

# Research Data Management Policy

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Version	Date	Note
0.1	17/1/11	First draft
0.2	24/2/12	Added policy elements from EPSRC expectations
0.3	22/05/13	Amended to reflect developments in responsibilities, facilities and approach to Research Data Management at all stages of the project lifecycle
0.4	26/07/2013	Amended to reflect comments made at 29 May Research Data Management Working Group and 8 July Research Executive
1.0	02/09/2013	Policy and Guidance into separate documents
1.1	14/10/2013	Amended to reflect comments made at 7 October Research Data Management Working Group
1.2	31/10/2013	Amended to reflect comments received from ADRs
1.3	18/11/2013	Amended to reflect comments received from Research Executive
1.4	02/07/2015	Updated as part of scheduled review
1.5	19/05/2017	Updated as part of scheduled review
1.6	05/06/2017	Minor revisions following scheduled review which included feedback from UREC members, ISD and HR, and approved at 15 June 2017 Research Executive meeting and 8 November Senate.
1.7	01/05/2019	Minor revisions following scheduled review
1.8	08/02/2020	Links updated following UEA website migration
2.0	11/01/2022	Updated as part of scheduled review, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- updating the definition of Research Data</li><li>- referencing the importance of ensuring that provision around Research Data covers all location where such data are used.</li><li>- clarifying the position around Research Data generated through undergraduate projects.</li></ul>
2.1	10/05/2025	Updated as part of scheduled review, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- updating the definition of Researcher: clarification on joint staff appointments, for example with a Norwich Research Park (NRP) institution.</li><li>- inclusion of Emeritus appointments.</li><li>- further information on a data sharing statement.</li><li>- use of other institutional data repositories.</li><li>- seeking advice in cases of data transfer.</li><li>- reference to the University's Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-2030.</li><li>- clarification on data retention period for undergraduate and taught post-graduate research data.</li><li>- clarification on where metadata for datasets held externally should be created.</li></ul>

## Background

This Policy sets out the principles that guide the University in managing research data and demonstrating its continued commitment to excellence and integrity in research.

Research Data Management affects everyone at UEA who is engaged in research, at whatever level and whatever their discipline. ‘Data’ exist in a wide variety of forms across all UEA research fields and the principles laid out here are equally relevant to images of artefacts in art history, as computer models in game theory, as sequences in genetics and as spectra in structure characterisation. From new students to experienced researchers, ensuring that research materials are well managed throughout the research project, and beyond, enables UEA’s research to have the greatest possible reach and benefit to the academic community and the wider public.

As a University committed to excellence in the quality of the research our staff and students undertake, it is essential to have guidelines on good practice in research as part of our framework to support the integrity of our research which lies at the centre of the University's vision in its Research and Innovation Strategy 2024-2030: ***“To deliver ambitious, high quality and high integrity Research and Innovation, strengthening collaboration and gaining global recognition.”***

## Review

This Research Data Management Policy sets out the University’s position on the management of Research Data. This is a rapidly-evolving area and the supporting document on Research Data Management Procedures and Guidance will be updated as the resources and infrastructure to support Research Data management are developed throughout the University.

This Policy will be reviewed and updated by the University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) and recommendations will be made to the University Research Executive, and thereafter to Senate before 31 July 2028.

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## Introduction

The University of East Anglia recognises Research Data as a valuable institutional asset to be managed in line with UKRI Common Principles on Research Data (<https://www.ukri.org/apply-for-funding/before-you-apply/your-responsibilities-if-you-get-funding/making-research-data-open/>). In addition, the University acknowledges the role that good Research Data management can play in supporting the University's research vision to ensure that our research has the highest possible global influence through a dissemination strategy that maximises impact and that ensures effective communication of our research.

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that Researchers and support staff:

- are supported in good Research Data management practice.
- find it easier to conduct research relying on Research Data.
- benefit from improved citations of their work.
- can maximise impact of their research by encouraging discoverability and re-use.
- have a reduced likelihood of data loss through inaccessibility and corruption.
- can comply with legislation and the policies and requirements of research funders and of Third Party Data providers.
- are supported in protecting intellectual property and commercialisation opportunities.

## Scope

The University's Guidelines on Good Practice in Research<sup>1</sup> outline what is expected of its Researchers. This policy and the associated guidance<sup>2</sup> expand on this with respect to Research Data. As such, this policy applies to all UEA Researchers. It is the responsibility of heads of Faculties, Schools and Units to ensure their staff and students are aware of and comply with these policies.

## Definitions

**Research Data** There is no single definition of what constitutes Research Data. For the purposes of the University's Research Data Management Policy and the associated Procedures and Guidelines, the following definition, from the Concordat on Open Research Data<sup>3</sup>, provides an indication of the scope:

"Research data are the evidence that underpins the answer to the research question, and can be used to validate findings regardless of its form (e.g. print, digital, or physical). These 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. Data may be raw or primary (e.g. direct from measurement or collection) or derived from primary data for subsequent analysis or interpretation (e.g. cleaned up or as an extract from a larger data set), or derived from existing sources where the rights may be held by others. Data may be defined as 'relational' or 'functional' components of research,

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<sup>1</sup> The Guidelines are available here: <https://my.uea.ac.uk/divisions/research-and-innovation/research-innovation-services/research-support/research-integrity-and-ethics>

<sup>2</sup> The guidance document is available here: <https://my.uea.ac.uk/divisions/research-and-innovation/research-innovation-services/research-support/research-integrity-and-ethics>

<sup>3</sup> The Concordat on Open Research Data can be found here: <https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-020920-ConcordatonOpenResearchData.pdf>

thus signalling that their identification and value lies in whether and how researchers use them as evidence for claims.”

