Chapter 3
Managing Electronic Records in Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT
This chapter presents findings on the management of e-records in a higher education institution (HEI) with a view to developing a best-practice framework for the management of e-records. The study has utilised interviews, observation document review, and questionnaire to generate data. The study revealed that there are weak institution policies and procedures to guide the management of e-records and the lack of knowledge and skills in the management of e-records. The study recommends, among other things, improvement of the e-records management policy framework and creation of awareness about management of e-records and regular training for records officers. Lastly, the chapter proposed a framework for managing e-records in HEIs.
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The management of electronic records in a higher education institutions (HEIs) helps it achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness, and economy. This is a vital ingredient in effective decision making and control of management processes in any organisation. The effects of not managing electronic records can be far-reaching and would necessarily suggest that records might not be available when needed for decision-making (Moloi & Mutula, 2007).

HEIs can only be effective and efficient if records management is considered a business process designed to support an institution’s objectives. Records are considered a resource and are utilised fully and cost-effectively to realise an institution’s mission, and each department or faculty creates and maintains a culture that promotes effective and efficient records management and facilitates timely decision-making. Electronic information management is thus a powerful tool to manage an institution’s information resources in an integrated manner but it all depends on the readiness of an institution to embark on such an initiative (Asogwa, 2013).

A study by Kemoni and Wamukoya (2000) established that e-records management at HEIs is a new development in their country. Ngulube (2002) also pointed out that policies and procedures relating to e-records management are non-existent in the East and Southern African Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) region. Writing on the core business of a university, Iwhiwhu (2005) stressed that universities’ records, support the administrative and educational research function of the institution and the objectives of the university including the provision of support in teaching, research and services in the university.

The chapter is a case study of the Institute of the Development Management (IDM) Eswatini campus. The institution based in the three countries namely: Botswana, Lesotho, and Eswatini (BLE). It was established in 1974 by the governments of the BLE countries through the companies Acts in the three countries, namely Companies Act 2003 No. 32 of 2004 of the Republic of Botswana; Companies Act No. 25 of 1967 of the Kingdom of Lesotho; and the Companies Act No. 7 of 1912 of Eswatini. In pursuance of the objectives stated in the memorandum of understanding between the three countries, IDM was established as an institute of learning, for acquisition of practical skills and dedicated to the improvement of managerial and organisational structures of the participating countries.

The Institute is now part of the digital world. E-records have become a reality as the use of computers as information management tools has been fully embraced by the institute. This has, in turn, led to huge volumes of records
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