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*Pepita Raventós\**

## **NEW PARADIGMS IN RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVES AT THE UNIVERSITY Our Experience**

**Izvleček:**

***Nove smernice pri poslovanju z dokumenti in arhiv univerze - naša izkušnja***

*Od začetka uvajanja poslovanja z dokumenti in arhivskega sistema na Univerzi je prišlo do več sprememb v organizaciji in še posebej v upravljanju. To je naloga danes za jutri, ki vključuje sprejemanje mnogih pomembnih odločitev. Čeprav je bil naš največji izziv vključiti enote in službe, ki ustvarjajo dokumente, to je, razložiti jim, kako urejati svoje spise, kako uporabljati pravila za zaščito - kot je na primer prenos dokumentov. Ta izkušnja še ni gotova in nam bo v veliko pomoč na poti k urejanju elektronskih dokumentov.*

**Ključne besede:**

*poslovanje z dokumenti, arhiv, Služba za arhiv in poslovanje z dokumenti, Univerza v Lleidi, univerzitetni arhiv, sistem poslovanja z dokumenti, sistem poslovanja z elektronskimi dokumenti, e-administracija.*

**Abstract:**

***New Paradigms in Records Management and Archives at the University - Our Experience***

*Since the beginning of its implementation records management and archives system at the University has required a change in organization, and especially in management. It is a task done today for tomorrow that involves taking a series of important decisions. Although our biggest challenge has been the involvement of the units and services that create the documents, that is, the explanation of how to manage their files, how to apply conservation rules - such as making the transfer of records. This experience is not complete yet, and is helping us to get into the management of electronic records.*

**Key words:**

*records management, archives, Archives and Records Management Service, University of Lleida, university archives, records management system, electronic records management system, e-administration.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The University of Lleida (UdL) where I work is a small regional university, which has great influence in the area where it is situated. It was founded in 1991, although the *Studium Generale*, which was closed by the decree of the King of the time in 1717, was established in 1300. Later, university degrees were resumed in 1841, but it

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\* *Pepita Raventós, archivist, Archives and Records Management Service, University of Lleida, Place Victor Siurana 1, 25003 Lleida, Spain.*

was not until the end of the 1960's that studies diversified, although they depended on the University of Barcelona till its final creation.<sup>1</sup>

We could say that the University is both an organizing and cooperative entity, and to maintain its hegemony it has to implicate itself in cultural, social and economic circles of the town it is situated in.<sup>2</sup>

During recent years the university has been working on the definition of its strategic plan whereby "as it is in a local atmosphere with a high level of research and innovation, it has become increasingly more of a key factor in improving business competitiveness, the localization of new productive activities of a highly technological nature and the development of innovative business strategies".<sup>3</sup> Lleida, as an agricultural capital of a Euro-region is aiming to achieve an enterprising university model. The fundamental aim is to develop scientific knowledge, which motivates innovation in its surroundings. The UdL is working towards the development of the agro-alimentary sector, of health and education and the development of the region, its heritage and culture.

To carry out the integration and focalization of these activities it is necessary to direct the efforts towards a differentiation strategy: this strategy consists in being a reference in the agro-alimentary sector, in pedagogical methodology and excellence in the management and organization of its environment.

One of the things accomplished by the UdL in the line of differentiation is to introduce a management model for the university and direct the institution towards a quality culture. The introduction of a combined system of records and archives management is a response to this, and also a legal requirement.<sup>4</sup>

## WHAT DOES A RECORDS MANAGEMENT AND ARCHIVES SYSTEM MEAN TO THE UNIVERSITY OF LLEIDA?

The University of Lleida detected the need to improve its information. In order to define a unique system of records management, make processes and circuits standardised, we needed a records system which integrated all of the main functions of the institution, as well as the values of the records, to enable us to be able to localise the information and have a series of clear criteria about what we had to keep and what could be eliminated in the work of units. It was then that the Archive

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<sup>1</sup> *The relationship between the University and the town was commemorated during the celebrations of the 700<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the foundation of the Studium Generale, and was published in the book entitled 700 aniversari. Universitat de Lleida. Lleida, 1996.*

<sup>2</sup> *Lleida is a town with 155,000 inhabitants. It is the most important demographic and economical centre of mainland Catalonia. Its economy is based on the agro-alimentary sector, tourism and other services. It offers a wide range of educational and cultural facilities.*

