

RESEARCH DATA POLICY

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1.1	Research Data Policy	RKES	RKEC (19/11/2013)	19 Nov 2013

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Version 1.1

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University of Strathclyde
Research Data Policy

1. Introduction and Purpose

1.1 University of Strathclyde believes that excellence in research is facilitated by the application of good practice in research data management. The Research Data Policy establishes a framework within which support and advice for researchers can be provided, with particular focus on enabling researchers to have the knowledge and control to make informed decisions about appropriate activities in relation to research data. Supporting the University's researchers in relation to research data is one of the ways in which the University meets its commitment to provide a world class research environment.

1.2 This policy applies to and should be observed by all researchers at the University and applies to all research data created, received, used, maintained, accessed and disposed of by researchers of the University in the course of their research.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

In line with recommendations made by Research Councils UK (RCUK) responsibility for the appropriate treatment of research data generated and used at the University is shared between the institution and its researchers as follows:

2.1 The University will support its researchers to achieve best practice in research data management by providing to its researchers:

- guidance and training on the practices and processes researchers can apply to plan and organise research data throughout the research lifecycle and augment the grant application process.
- the necessary storage capacity required during and after research to enable the safe storage and, if appropriate, sharing of research data such that no researcher is hampered in their research by lack of appropriate storage. The University will support researchers to identify research with extraordinary storage requirements that may require cost consideration when seeking funding.
- advice on, and application of, rigorous checks and controls in relation to data security, access and embargos, to protect the rights of researchers, the University and any others with rights related to research data created and stored at the University.
- advice on the most appropriate place for long term storage of completed and/or published datasets. The University supports the use of appropriate external data storage and curation facilities where specified by a funder or where this is the disciplinary norm. Where no suitable external repository exists the Institution will make provision for long term data storage.
- clear guidelines on the retention and, where appropriate, the disposal of research data. Researchers will be supported to ensure that disposal of any research data is carried out in accordance with all legal and ethical requirements and conforms to guidelines on confidentiality and security.
- the employment of documented curation practices on stored research data that enable data recoverability, preservation and, if appropriate, sharing of data into the future.

2.2 The University expects its researchers will engage with the available guidance and advice and employ the appropriate practices, processes and systems to protect themselves and their data as part of their commitment to excellence in research.

A researcher must be assigned the role of responsible party in relation to research data and the processes and practices employed by the research team. Where no assignment of responsibility is made in externally funded research the Principal Investigator will be considered the responsible party and in the case of PhD projects the lead supervisor will be considered the responsible party. Assignment of responsibility must be formally recorded as part of a Data Management Plan.

Specific expectations on researchers include but are not limited to:

- the creation of an implementable Data Management Plan early in the research lifecycle that will assist the research team in addressing issues relevant to data management and any related contractual obligations.

- the provision of a robust and reliable data audit trail which can be followed to establish the authenticity of any discovery or invention and to defend the results of genuine research endeavour.

- the application of guidelines that enable informed decision making on identifying and preparing data which is appropriate for retention, sharing and publication, including non-digital materials, in line with funding mandates and contractual obligations to external partners.

- make use of institutional storage provision in order to ensure that data is appropriately protected from accidental or malicious loss or disclosure.

- researchers will make research data publicly available where appropriate.

- the University supports the use of appropriate external data storage and curation facilities where specified by a funder or where this is the disciplinary norm. In this case it is the responsibility of the researcher to ensure this data is catalogued via Pure in relation to its publications and project to enable the University to meet its requirement to monitor activity in relation to research data storage and preservation.

- when a researcher's employment or period of study at the Institution ends, the researcher will ensure that all data generated during their time at the University is placed on University storage. Data will be available to the researcher to use and copy unless there are contractual requirements that prevent access.

3. Definitions

Researcher: in the context of this policy 'researcher' includes

- i. University staff (whether holding employment or worker contracts);
- ii. registered postgraduate research students;
- iii. individuals who do not fall within (i) and (ii) above but who are otherwise associated with the University and are authorised to use the University's name, facilities and/or services when engaging in research activities (this includes those holding visiting, honorary or emeritus status).

Research Data: the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific/research community as necessary to validate research findings:

- may take the form of numbers, symbols, text, sound, images (still and moving).

- primary or secondary sources for research that are collected, observed, or created in digital form, for purposes of analysing to produce original research results.
- the University makes no distinction between data, records, files or other evidence, irrespective of their content or form (e.g. in print, digital, physical or other forms), that constitute research observations.

Research Data Management: a means of systematically managing the creation, receipt, maintenance, use and disposal of research data. Management of research data through organisation, administration and record-keeping is a requirement of the University Code of Practice for Post Graduate Research Programmes.

Data/Dataset: file(s) containing both research data and related documentation sufficient to ensure the data remains identifiable and re-usable.

Data Management Plan (DMP): a formal working document which outlines how data will be handled both during the active research phase and after the project is completed. DMPs in some form are now a requirement of a research grant proposals and therefore must be addressed at the earliest phase of the research lifecycle.

Preservation: actions required to maintain data in its original state over time.

Curation: actions required to maintain data to ensure it remains identifiable and useable over time.

Research Lifecycle: a conceptualised approach to research data management adopted by the University, comprising a sequential series of phases from design, creation, analysis to conclusion which reflects the 'project-style' funding environment.

The University and/or The Institution: University of Strathclyde.

4. This policy will operate in conjunction with other relevant University and funder policies:

[University Information Governance and Compliance](#)

[University Policy and Code of Practice for Post Graduate Research Programmes](#)

[University Research Publications Digital Deposit Mandate](#)

[University Information Security Policy](#)

[RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy](#)

Date of Adoption: The University adopted this policy from 19 November 2013.

Review Date: August annually.