

# Archiving handbook

Legal Office  
Archives and Registrar`s Office



**Karolinska  
Institutet**



## Archiving handbook

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The Archiving handbook contains guidelines for archiving at Karolinska Institutet (KI). Together with Karolinska Institutet's document management plan, the Archiving handbook comprises rules for archiving and document management throughout Karolinska Institutet.

## **Contents**

TOC

# 1. Guidelines for archiving at Karolinska Institutet

The Archiving handbook comprises, together with the policy documents

- Document management plan for Karolinska Institutet and
- Karolinska Institutet's Classification structure

Karolinska Institutet's (KI's) archive reporting, and contains KI's overall rules on archiving.

The guidelines are intended for employees including researchers, affiliates, contractors and consultants who work at KI.

## 1.1 Purpose and objective

The Archiving handbook should comprise support for management of KI's documents which will then form KI's archive.

A well-organised archive and clear archiving procedures entail

- easier information searching
- reduced vulnerability through better knowledge of where information is stored and how it should be managed
- reduced unnecessary and expensive double work.

## 1.2 Archiving responsibility and procedures

The University Administration (UA) has the overall responsibility for rules and guidelines on recordkeeping and archiving. These are university-wide and apply throughout KI.

Pursuant to the Vice-Chancellor's decision-making procedures and delegation rules, each department is responsible for archive preservation and archiving of the official documents which are received, prepared or stored at each department. Therefore, each department has its own archive holders and together with UA's archive these archives comprise KI's complete archiving procedures.

## 2. Rules

As a government administrative authority, the following regulations apply for management of, inter alia, official documents, secrecy and archiving:

- Freedom of the Press Act
- Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act (2009:400)
- Public Access to Information and Secrecy Ordinance (2009:641)
- Archives Act (1990:782)
- Archives Ordinance (1991:446)
- The Swedish National Archives regulations (RA-FS) and authority-specific regulations (RA-MS)

## **2.1 Principle of public access to official records and the document concept**

Pursuant to the Freedom of the Press Act, the public is guaranteed entitlement to insight by means of, inter alia, public access to official records. This means that, for example, a private individual or journalist is entitled to access the authority's official documents.

### **2.1.1 What is an official document?**

Document is understood to mean any written or pictorial matter or recording which may be read, listened to, or otherwise comprehended only using technical aids.

The document concept comprises documents in both paper and electronic form. Examples of common paper document types at KI are records, degree certificates and decision documents. Examples of electronic documents at KI are e-mails and data files. Examples of other document types are photographs, databases and websites.

A document is official if it is *held* by a public authority, and if it can be deemed to have been *received* or *drawn up* by such an authority.

A document is deemed to have been received by a public authority when it has arrived at the authority or is in the hands of a competent official. Received documents comprise all documents which have been received and concern a specific matter or activity at the authority. A document is deemed to have been drawn up by a public authority when it has been dispatched, i.e. when it has been sent from the authority. A document which has not been dispatched is deemed to have been drawn up when it has been checked or completed in another manner, i.e. when the document has received its final form.

## **2.2 Public access to information and secrecy**

The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act contains provisions on registration, disclosure of official documents and other management of official documents by authorities.

### **2.2.1 Which documents are public?**

Information in official documents which is not covered by any provision in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act, or in the Government's application decision of the Act in the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Ordinance, is public.

Therefore, KI cannot itself or by means of agreements, undertake to observe secrecy which is not based on the Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act or Public Access to Information and Secrecy Ordinance. A request for a document to be processed as "confidential" cannot be considered, unless there is constitutional support for it. For documents from abroad, the rules on public access to information of the country of origin do not apply.

### **2.2.2 Which information in a document can be covered by secrecy?**

Non-disclosure of information in a document must be based on the law. A request for disclosure of a document should always entail a confidentiality assessment of the document in the individual case. If the document is deemed to contain classified information, reference should be made to the relevant provision.

Secrecy applies to classified information. This means that unclassified information in the same document may be disclosed. It is common for classified information to be masked, i.e. crossed out, on a copy of the document which can then be disclosed.

Read more about disclosure of official documents on KI's internal web.

### **2.2.3 Registration and recordkeeping**

For KI to fulfil the requirements on public access to documents, good organisation of the documents is important. One way of obtaining this organisation is to register the official documents in a register.

