Research Data Governance Policy

Policy Statement

The Research Data Governance Policy is a collection of principles that describe the rules to control the integrity, security, quality, and usage of research data during its lifecycle.

This Policy defines the roles and responsibilities of University research staff, contractors, consultants, internal and external parties in relation to data access, retrieval, storage, disposal, and backup of University research data.

The purpose of the Research Data Governance Policy is to:

- Define the roles and responsibilities for different data creation and usage types, cases and/or situations, and to establish clear lines of accountability.
- Develop best practices for effective research data management and protection.
- Provide principles to protect the University’s research data against internal and external threats (e.g. breach of privacy and confidentiality, or security breach).
- Ensure that the University complies with applicable laws, regulations, exchange and operational standards.
- Ensure that a data trail is effectively documented within the processes associated with accessing, retrieving, exchanging, reporting, managing and storing of research data.

Scope

This Policy applies to all UNSW staff, research students, contractors, consultants, and external parties engaged in research activities associated or affiliated with the University, in all disciplines.

This Policy applies to all research data used or generated during UNSW research. This Policy covers, but is not limited to, research data in any form, including print, electronic, audio visual, backup and archived data.

1. Introduction

Research data is a strategic asset of UNSW and the appropriate governance for management and use of research data is critical to the University’s operations. Lack of governance could expose the University to unwanted risks and may lead to improper management of a UNSW asset.

Research data is a valuable resource. It validates research findings and has long term value as a potential resource for future research and teaching. Good practice in research data governance benefits the wider research community and enhances the public value of research by enabling the data publication, sharing and citation, reusability of research data for future researchers, and reducing the risk of data loss and corruption.

This Policy has been developed in response to the specific and different Data Governance and Data Management needs of the research community. In consequence the Research Data Governance Policy was developed. Further, a UNSW Research Data Governance Framework (RDGF) was also developed.
2. Research Data at UNSW

Research data are the original sources or material that have been created, generated or collated in the conduct of research. They can be digital or non-digital. The response to a particular research question is based on the analysis of the research data. Research data may include but is not limited to:

| Any data which is generated in the conduct of research | Methodologies and workflows |
| Clinical records of treatments and test results | Models, algorithms, scripts |
| Annotated bibliographies and readings | Photographs, films |
| Records of interviews in the form of notes, audio or video recordings | Protein or genetic sequences |
| Notes, audiotapes, videotapes, including those collected during interviews or by other means | Questionnaires, transcripts, codebooks |
| Collection of digital objects acquired and generated during the process of research | References stored in management software (e.g. Zotero, Mendeley, Endnote) |
| Contents of an application (e.g. input, output, logfiles for analysis software, simulation software, schemas) | Responses to surveys or questionnaires |
| Curated data from other research projects | Numerical or graphic results obtained as the output of simulations, modelling or any other software or as the result of analysis of experimental results |
| Database contents (video, audio, text, images) | Any other recorded data that is of significance to research undertaken by the university's researchers. |
| Design portfolios, mock-ups | Slides, artefacts, specimens, samples |
| Documentation of a research journey | Spectra |
| Documents (text, Word), spreadsheets | Standard operating procedures and protocols |
| Drafts of music scores | Survey responses |
| Experimental results and the contents of laboratory notebooks, field notebooks, diaries | Test responses |
| Human/animal materials (e.g. Slides, artefacts, specimens, samples) | Any other source or primary materials, in particular where these may be necessary to validate research results |
| Images or visualisations | Trade secrets, commercial information, materials necessary to be held confidential by a researcher until they are published, or similar information which is protected under law |
| Metadata | Personnel and medical information and similar information the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, such as information that could be used to identify a particular person in a research study |

The following are not considered to be research data and as such are covered by the University's institutional Data Governance Policy:

- Administrative data – which consists of data such as payroll, student enrolments, research management, etc. This kind of data is subject to the University’s Data Governance Policy.
- Learning and Teaching data – which consists of data relating to students who are studying at UNSW and their progress in their courses. It includes data which is stored in Learning Management Systems and related solutions that are part of the teaching function of the University.
- Research publications.
- Research management systems – including but not limited to Info Ed, F1 Ethics, GRIS, BORIS.
- Library management systems – including but not limited to Research Outputs System (ROS) and UNSWorks.

