Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Archiving and Data Retention of Assessment Records

Purpose:

This SOP describes the **archiving and data retention of assessment records**, including procedures for the systematic storage, preservation, and management of assessment documents. It ensures compliance with legal and organizational requirements for data retention periods, secure handling of sensitive information, and efficient retrieval of archived records. The purpose is to maintain the integrity and accessibility of assessment data while protecting confidentiality and supporting audit and review processes.

Scope:

This SOP applies to all staff involved in the creation, management, storage, and disposal of assessment records within the organization.

Definitions:

- **Assessment Records:** All documents, including digital and physical, that pertain to student assessments, grading, evaluations, feedback, and reports.
- **Archiving:** The process of securely storing records that are no longer in active use but must be retained for legal or organizational reasons.
- **Data Retention Period:** The minimum duration for which records must be preserved according to policy or regulation.

Responsibilities:

- **Records Manager:** Oversee implementation of this SOP, ensure compliance, and coordinate periodic audits.
- **Staff:** Follow prescribed procedures for handling assessment records throughout their lifecycle.
- **IT Department:** Manage the security and accessibility of digital records and backup solutions.

Procedures:

1. **Identification and Classification**
   - Classify assessment records according to type, sensitivity, and retention schedule as defined by organizational policy.

2. **Storage**
   - Physical records: Store in secure, access-controlled facilities with environmental protections.
   - Digital records: Store in approved, secure digital repositories with access control and backup mechanisms.

3. **Access and Retrieval**
   - Grant access to authorized personnel only. Maintain access logs for accountability.
   - Implement a documented retrieval process for records needed for audits or reviews.

4. **Retention Periods**
   - Retain assessment records for the period specified in the organizational retention schedule (see table below).

5. **Protection and Confidentiality**
   - Ensure records are protected from unauthorized access, alteration, or destruction.
   - Encrypt digital records containing sensitive information.

6. **Disposal**
   - At the end of the retention period, dispose of records securely via shredding (physical) or secure deletion (digital).
   - Document and authorize all disposals.

7. **Audit and Review**
   - Conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with data retention and archiving policies.
   - Review and update SOP as needed.

Example Retention Schedule:

Record Type	Minimum Retention Period	Disposal Method
Final Assessment Results	5 years	Secure deletion/shredding
Student Examination Papers	3 years	Secure deletion/shredding
Grade Appeals Documentation	6 years	Secure deletion/shredding
Assessment Feedback Forms	2 years	Secure deletion/shredding

References:

- Organizational Records Management Policy
- Data Protection Legislation (GDPR or relevant local laws)

Change History:

Version	Date	Description	Author
1.0	2024-06-20	Initial creation of SOP Template	Your Name