The Public Access to Information and Secrecy Act contains fundamental rules on registration of official documents. The general rule is that all official documents received or drawn up by KI should be recorded.

Documents which are not covered by secrecy can be organised in another manner provided that it is possible to easily determine whether the document has been received or drawn up. Documents which are completely or partially covered by secrecy must be recorded under the law.

Recordkeeping of official documents must take place without delay. Received documents should be recorded the same day they arrive. Drawn up documents should be recorded when they are dispatched, a decision is made or when they are completed in another manner. A document's status as official cannot be deferred by recording it on a later date.

For more information on recordkeeping, please contact the registrar or see the policy document W3D3 handbook.

## **2.3 Archives Act and the Swedish National Archives regulations**

Pursuant to the Archives Act, an authority's archive comprises the official documents which emerge in its activities and the documents defined in the Freedom of the Press Act. It also states that an authority's archive belongs to the national cultural heritage and that it should satisfy the

1. entitlement to access official documents,
2. need of information for adjudication and administration, and
3. need of research.

The Swedish National Archives are KI's supervising authority for archiving. As support for the Archives Act's provisions, the Swedish National Archives issue general regulations and advice which are published in the Swedish National

Archives regulations (RA-FS). The provisions should be applied by KI. KI's archiving function is responsible for contact with the Swedish National Archives.

### **3. Archiving**

Archiving at KI should be adapted to each activity and reflect KI's activities. It should also fulfil the requirements of the Archives Act and Swedish National Archives. Accordingly, it is important that there is good organisation, both among the authority's administrative documents and the documents drawn up within education and research. Below is a description of which rules and procedures should be complied with.

#### **3.1 Archive resistance**

Archive resistance means that it should be possible to preserve documents for all time. There are two varieties of approved paper quality. In most cases KI uses age-resistant paper, which is the paper found in copying machines and printers. This paper has a high level of resistance and has been approved by the Swedish National Archives regulations. At the same time there are document types which are deemed to be of such nature that they will be exposed to extensive handling and in these cases archive-resistant paper is used. Degree certificates and records include such examples.

In order to guarantee the paper's archive resistance, it is important that paperclips, plastic folders and Post-it notes are removed from paper preserved for archiving. The choice of ink and printer also affects the paper's resistance. Cases should be kept together by using file wrapper and stored in archive-resistant archiving boxes.

Documents drawn up at the authority which will be preserved for archiving should be printed or copied single-sided. However, this does not apply to documents received from external parties.

#### **3.2 Preserving documents in approved archiving premises and storage cabinets**

Documents used in the ongoing activities can be stored in a local archive close to the activities. Documents preserved for the future should, when they are no longer required for the ongoing activities, be organised and listed and placed in approved archiving premises.

It is important that the original document is preserved in archiving premises in so far as the original document will not be dispatched. Then a copy of the original document is stored instead. For some types of more important documents, for example, signed agreements and decisions, it is appropriate to only use working copies, i.e. copies of the original document, in the daily activities.

The archiving premises should be close to a department in order to guarantee that official documents can be accessed at any time. The starting point is that only authorised persons should have access to the archiving premises. Therefore it is important to have locks and procedures for handling keys.

Only archives may be stored in the premises. Furniture or other material which obstructs accessibility and reduces the safety of the archives may not be contained in the premises.

For new construction or reconstruction of archiving premises or procurement of storage cabinets, the Facilities Office (FO) and UA's archiving function should be contacted.

### **3.3 Lending archive documents**

Lending of archive documents for own activities should be documented and there should be a procedure for loan handling. For more information, please contact UA's archiving function.

### **3.4 Closing archives**

If for some reason a department closes, this department's archive should be terminated within three months of the closing date. The archive is terminated by all documents which are to be preserved being collected, organised, listed and placed in archiving premises. The responsibility for archive documents is thereafter transferred to the successor department or UA.

All departments are entitled to submit a predecessor's archive to UA for free of cost storage. During the submission, the archive should be organised and listed and delivered together with an updated archive description and archive list. An agreement should be drawn up between the department and UA. Contact UA's archiving function for submission.

If a department changes its name, is reorganised or changes its specialism etc., this does *not* constitute closing of the department. The previous archive should instead be included in the "new" department's archive reporting.

