

University of Oxford Research Data Management Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 Statement of intent

1.1.1 The University of Oxford takes pride in the wealth of research data which its academic community produces, and wishes to ensure the widest possible access to its world-class research. The value and utility of research outputs increases the more broadly they are available to be considered and used by others, including scholars, businesses and charities around the globe, as well as society in general. Access for everyone in any location to Oxford's preserved and shared research data will also help to highlight the excellence of its research. It will attract scholars and students, foster collaboration, and enhance public engagement with research, and maximise the intellectual, social, cultural and economic impact of research.

1.1.2 The University of Oxford also recognises that good practice in data management is key to an efficient and effective research process. It is essential for enabling and safeguarding the longevity and continuing intelligibility of data, and for ensuring that sensitive data is handled in compliance with all relevant ethical and legal requirements. Preserving the data that underpins research outputs, whether it is shared or not, is integral to research integrity and reproducibility of results. Sharing data outputs also helps promote the work of our researchers and creates opportunities for future collaborations.

1.1.3 The University promotes compliance with relevant funder and publisher policies, supports the [Concordat on Open Research Data](#) and the [UKRI Common Principles on Data](#) and is committed to ensuring that access to data is as open as possible, as closed as necessary and, as appropriate, follows the [FAIR](#) (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable) principles for data management.

1.1.4 This policy is intended to promote good practice regarding research data, with the aim that it is:

- a. stored securely and preserved in order to ensure its continuing utility;
- b. appropriately identifiable, retrievable, and available when needed;
- c. an accurate, complete, reliable and coherent representation of the materials collected;
- d. kept in a manner that is compliant with legal obligations, including UK Data Protection legislation and the Freedom of Information Act 2000, and, where applicable, the requirements of funding bodies and project-specific protocols approved under the University's Research Ethics Policy;
- e. able to be made available to others in line with appropriate ethical, data sharing and open research principles, especially when the data underpins published research.

1.2 Scope

1.2.1 This policy is for all staff (this includes technical and other support staff, and persons with honorary positions) and students conducting or supporting research at, or on behalf of, the University (hereafter referred to collectively as "researchers"). Principal Investigators have overall responsibility for effective data management during research projects. However, all researchers affiliated with the University, including undergraduate and postgraduate students, have a personal responsibility to contribute to the effective management of the data they produce, and must therefore act in accordance with the aims stated in section 1 of this policy.

1.2.2 For the purposes of this document and its related guidelines, the following terms may be defined as below:

- *Research*: a process of investigation leading to new insights. It includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction.
- *Research data*: the recorded information (regardless of the form or the media in which it may exist) necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs, or which is required for legal or regulatory compliance.
- *Researcher*: Anyone who conducts research for, on behalf of, or in association with the University, on University premises or using University facilities or funding.
- *Principal Investigator*: a researcher with overall responsibility for a research project, of any size, conducted for, on behalf of, or in association with the University; on University premises; or using University facilities or funding.

2. Responsibilities of the University

2.1 The University will provide:

- a. sufficient support, advice and information to researchers on all aspects of research data management.
- b. suitable infrastructure to facilitate the appropriate management of research data.
- c. relevant training to promote best practice in research data management.

2.1 In order to support and enable this policy, the University will engage with researchers to ensure that the research data management services and infrastructure capabilities it provides are adequate and fit for the purpose of supporting researchers' compliance with the policy, ensuring adherence to the [FAIR principles](#) for data management.

2.2 Sources of relevant advice, support and information are listed below in Section 6.

3. Responsibilities of the researcher

3.1 Principal Investigators hold day-to-day responsibility for the effective management of research data generated within or obtained from their research, including by their research groups. This includes understanding and complying with the requirements of any relevant contract with or grant to the University that includes provisions regarding the ownership, preservation and dissemination of research data.

3.2 Researchers will protect confidential, personal and sensitive personal research data in accordance with legal and ethical requirements related to the research they conduct.