A definition of the research data should be provided in the Data Management Plan.<sup>4</sup>

Examples of research data include (but are not limited to): documents, spreadsheets, databases, field notebooks, diaries, audio- and video recordings, photographs and images, transcripts, survey responses, protein or genetic sequences, algorithms, computer code, workflows, standard operating procedures and protocols.

All data gathered and generated as a result of the research, and not just analysed data that underpin a research output, are in scope. The mechanisms for retention and archive will necessarily differ according to the format of the data, or due to disciplinary norms. Where data are obtained from a third party, any adjustments to that base data set on which research relies should be included within the data generated as a result of the research.

**Researchers** Anyone engaged in research at UEA at post-graduate level or above. This encompasses:

- All staff employed by the University (including academic, research and support staff; and joint appointments, for example with a Norwich Research Park (NRP) institution) carrying out research at, or on behalf of, the University (including those on a UEA contract/payroll but based elsewhere, for example at an NRP institution).
- All students (undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research) undertaking research and their supervisors (including students registered at UEA but based elsewhere, for example at an NRP or other partner institution).
- Any persons with Honorary positions or Emeritus appointments, conducting research at, or on behalf of, the University.

In this document, the following verbal forms are used:

“shall” and “must” indicated a requirement;

“should” indicates a recommendation;

“may” indicates a permission;

“can” indicates a possibility or a capability.

## Principles

The University’s policy is based on the following principles:

1. Publicly funded Research Data are a public good and should be made openly available wherever possible.
2. Research Data include both digital and non-digital forms and the definition of Research Data shall be guided by that widely accepted within the relevant discipline of the research.
3. Overall responsibility for Research Data Management at UEA rests with Research Executive. Every project must have a named Researcher responsible for data management. Researchers who are students shall seek advice about management and preservation of their research data from their supervisor(s), course/module director. All

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<sup>4</sup> Examples of analysed data are derived variables in a data set which retains the level of disaggregation of the primary data, and data which underlie a graphical representation in a published paper.

Researchers have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with this policy and the associated guidance.

4. UEA shall provide advice and support to Researchers in planning and managing their Research Data through the provision of training, guidance, good practice documentation and expert advice.
5. Best practice for the management of Research Data starts at the earliest stage of planning a research project and should cover all stages of the Research Data lifecycle, normally through the creation of a Data Management Plan which should be seen as a 'living document' that is reviewed and updated throughout the course of the research project. This should cover the requirements of working across various locations where necessary.
6. Researchers shall include a short statement ("Data sharing statement") within a research output describing how and on what terms supporting Research Data can be accessed. This includes stating where it is not possible to share data. Depending on publisher preferences, the statement may cover code and other research materials, or these may be covered by separate statements.
7. Research Data that are made available shall be as comprehensive as possible and have clear instructions for use, including Metadata that facilitates discovery and reuse.
8. Research Data should be kept and remain available for access for at least 10 years following any publication, except when special circumstances apply. Metadata should be kept indefinitely. Any additional documents required to enable sharing or reuse, or to meet legal or ethical obligations should also be retained for as long as is necessary to ensure continuing access of Research Data. In the case of undergraduate or taught post-graduate research projects, the requirements to keep data and metadata may be waived where student and supervisor(s) or course/module director agree that this is not appropriate for that research project.
9. A Researcher should use an appropriate external repository or data centre which will archive and preserve Research Data, e.g. national, disciplinary or funder archive. Where Research is generated across multiple institutions/organisations, a Researcher may also use another institutional data repository. Alternatively, if no such repository or data centre is available, Researchers should use a central repository provided by UEA. Where the data are held externally Researchers should create a Metadata record in Pure for the data, including a link to the holding repository. Research Data should be deposited in a single location to maintain integrity of and transparency around the data.
10. Where the transfer of Research Data between organisations is required, it should be straightforward (e.g. research collaborations, Researchers moving between HEIs) but also secure and managed (i.e. not on an exclusive basis unless that is a condition of funding), and accompanied by appropriate documentation (e.g. data sharing agreements). Advice should be sought from RIN and other central services such as the Library, ITCS and the Information Compliance team where necessary. Where the Research Data have an assessed commercial value then additional steps will need to be followed before Research Data can be transferred.
11. Any destruction of Research Data shall be in accordance with the terms of this Policy, the retention period set out in the Data Management Plan and any legal and funder requirements, whichever is the most stringent.
12. All Researchers must comply with any policies, mandates and expectations around Research Data that are imposed by the university, their funders, as well as any wider legal or ethical requirements, including (but not limited to) relevant Data Protection and Freedom of Information legislation.

13. Researchers should recognise the Intellectual Property in all research outputs and processes, and manage it appropriately, in line with the University's Intellectual Property Regulations.
14. The University's Research Data Management Policy will be reviewed and updated regularly. As a minimum this should be every three years.