



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER

# **Research Data Management Policy**

**Version Number 2.0**

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**The Library**

## 1.0 Purpose

This policy outlines the University of Salford's requirements for research data management before, during, and after a research project's lifecycle. The University champions good practice in research data management because it is integral to high-quality research and aligns with funder requirements and the values and priorities set out in the Innovation Strategy 2021-26.

Active management, secure storage and retention, and timely deletion of research data are necessary for research integrity, information security, and environmental sustainability. Making research data as open as possible and only as restricted as necessary is important to the University's commitment to openness in research, supporting reproducibility and maximising the potential for re-use and impact.

This policy is supported by, and should be read in conjunction with, the Research Data Management Guidance published on the Library's webpages.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all research activities involving the collection, analysis, and storage of digital and physical research data conducted by University staff, postgraduate research students enrolled on a research degree, visiting or emeritus staff, associates, holders of honorary and clinical contracts, contractors and consultants and others working on the University premises or carrying out research activity in the name, or on behalf of the University of Salford, and across all subject disciplines and fields of study, hereafter referred to as 'Researchers'.

The policy does not apply to postgraduate taught students or undergraduates, but best research practice is recommended, and support and guidance is available to everyone.

## 3.0 Definitions

| Term                                | Definition  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Creative Commons Zero (CC0) licence | A Public Domain, No Rights Reserved licence with which creators and owners of copyright- or database-protected content waive those interests in their works so that others may freely build upon, enhance and reuse the works for any purposes without restriction under copyright or database law. See: <a href="https://creativecommons.org/public-domain/cc0/">https://creativecommons.org/public-domain/cc0/</a>  |
| Data management plan                | A formal document that describes how research data will be collected, organised, stored, secured, backed-up, preserved, and where applicable, shared.   |
| Data steward                        | A person employed in any role by the University of Salford who is identified by the researchers as being responsible for the management of a specific set of research data for the purposes of continuity. The choice of data steward will depend on the nature of the research project and project team. For example, the data stewardship role may be undertaken by a senior researcher, data curator, project officer, research technician, or the supervisor of a research student. |
| FAIR Principles                     | FAIR data are data which meet principles of findability, accessibility, interoperability, and reusability.  |

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Metadata                    | Metadata is the data that provides information about other data. This can include the source, format and location of the other data. Metadata enables the discovery and reuse of other data, and can be administrative, descriptive, or technical.  |
| Personal Data               | The University adheres to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) <a href="#">definitions of personal data</a> .  |
| Principal Investigator (PI) | Principal Investigator (PI): Within this Policy, "Principal Investigator (PI)" means the staff member or student primarily tasked with conducting the research project at the University of Salford, whether or not they are referred to as such in a research grant. For external collaborative projects, this would be the lead researcher based at the University of Salford.  |
| Research                    | The University of Salford adheres to the Frascati definition of Research as described in the Research Code of Practice.   |
| Research data               | The University defines research data as 'information created, observed or collected in the course of research which is necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs'. Research data may take physical or digital form.   |
| Research data management    | Research data management involves activities throughout the research data lifecycle; planning and making decisions about the collection, protection, organisation, storage, preservation, publishing and sharing of research data.  |
| Researchers                 | Researchers refers to all University staff, postgraduate research students enrolled on a research degree, visiting or emeritus staff, associates, holders of honorary and clinical contracts, contractors and consultants and others working on the University premises or carrying out research activity in the name, or on behalf of the University of Salford, and across all subject disciplines and fields of study.   |
| Sensitive data              | <p>'Sensitive data' is used as a catch-all term to refer to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research data containing personal identifying information, 'personal data' and special category data as defined in UK data protection legislation;</li> <li>• commercially sensitive data, including data generated or used under a restrictive commercial research funding agreement;</li> <li>• data relating to species of plants or animals where the release of data may adversely affect rare or endangered species;</li> <li>• data likely to harm an individual or community or have a significant negative public impact if released.</li> </ul> <p>Sensitive data may also be classified as confidential according to the University's Information Security Policy.</p> |

## 4.0 Policy statements

### Researchers' responsibilities:

#### 4.1 Compliance

All researchers are responsible for following their funders' and the University's policies for research data management (RDM), in particular the University of Salford Data Protection Policy, Information Security Policy and ICT Acceptable Use Policy and Academic Ethics Policy. All researchers are responsible for managing their research data in accordance

with contractual, legislative, regulatory, ethical, and other specified requirements and as set out in the project's Data Management Plan (see 4.3).