3. Policy Framework and Principles

The following framework outlines the principles and minimum standards that guide the University’s data governance procedures and must be adhered to by all personnel working on UNSW research projects:
3.1. Governance

Research Data Governance at UNSW is managed by the Research Data Governance Group. It is comprised of the following members, who serve according to the Terms of Reference for the Committee.

- Chief Data & Analytics Officer.
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Infrastructure).
- Director Research Technology Services.
- Representative of Deputy Vice Chancellor Research.
- 2 x Researcher representatives from STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) disciplines.
- 2 x Researcher representatives from HASS (Humanities and Social Science) disciplines.
- Representative from UNSW Library.
- Representative from Research Integrity.
- Representative from UNSW IT.

3.2. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Data Custodian**: UNSW, rather than any individual or Organisational Unit, is the Custodian of the data and any information derived from the data. Original research data and primary materials generated in the conduct of research at the University will be owned and retained by the University, subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical, and/or funding body requirements. Research project members are permitted to retain a copy of the research data and primary materials for future use, subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical or funding body requirements.

- **Chief Data & Analytics Officer**: is responsible for the overall management of the University’s Data and Information Governance.

- **Data Governance Steering Committee**: is responsible for defining the overall vision and Data and Information Governance principles and oversees initiatives designed to result in more effective and efficient use of data across UNSW.

- **Research Data Governance Group** is the group delegated by the Data Governance Steering Committee for the governance of research data at UNSW.

- **Research Data Owners**: are typically Chief Investigators or Principal Investigators and are accountable for ensuring effective local protocols are in place to guide the appropriate use of their data. They (or delegated Research Data Stewards) are responsible for ensuring that all legal, regulatory, and policy requirements are met in relation to the specific data and data conforms to legal, regulatory, exchange, and operational standards. This includes accountability for the classification of data in accordance with the Data Classification Standard. Access to, and use of, institutional research data will generally be administered by the appropriate Research Data Owner (refer Appendix 2).
The Research Data Owner must ensure the process for the administration of data is in accordance with the Research Data Management Life Cycle (refer Appendix 1).

- **Research Data Stewards**: Data Stewards, who are responsible for the quality and integrity, implementation and enforcement of data management within their research project. Every research dataset may have one or more Data Stewards (refer Appendix 2).

  The Research Data Steward will classify and approve the access, under delegation from a Research Data Owner, based upon the appropriateness of the User's role and the intended use. Where necessary, approval from the Research Data Owner may be required prior to authorisation of access to other users.

- **Research Data Creators**: are people who create original research data during the course of a research project at UNSW. This includes academics, professional and technical staff, students, collaborators at other institutions, contractors, and consultants who participate in a research project.

- **Data Specialists**: Data Specialists are subject matter experts in relation to the data. They are specialists who are responsible for providing ongoing support in respect of research data and related systems.

### 3.3. Quality and Integrity:

All research projects must ensure appropriate data standards are followed to uphold the quality and integrity of the data they create, access, and manage.

Data records must be kept up-to-date throughout every stage of the research project and in an auditable and traceable manner. Data should only be collected for legitimate uses, to optimise research outcomes and to add value to the University. Extraction, manipulation and reporting of data must be done only to perform University business, including teaching or research.

Where appropriate, before any data (other than publicly available data) is used or shared outside the University, verification with the Research Data Owner or Research Data Steward is required to ensure the quality, integrity and security of data will not be compromised.

Data shall be retained and disposed of in an appropriate manner in accordance with the University's Recordkeeping Policy and associated procedures under the State Records Act 1988 (NSW)

### 3.4. Classification and Security:

People working on UNSW Research Projects should refer to the Data Classification Standard and the Data Handling Guideline for further information.

Appropriate data security measures (see Data Classification Standard and Data Handling Guidelines) must be adhered to at all times to assure the safety, quality and integrity of the University's research data.

Data stored in an electronic format must be protected by appropriate electronic safeguards and/or physical access controls that restrict access only to authorised user(s), including research data in any University or external data repository (databases etc.).

This Policy applies to data in all formats (see Section 2 for examples).

If research is undertaken in collaboration with other institutions, government agencies, or any third party, a written agreement should be in place to cover Research Data ownership, sharing, storage, accessibility, retention and disposal.

