The School has guidance on [using storage devices](). Files deleted from USB drives and external hard drives can sit in the memory of those devices and even reformatting won't necessarily delete them. If you are using storage devices for business critical or personal data, you must encrypt them.

Databases and other systems

These should have a purge function which allows you to delete multiple entries. If the current system you have does not allow this, you should ensure future systems do.

If not, you will have to delete entries manually once they have reached their retention date.

Review schedule

Review interval	Next review due by	Next review start
3 years	28/02/2025	1/02/2025

Version history

Version	Date	Approved by	Notes
1	01/02/2019	Information Governance Committee	
1.1	11/03/2022	Information Governance Management Board	Reviewed and no changes necessary

Contacts

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Communications and Training

Will this document be publicised through Internal Communications?	**Yes/ No**
Will training needs arise from this policy	**Yes/ No**
If Yes, please give details	