## **4.2 Accountability**

The lead researcher (Principal Investigator or equivalent) on a research project is primarily accountable for RDM practices within the project. They must ensure that all research data are generated, stored, managed, and shared in accordance with contractual, legislative, regulatory, ethical, and other specified requirements, including any funder policies.

- 4.2.1. The lead researcher must ensure that, where external partners are involved, research data ownership is established and confirmed contractually in advance of a research project starting, in accordance with the University's Intellectual Property Policy and relevant third-party agreements. They must ensure that any access to research data by third parties is managed in accordance with the Information Security Policy.
- 4.2.2. Postgraduate research students are primarily accountable for RDM practices within their project. Supervisors of research students are responsible for ensuring that their students are adequately trained and have a clear understanding of RDM requirements and appropriate practice.
- 4.2.3. RDM responsibilities can be shared or delegated but should be clearly documented in a Data Management Plan, and the lead researcher retains overall accountability. If leaving the University they must nominate a data steward, recorded in the Data Management Plan, to ensure the ongoing management, retention, and timely destruction of research data.

## **4.3 Data Management Plans**

The lead researcher must ensure a Data Management Plan (DMP) is created for every research project which sets out how research data will be collected, classified, protected, prepared, securely stored, retained, and, wherever possible, shared. The DMP must be created before the beginning of the research project, typically at the funding application or ethical approval stage. DMPs are living documents which must be reviewed and kept up to date throughout the project. All members of the research project team must be aware of, and abide by, the DMP.

## **4.4 Protecting sensitive data**

Researchers must protect sensitive data and the rights of research participants in accordance with legislation, contractual agreements, and ethical requirements.

- 4.4.1. Sensitive and confidential research data can be shared ethically and legally when this has been planned and agreed before collection, following relevant professional, ethical and discipline-specific standards. These include, but are not limited to, gaining informed consent from participants; protecting identities through anonymisation or pseudonymisation; and controlling access to data where necessary.

## **4.5 Costs**

When developing a research funding application, researchers must include appropriate research data storage and retention costs, including any costs associated with the digitisation of physical research data. Where a project is not in receipt of external research funding, research data storage needs should be identified at the outset and, if

these exceed the allowance provided by the University, suitable arrangements made to cover any additional costs.

#### **4.6 Storage during the project**

While in active use, researchers must ensure that research data are stored safely, securely and protected from loss using facilities appropriate to the data medium.

4.6.1. Researchers must store digital research data on secure digital systems with a back-up mechanism to protect against loss. Where, due to the circumstances of data collection, research data needs to be temporarily stored on mobile devices or external storage, data classified as confidential must be encrypted and in all cases researchers must ensure data security in line with the Information Security policy.

4.6.2. The loss of sensitive data or University IT equipment must be reported according to the ICT Acceptable Use Policy.

#### **4.7 Retention**

Researchers are responsible for selecting which research data to retain by considering potential long-term value, reproducibility of the research findings, and legal or funder requirements. Selected research data must be retained for at least any period stipulated by legal, contractual, regulatory, or ethical requirements, and in line with discipline-specific norms, typically at least 10 years from publication.

#### **4.8 Depositing research data**

Researchers must deposit their selected research data in an appropriate data repository as soon as possible. Researchers may choose to use Figshare, the research data storage service provided by the University, or an alternative data repository which complies with legal, regulatory, and ethical requirements and aligns with FAIR principles to ensure data are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable. Access to deposited data can be restricted where necessary.

4.8.1. Where research data are deposited in a repository other than the University's data storage service, researchers must enter a metadata record into the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR).

4.8.2. Where research data selected for retention are not in digital format, they should be digitised where possible. Where digitisation is not possible, researchers should seek to store the data in facilities appropriate to the subject matter and medium. To ensure these data are discoverable, a metadata record should be added to the University of Salford Institutional Repository (USIR).

