



UNIVERSITY OF
PLYMOUTH

Research Data Policy

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Research Data Policy

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1.2	Alison Bendall, EMA, JM, Emma Wainman, Cassandra Paxton-Denny, Nick Sharratt, Kate Russell, Tara Healy, Kim Davis	Updated version	02/08/2022		

1. Introduction

1.1 The University of Plymouth recognises that **good practice in research data management and open access to research data are integral to high-quality research**. They protect intellectual and financial investment, support reliable verification of results, and enable additional innovative research.

1.2 Principles:

To facilitate good practice in Research Data Management (RDM) and encourage open access to research data, the University establishes the following principles:

1. Data management planning is embedded in research activities throughout the lifecycle of every project.
2. Research data management practices are compliant with legal, ethical, contractual and funding requirements.
3. Data is well organised and documented from the outset to ensure its integrity, discovery and reusability.
4. Data is stored securely and protected against unauthorised modification or destruction.
5. Data of long-term value is selected for preservation.
6. Researchers recognise the value of research data to the wider community and are committed to making their data open access and usable, *wherever possible* and within an appropriate and defined period.



1.3 Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to make University of Plymouth researchers aware of their responsibility to exercise **good practice in RDM**; and to ensure that their **research data is made openly available for use by others wherever possible**, in a manner consistent with relevant legal, ethical, disciplinary and regulatory frameworks. Adherence to the policy will demonstrate their commitment to research funder mandates, the UKRI Concordat on Open Research Data¹, the *Code of Good Research Practice*, and the *Research Ethics Policy*². The **aims** of the policy are:

1. To set standards of practice for developing a consistent approach to RDM and open data sharing across the University of Plymouth;
2. To provide guidance on the storage, organisation, documentation, preservation, sharing and disposal of research data in accordance to its value and to legal, ethical, contractual and funding requirements;
3. To define roles and responsibilities for the governance of research data;
4. To provide guidance on the development of data management plans for each research proposal that requires the collection or generation of data, and that additional requirements, roles and responsibilities are documented in the plans.

¹ Open Research. Available from: <https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/data-policy/> (accessed 02.08.22)

² University of Plymouth (2018). *Research Ethics Policy & Code of Good Research Practice*. Available from: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/research/governance> (accessed 02.08.22)

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1.4 Audience:

This policy applies to all staff and students of the University that have responsibility for any aspect of research data creation, collection, use, maintenance or disposal.

1.5 Scope:

The policy applies to all research data generated by University of Plymouth researchers, or under the auspices of the University as stated in the *Code of Good Research Practice*, and the *Research Ethics Policy*. In cases when research is funded by a third party, any agreements made with that party concerning intellectual property rights, access rights and the storage of research data take precedence over this policy.

2. Roles and responsibilities

- 2.1 The roles and responsibilities for RDM align with those stated in the '*Information Governance Roles & Responsibilities*' document³. Figure 1 in the guidance provides an overview of the roles, responsibilities and support infrastructure in the context of the research lifecycle.

2.2	Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research	Fulfil the role of <i>Senior Research Data Owner</i> (SRDO) with overall accountability for research data.
2.3	University Research Ethics & Integrity Committee (UREIC)	Chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research ; it is the owner of this policy and has overall responsibility for mandating adherence to it and ensuring the availability of resources to support its implementation. Responsible for: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensuring that RDM measures and procedures are in place to protect against risk.2. Monitoring and reviewing compliance with this policy.
2.4	Faculty Research Ethics & Integrity Committee (FREIC) and sub-committees	The Chairs of FREIC fulfil the role of <i>Data Asset Owners</i> , which makes them accountable for the data assets generated by their Faculty. Each FREIC and sub-committee is responsible for: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Ensuring that data management plans (DMP) have been completed and peer reviewed, before work on a project starts and, if relevant, before granting ethical approval for the proposed research.2. Producing monitoring reports for the <i>University Research Ethics & Integrity Committee</i>.3. Identifying training requirements and providing professional development opportunities for researchers relevant to domain specific data management practice.
2.5	DMP Peer Reviewers	Responsible for peer reviewing data management plans (DMP) and providing feedback to fellow researchers to help them improve their data management practice in alignment with this policy.
2.6	Principal Investigators (PI)⁴	Fulfil the role of <i>Data Asset Steward</i> , and are accountable for ensuring that:

³ University of Plymouth (2019). *Information Governance Policies*. Available from: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/governance/information-governance/policies> (accessed 02.08.22)

⁴ For collaborative external grant projects, the lead University of Plymouth Researcher will assume this role.

