

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Research Data Management Policy

1. AIM

- 1.1 The University of Sussex considers that research data should be made freely and openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely and responsible manner. This policy is intended to set out the framework within which this aim will be met.
- 1.2 Research data is defined as recorded material commonly accepted in the scholarly community as necessary to produce or validate research findings.

2. PRINCIPLES

- 2.1 Research data will be managed to appropriate standards throughout the research lifecycle as part of the University's commitment to research excellence and integrity. This commitment (and the research data management policy as a whole, including all requirements detailed below) applies to all significant research producing or using data conducted at the University, regardless of whether or not the research is externally funded. 'Significant' research here refers to all research where the aim is to produce original findings, grounded in rigorous analysis; it normally *excludes* activity described as research where the primary or sole aim is for an individual or group to be trained in research skills or methodologies or in general academic scholarship, and as such is not expected, for example, to apply to the majority of the research undertaken by undergraduates.

3. SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 Research data will be made available to other researchers and to the public in an appropriate and accessible form and in a timely way wherever such publication is practical, legal, ethical, and commercially viable. Research data of future historical interest, and all research data that represent records of the University, including data that substantiate research findings, will be offered and assessed for deposit and retention in an appropriate national or international data service or domain repository, and/or a University repository. Ownership or exclusive rights to reuse or publish research data should not be granted to commercial publishers, agents or others without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for re-use, unless this is a condition of funding.
- 3.2 Responsibility for research data management within any research project, programme or activity lies primarily with the relevant Principal Investigator (PI). If a PI is not formally identified, the responsibility applies to the most senior researcher involved with the work. Heads of School are responsible for research data management within their Schools as a whole.

- 3.3 All new substantive research proposals that include the collection and/or analysis of data must include research data management plans¹ explicitly addressing data capture, management, integrity, confidentiality, storage, retention, and transportation, sharing and publication. The plans should be in line with relevant standards and good practice within the disciplinary community and proportionate to the type of data intended to be collected. This applies irrespective of whether or not the research funder, if there is one, requires such a plan. Informal or very early-stage proposals need not necessarily include such a plan, but one must be produced before any data collection takes place.
- 3.4 The University will provide training, support, advice and, where appropriate, guidelines and templates for research data management and the required plans. The University will also provide, to the best standard that resources allow, mechanisms and services for storage, backup, registration, deposit and retention of research data assets in support of current and future access, during and after completion of research projects. Wherever possible and particularly in the case of research projects requiring greater storage capacity than available through the University's normal provision, PIs must seek to secure funding to cover the costs of providing the required storage capacity from the project funder. Any additional costs will be the responsibility of the relevant School.
- 3.5 At the conclusion of a research project, any data retained outside University-managed infrastructure (for example, as a result of collaborative projects) must have any meta-data recorded in an appropriate repository/index.
- 3.6 Researchers must ensure that active research data are stored in an appropriately secure form (for example, both data relating to human participants, including data which are identifiable, pseudonymised/coded or traceable, and commercially sensitive data must be encrypted to an appropriate standard under the University's information security policies) and protected from loss. PIs should ensure that access is not limited to a single person.
- 3.7 Research data management plans must ensure that research data are available for access and re-use where appropriate and under appropriate safeguards, and in line with the applicable policies on Open Access and Open Data.
- 3.8 Published research outputs should normally include a statement, or appropriate referencing, to advise how and on what terms any supporting research data may be accessed.
- 3.9 All research data must be collected, handled, stored and published in line with the standards of research integrity and ethical conduct set out by the University's Code of Practice for Research, guidance and standard operating procedures. All procedures set out by the University to meet the required standards of research integrity and ethics must be followed. Researchers should also comply with any applicable funder's requirements for the deposit of data.

¹ Individuals writing a Data Management Plan are advised to refer to the guidance from their funder or the funder most appropriate for their area of research; guidelines are published by RCUK, the Wellcome Trust, and other funders.

- 3.10 The legitimate interests of the subjects of research data must be protected at all times. Data relating to research participants must be handled in line with the *Standard Operating Procedure for the Management and Use of Research Participant Data for Secondary Research Purposes*. Non-anonymised personal data must be held, and ultimately destroyed, in compliance with data protection legislation² and the University's data protection policies. Accordingly, the extent of non-anonymised personal data stored must be adequate, relevant, and not excessive. Where research involves the use of data owned by a third party, researchers must abide by licences or terms of use governing the data.
- 3.11 The timescale for retaining data collected should reflect the anticipated value of those data in the future. It is recommended that when ethical review is sought for data collection the applicant states how the data may be used in the future, the value of retaining these data, and how appropriate storage, management and access will be organised in the future.

Version 1.0 October 2014

Document history

Version	Date	Change
1.0	October 2014	Original document.

² Researchers are advised to refer to the Data Protection Principles and other guidance published on the website of the Information Commissioner's Office.