

Research Data Management Policy

1. Introduction

The University of Liverpool (UoL) is committed to maintaining the highest standards of rigour and integrity in its research. It recognises that data collected in the conduct of a research project (termed *research data*) are a key asset that will continue to yield benefits after the conclusion of the project. Many research projects collect personal data from individuals (termed *personal research data*). The University recognises its duty to protect the confidentiality of the personal research data in keeping with its responsibilities under the General Data Protection Regulation, and any research project that collects personal data must have formal ethical approval from the University.

This policy sets out the principles that should be followed by staff and students of the University in the creation, collection and curation of research data.

2. Scope

This policy covers all data collected during the course of a research study regardless of format or whether or not the research is funded. It applies to all members of the University conducting research or involved in the creation, collection or curation of research data.

Administrative paper records arising from research projects (i.e. research grant documentation, consent forms etc.), are covered by the University's policy on Records Management.

3. Principles

3.1 Ownership

All research data generated by UoL academics or research postgraduate students are wholly owned by the University (or funder) and remain with the University if the academic leaves the institution. Where taught students generate data under the supervision of an academic member of staff as part of a wider funded project, the data will be wholly owned by the University (or funder) as above.

Unless it is a condition of a grant or contract, exclusive rights to research data must not be assigned, licenced or otherwise transferred to external parties.

3.2 Management of Data

Primary responsibility for the management of data produced during research activities lies with the Principal Investigator (PI). In the case of research undertaken by undergraduate or postgraduate students, the responsibility lies with the student's supervisor.

When research is conducted with other institutions and independent researchers, all parties should agree a plan for managing the data generated during the study. Liverpool researchers are responsible for the management of any research data held by UoL.

3.3 Collection of personal research data

Any staff or student research project that collects personal research information must have formal ethical approval from the University¹. The study must ensure that the participants have given their ‘informed consent’. This must inform participants about how research data will be stored, preserved and used in the long-term, and how confidentiality will be maintained. The ‘informed consent’ should enable the data collected to be made available to other researchers. Further information on ‘informed consent’, including ‘sensitive personal data’ can be found in the document ‘General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and research². Personal research data should be held in a fully anonymised form that protects the confidentiality of the participant.

3.4 Data management plans

It is best practice to complete a data management plan (DMP) prior to the commencement of research projects. This sets out the arrangements for research data management throughout the project life cycle. The plan should respect the policies of the funder(s) and other interested parties, unless otherwise agreed.

In the case of personal research data, the DMP is a required component of the application for research ethics review.

Guidance and training is provided by the RDM service based in the Library; more information can be found at www.liverpool.ac.uk/rdm.

3.5 Storage

The storage of research data must conform to the following characteristics:

- It is stored with appropriate metadata to facilitate reuse;
- The storage is secure, safe and backed up regularly (where local storage is chosen, this should be on University networked drives);
- It is stored in a manner that is compliant with legal obligations (such as GDPR) and the requirements of funding bodies and project-specific guidelines;
- The storage complies with other University policies such as Information Asset Classification and Information Security Policy.

Personal data acquired from participants in research studies should be held in an anonymised form that fully protects the participant’s identity. Personal data should be anonymised during the course of the study, and not just at its conclusion.

Users are liable and responsible for the security of data whilst working off site and detailed guidance is provided in the Code of Practice for use of Data on Laptops and Mobile Devices. If cloud storage is being considered the Code of Practice for Using Cloud Services draws attention to security concerns of data managed through cloud based software. Particular care should be exercised when using cloud software to store or transfer personal research information.

¹ Policy on ethical approval for research involving human participants, tissues or personal, data www.liverpool.ac.uk/intranet/media/intranet/research-support-office/ethics/University,Research,Ethics,policy.pdf

² <https://staff.liverpool.ac.uk/our-university/gdpr/gdpr-and-research/>

The University provides robust and secure active research data storage. Where storage requirements are very large or need to be customised, charges may apply. The costs of storage and management of research data should be incorporated into the overall costing of research projects, and, where possible, included into research grant applications.

3.6 Retention

The University requires that research data necessary to support or validate a research project's observations, findings or outputs must be retained in an appropriate format and storage facility for at least 10 years. The retention of this research data must also comply with any requirements specified by the funder of the research.

Discovery metadata from all research undertaken by University of Liverpool researchers, irrespective of where the data is stored, or whether the University plays a collaborative or lead role, should be recorded within the University's research data catalogue.

Data acquired in undergraduate or taught postgraduate projects will normally not be retained. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to ensure that any personal research data collected during such projects is deleted.

Any deletion of data must also comply with the Information Security Policy and the Records Management Team can assist with any physical confidential waste destruction.

3.7 Access and sharing

All research data produced by UoL researchers should be made openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely manner. Personal research data may be made available if it is in an anonymised form and there is informed consent for it to be shared.

Sharing of research data will be restricted when

- the rights of individual researchers/and or subjects would be compromised;
- the research has an Intellectual Property opportunity arising from it, in alignment with the Intellectual Property Policy;
- it includes secondary data that you may have had the right to use as part of your research, but do not have the right to share with others.

Published results should include a data statement on how to access the supporting data including details on any access restrictions. A simple direction to interested parties 'to contact the author' is not sufficient.

Freedom of Information requests that relate to research data should be directed to the Legal and Compliance department.

4. Relationships with other University policies

REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CODES OF PRACTICE

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

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR USING THE DATA NETWORK

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

<https://community.jisc.ac.uk/library/acceptable-use-policy>

CODE OF PRACTICE FOR USING THE CLOUD SERVICES

<http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/codecloud.pdf>

DATA SHARING AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/legal/freedom-of-information/>

POLICY ON EXPLOITATION AND COMMERCIALISATION OF INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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

INFORMATION ASSET CLASSIFICATION POLICY

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

INFORMATION ASSET DISPOSAL POLICY

<http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/it-asset-disposal-policy.pdf>

IT PROCUREMENT AND THIRD PARTY SECURITY

<http://www.liverpool.ac.uk/media/livacuk/computingservices/regulations/IT-procurement-policy.pdf>

INFORMATION STRATEGY

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

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

INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY

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

DATA PROTECTION POLICY

<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/legal/freedom-of-information/data-protection/policy/>

RESEARCH ETHICS

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

RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

http://pcwww.liv.ac.uk/csd/records-management/policies-and-forms/Records_Management_Policy.pdf

http://pcwww.liv.ac.uk/csd/records-management/policies-and-forms/University_Retention_Schedule.pdf

5 Review

This policy will be reviewed after its first year of implementation (summer 2019) and then every 3 years.