<sup>3</sup> *University of Lleida. Strategic Plan 2006-2012. Base document from the Commission. July 2005. p. 1.*

<sup>4</sup> *Law 10/2001, of 13 July, on archives and documents. (Official Journal of the Government of Catalonia: DOGC number 3437, 24.7.2001), art. 7. The Law defined a record keeping model and system, sketched out the basic work to be done and established the tools necessary for the "archive function" to be fulfilled in terms of efficacy and efficiency by all of us who are responsible for them. It was designed to respond to the public's documentation and information needs. It also contemplated comprehensive processing of the documentation and required all the authorities to have electronic document and archive management systems to serve the public interest. (consulted December 29, 2009 at <http://www.arxivers.com/idadmin/docs/English%20N%C3%BAm.%2069-yDTg83J.pdf>).*

*In the specific case of the UdL, this is exposed in the policy of the Archives and Records Management Service approved by the Council of Governors of the UdL on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2005.*

and Records Management Service of the University was established at the end of 2004.

The mission of the Archive and Records Management Service is to improve the records management of our organisation, as well as making sure that the system's elements are correctly applied, that is, classification, description of the repertoire of files, establish the rules of preservation and elimination, define the processes and analyse circuits and procedures during the life of documents, and always take into account the continual and global vision of the different functions of our institution.

We took the second step in 2006 when we carried out a records auditory, which allowed us to examine the records and where they were to be found, the risks they were exposed to, etc., and from this experience, we designed our proposal:

Three years after the auditory, we have inventoried just over 45% of the records and classified some 20%.

### **THE BIG CHALLENGE IS HOW TO DO IT**

As we have just stated, the first step was the creation of the university service, with its own regulation and the prevision of the expenditure in the University's budget, which served to define the integral system of records and archives management of the University of Lleida as a series of operations and techniques that are integrated into the general administrative management of the University, and that are based on the analysis of production, processing and records values which are destined to planning, control, use, conservation and elimination or transfer of records to the archive with the aim to rationalise and unify their treatment and accomplish an effective and profitable management.<sup>5</sup>

#### *Representational diagram of the general procedure of the records management and archives system of the UdL<sup>6</sup>*

We have used the IDEF methodology, which consists of a schematic representation of boxes joined by arrows. The arrows, which come in from the left, are the main ones. Those, which come down from the top part, are the controls, which the system has to follow.

The arrows, which come up from the bottom, cover all the functions of the institution, and the arrows, which go out to the right are the results. There are different levels at work: Level 1 is the procedure of general record management, level 2 gathers all the sub-procedures of the system and level 3 refers to methods and procedures.

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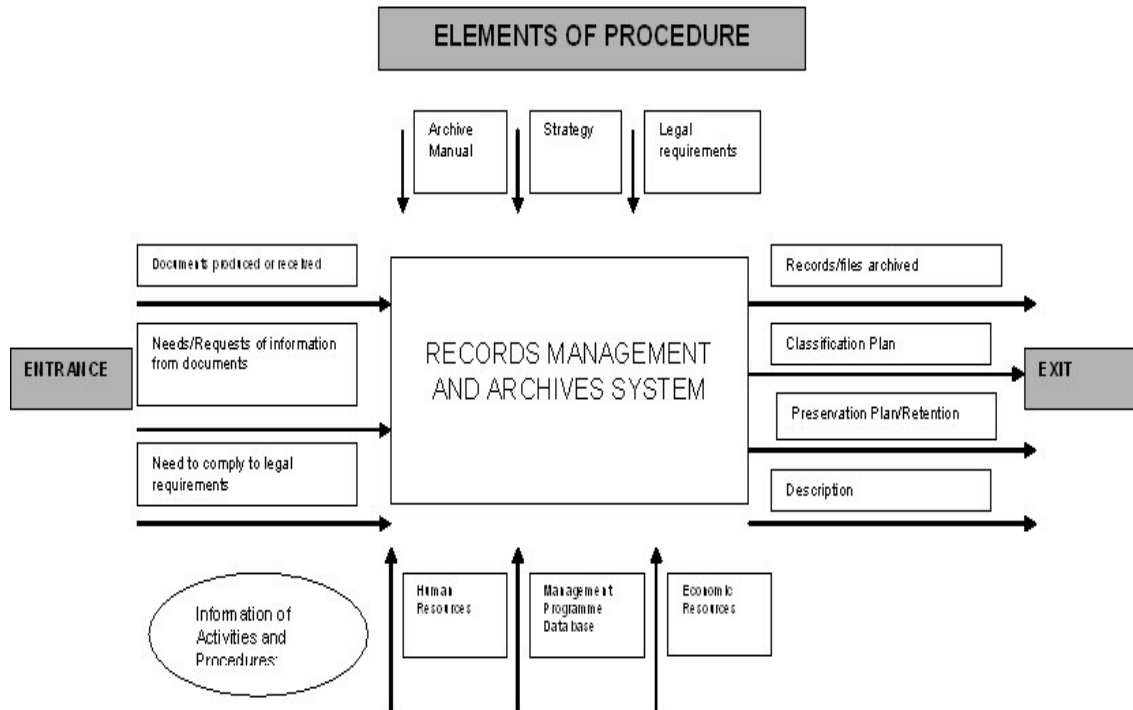
<sup>5</sup> Normes i procediments per al classificació dels documents administratius. Universitat de Lleida. p. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Inspired by the example given by ROIG, Albert. Evaluation of quality to record management. p. 225-227.

