

UWE Research Data Management Policy

1. Introduction

Research data management is a set of activities undertaken over the course of the research lifecycle which address the collection, organisation, storage, documentation, preservation, and sharing or destruction of research data. UWE recognises that effective management of research data is an integral part of good research practice. This is crucial for research integrity as well as for handling data responsibly in accordance with ethical, legal, and regulatory requirements. The University is committed to managing research data throughout its lifecycle, from the point of creation through to dissemination, publication and archiving or secure destruction. Aspects of research data management will usually continue long after the initial research project has ended.

The policy reflects UWE's support of the [Concordat on Open Research Data](#), [UKRI Common Principles on Research Data](#), and the UWE Bristol Open Research Statement. Whilst the latter encourages our researchers to be as open as possible, as early as possible, UWE acknowledges that there may be valid reasons why data cannot be shared (e.g. sensitivity of the topic, contractual obligations, commercial reasons) and therefore follows the [Horizon Europe](#) principle that data should be 'as open as possible, as closed as necessary'.

UWE Research Data Management Policy lays out responsibilities of UWE and its researchers for the management and potential sharing of research data. It aims to increase the quality, integrity and accessibility of UWE Bristol's research data which can lead to greater research impact and enhanced reputation. Good research data management facilitates research data sharing, which can increase its visibility, fostering collaboration, securing public trust and ensuring the full potential of research is exploited. This can then provide a growing resource for further research, education and training.

2. Purpose

The University considers the safe and effective management of research data to be integral to good research practice. The purpose of this policy is therefore:

- a) to ensure research data is stored in a secure and safe manner;
- b) to promote the highest standards of research integrity by ensuring that research data accessed, used or produced by UWE Bristol researchers, is managed (created, stored, used, re-used, archived or destroyed)

- according to good research practice and ethical requirements, legal and regulatory frameworks and funder requirements;
- c) to establish sound research data management practices which protect the interests of research participants, researchers, funders and partners, and which support the proper conduct of research and validation of research findings;
 - d) to promote best practice in research data management together with [FAIR](#) Principles (findable, accessible, interoperable, re-usable) to ensure research data are managed in a way that maximises their reproducibility and long-term accessibility;
 - e) to promote appropriate preservation, sharing and re-use of research data;
 - f) to outline the responsibilities and requirements of the University and its researchers.

3. Scope and Definitions

The policy applies to all UWE Bristol employees, postgraduate research students, and those conducting research on behalf of UWE, who produce or use research data as part of their research (hereafter “researchers”) regardless of the research funding source.

The policy applies to all research data, or materials, (digital or physical) created, co-created or used by all UWE researchers.

UWE adopts the definition of research data laid out in the Concordat on Open Research Data (p.3) which states that “research data are the evidence that underpins the answer to the research question, and can be used to validate findings regardless of 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.”

Examples of research data include, but are not limited to, statistics, collections of digital images, sound and video recordings, transcripts of interviews, survey data and fieldwork observations with appropriate annotations, an interpretation, an artwork, archives, found objects, published texts or a manuscript, lab books, and data generated by machines and instruments.

4. University’s responsibilities

The University will disseminate information amongst its academics about the requirements under this policy framework. Colleges, Schools, and Research Centres are expected to be proactive in disseminating these requirements among their researchers and facilitate compliance. Principles of findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (FAIR) data will be promoted to all relevant research and support staff and other stakeholders.

The University will provide the infrastructure, advice and training to support research data management, including mechanisms for the registration, storage, deposit and retention of research data throughout its life cycle.

The University will provide methods and procedures for controlled access to restricted data for approved researchers.

5. Researcher responsibilities

All researchers are required to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, this policy, along with relevant legislation, regulation, and funder requirements.

Researchers must complete any current UWE Bristol mandatory training relating to research data management before generating, collecting or working with any research data. The UWE Bristol Research Manager and project leads (this includes DoS for PGR students) have the overall responsibility for effective research data management during research projects. However, all researchers have a personal responsibility to effectively manage the research data and must act in accordance with this policy.

All research that collects, generates or uses research data must be supported by a Research Data Management Plan (RDMP). A RDMP must be in place at the start of the research, before any work with research data takes place. The RDMP must specify the type and volume of data, any restrictions on reuse, where data will be stored including after findings are published, and how and when data will be made available for access and reuse. The RDMP should be retained at the end of a project and updated throughout the project lifecycle.

Up-to-date RDMP should be uploaded to Research Governance Record.

Where a research project involves human participants, due consideration should be given to the open access data and reuse of data as part of the participant consent process ([UK Data Service provide advice](#)).

Researchers should apply appropriate measures to ensure research participants are protected during the full research data lifecycle and must comply with both GDPR and the supplementary Data Protection Act 2018.

Legal, ethical and commercial constraints on the sharing of research data must be considered at the initiation of the research process and throughout research data lifecycle. Such constraints will normally be included in the RDMP.

Researchers are responsible for seeking, where possible, funding for the direct costs of research data management, including the preparation of data for archiving, from their research funder.

Collaborative research involving partners outside the University should normally be the subject of a collaboration agreement, and the arrangements for management of research data must be clearly set out in the agreement.

Researchers should prepare descriptive metadata and documentation for the research data that is being preserved. This should be written in a way to enable research data is found and understood.

Subject to funder terms and conditions metadata should be open even if the datasets themselves cannot be made freely available.

