

Synod Archives Transfer Procedure

1 Purpose

The Synod of Victoria and Tasmania (**the Synod**) administers and maintains a central repository for archival material relating to The Uniting Church in Australia in the Synod of Victoria and Tasmania, referred to as the 'Synod Archives'. The Synod Archives are responsible for the appraisal, storage, preservation and accessibility of the archival material of the Synod, except those materials that may be archived with the Tasmanian State Government.

The Synod Archives Transfer Procedure (the **Procedure**) outlines the required procedures for transferring records to the Synod Archives.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all councils of the Church within the bounds of the Synod and includes Synod Ministries and Operations (SMO). The Procedure should be read and interpreted in the context of the related Synod Archive Collection and Access Policy.

Note that within Tasmania only, councils of the Church may choose to transfer items to the Tasmanian State Archives instead of the Synod Archives. Processes for these arrangements must be coordinated with the Tasmanian State Archives and are therefore excluded from this procedure.

3 Policy statement

The Synod recognises its archives, including archival records and artefacts, as a collective organisational memory and governance asset. The Synod commits to:

- Ensuring adequate record-keeping and archiving to evidence the Synod's governance, mission, ministry and community life.
- Identifying records and artefacts of enduring value in a consistent, transparent and defensible manner.
- Preserving archival materials in ways that respect their evidential, historical, cultural and spiritual significance.
- Ensuring ethical, secure and sustainable custodianship.
- Supporting appropriate access, balanced with privacy, pastoral, cultural and legal responsibilities.

4 Key roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Synod Archives Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise on archival appraisal, artefact assessment, preservation and access • Provides guidance and advice across different councils of the Church to support consistent interpretation and application of archiving requirements. • Review and assessment of items transferred for archiving to ensure only appropriate items are accepted into Synod Archives. • Provides care and custody of all Synod Archives material accepted into Synod Archives.
Tasmanian Office of the Synod	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate any Tasmanian state-based archiving processes and arrangements with Archives Tasmania.
All Councils of the Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and retain records and artefacts with archival value. • Periodically transfer archival materials in accordance with these procedures. • Ensure that records and artefacts of councils of the Church that are disbanded, merged or restructured are archived in accordance with applicable policy and procedures.

5 Synod Archives location and contact

Office Location	54 Serrell Street Malvern East VIC 3145
Office Hours	Thursdays and Fridays 9am – 4pm
General Enquiries	archives@victas.uca.org.au
Phone	(03) 9964 4080

6 Procedures

6.1 Transfer of items to Synod Archives

Councils of the Church should periodically transfer archival materials as records become no longer operationally required. This helps to prevent a local build-up of archival material that may become more challenging to review with the passage of time and ensure that these materials are stored adequately in a secure environment.

Councils of the Church are responsible and bear all costs associated with the courier / postage of material to the Synod Archives. No fee is charged for the archiving and storage of records.

All archive material should be boxed in clean boxes no larger than standard archive size approx. 420 mm x 320mm x 260mm and weighing no more than 10kg per box.

6.1.1 Delivery of items to Synod Archives

Councils of the Church must liaise with the Synod Archivist to arrange for suitable time for the drop-off or delivery of records to the Synod Archives Office in Malvern East. Deliveries can only be made and accepted during staffed opening hours.

6.1.2 Delivery of items to Wesley Place (130 Lonsdale Street)

Where delivery to Synod Archives is not suitable, Councils of the Church may arrange for delivery / drop-off to the Synod's Wesley Place Office. This provides greater flexibility for delivery options. This arrangement should still be confirmed in advance with the Synod Archivist so there is awareness of what is being delivered and when.

UCA Synod of Victoria and Tasmania
C/O Synod Archives and Records Team
Level 2, 130 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

6.1.3 Collection of items by SMO staff

Synod Ministries and Operations (**SMO**) staff periodically visit different presbyteries and congregations as part of their work and activities. Councils of the Church may request a visiting SMO staff member to collect archival records to take back to the Synod's Wesley Place Office with them. Note, this may not always be suitable for the SMO staff member logistically and as such some requests may be declined.

This arrangement should still be confirmed in advance with the Synod Archivist so there is awareness of what is being delivered and when.

6.1.4 Collection of items by presbyteries

Some presbyteries may optionally offer an arrangement to collect archives for the region and periodically transfer to Synod Archives when presbytery staff are visiting Synod Offices. This can be particularly helpful for more regional areas.