### 4. Further Assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding this Policy should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further assistance be needed, the staff member should contact the Contact Officer for clarification.
### Accountabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Responsible Officer</td>
<td>Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Research Infrastructure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Chief Data &amp; Analytics Officer, UNSW Planning &amp; Performance</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Supporting Information

#### Legislative Compliance
This Policy supports the University’s compliance with the following legislation:
- Nil

#### Supporting Documents
- Data Governance Policy
- Data Classification Standard
- Data Handling Guideline
- Collibra Data Governance Centre: https://unsw.collibra.com
- Information Security Management System
- Recordkeeping Policy
- UNSW Privacy Management Plan
- UNSW Risk Management Framework
- Handling Research Material & Data Procedure
- Authorship and Resolving Disputes Between Authors Procedure
- Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct Procedure
- Research Code of Conduct
- Research Export Controls Procedure
- IT Security Standards

#### Related Documents
- Collibra Data Governance Centre: https://unsw.collibra.com
- Information Security Management System
- Recordkeeping Policy
- UNSW Privacy Management Plan
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- Handling Research Material & Data Procedure
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#### File Number
- Nil

### Definitions and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access</td>
<td>The right to read, copy, or query data</td>
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<tr>
<td>Data set</td>
<td>A term used to denote a set of research data.</td>
</tr>
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<td>Chief Data &amp; Analytics Officer</td>
<td>Senior officer of UNSW responsible for Data and Information Governance.</td>
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<td>CDAO</td>
<td>Senior officer of UNSW responsible for Data and Information Governance.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Institutional Data</td>
<td>The representation of facts, concepts or instructions in a formalised (consistent and agreed) manner suitable for communication, interpretation or processing by human or automatic means. Typically comprised of numbers, words or images. The format and presentation of data may vary with the context in which it is used. Data is not Information until it is used in a particular context for a particular purpose. (Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC), 2013) Data is typically considered to be conceptually at the lowest level of abstraction. In the context of this policy this term includes all institutional data including research, administrative, and learning and teaching artefacts.</td>
</tr>
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## Definitions and Acronyms

### Research Data

**Research data** are the original sources or material that have been created, generated or collated in the conduct of research. They can be digital or non-digital. The response to a particular research question is based on the analysis of the research data.

Research data may include but is not limited to:

- any data which is generated in the conduct of research
- clinical records of treatments and test results
- annotated bibliographies and readings
- records of interviews in the form of notes, audio or video recordings
- audiotapes, videotapes
- collection of digital objects acquired and generated during the process of research
- contents of an application (e.g. input, output, logfiles for analysis software, simulation software, schemas)
- curated data from other research projects
- database contents (video, audio, text, images)
- design portfolios, mock-ups
- documentation of the research journey
- documents (text, Word), spreadsheets
- drafts of music scores
- experimental results and the contents of laboratory notebooks, field notebooks, diaries
- human/animal materials (e.g. slides, artefacts, specimens, samples)
- images or visualisations
- metadata
- methodologies and workflows
- models, algorithms, scripts
- photographs, films
- protein or genetic sequences
- questionnaires, transcripts, codebooks
- references stored in management software (e.g. Zotero, Mendeley, Endnote)
- responses to surveys or questionnaires
- numerical or graphic results obtained as the output of simulations, modelling or any other software or as the result of analysis of experimental results
- slides, artefacts, specimens, samples
- spectra
- standard operating procedures and protocols
- survey and test responses
- any other source or primary materials, in particular where these may be necessary to validate research results
- trade secrets, commercial information, materials necessary to be held confidential by a researcher until they are published, or similar information which is protected under law
- personnel and medical information and similar information the disclosure of which would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy, such as information that could be used to identify a particular person in a research study
- any other recorded data that is of significance to research undertaken by the University’s researchers.

