

University of Liverpool

Computing Services

Research Data Management Policy

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Comments	

Policy on Research Data Management December 2013

1. Introduction

University research is conducted in an increasingly complex and data-oriented environment which requires the effective collection, management, and sharing of data. The University of Liverpool (UoL) recognises that accurate and accessible data created during the research process are fundamental to the conduct of high quality research and promotion of research integrity. Data are a key asset that will continue to yield benefit for the creator, institution, and the wider public well beyond the life of the project.

As part of the University's commitment to academic excellence, this policy seeks to outline key principles for effective curation throughout the lifecycle of data. Over the next two years, UoL will implement a set of processes and systems to support researchers to achieve the highest standards of research data management. This policy, and its implementation, will be kept under regular review by the Research and Knowledge Exchange Committee.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all members of the University conducting research or involved in the creation, collection, or generation of research data. This policy encompasses all research data that have the potential for publication, regardless of whether or not the research is funded. Research data are defined as any recorded information necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs, regardless of format. It includes research in all disciplines but it is recognised that current practices, knowledge and experience varies across and within Faculties, in line with discipline norms. During implementation, Faculties will ensure that all processes and support materials are tailored to different disciplines, reflecting varying research processes, data formats and the potential or opportunity for re-use.

For physical or electronic data not produced as a result of research, please refer to the University's policy on [Records Management](#).

3. Data Management Principles

3.1 Ownership

Primary responsibility for the management of data produced during research activities lies with the Principal Investigator. Where research is conducted with other institutions and independent researchers, Liverpool researchers are responsible for the management of research data held by UoL that is under their own control.

All research data generated by UoL academics are wholly owned by the University (or funder) and remains with the University if the academic leaves the institution.

3.2 Data management plans

Funders increasingly require grant holders to produce Data Management Plans (DMPs) at the bid preparation stage. These plans should be kept up to date after funding is granted and as the project progresses. This is good practice that should be followed for all new research projects. DMPs typically include information describing what kind of data will be created, how it will be stored, organised, shared and archived, keeping in mind any ethical issues that may apply to the information. Guidance and training will be provided by the University.

3.3 Storage

Across disciplines at the University, research data should be:

- Accurate, complete and reliable;
- Stored with appropriate metadata to facilitate reuse;
- Secure, safe and backed up regularly (where local storage is chosen, this should be on University networked drives);
- Stored in a manner that is compliant with legal obligations and the requirements of funding bodies and project-specific guidelines.

The storage and management of research data carries a cost, particularly if there is a need for long-term curation, requiring staff and equipment resources. These costs should be written into research grant applications, where possible. Early planning of data management can significantly reduce costs. [Computing Services](#) should be contacted before procuring any data storage equipment for advice on the best storage options.

3.4 Retention

Data must be retained in an appropriate format and storage facility for a period of at least 10 years, or the period of time specified by the funder, if longer. If research data are to be deleted or destroyed, this should be done so in accordance with all legal, ethical, and research funder requirements and with particular concern for confidentiality and security.

3.5 Access and sharing

All research data produced by UoL researchers should be made openly available to the wider academic community with as few restrictions as possible in a timely manner except where the right of individual researchers, or the subjects of the research, would be compromised. The route you take to making your data open will vary according to your research discipline and environment. Published results should include information on how to access the supporting data.

Positive initiatives for sharing research data will be recognised through the University's award and recognition processes (Annual Review, Staff rewards etc.).

4. Resources

The University of Liverpool is in the process of developing dedicated web guidance and training materials tailored to its academics' research data management needs. In the meantime, please refer to the following resources for advice and support:

[Guide for writing Data Management Plans](#): guidance on what to include in your DMP

[Digital Curation Centre](#) (DCC): website where guidance and tools are available in particular

[DMPonline](#): the DCC's web based data management planning tool

[UK - Data Archive](#): web based guidance on making your data open

[RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy](#): a set of common data principles which provide an overarching framework for individual Research Councils

5. Relationships with other University policies

REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CODES OF PRACTICE

The regulations and policies apply to all members of staff, visitors, honorary members and all students of the University. The Codes of Practice help all members in adopting best practice

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/regulations/>

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR USING THE DATA NETWORK¹

The Use of the University Data Network is subject to the JANET Acceptable Use Policy:

<http://www.ja.net/company/policies/aup.html>

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/codenetwork.pdf>

DATA SHARING AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/freedom-of-information/>

POLICY ON EXPLOITATION AND COMMERCIALISATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/hr-migrated/policies/Intellectual-Property-Policy.pdf>

ASSET CLASSIFICATION POLICY

Information is a vital asset to any organisation, and this is especially so in the University which is a knowledge-driven organisation. Virtually all of our activities create information assets in one form or another. The Information Asset Classification Policy and its associated policies are concerned with managing the information assets owned by the University and used by members of the University in their official capacities.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/information-asset-classification-policy.pdf>

INFORMATION STRATEGY

Our Strategic Plan 2009 – 2014 recognises the importance of Information in achieving our key ambitions.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/csd/regulations/strategy/>

¹ This policy will combine with other related policies during Q1 2014

INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

This Information Security policy can be summarised as the preservation of confidentiality, integrity and availability which is informed by the principles set out in ISO 27001.

All members of the University are directly responsible and liable for the information they handle. Failure to comply with this policy, and other associated policies, may result in disciplinary action.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/informationsecuritypolicy.pdf>

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

The University must comply with the Data Protection Principles which are set out in the Data Protection Act, 1998.

http://www.liv.ac.uk/legal/data_protection/policy/

RESEARCH ETHICS

A member of the UK Office for Research Integrity (UKRIO), the University is committed to supporting the University's strategic objective of research excellence through its application of robust policies around Research Integrity and Ethics.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/research-integrity/>

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

The University of Liverpool recognises that efficient management of its records is essential, both for effective administration and to enable it to comply with legal and regulatory requirements. This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff in the course of carrying out their duties, or by researchers engaged on internally or externally funded projects. The records may be in any format or medium, including electronic media. **Please note that all members of University staff are subject to this policy.**

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/records-management/policy.html>

http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/records-management/services/records_management_policy.pdf

STORAGE CURATION AND RETENTION

The Records Management department provides advice to all members of staff on all aspects of record-keeping throughout the University.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/records-management/>

RETENTION POLICY

This policy applies to all records created, received or maintained by staff in the course of carrying out their duties, or by researchers engaged on internally or externally funded projects.

The records may be in any format or medium, including electronic media.

http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/records-management/services/retention_policy.pdf

STORING RECORDS

The Records Centre offers medium-term storage (5-10 years on average). The Records Centre is situated in specially adapted and secure premises within the University campus.

<http://www.liv.ac.uk/library/records-management/services/storing-records.html>

6. Contacts

Should you require any advice regarding research data management, please contact Project Manager [Nick Dods](#) at data@liverpool.ac.uk, or your Faculty's Academic Champion:

Health and Life Sciences:	Dr Andy Jones	jonesar@liverpool.ac.uk
Humanities and Social Sciences	Professor Claire Taylor	ctaylor@liverpool.ac.uk
Science and Engineering	Dr David Hutchcroft	dhcroft@liverpool.ac.uk