Level 1:

*Representational diagram of the general procedure of the records management and archives system of the UdL*

Level 1:



GENERAL ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION  
 INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT  
 REPRESENTATION AND PUBLIC RELATIONS  
 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
 ECONOMICAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
 MANAGEMENT OF PERSONAL ASSETS  
 MANAGEMENT OF REAL ESTATE  
 GUIDELINES AND JURIDICAL MATTERS

ACADEMIC RESOURCES MANAGEMENT  
 TEACHING ORGANIZATION  
 RESEARCH ORGANIZATION  
 MANAGEMENT OF SERVICES OFFERED TO THE UNIVERSITY  
 COMMUNITY

**FUNCTIONS RESOURCES TO DEVELOP THE SYSTEM**

Level 2:

*Sub-processes of the general procedure of the records management and archives system of the UdL:*

1. Audit of the state of records and creation of a classification plan.
2. Archiving documents in files according to the classification plan.
3. Transfer of documents to the Archives and Records Management Service.
4. Processing of personal details, which entail the use of a security system.
5. Definition of the preservation plan. The retention schedules which comply with legal requirements.
6. Access to records: loan and reference.
7. Description.
8. Checking system elements: classification plan, preservation plan, etc.
9. Working on the processing of electronic records. Schema of metadata.

It is not the aim of this paper to go into a description of each sub-process. However, it is interesting to mention that in the introduction of the process of creating the classification plan, which the UdL is using at the moment and its effect on our system, that, apart from the auditing of the records for identification in the main series which the university uses, the experience of other universities which have introduced their own system has been a great help.<sup>7</sup>

Level 3:

*Methods, which are being used at present*

1. Method of classifying administrative records.
2. Method of file making.
3. Method of transferring administrative documents.
4. Method of applying the retention schedules.

Methods 1 and 2 are fully developed and in implementation phase. Training sessions have been undertaken to guarantee correct application and continuation, as have work groups for specific work areas to improve the description of expedients and standardize procedures.

Methods 3 and 4 are in initial phases. The conservation policies are being approved in a progressive fashion so as to avoid any breakdown in administrative departments and avoid any problems in processing the personal details, which the

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<sup>7</sup> We have taken into account the comparison of functional classification plans from the following universities: Autonomous University of Barcelona, University Pompeu Fabra, University of Girona, University Carlos III of Madrid, Public University of Navarre and the University of Almeria, among others.

The classification plan most used up till now in Spanish universities is the functional one. As seen in: Informe Encuesta Archivos universitarios 2008. Report written by Carlos Flores, Ana I. Gascón, Mercedes Guijarro and Lidón París, who are members of the executive committee of CAU, taken from a Questionnaire of University Documents and Records 2008 published by Spanish universities.  
[http://cau.crue.org/export/sites/Cau/Quehacemos/encuestas/infoENCUESTA08\\_final.pdf](http://cau.crue.org/export/sites/Cau/Quehacemos/encuestas/infoENCUESTA08_final.pdf) (last consulted on January 4, 2010).

records contain, among other reasons. The expectation is to continue working on these lines and to introduce any improvements into the system as seen necessary.

## THE RELATIONSHIP AND COLLABORATION BETWEEN THE SYSTEMS AGENTS

According to J. Borràs<sup>8</sup> the producers or users of a system can be divided into three groups: the senior managers of the organism, the person responsible for the administration unit and direct users of the system. As Borràs says, the archivist must work with all of them in a coordinated way on each level.

