

## **Microsoft Teams Chat Retention - Guidance**

We are currently reviewing how long we keep selected Microsoft Teams conversations for. This is in line with data protection legislation; ensuring that we do not keep data for longer than is necessary.

The retention period for the following conversations will be **3 months**.

This will be effective from **14<sup>th</sup> March 2025**, effecting the following areas:

- **Teams 1:1 chat** - Chat messages, posts, and attachments shared in a Teams conversation between two people.
- **Teams Group chats** - Chat messages, posts and attachments shared in a Teams conversation between three or more people.
- **Teams Meeting chats** - Chat messages, posts and attachments shared in a meeting not taking place within a channel or within a Team.

Files shared in chats are stored in the OneDrive account; of the person who shared the file. The copy/link within the chat will be deleted, but not the original file/s, this is within the owner's OneDrive.

The changes will **not** affect the following conversations:

- *Teams channels, private channels and shared channels chats.*

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. Why are we changing the retention dates of selected Microsoft Teams Conversations?**

We are currently reviewing how long we keep selected Microsoft Teams conversations for – covering the retention of data and including personal data. This is in line with data protection legislation; ensuring that we do not keep data for longer than is necessary. As it can lead to poor records management, as well as increased institutional risk. Ultimately this leads to individuals finding it increasingly difficult to form good records management.

Furthermore, Teams chat is not the correct place to store records. It is important that records are held in the most appropriate location and staff are encouraged to utilise the correct location, such as your own *One Drive or a Teams shared area - i.e. NVP Staff Team*.

#### **2. What are the benefits of applying a retention period to Microsoft Chat conversations?**

- Reduced risk of data protection breaches
- Reduction in volume of data being stored
- Quicker identification of data that may be required to answer a Freedom of Information or Data Subject Access Request
- Reduced risk of losing business-critical records

#### **3. Where should I store Teams messages?**

It is important that records are held in the most appropriate location and staff are encouraged to utilise the correct location, such as your own *One Drive or a Teams shared area - i.e. NVP Staff Team*.