#### **4.9 Preparation of data**

Researchers are responsible for preparing data prior to deposit and/or sharing. Before depositing research data, researchers must ensure that any sensitive data are prepared and protected in accordance with the consent given by participants, and any legal, contractual, regulatory, or ethical requirements (see 4.4).

4.9.1. Research data held in any repository must be accompanied by metadata that clearly describe the data in sufficient detail to allow other researchers to find and understand them.

4.9.2. Where research data have been made openly accessible, they should be accompanied by sufficient descriptive and technical metadata and documentation to enable reading, reuse, and interoperation by humans and machines.

#### **4.10 Data sharing**

Research data selected for deposit must be made as open as possible and only as restricted as necessary. To enable open data sharing and maximise reuse and reproducibility, researchers should choose the most permissive Creative Commons licence possible (e.g. CC 0 licence). Researchers should minimise the period of time for which they hold exclusive use of the data, as allowed by ethical, legislative, regulatory, commercial, and contractual conditions.

#### **4.11 Data underpinning publications**

A data access statement describing where supporting data can be found and accessed must be included in the publication when mandated by the research funder or publisher, even where the study generated no original research data, or the data are restricted or otherwise not accessible. In all other cases, a data access statement is strongly encouraged. Research data that underpins published research findings should, where possible, be made openly available at the time of first online publication.

#### **4.12 Data underpinning theses**

Where postgraduate research students have created or collected original research data which underpins the findings of their research, and these are not included in the thesis itself, they should ensure that selected data is stored in accordance with this policy. Research students are strongly encouraged to add a data access statement to the thesis. This statement should describe where supporting data can be found and accessed, even where the data are restricted or otherwise not accessible. Guidance is set out in the PGR Code of Practice.

#### **4.13 Disposal of data**

Researchers, or research data stewards, must securely dispose of research data identified for deletion or destruction with particular concern for the confidentiality and security of the data, in accordance with legal, contractual, regulatory, or ethical requirements and the University's Information Security Policy.

#### **University responsibilities:**

#### **4.14 Research data storage service**

The University will provide a digital research data storage service which complies with legal, regulatory, ethical, and information security requirements. Research data in the University's research data storage service, Figshare, will be retained for the length of time detailed in the data management plan.

4.14.1. Where research data selected for long-term retention are not in digital format and cannot be digitised, the University will support researchers to identify facilities and resources required for preservation within the data management plan.

#### **4.15 Guidance, training and support**

The University will provide support, guidance and training for researchers to enable effective research data management throughout the research lifecycle.

## 5.0 Policy Enforcement and Monitoring

Breach of this policy will be considered as having the potential to bring the University and its employees into disrepute and managed in that context. Specific processes will be brought to bear in this context, including the Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure, the Academic Misconduct Procedure, and the Disciplinary Policy.

Periodic monitoring against this policy will be undertaken by The Library and Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) and be reported to the Research Enterprise & Innovation Committee (REIC).

## 6.0 Related Documentation

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| <b>Internal Websites (the Hub)</b>  |
| <a href="#">Academics Ethics Staff website</a>  |
| <a href="#">Academic Handbook</a>   |
| <a href="#">Academic Regulations for Research Awards</a>                                    |
| <a href="#">Code of Practice for the Conduct of Postgraduate Research Degree Programmes</a> |
| <a href="#">Concordat to Support Research Integrity</a>                                     |
| <a href="#">Information Governance website</a>  |
| <a href="#">Quality Management Office</a>   |
| <b><a href="#">Research Data Management</a></b>   |
| <a href="#">Research Policy</a>   |
| <a href="#">Senate and Committees website</a>   |
| <a href="#">Student Facing Procedures website</a>   |
| <b>Policies and Procedures (all internal)</b>   |
| <a href="#">Academic Ethics Policy</a>  |
| <a href="#">Academic Misconduct Procedure</a>   |
| <a href="#">Data depositor agreement</a>  |
| <a href="#">Data Protection Policy</a>  |
| <a href="#">Disciplinary Policy</a>   |
| <a href="#">ICT Acceptable Use Policy</a>   |
| <a href="#">Information Security Policy</a>   |
| <a href="#">Intellectual Property Policy (under review)</a>                                 |
| <a href="#">Research Misconduct Policy and Procedure</a>                                    |
| <a href="#">Records Retention Schedule</a>  |
| <a href="#">Research Code of Practice</a>   |