A. Lorente<sup>9</sup> agrees with this when she distinguishes between management, company staff, archivist, personnel computer system, and the figure of the consultant, who is added when a resource is needed that the organisation itself cannot provide.

The ISO/TR 15489-2:2001<sup>10</sup> distinguishes between five categories of users or authorities who could be defined within the record management system and which are applied by our University: Senior management, Records management professionals, Managers of business units or organisational groupings, others in the organisation have specific records-related duties and all staff create, receive and keep records as part of their daily work.

According to these definitions, in the records management and archives system of the UdL we describe the following relationship between systems agents and the collaboration and cooperation which exists between them:

- A. **Direction Agent - Senior management of the university.** These are those who establish the direction in which the university is run and the work system is used to assess resources, correct and evaluate and improve the system.
- B. **Planning Agent and coordinator - Archivist.** These are those in charge of planning and coordinating the introduction of the system. Their duties are as follows:
  - Work out the standards, policies and procedures related to the management of active, semi-active and inactive records and supervise their application.
  - There is a close collaboration between the active records and the different units, which produce them.
  - Instigate and collaborate in training university staff in records and archives management.
  - Establish levels of intervention and responsibilities of each person involved in the introduction of the system, to enable an efficient and useful system.
  - Prepare guidelines and other work documents, which in a monographic way can solve problems common to all units.

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<sup>8</sup> BORRÀS, Joaquim. *Les relacions entre els arxiviers i els productors de documents*. *Journal Janus*, 1 and Lligall, 12. Barcelona, 1998. p. 104.

<sup>9</sup> LORENTE, Anna; FLORENSA, Heribert. *El Sistema de Gestió Documental: una responsabilitat compartida*. *Revista Lligall*, 22. Barcelona, 2004. pp. 423-424.

<sup>10</sup> ISO/TR standard 15489-2:2001, 2.3.2. *Authorities and responsibilities within the organization*. P. 4.

- Take on the evaluation and control of the record management programme of each unit and approve its calendar of conservation and elimination, when it is fixed.
  - Ensure that each unit sticks to its retention schedule/selection concerning semi-active records and their appropriate transfer to the Archives and Records Management Service.
  - Look after the conservation of inactive records destined to be preserved long term according to the retention schedule.
  - Dispose of records, which are not to be kept on a permanent basis in accordance with the authorized disposition instruments.
  - Secure the constitution of archive tradition in the university.
  - Secure satisfactory funding.
  - Ensure that records with permanent or historic value for the UdL are given value, made known and made accessible.
- C. **Management Agent - Administration staff and records management officer** who have to follow the criteria, direction and procedures given by the archivist.
- Follow up and control the production and receipt of documents from each unit.
  - Collaborate with department staff to make instruction guidelines for their unit and their subsequent dispatch to the Archives and Records Management Service.
  - Be responsible for the active records of the unit.
  - Transfer semi-active and inactive documents from the unit to the Archives and Records Management Service.
  - Make sure any suggestion to improve the record management and archive reaches the Archives and Records Management Service.
- Included in this group are academic staff and students who are responsible for administration tasks.
- D. **Personnel computer**. These are those who are responsible for designing and implementing systems using communication and information technologies, as well as their security and technical integrity. Collaboration with the records management and archives system is constant and it would be impossible to affront this challenge without this liaison.
- E. **Legal Advisor**. They liaise with the archivist on all aspects, which require legal advice, concerning data processing, access to information etc.
- F. **Consultant or external record management company** - also considered important for the system being implemented by the university because it allows advances in certain areas which otherwise would prolong matters. In our case, working with an external company in a coordinated way and under the control

of the archivist, has allowed us to implement record processing much quicker than we had expected.<sup>11</sup>

An interesting observation on the theme of this Conference is the role played in records management and archives by the Archives and Records Management Commission of the University. The function assigned to the Service is to advise the governing bodies of the UdL in matters concerning archives and records management, such as the Archives and Records Management Service of the University in carrying out its duties.<sup>12</sup>

The Commission is made up of a general Secretary who presides; the archivist, who is a secretary; the university's legal advisor; a records officer, a university representative with knowledge and experience in quality control (manager or a delegate); a university representative with knowledge and experience in information and communication technologies; a university representative with knowledge and experience in archives. This multidisciplinary approach promotes the sharing of different knowledge and different points of view when making decisions.