3.3 Researchers are expected to keep an accurate and comprehensive record of their research, including documenting clear procedures for the collection, storage, use, reuse, access and retention or deletion of the research data associated with their records. Where appropriate, this should include defining and documenting protocols and responsibilities in collaborative research projects. Researchers are encouraged to identify and utilise relevant data standards and protocols, and to document their data-related decisions in a Data Management Plan.

3.4 Researchers are expected to recognise Intellectual Property arising from their research activities and manage that Intellectual Property according to any funder requirements or contractual obligations, and in accordance with University [Statute XVI](#) and associated University Regulations on commercial exploitation.

3.5 Researchers will preserve and provide appropriate access to their research data supporting outputs after the end of their project for as long as it has continuing value, in accordance with legal and funder requirements and paying due regard to discipline norms and cost. Notwithstanding, the minimum retention period for research data and records is either three years after publication or public release of the work of the research, or completion if the work is unreleased, or that specified in the contract/grant agreement related to the work, whichever is longest.

3.6 Researchers are expected to deposit their data supporting outputs in an appropriate data repository and provide sufficient information (such as a data availability statement and metadata record) to ensure that it can be found, understood, and cited. Where data is deposited somewhere other than the University's institutional repository (the Oxford Research Archive, or ORA), a metadata record should also be created in ORA which describes and points to the data. External repositories, where used, should support the use of Open Researcher and Contributor IDs (ORCIDs) and Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs).

3.7 Researchers are responsible for informing their Head of Department (or nominee) where their research data will be stored and who will have access to it after they leave (or retire from) the University. The researcher's department or faculty reserves the right to retain a copy of the data for an appropriate period to ensure compliance with any legal or regulatory responsibilities, and/or research grant or contractual requirements.

4. Relationship with existing policies and guidance

4.1 This policy operates in conjunction with other University policies, namely:

- Academic Integrity in Research (<https://hr.admin.ox.ac.uk/academic-integrity-in-research>)
- Research Ethics Policy (<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/sitefiles/policyontheethicalconductofresearchinvolvinghumanparticipantsandpersonaldatapdf.pdf>)
- Intellectual Property Policy (<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/statute-xvi-propertycontracts-and-trusts#collapse1383596>) and Regulations (<https://governance.admin.ox.ac.uk/legislation/council-regulations-7-of-2002>)
- Data Protection Policy (<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/data-protection-policy/>)
- Freedom of Information (<https://compliance.admin.ox.ac.uk/guide-to-information>)
- Information Security Policy (<https://www.infosec.ox.ac.uk/guidance-policy>)
- Export Controls Guidance (<https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/OxIntranet-research-innovation/SitePages/policy-export.aspx>)
- Human Tissue Guidance (<https://unioxfordnexus.sharepoint.com/sites/OxIntranet-research-innovation/SitePages/governance-human-tissue.aspx>)

5. Policy implementation and reviewing mechanisms

5.1 This policy is reviewed, and where necessary amended, by the Research Data Steering Group annually. It is approved by the Research and Innovation Committee.

6. Further information and support

6.1 Further information on the Research Data Management Policy, including help on how best to comply with it, can be found on the **Research Data Oxford** website (<https://researchdata.ox.ac.uk>)

6.2 General support on Research Practice at Oxford can be found on the Research Practice website (<https://www.ox.ac.uk/research/support-researchers/research-practice>)

6.3 The following teams provide support with research data management:

- Research Data Oxford: researchdata@ox.ac.uk
- Information Security: grc@infosec.ox.ac.uk
- Information Compliance Team: data.protection@admin.ox.ac.uk
- Legal Services: lsoweb@admin.ox.ac.uk
- Purchasing: purchasing@admin.ox.ac.uk
- Oxford University Innovation: enquiries@innovation.ox.ac.uk
- Research Ethics Committees: curec@admin.ox.ac.uk