### **3.5 Submission of archive to another authority**

In the event that a department needs to move documents to another authority, for example, during a research transfer, a request for submission of documents to another authority must be made to the Swedish National Archives. The request should contain, inter alia, a description of the documents, an account of the documents' scope, a description of their use and reasons for why the authority wants to submit the documents.

UA's archiving function should always be consulted for planned submission of archives to another authority.

### **3.6 Submission of archive documents between departments**

Generally each department has archiving responsibility for the documents created within the framework of its activities.

A research project can sometimes start at one department and then continue to be managed at another department. It is then advisable to transfer the documents

from the original department to the new department which takes over the archiving responsibility.

An agreement between both departments on the takeover should be drawn up which clearly states that the new department approves the takeover of the archiving responsibility. The responsibility entails providing archiving premises and keeping applicable archive lists available. The agreement should be recorded by the new department.

In terms of recorded documents concerning the researcher or research team, different rules apply depending on whether the case has been completed. If a researcher moves to another department within KI, the contracts/agreements which are still open in KI's register should be transferred to the new department. Administrators at the new department change official and departmental affiliation for the relevant cases. The processing and responsibility for completion of the case is accordingly taken over by the new department. The cases which have been completed are kept at the old department.

### **3.7 Electronic documents**

Archiving procedures also apply to electronic documents. For an electronic document to be preserved for the future, the information must be saved in a format which is independent of software and technical equipment. Examples of long-term measures are saving the file in a resistant format (for example, PDF or XML), saving the file on a server with backup procedures and if necessary converting the file to a resistant file format.

Below is a description of how electronic documents should be handled.

#### **3.7.1 Archiving and screening of electronic documents**

Electronic archiving refers to long-term preservation of official documents in electronic form. At present KI does not have any electronic archive (e-archive). Electronic documents which are preserved for archiving, and which are not covered by a screening decision should currently be *printed on paper*. Paper is currently the only resistant format for archiving.

The following applies for electronic documents (for example, decision documents and reports) with an approved screening deadline.

- Electronic documents which have a screening deadline of up to 2 years can be saved in their original format in existing systems up until screening.
- Electronic documents which have a screening deadline of between 2 and 4 years can be saved in existing systems in PDF format. In the event of system discontinuation, the documents for which the screening deadline has not been attained must be transferred from the systems and stored in another location.
- Electronic documents which have a screening deadline of 5 years or longer may, if they are converted to PDF/A-format, remain in the systems until the system is discontinued. In the event of system

discontinuation, the documents for which the screening deadline has not been attained must be transferred from the systems and stored in another location.

The concept electronic document also covers KI's web pages. These constitute outward documents and are thus official. KI's presence on social media may also contain official documents which KI is thus responsible for.

Please contact UA's archiving function with questions on archiving of web pages and social media.

### **3.7.2 Storage of electronic documents**

Electronic documents which will be saved should be stored on approved storage space. Storage is not the same as archiving.

For more information, please contact UA's archiving function.

### **3.7.3 Storage format of electronic documents**

In terms of file format for storage of electronic documents, KI should comply with the recommendations of the Swedish National Archives regulations and general advice (RA-FS 2009:2) on technical requirements for electronic documents.

It is prohibited to place discs or CDs in an archiving box with paper documents. There should always be a reference in the archiving box to any documents in the case which are only stored on electronic data carriers.

## **3.8 Research documents**

KI accounts for roughly 40% of the medical research at universities and colleges in Sweden. The research generates large amounts of documents. The principle of public access to official records also applies to the authority's research activities. Accordingly the documents should be collected at the department and completed cases/projects should be stored in each department's archive.

For more specific information on archiving and recordkeeping of research documents, see the internal web.

## **4. Archive reporting**

Pursuant to the Swedish National Archives regulation on archive reporting (RA-FS 2008:4), KI is liable to prepare an archive report for its archive documents. The archive report is a search instrument for KI's document portfolio.

### **4.1 Activity based archive reporting**

KI reports its archives in accordance with activity based archive reporting which means that the entire authority's information flow is reported based on its processes and activities. In practice this means that all KI's documents are classified and reported in accordance with the *classification structure* developed by UA's archiving function. The classification structure is a policy document which reports on KI's five fields of activity with related processes.