To conclude, we would like to mention a further element in university archives on a State level which has an important influence - The Spanish Universities Archives Conference (CAU),<sup>13</sup> which promotes collaboration between university archives. It was founded in 2002 as a permanent work group of the "Sectarian Commission of general Secretaries of the Conference of Spanish University Rectors" (CRUE). This group has brought university archivists together since 1994. Its aim is to promote cooperation and improve the service offered in the management and creation of technical records which facilitate work organization on a daily basis, as well as being a reference for consultations about the profession of archivists in the university world.<sup>14</sup> Meeting days are held annually and work groups formed for specific points of interest. The UdL joined the CAU in 2004.

## CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, we should look back to the significance of the title of the Conference, for this paper. The UdL has been able to share knowledge and experience, define joint strategies, which have allowed it to find its place as a university. The aim of improving our administration by implementing a records management and archives system with paper records and electronic records is part of this. In the conclusions of the DLM-Forum in 1996 and 1999, cooperation and networking between different disciplines was asked for and ratified in 2008.<sup>15</sup> The

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<sup>11</sup> *The company which has been working with the University up to present is "Dos punts"-logistics of information and culture (<http://www.dospunts.net/>) (last consulted January 4, 2010).*

<sup>12</sup> *Rules of the Archives and Records Management Service of the University of Lleida. Art. 14.*

<sup>13</sup> *The official page of the CAU is: <http://cau.crue.org/> (last consulted January 4, 2010), which shows the work groups which have been formed, the standards and policies adopted and the archive directory of Spanish universities.*

<sup>14</sup> *BORFO, Antoni. Conferencia de Archiveros de las Universidades Españolas. Un balance de 10 años 1994-2004. Paper presented at the University Archivists Annual Meeting. Valladolid, 10-11 June 2004. (<http://www.crue.org/CAU/comunicacionCAU10anyos.pdf>. (last consulted January 4, 2010).*

*PEÑA, Carmen de la. 10 años de la CAU. Balance y perspectivas. Paper read at the University Archivists Annual Meeting. Valladolid, 10-11 June 2004 (<http://www.crue.org/CAU/pdf/Novedades10anyoscau.pdf>. (last consulted January 4, 2010).*

<sup>15</sup> *"5. The Member States, together with the European Commission, indicate national focal points (DLM correspondents), which either existed or are new ones, to foster within the framework of the information society:*



change in mentality to achieve wider goals in the institutions is running its course. The implementation of the records management and archives system in a university without sharing, collaborating and liaising at each level (process, sub-process or procedure) and with each agent that intervenes in the system would be inconceivable.

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- an information exchange;
  - the establishment of **functional requirements** for electronic documents and records management in public administration and in the private sector;
  - the improvement of cooperation and networking between the different disciplines (administration, archives, private sector, research and other disciplines) in order to gain full benefit concerning common issues such as standardization in creation, transmission, migration of and access to electronic records.

6. The Member States and the European Commission are urged to increase their involvement in National and international **standard bodies** (ISO, CENELEC, CEN). The multidisciplinary approach (public administration, archives services, industry and research) should be emphasized in particular.

7. On the basis of the experiences of different Member States, a **programme for training** of administrators and archivists should be established. This training programme should address technical matters related to the handling of electronic records in order to learn the necessary skills from IT disciplines. In this context, the European Commission is asked to facilitate the use of relevant European action programmes for vocational training (Leonardo, Socrates, etc.). A progress report on this subject has to be presented to all interested parties in the second semester of 1997." In:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/archival\\_policy/dlm\\_forum/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/archival_policy/dlm_forum/index_en.htm) (last consulted January 4, 2010).

"A major result of the DLM-Forum'99 is the progress achieved in the development of a reference model for the management of electronic documents and records. The reference model will take account of the continuum of electronic documents and records, i.e. their reception or creation, active life and long-term preservation and accessibility.

The reference model is to meet the main criteria for electronic documents and records formulated by public administrations and archives. These criteria concern issues such as the transparency and accessibility of electronic information, the possibilities for short- and long-term preservation of authentic records, open standards and specifications, and interdisciplinary guidelines for best practices .

The reference model is to be further developed in close partnership with industry (system and service providers) and research. While it is the responsibility of information professionals to specify their needs, it is up to industry to provide solutions." In:

[http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/archival\\_policy/dlm\\_forum/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/archival_policy/dlm_forum/index_en.htm) (accessed January 4, 2010).

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