

RECORDS AND ARCHIVES POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The principal activity of EREA is the provision of support services and governance of its member schools and entities.

EREA is a new iteration of the Christian Brothers' presence in Australia, and a new way of providing Catholic Education underpinned by a particular charism and tradition. EREA is one of only a handful of Public Juridic Persons in Australia, which is the Church's approach to managing this significant transition towards stewardship and governance of schools by lay people.

EREA is uniquely placed to create and maintain records of this transition. Its

Records and archives are highly significant to those within EREA and also to those, in future years, who may be interested in evidence of how this transition was achieved, and how the custodians of the Edmund Rice charism and traditions have achieved their mandate.

1.2 Purpose

This policy sets out the requirements for the creation, maintenance, use and retention of records relating to the activities of Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA).

1.3 Scope

- (a) This policy applies to the National Office, Council, Board and Trustees of EREA.
- (b) The principles of this policy also apply to all member and associate schools of EREA, however the practicalities of recordkeeping for those schools are addressed separately in a generic records retention schedule developed specifically for non-government schools.
- (c) The principles of this policy apply whether the records are in hard copy or digital format.

2. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibilities
EREA Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approving this policy • Ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated as needed • Reviewing compliance with this policy
EREA Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing procedures and guidelines supporting adherence with this policy

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Role	Responsibilities
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring this policy is implemented
Principals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complying with the principles of this policy in respect to school records and archives

3. POLICY GUIDELINES

3.1 Record Keeping

3.1.1 Record Keeping Principles

Records capture decisions and actions, and contain information created, received and maintained as evidence by an organisation in pursuance of their obligations.

Archives are the records of an organisation selected for indefinite retention on the basis of their continuing value for legal, administrative or historical purposes.

- a) EREA recognises that it has a duty to create and retain appropriate records of its activities.
- b) Good recordkeeping is an essential part of transparent, ethical and accountable practice, and is a key element of good corporate governance.
- c) Good recordkeeping practice applies equally to records created digitally or in hard copy.
- d) Proper records must be created and maintained in order to:
 - i. Ensure adequate documentation of the work and other activities undertaken by or on behalf of EREA personnel;
 - ii. Support the effective and efficient management of the affairs of EREA;
 - iii. Ensure financial accountability by EREA;
 - iv. Comply with applicable legal and regulatory requirements;
 - v. Preserve the history and organisational memory of EREA.
- e) The essential elements of good record-keeping are:
 - i. Records are created in a way that ensures accuracy and completeness, and are sufficiently detailed for the purpose they record;
 - ii. Records are securely stored and able to be located and retrieved when required;
 - iii. Records are accessible to those with a legitimate need to access the information they contain;
 - iv. Records are retained for as long as they are required;
 - v. Records are disposed of securely when no longer required.
- f) All EREA personnel are responsible for ensuring that they follow appropriate recordkeeping practices in relation to their own activities and those activities within EREA for which they have oversight or responsibility.

*Nb. For a full list of the types of records which should be created, and the length of time they should be retained before secure destruction, refer to **Records Retention Schedule**.*

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3.1.2 The quality of records

Records created and maintained by Edmund Rice Education Australia should:

- a) Be clear, accurate and factual;
- b) Document relevant events and other matters fairly and impartially;
- c) Contain sufficient detail for the purpose for which they are created and kept;
- d) Include the identity of the person who created the record;
- e) Specify when the record was created.

3.1.3 Protocols for digital records

Acknowledging that records can take many different formats, and mindful of the particular preservation and security issues concerning digital records, the following should be taken into account. *See also 3.4 Storage and Preservation of Records.*

- a) Platforms on which records are created should, where possible, be non-proprietary to ensure maximum longevity and ease of access. At time of writing, the Microsoft suite of applications (typically MS Word, MS Excel) are ubiquitous.
- b) Applications which allow a high degree of change (such as MS Word or MS Excel) should be converted to more stable formats such as Adobe PDF to ensure integrity of content.
- c) A standard file-naming convention should be agreed and adopted. Particular attention should be paid to date(s) of creation and content of files.
- d) A routine migration program should be implemented to ensure on-going access to records created in older applications (e.g. MS 1995, or MS 2007 formats)
- e) Where possible, older records which exist only in hard copy format should be digitised for preservation and access. This includes images.
- f) Adequate resourcing must be available to ensure sufficient digital storage capacity as the collection grows.
- g) Adequate access and security protocols should be agreed and implemented to ensure security of digital records.
- h) Care must be taken to ensure security and privacy when printing by third parties such files as have been transmitted electronically.