### Examples of research data

- any data which is generated in the conduct of research
- clinical records
- annotated bibliographies
- records of interviews
- audiotapes, videotapes
- digital objects acquired and generated during the process of research
- contents of an application (e.g. input, output, logfiles)
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<td>• Library management systems data - including but not limited to Research Outputs System (ROS) and UNSWorks</td>
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| Data Creator | Data Creators are persons responsible for the creation of research data and primary materials. Original research data and primary materials generated in the conduct of research at the University will be owned and retained by the University, subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical, or funding body requirements. Research project members are permitted to retain a copy of the research data and primary materials for future use, subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical or funding body requirements. |

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<th>Data Governance Steering Committee</th>
<th>DGSC</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Data Governance Committee</td>
<td>A University wide committee, with members consisting of Data Executives, Data Owners, Data Stewards and designated Data Users, senior academic and professional staff members. The DGSC has oversight of the Data Governance Program and is responsible for endorsing the procedures related to the Data Governance Policy and the Research Data Governance Policy. The DGSC also assures appropriate data processes are used in all of the University's data-driven decisions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Research Data Governance Group | Is responsible for providing consultation and input in relation to research data governance, data quality, and research data management activities across UNSW |

| Research Data Management Life Cycle | Refers to the process for planning, creating, managing, storing, implementing, protecting, improving and disposing of all research data across the University |

| Research Data Owner | Accountable for research data; including, but not limited to: the collection, development, maintenance, distribution, and security of research data. Research Data Owners are expected to have high-level knowledge and expertise in the content of data within their responsible area. UNSW, rather than any individual or Organisational Unit, is the Custodian of the data and any information derived from the data. |

| Data Quality | Refers to the validity, relevance and currency of data. |

| Data Specialist | Data Specialists are subject matter experts in relation to the data or information asset. |

| Research Data Steward | Every research data set may have one or more Research Data Stewards, who are accountable for the quality and integrity, implementation and enforcement of data management within their research project. The Research Data Steward will classify and consider approving the access, under delegation from a Research Data Owner, based upon the appropriateness of the User's role and the intended use. This role is a member of the research project who oversees the capture, maintenance and dissemination of data for a particular research project. Research Data Stewards are responsible for assuring the requirements of the Research Data Governance Policy and related Data Governance standards are followed within their research project. |

| Research Data User | Any staff member, contractor, consultant, third party or authorised agent who accesses, inputs, amends, deletes, extracts, or analyses research data. Data Users are not generally involved in the governance process but are responsible for the quality assurance of data. Appropriate security and approval is required from Research Data Stewards to maintain the quality and integrity of the Data. Any member of the University community who has access to University research data, and thus is entrusted with the protection of that data. |
### Definitions and Acronyms

| Information Security Management System (ISMS) | The ISMS provide Information Security Governance and sets out people, process and technology related controls to assure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of all UNSW data. The ISMS is a response to UNSW Data Classification and Data Handling requirements. Moreover, the deployment and measurement of ISMS controls provides input into the risk management process enabling informed business decisions. |
| Integrity or data integrity | Refers to the accuracy and consistency of data over its entire life-cycle. |
| Management Board (MB) | The senior executive team of the University. |
| Record | Any recorded information made or received by a staff member of the university in the course of undertaking their duties. Records are evidence or information about University activities. They exit in any format. |
| Security | Refers to the safety of University data in relation to the following criteria: Access control; Authentication; Effective incident detection, reporting and solution; Physical and virtual security; and change management and version control. |

### Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
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**Research Data Governance Policy**

**Version:** 0.8 Effective  
[Consultation draft 19 March to 6 April 2018]
APPENDIX 1 – RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT LIFE CYCLE

Research Data Management Life Cycle refers to the process for planning, creating, managing, storing, implementing, protecting, improving and disposing of all institutional research data of UNSW.

The Research Data Management Lifecycle

Figure 2.0 – Research Data Management Lifecycle
APPENDIX 2 – RESEARCH DATA GOVERNANCE ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>High Level Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Data Owner</td>
<td>• Provides leadership in resolving conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Leads the principles, policies and standards across the Data Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure the administration of data with the Research Data Management life cycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Data Steward</td>
<td>• Responsible for checking data quality, understanding and ensuring the enforcement of data management in research projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Identify and fix data quality issues in relation to the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Provide defined processes for conformance of data to acceptable levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Data Creator</td>
<td>• Is academic researcher who creates original research data during an academic appointment with UNSW</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ensure the management and maintenance of data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Specialist/ Technical Support</td>
<td>• Business and Technical SMEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• IT/Source System/Application SMEs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Responsible for following UNSW policies, standards, procedures and guidelines in relation to data governance and data management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>