

Research Data Management Policy

1. Introduction and purpose

The University of Manchester recognizes the fundamental importance of research data and the management of related administrative records in maintaining quality research and research integrity and is committed to pursuing the highest standards. The University acknowledges that correct and easily retrievable research data are the foundation of and integral to every research study. They are necessary for the verification and defence of research processes and results. Research data have a long-term value for research and academia, with the potential for widespread use in society.

The University endorses the [Research Council Common Principles on Data Policy](#) and requires all its researchers to adhere to them, as well as taking into account any other research data management requirements that may apply.

The purpose of this Policy is to provide guidance and support on the responsibilities of the University and its researchers in managing and preserving current or future research data.

2. Scope and definitions

This Policy applies to:

- all research, regardless of whether or not the research is externally funded, and is subject to the provisions of any relevant contracts including funding/collaboration agreements; and
- all researchers active at The University of Manchester.

Research is any creative and systematically performed work with the goal of furthering knowledge, including discoveries regarding people, culture and society, in addition to the use of such knowledge for new applications.

Researchers refers to all research-active members of an institution including employees and doctoral candidates. Persons not directly affiliated with an institution, but who, for purposes of research, make use of or are physically present at the institution, are also included in the term. Visiting researchers or collaborators will also be expected to comply with the Policy.

Research data is the evidence that underpins the answer to the research question and can be used to validate findings. This might be quantitative information or qualitative statements collected by researchers in the course of their work by experimentation, observation, modelling, interview or other methods, or information derived from existing evidence. Research data may take the form of numbers, symbols, text, images or sounds, including computer code, annotated fieldwork observations, or a descriptive record of a physical sample.

Information store is where information is held/stored, for example, paper records in a filing cabinet, data held in IT systems, records stored onsite and offsite (e.g. in the Cloud), approved encrypted removable media. This list is not intended to be exhaustive.

Information Store Owners are accountable for information held within the information store including the approval of any processing activities. For example, the Head of Research Governance, Ethics and Integrity is accountable for information processed in the Data Safe Haven. Where the

information in an information store is created through many processing activities and accessed by many users (such as the University's research studies) the Information Store Owner may delegate responsibility for the processing activities to a Processing Activity Owner. Information Store Owners also include, for example, the creators of databases, spreadsheets, computer code or physical sample collections (this list is not intended to be exhaustive) where they may also be the Processing Activity Owner. The [Information Governance Accountability and Assurance Framework Standard Operating Procedure](#) describes the wider accountabilities of Information Store Owners.

3. Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights (IPR) are subject to the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#). IPR might also be defined through further agreements e.g. grants, consortium agreements, or commercial agreements. Where no external agreement exists the University generally has ownership of research data generated in the course of research undertaken by researchers in its employment.

4. Handling research data

Research data is to be stored and made available for use in a suitable repository or archiving system, and whenever possible, provided with persistent identifiers.

It is important to preserve the integrity of research data. Research data must be stored in an accurate, complete, unadulterated and reliable manner. Furthermore, they must be identifiable, accessible, traceable, re-usable, and whenever possible, interoperable and made available in a timely way with as few restrictions as possible.

Research data is to be stored, made available and assigned a licence for open use in compliance with legal, ethical, and contractual requirements, and providing no funder, third-party or contractual rights prohibit it. Research data of future historical interest and the administrative records accompanying research projects should also be archived.

Research data is a legitimate product of research and must be cited as such adhering to scholarly norms; re-used data must be explicitly traceable and original sources acknowledged.

The minimum archive duration for research data and records are subject to the University's [Records Management Policy](#) and [Records Retention Schedule](#).

In the event that research data and records are to be deleted or destroyed, either after expiration of the required archive duration or for legal or ethical reasons, such action will be carried out only after considering all legal and ethical perspectives. The interests and contractual stipulations of third-party funders and other stakeholders, employees and partner participants in particular, as well as the aspects of confidentiality and security, must be taken into consideration when decisions about retention and destruction are made. Any action taken must be documented and be accessible for possible future audit.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Researchers

Researchers are responsible for:

1. Management of research data in adherence with principles and requirements expressed in this Policy, and ensuring the appropriate security and integrity of the data, compliance with confidentiality undertakings and data protection law, and respect for ownership of IPR;
2. Collection, storage, documentation, access to, and archiving or proper destruction of research data and research-related records. This also includes the definition of protocols and responsibilities within a collaborative research study. Such information must be included in a Data Management Plan (DMP), or in protocols that explicitly define the collection, administration, integrity, confidentiality, storage, use and publication of data. Researchers will produce a DMP for every research study;
3. Compliance with the general requirements of the funders and the research institution; special requirements in specific studies must be described in the DMP;
4. Planning to enable, wherever possible, the future re-use of data . This includes defining usage rights after a study has completed, with the assignation of appropriate licences, as well as specifying any data storage and archiving requirements;
5. Compliance with all organisational, regulatory, institutional and other contractual and legal requirements, both with regard to research data, as well as the administration of research records (for example contextual or provenance information); and
6. Registering new research studies at the proposal stage with The University of Manchester to ensure appropriate institutional support.

5.2 The University

The University of Manchester is responsible for:

1. Empowerment of organisational units, providing appropriate means and resources for research support operations, the upkeep of services, organisational units, infrastructures, and researcher education;
2. Support of established scientific practices from the beginning. This is possible through training, education, support, and monitoring, while in compliance with legislation, regulations, third-party contracts for research grants, University laws, codes of conduct, and other relevant guidelines;
3. Developing and providing processes and services for the storage, safekeeping, deposition and registration of research data in support of current and future access to research data during and after the completion of research studies; and
4. Providing access to infrastructures for data management planning, and the storage, safekeeping and archiving of research data and records, enabling researchers to exercise their responsibilities (as outlined above) and to comply with obligations to third-party funders or other legal entities.

6. Compliance

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the University's [Code of Good Research Conduct](#) which sets out the University's overarching policy framework for good research practice, including the management of research data. All allegations of research misconduct are received centrally and considered under the University's [Code of Practice for Investigating Concerns about the Conduct of Research](#).

7. Monitoring and Auditing

This Policy and its implementation will be subject to monitoring and auditing.

8. Review of Policy

This Policy will be reviewed at least annually or when significant changes are required.

Version amendment history		
Version	Date	Reason for change
1.2	March 2021	Updated following scheduled review

Contact list for queries related to this policy

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Document Control

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Next Review Date	March 2022
Related Statutes, Ordinances & General Regulations	N/A
Related Policies	The University of Manchester Data Protection Policy The University of Manchester Records Management Policy The University of Manchester IT policies and guidelines

	The University of Manchester Intellectual Property Policy The University of Manchester Copyright Policy
Related Procedures	The University of Manchester Research Data Management Standard Operating Procedure The University of Manchester Records Retention Schedule The University of Manchester IT policies and guidelines Information Governance Accountability and Assurance Framework Standard Operating Procedure
Related guidance and or codes of practice	The University of Manchester Code of Good Research Conduct
Related Information	Open Research Statement
Policy Owner	Vice President for Research (Professor Colette Fagan); Associate Vice President for Research (Professor Chris Taylor)