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| <a href="#">Safeguarding Guidance for Research</a>                               |
| <a href="#">Scheme of Academic Governance</a>                                    |
| <a href="#">University Ethics Framework</a>                                      |
| <b>Terms of Reference</b>  |
| <a href="#">Academic Ethics &amp; Research Integrity Committee</a>               |
| <a href="#">Governance, Nominations, and Ethics Committee</a>                    |
| <a href="#">Research, Enterprise &amp; Innovation Committee</a>                  |
| <a href="#">School Ethics Approval Committee</a>                                 |
| <a href="#">School Research, Enterprise and Engagement Ethics Approval Panel</a> |
| <b>Related external legislation, policies and information</b>                    |
| <a href="#">Data Protection Act (2018)</a>                                       |
| <a href="#">National Security in Research Policy</a>                             |
| <a href="#">Go FAIR</a> – FAIR Data Principles                                   |

## 7.0 Contact

- a. Queries regarding research data management (RDM) should be directed to [library-research@salford.ac.uk](mailto:library-research@salford.ac.uk).
- b. Queries regarding research policies should be directed to [research-governance@salford.ac.uk](mailto:research-governance@salford.ac.uk).



| <b>Document Control Information</b>   |  |                |  |
|---|--|----------------|--|
| <b>Revision History incl. Authorisation: (most recent first)</b>                  |  |                |  |
| <b>Author</b>   | <b>Summary of changes</b>  | <b>Version</b> | <b>Authorised &amp; Date</b>                 |
| E Smith & T Williamson  | <i>Significant rewrite. Restructured to reflect research lifecycle. Scope and definitions clarified; related policies section expanded and updated. Added explicit reference to physical data. Updated statements relating to information security. 12-month data deposit deadline removed. Added reference to FAIR data principles. Added recommendations re use of CC0 licenses for data and inclusion of data access statements in publications and theses.</i> | V2.0           |  |
| H Baker & D Clay  | <i>New policy</i>  | V1.0           | Research & Enterprise Committee:<br>04/11/15 |
|   |  |                |  |
|   |  |                |  |
| <b>Policy Management and Responsibilities:</b>                                    |  |                |  |
| Owner:  | This Policy is issued by the Pro-Vice Chancellor Research & Enterprise, who has the authority to issue and communicate policy on research data management and has delegated day to day management and communication of the policy to The Library.  |                |  |
| Others with responsibilities (please specify):                                    | All subjects of the Policy will be responsible for engaging with and adhering to this policy.  |                |  |
| <b>Author to complete formal assessment with the following advisory teams:</b>    |  |                |  |
| Equality Analysis (E&D, HR)<br><a href="#">Equality Assessment form</a>           | 1. <i>Approved February 2024. Ref <a href="#">EIA2024-22</a></i>   |                |  |
| Legal implications (LPG)  | 2. <i>Reviewed by Director of Legal Services, May 2024.</i>  |                |  |
| Information Governance (LPG)  | 3. <i>Reviewed by DIT information security team and Director of Legal Services, May 2024.</i>  |                |  |
| Student facing procedures (QEO)   | 4. <i>N/A</i>  |                |  |
| UKVI Compliance (Student Admin)   | 5. <i>N/A</i>  |                |  |
| <b>Consultation:</b>  |  |                |  |
| Staff Trades Unions via HR  | 1. <i>N/A</i>  |                |  |
| Students via USSU   | 2. <i>N/A (PGR Forum consulted, including PGR student representation)</i>  |                |  |
| Relevant external bodies (specify)  | 3. <i>N/A</i>  |                |  |
| <b>Review:</b>  |  |                |  |
| Review due:   | 2 years by May 2026  |                |  |
| Document location (webpage):  | Library Research Data Management web page.<br>RKE Data in Research Staff Hub page.   |                |  |
| Document location (link)  | <a href="https://www.salford.ac.uk/library/open-research/open-data/research-data-management">https://www.salford.ac.uk/library/open-research/open-data/research-data-management</a>  |                |  |
| <b>The owner and author are responsible for publicising this policy document.</b> |  |                |  |