Presbytery should contact Synod Archivist in advance of delivery so there is awareness of what is being delivered and when. Delivery can be made to either the Synod Archives Office, or the Wesley Place Office.

Councils of the Church should contact their local presbytery to understand if such an arrangement is available.

6.2 Review and acquisition into Synod archives

The Synod Archivist is responsible for the review and appraisal of materials to determine if items meet requirements of being core archival material and therefore able to be accepted by Synod for archiving. Items that do not clearly meet core archival value requirements, including general memorabilia, duplicates or materials lacking sufficient context or significance, are not required to be accepted into archival custody.

- If records are sent to the Synod Archives and do not meet archival requirements, they may be securely destroyed by the Archives Officer.
- If artefacts are sent to the Synod Archives and do not meet archival requirements, they may be returned to the donor, donated or disposed of.

Items accepted into Synod Archives will be catalogued and object provenance will be recorded where available. Given the extent of archival records, cataloguing may be limited to broad summary of contents of boxes as opposed to individual file level cataloguing. The storage or display location of all objects will be recorded, along with any subsequent object movements.

Generally, all archival material accepted into the Synod Archives will be transferred to the Synod’s offsite storage facilities.

6.3 Tasmanian specific arrangements

Archives Tasmanian (a Tasmanian State Government Department) allows churches to submit items of church and/or wider historical and cultural significance in its storage facilities and at its expense. This arrangement has been in place for several decades and a majority of Synod archival material from Tasmania has been deposited with Archives Tasmania.

There is no requirement for Synod archival material from Tasmania to be archived with Archives Tasmania. Councils of the Church in Tasmania may choose to utilise the archival arrangement with Archives Tasmania, or may choose to send their archival material to the Synod Archives. Where records are submitted to Archives Tasmania, review and access to records will be based on Archives Tasmania processes.

7 Definition of key terms

The table below provides definitions for key terms specific to this policy to support consistent interpretation and application.

Term	Definition
Appraisal	The process of evaluating business activities to determine which records need to be captured and how long the records need to be kept, to meet business needs, the requirements of organisational accountability and community expectations.
Artefact	An artefact is a physical object that is not primarily a documentary record, but which has been assessed as having enduring value because it materially evidences, symbolises or is directly associated with significant aspects of the Synod’s life, ministry, identity or history.
Disposal / Deaccessioning	A range of processes associated with implementing appraisal decisions. These include the retention, deletion, or destruction of records in or from recordkeeping systems. They may also include the migration or transmission of records between recordkeeping systems, and the transfer of custody or ownership of records.
External users	External users include all potential users that may request access to Synod Archive materials other than the councils of the Church that deposited the material. This may include other related bodies of the Church, historians, researchers, past ministers, past or current church members and their family and other such users.
Internal users	Internal users of Synod Archives material include authorised representatives of the councils of the Church that deposited the material and staff from the Synod office.

Term	Definition
Record	<p>A record is information created, received and maintained as evidence of decisions, activities or transactions undertaken regardless of format or medium. This may include digital or physical documents as well as photographic records.</p> <p>An archival record is a record that has been formally assessed as having enduring value and is preserved permanently because of its continuing legal, governance, evidential, historical, cultural or accountability significance.</p>

8 Related documents

This section provides a summary of key related documents as at the time of writing.

- Synod Archives Collection and Access Policy
- Access and Use of Synod Archives Procedure
- Data breach Policy and Procedure
- UCAVT Privacy Policy

Document control

Document Owner:	The Synod Archivist is responsible for the management and maintenance of this document.			
Review cycle:	This document will be subject to formal review every 3 years .	Next review date:	June 2029	
Endorsers:	Review and endorsement are required from the following bodies: - Director – Audit, Risk and Records Management	Approver:	SMO Senior Leadership Team	
Version	Date	Update by	Summary of changes	Approval date
1.0	May 2026	Jennifer Bars – Synod Archivist Tamika McLaren – Dir. Audit, Risk and Records Management	New procedure to supersede previous mix of policy, procedure and by-laws.	04/06/2026

Document management:

- Any minor changes made between review periods should be reflected in the above table. Only changes of a material nature will require approval by the nominated approver between formal review periods.
- **Note:** when reviewing this document, the reviewer should ensure the template used is still the most current template for Synod policies and procedures, as found on the Synod intranet. This document is based on the **November 2025** template as approved by the Senior Leadership Team.