1. **Control activities** – describes the controlling processes in KI's activities
2. **Support activities** – describes the supportive processes for how KI conducts its assignments
3. **Manage education** – describes processes of the core activities for education at first, second and third cycle
4. **Research** – describes processes of the core activities for research activities
5. **Communicate and collaborate externally** – describes the processes of core activities for communication and collaboration

The classification structure determines how KI's documents should be reported in an archive list but it does not determine how the documents should be stored physically in the archive.

The classification structure is used as a starting point for KI's case handling and serves as a table of contents for KI's document management plan. The document management plan lists all document types in the processes and describes how KI's official documents should be handled, i.e. whether they should be recorded, preserved or can be screened after a certain duration.

## 5. Screening

In order to screen documents, constitutional support or a screening decision from the Swedish National Archives is required. The Swedish National Archives prescribe both screening regulations for all authorities (RA-FS) and authority-specific screening regulations which apply for authorities mentioned in the decision (RA-MS).

The screening regulations entail that the authority in some cases may screen documents only provided that the authority itself takes application decisions. The document management plan states screening deadlines for all KI's document types.

Documents which in accordance with the document management plan have a screening deadline of up to 10 years are not archived but screened directly from the workrooms. On the other hand documents with a screening deadline of 10 years or more should be stored in approved archiving premises up until the screening date. There they should also be stored separately from the documents which will be preserved for all time. This also applies to the documents which can be screened after completed research projects for which screening deadlines have not elapsed at the time of the research project's completion.

## 6. Roles and allocation of archiving responsibility

For the archiving to function in practice, it is important to have a clear role allocation of the archiving responsibility. Below is a description of the role allocation.

## **6.1 Allocation of archiving responsibility between the University Administration and departments**

At KI there are several joint administrative systems for decision-making and management of documents. From an archiving viewpoint, KI should be viewed as a single unit within which double registration and double archiving of documents should be avoided.

The University Administration has overall archiving responsibility for all joint administrative registers. However, the departments are responsible for the documents which are recorded/registered at each department.

### **6.1.1 Archivist at the University Administration**

- Is responsible for archiving and archiving procedures at UA
- Has overall responsibility for developing policy documents, instructions and handbooks for all of KI, and for preparing procedures which ensure that archiving and document management at KI function in accordance with applicable legislation
- Is responsible for contact with the Swedish National Archives and other bodies on archive management issues
- Has main responsibility for handling KI's official documents, both paper documents and electronic documents
- Provides advice and support on archiving issues and information management issues

### **6.1.2 Registrar at the University Administration**

- Is responsible for recordkeeping at UA
- Is responsible for training and supervising departmental registrars
- Should continuously and in collaboration with the archiving function at UA conduct random checks to ensure registration of official documents
- Should in collaboration with the archiving function at UA provide suggestions for improvements to KI's register, recordkeeping procedures and archiving of recorded documents
- Provides advice and support on recordkeeping issues

### **6.1.3 Head of department**

- The Head of department has ultimate responsibility for archiving at the department

### **6.1.4 Head of administration at the department**

- The Head of administration should, together with document coordinators and the archivist at UA coordinate the department's archive preservation

### **6.1.5 Document coordinator at the department**

- The department's contact person for archiving issues
- Is responsible for coordinating the department's archiving procedures and archive preservation

### **6.1.6 Registrar at the department**

- The department's contact person for recordkeeping issues
- Is responsible for attending to the department's recordkeeping on a daily basis
- Is responsible for opening the department's post and for distributing documents to relevant administrators

### **6.1.7 Administrator at the University Administration and at the department**

- Each individual administrator is responsible for ensuring that documents which in accordance with the document management plan should be recorded are registered in the recordkeeping system.
- Is responsible for cleaning of the completed file before it is submitted to the registrar for archiving. The file should not contain duplicates, plastic folders, paperclips, drafts, rough paper and insignificant notes when the final document is prepared.

### **6.1.8 Allocation of archiving responsibility between the county council and clinical department at KI**

Documents which are generated in clinical activities, such as medical records, healthcare registers and biobanks are the county council's documents.

Documents generated in academic activities and teaching constitute KI's documents.