



Management of Research Data Policy

CU-RIO-POL-4.0 – V7

The purpose of this policy is to comply with external funder requirements for managing data sets resulting from funded projects, and to provide guidance and support on the responsibilities of the University and its staff in managing and preserving current or future research data.

Good research data management (RDM) enables research data to be securely stored, shared where appropriate, allows the verification of findings and supports digital preservation. In addition, the University acknowledges the role that good research data management can play in underpinning and realising its vision to be recognised globally for the quality of its research.

Ownership of Data

Where research is carried out under a grant or contracts, the terms of the agreement will determine ownership and rights to exploit the data.

Where no external contracts exist, the University normally has ownership of primary data generated during research undertaken by researchers in its employment.

Policy Scope and Definitions

This policy applies to all research conducted by University staff and research students regardless of whether the research is externally funded.

The definition of research data for the purpose of this policy is digital or analogue information that is collected, observed, created or reused to produce, validate and enrich research findings and conclusions¹.

Responsibilities

Responsibility for managing data during any research project or programme lies with Principal Investigators (PIs) or individual researchers (academic staff or postgraduate research students) working on their own. When responsibility is delegated to data managers, the PI retains accountability, and is responsible as data owner (and data controller when personal data are collected) on behalf of the University. The PI should choose methods, platforms, and services for managing data that are affordable through the research grant and comply with University policy and procedures, as well as their funder's requirements and those of any external data controller. Researchers should be familiar with University RDM solutions as well as disciplinary tools and infrastructure available to them, including their full costs, terms and conditions, in order to make optimal choices for active and archived

¹ 2016. UKRI. Concordat on Open Research Data.

<https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/concordatonopenresearchdata-pdf/>

They may include, for example, statistics, collections of digital images, sound recordings, transcripts of interviews, survey data and fieldwork observations with appropriate annotations, an interpretation, an artwork, archives, found objects, published texts or a manuscript. The primary purpose of research data is to provide the information necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs.

research data. The researcher must comply with the [Cranfield University Privacy Policy](#) and [Data Protection Policy](#).

When a University researcher is collaborating with any external partner, they should agree between them the rights and responsibilities of each party with respect to data collected, including key decisions about data storage, backup and security, registration, access, transfer, retention, destruction or archiving and licensing. (See 'Rights' section below for when a data sharing agreement may be required).

In line with best practice, metadata (structured information about the dataset) should be recorded and made available as required by the funder, according to their required timeframe. The metadata should be in sufficient detail to enable other researchers to understand the potential for further research and re-use of the data where appropriate.

Full guidance on how this should be implemented is contained in the wider guidance on Research Data Management².

Research students in consultation with their supervisors should establish collection and storage procedures for their research data and ensure that data management is planned and documented at the outset of the research project in accordance with their obligations as defined by the relevant funding bodies or sponsors and the University's policies. A generic Data Management Planning template is available to help guide this process.

A data management plan (DMP) should be completed by the student before any data collection occurs, and regularly reviewed thereafter.

It is the responsibility of both the student and their supervisor to ensure that any third party funded research data is passed on to their supervisor before the student leaves the University.

Data Management and Sharing

It is good research practice to plan data management before commencing any research. Where a DMP is not a requirement of the funder, it is recommended that Principal Investigators (PIs) nevertheless generate, execute and update one, when necessary, by keeping it under review throughout the research data life cycle. Templates, guidance, and examples to create such plans are available from the University Library's Research Data Management guidance and [DMPOne](#).

Research data management plans must specify how and when research data will be made available for access and reuse. Generally, accompanying research data should be made available as soon as findings are published, under appropriate safeguards when necessary. Research outputs which convey findings from research data should include a citation or data availability statement which clearly provides a route for readers to obtain the data. When the researcher does not hold the intellectual property rights or have permission to make derived data available, they must provide a citation or data availability statement in relevant publications to the source of data.

Rights

Researchers must be aware of their and the University's legal obligations and potential liability when processing data relating to people to ensure compliance with handling data protected by the UK Data Protection Act (2018) and the European Union General Data Protection Regulation (2016), together with any other applicable data protection or privacy laws.

In determining access rights for research data, the legitimate interests of the subjects of research data must be protected. The rights of citizen scientists and the public to access publicly funded research

² <https://library.cranfield.ac.uk/research-data-management/data-availability-statements>

should be considered as well. When open access to datasets is not legal or ethical, information governance restrictions on access and use must be applied as necessary.

Written agreements are required when personal data (any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person) is passed from a data controller to a data processor or another data controller, or to a country not bound by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) or equivalent privacy legislation. Written agreements are also useful when the data being shared, although not personal data, are confidential or valuable to the parties involved.

Exclusive rights to reuse or publish research data must not be passed to commercial publishers or agents without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for reuse, unless this is a condition of funding.

If the PI leaves the University either during the course of the Research or after its completion, they must pass on the stewardship of any research data created during their employment before their departure, which may include transfer to their next institution if agreed by all parties. In the absence of an agreed successor for the data the stewardship will devolve upwards to the relevant Director of Research.

Preservation

The University supports the broad global consensus that publicly funded research data should be made openly available as soon as possible with as few restrictions as necessary³.

Therefore, appropriately documented research data must be offered for deposit and retention in an appropriate national or international data service or domain repository, or a University repository by PIs or their delegates⁴.

Researchers are responsible for managing their data to ensure that it is accessible (as appropriate) and fit for purpose, for a duration of 10 years after project completion, or longer if specified by the funder.

The University supports a free-at-point-of-use digital repository for University research data which may be used by PIs and research students. A time-limited embargo may be used to ensure data are not made available before related publications, subject to funder mandates. Any data which are retained elsewhere, for example in an international data service or domain repository must be registered with the University. These external services may assess data for acceptance according to their criteria. Any lock-in to proprietary databases or unnecessary restrictions must be avoided.

Data may be published openly, so must be compliant with current legislation, e.g., Data Protection and Freedom of Information Acts.

Prior to publication, consideration should be given to intellectual property, copyright and commercial considerations.

³ Numerous government bodies have endorsed the principle of publicly funded research as a public good, including the OECD, most recently in Recommendation of the Council Concerning Access to Research Data from Public Funding, <https://legalinstruments.oecd.org/en/instruments/OECD-LEGAL-0347>.

⁴ <https://Re3data.org> is a register of repositories to assist in this choice. Considerations for choosing a repository can include funder and publisher requirements, location (and legal jurisdiction), discipline relevance, longevity, price (if applicable), value-added features, user friendliness, scale, and whether the repository has Trusted Digital Repository standard certification, such as the Core Trust Seal.

Document control

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Document Review

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V4	Under Data Management, inclusion of requirement for a data management plan.	Library	6.11.17
V5	Full revision of policy.	Library	03.02.20
V6	Update of policy in line with new UKRI OA Policy. Document control updated with details of new PVC R&I	Library	27.01.22
V7	Full revision of policy	Library	18.08.23