Researchers are responsible for complying with UWE's data security requirements as outlined in [UWE guidance](#), including the [Information Security Toolkit](#), [Research Data Security Guidance](#) and [Data Protection Guidance](#).

6. Retention of research data

In line with UKRI requirements research data should typically be retained for 10 years after the study has been completed (10 years after the end of project when the project is funded; 10 years after active data collection; 10 years from the publication of data results). For clinical projects or projects of major heritage, social or environmental importance data should be kept for 20 years. Funder specific requirements, which may be different from above, must be adhered to.

At the conclusion of a project, research data must be assessed for retention. Researchers need to e.g. weigh up the risk and cost of retaining research data versus the risk of their destruction to take a well-informed decision. Examples of research where retention beyond 10 (or 20 years) is advised, includes research where participants may suffer harm as a result of research, research which has generated IP, or research where the findings are high profile and where there is greater likelihood that scientists will be asked to show data to support further research or reproduce the findings.

Research data not selected for retention must be appropriately and securely destroyed in a timely way, and a record of its destruction made in the RDMP.

- Secure destruction may need to take place because the research data is not deemed sufficiently valuable to warrant the costs of storing and supporting it.
- Research data may need to be securely destroyed where consents, or legal or regulatory requirements, mean that this is necessary.

Metadata about the research data in research data repository shall not be deleted.

7. Sharing and re-using research data

Notwithstanding UWE's commitment to open access research data, the creators of Research Data have a right to reasonable exclusive first use, as recognised in the Concordat on Open Research Data, principle 4. For other justifiable reasons why data publication of research data can be delayed, please refer to [UKRI guidance on best practice](#) in the management of research data.

Generally, associated research data should be made openly available as soon as findings are published, via a trusted repository or publication. Nevertheless, as established, UWE is aligned with the Concordat on Open Research Data and recognises that access may need to be managed in order to maintain confidentiality, guard against unreasonable costs, protect individuals' privacy, respect consent terms, as well as managing security or other risks.

The UWE Research Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that all legal, ethical and contractual requirements are complied with in relation to third party access to data.

Researchers must include a data access statement in any publication. This is a short statement to describe where associated data is held, and under what conditions it can be accessed. Where it is inappropriate for the data to be made openly available, a reference must be made to the location of the metadata.

Research data relating to doctoral theses should be added to the UWE research data repository as part of the completion process, when it is appropriate and safe to do so. Such research data will be subject to an automatic 24-month embargo.

8. Data Ownership

All research data is subject to the University's Intellectual Property Policy, and intellectual property issues related to research data must be considered at the outset. Exclusive rights to research data must not be granted to a third party where this will restrict publication or the ability to make the data openly available for re-use unless this is an agreed condition of funding or of a collaboration agreement.

The intellectual property rights of others in third party data being used for research must be respected. Commitments about IP, either explicit or implicit, must not be made in communications with companies or other external organisations (see the UWE guide on Intellectual Property and Research).

PGR students are advised to check the ownership of their data with the UWE IP team particularly where they are in receipt of funding.

If the UWE Research Project Manager leaves the university, it is the responsibility of the Head of School to ensure that an appropriate handover of data takes place, and a new UWE Research Project Manager with responsibility for the data is immediately in place. In the absence of such an arrangement, the Head of School will be deemed the Research Project Manager in relation to the data.

Research data remains the property of UWE when a researcher leaves the University, unless otherwise vested by the contract. Research Data may not be removed from UWE by a leaving staff member without the express permission in writing from the College Dean Research and Enterprise or Pro-Vice Chancellor Research and Knowledge Exchange, as appropriate.

Further guidance and support

The policy will be implemented in conjunction with advocacy, training and support from Research Integrity Governance and Ethics Team and Library and Learning Services.

Support for research data management is available from:

Manage your research data
UWE Research Data Repository – repository@uwe.ac.uk
Research Data Security
Library Research Support Team – open.research@uwe.ac.uk
Research Integrity Governance and Ethics Team – reserachgovernance@uwe.ac.uk
Data Protection Office – dataprotection@uwe.ac.uk
UWE Learning & Development - My Learning Staff Development Hub (UWE intranet)

Ownership and Oversight

Document name:	Research Data Management Policy
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Equality Analysis:	
First approved by:	UEIC
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Senior Policy Owner:	Director of Research and External Engagement and Library and Learning Services
Policy Author:	Research Integrity Governance and Ethics Manager, REE Open Research Services Manager, Library and Learning Services
Overseeing committee:	UEIC
Compliance measures:	Instances where it is not possible to manage research data in line with the RDM policy will be noted, reviewed and escalated as appropriate.
Related policies, procedures and codes of practice:	GDPR Research Governance Standard UWE Records Management Policy UWE retention schedule Data Protection Policy
Related legislative and/or regulatory requirements	Concordat to Support Research integrity. Research Funder Research Data Management and Open Access policies.

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Author
V1.0	2015	New policy	Richard Bond, Head of Research Administration, RBI
V2.0	Draft May 2022	Major changes: Expansion of scope to include Post Graduate Researchers Revised wording to reflect changes in Data Protection laws, and UWE's requirements relating to data security. Changes to author titles and roles, and Policy owners.	Research Governance Manager, RBI Head of Research Support, Library Services
V2.1	October 2025	Minor changes: restructuring of the text, clarifications, change of the expectation that research data is made openly available after 12 months.	Research Integrity Governance and Ethics Manager, REE Open Research Services Manager, Library and Learning Services