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1. Good practice is implemented by all researchers involved in a project.
 2. Data is handled appropriately according to University policies, and legal, ethical, regulatory and contractual requirements.
 3. A DMP is completed and peer reviewed prior to grant application and the project commencing.
 4. The DMP is reviewed and updated throughout the project.
 5. Data is deposited in accordance with section 3 of this policy.
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2.7 **Researchers** Responsible for making themselves aware of and adhering to relevant legislation and regulation, funders' expectations and the requirements stated in section 3 of this policy.

2.8 **Research & Innovation, supported by Library & Digital Support** Responsible for:

1. Defining the core University offering in support of research data management and communicating that to researchers.
2. Providing central guidance and training to support generic good practice in data management and open data deposit.
3. The *Funding Advisory Service* is responsible for providing **cost modelling guidance** to *Principal Investigators* at the start of the data management planning process.

2.9 **Technology & Information Services** Responsible for the **provision and maintenance of core infrastructure** to support RDM and the open deposit and long-term preservation of research data.

3. Requirements

This section outlines the actions which researchers are required to carry out in order to follow the principles stated in 1.2. By fulfilling these requirements, researchers will also ensure commitment to research funder mandates and the RCUK Concordat on Open Research Data. Further information can be found in the [related guidance document](#) (section 2).

3.1 Data management planning

Researchers must ensure that a *data management plan (DMP)* is completed for each new research proposal.

3.2 Ethical and legal compliance

Research data should be created, managed and shared in a manner that is compliant with Intellectual Property (IP) rights, security classification levels, and how legal and ethical restrictions will impact on their ability to share data at the end of the project.

3.3 Organisation, documentation and metadata

Researchers should ensure research data is created and maintained following the data quality standards set in the University's *Data Quality Policy*⁵. Research data should be organised and documented to ensure its future discovery and reusability. Consideration should be given to the use of open or widely available file-formats and metadata standards that will facilitate the discovery, interpretation and reusability of the data.

3.4 Storage and backup

Researchers should ensure that data is stored in a secure location and managed in accordance with the University's *Information Classification and Security Policies*⁶ and any additional ethical, legal, contractual and funder requirements.

3.5 Retention, preservation and disposal

Research data that supports published research findings or is of long-term value must be retained for a minimum of 10 years from collection or creation of the data or publication of the research results (whichever is the latter) or depending on legal, statutory, contractual or funder requirements.

3.6 Sharing and publishing

Research data that supports published research findings or is of long-term value should be considered for open deposit and should be undertaken in accordance with the University's *Information Classification and Security Policies* and any additional ethical, legal, contractual and funder requirements.

⁵ See University of Plymouth's *Information Governance* page <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/governance/information-governance> (accessed 02.08.22)

⁶ University of Plymouth (2022). *Information Classification and Security Policies*. Available from: <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/governance/information-governance/information-classification> and <https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/students-and-family/governance/information-governance/information-security> (accessed 02.08.22).

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4. Research information management systems

The research information management systems support the implementation of this policy and include Symplectic Elements and PEARL. [Guidance link](#).

5. Related policies

- 5.1 [Data Protection Policy](#)
- 5.2 [Data Quality Policy](#)
- 5.3 [Information Governance Roles & Responsibilities](#)
- 5.4 [Information Classification](#)
- 5.5 [Information Security](#)
- 5.6 [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- 5.7 [Records Retention Schedule](#)
- 5.8 [Research Ethics Policy – includes 'Code of Good Research Practice'](#)
- 5.9 [Research Publications and Open Access Policy](#)

6. Further support and guidance

- 6.1 Additional information can be found via the [University's Research Support website](#) and the [RDM online guide](#).