3.2 The EREA Archives

In recognition of the significance of the establishment and work of Edmund Rice Education Australia, the EREA Archives was established shortly after the establishment of the organisation itself.

3.2.1 Purpose

The EREA Archives exists to capture and retain the records of EREA which are deemed to have on-going value for administrative, legal and historical purposes.

- a) It is a safe and secure repository for the archival records of Edmund Rice Education Australia.

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- b) It provides access to those records (or the information contained therein) to the members of the EREA National Leadership Team, members of EREA Board and Council, and to *bona-fide* researchers interested in the history of EREA.

3.2.2 Duties of the Archivist:

The EREA Archives should be in the care of a professionally-qualified Archivist, who:

- a) Accepts routine deposits of Edmund Rice Education Australia records in accordance with the schedule laid out in Appendix B of this policy.
- b) Manages access to the archival holdings.
- c) Is empowered to follow-up non-deposit of records with EREA National Leadership Team Office holders, Council and Board Members.

3.2.3 Access to Archives and Records

Records held within the EREA Archives may contain information of a sensitive nature, such as personal information, internal reports, minutes which document private administrative and managerial decisions. In order to maintain the security and integrity of the archives, and to ensure the privacy of those individuals whose records may be retained in the archives, the material held in the EREA Archives may only be accessed by users external to EREA under the conditions noted below.

- a) All records created by EREA will fall into one of two access classifications, and access will be controlled according to each classification.
 - i. **Open** Generally material which has been published or is otherwise available in the public domain. This applies equally to hard-format publication or digital publication, such as web-based material. No restrictions on access and use.
 - ii. **Closed** This material is not for public release or use by external users without permission of EREA.
- b) Access will be controlled by the Archivist, including through the establishment of an Access Register.
- c) Appeals concerning the above access classifications must be made through the National Director of Governance.

3.3 Role of EREA in relation to records of closed schools

In the event of former Christian Brother or EREA member school closures or amalgamations, it is acknowledged that EREA is the entity of last resort. It is therefore reasonable and appropriate for EREA to accept responsibility as custodian of the long-term records of those member schools.

- a) Records of former Christian Brother or EREA schools which are closed or merged into a new entity must be classified according to the *Records Retention & Disposal Schedule for Non-Government Schools, 2nd Edition 2018*.
- b) Those records found to require permanent retention will be managed by EREA through provision of storage and access services.

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3.4 Storage and Preservation of Records

In order to ensure that records are accessible in the long term, it is necessary to ensure that both hard copy and digital records are preserved. Adequate storage of records is a key component of long-term preservation.

- 3.4.1 EREA commits to the long-term preservation of its records, particularly those noted as requiring permanent retention (see records retention schedule, Appendix B), and those records noted in point 3.3 of this policy.

This principle applies equally to hard copy records or digital records.

- 3.4.2 For hard copy records, good preservation ideally requires:

- (i) Physical containers (boxes and file covers) of archival quality in addition to sturdy shelving;
- (ii) A secure location away from direct sunlight and protected from ingress of water;
- (iii) Environmental conditions close to optimal temperatures of 20°C ± 2°C, and relative humidity of RH 50% ± 5%.

- 3.4.3 For digital records, good preservation ideally requires:

- (i) Sufficient storage capacity on a stable and secure platform (networked, separate stand-alone hard drive or cloud);
- (ii) Limited and traceable access to the drive upon which the records are stored;
- (iii) Regular migration over formats (MS suite, Adobe etc) as versions evolve.

4 POLICY COMPLIANCE

4.1 Breach of this policy

Any breach of this policy will be taken seriously and may result in disciplinary action.

4.2 Policy Review

A review of this policy will be conducted every three years or earlier if required, such as due to changes in legislation.

The EREA Board is responsible for ensuring this policy is reviewed and updated as required and endorsing this policy.

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5 RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND LEGISLATION

5.1 EREA policy linkage

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following related documents:

- (a) EREA Records Retention Schedule (Appendix B)
- (b) EREA Privacy Policy

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