

## **Policy Redesign Project**

*All policies and procedures are being reviewed as part of this project. This document is pending review, but remains in effect until the review is carried out.*

# **Management of Research Data and Primary Materials Policy**

**Establishment:** Academic Senate, 29 June 2016

**Last Amended:**

**Nature of Amendment:**

**Date Last Reviewed:**

**Responsible Officer:** Director, Research Services

## **1. Scope and Objectives**

This policy addresses the following aspects of research conduct within the University, in compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research* (the Code) and relevant legislation, such as the *Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth)*, and the *South Australian State Records Act 1997*:

- management of research data;
- ownership of research data;
- storage, retention and disposal of research data; and
- security and access to research data.

## **2. Definitions**

**General Disposal Schedule (GDS)** means a document/s pursuant to the *South Australian State Records Act 1997* that regulate/s retention periods for university records. GDS 24 (General Disposal Schedule 24, version 3) formally regulates retention periods for research-related university records for all South Australian universities. GDS 24 was set up jointly by the South Australian universities and State Records of South Australia, taking into account all relevant retention periods mentioned in the Code, and is the primary legal source for determining minimum retention periods for university records. A summary of key retention periods is set out in [Appendix 1](#).

**Open access licence** means a permissive copyright licence that provides the freedom to copy, use, modify and distribute a work that would otherwise fall under a restricting copyright licence. The version most often used is the Creative Commons (CC) Licence. A CC license is used when an author wants to give people the right to share, use and build upon a work they have created.

**Research** in accordance with the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) Specifications means the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as

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to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and development, one that recognises research as comprising creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise applications.

**Research Data** means the primary and secondary data, records, files or other elements that form the basis of the main inferences, observations, findings, conclusions, outcomes or elements of a research project or publication, irrespective of the form in which it exists, e.g., in print, electronic, physical, multi-media or other forms.

**Research Data Management Plan** means a formally recorded and updated plan for the proper storage and retention of research records/data and primary research materials that includes consideration of the following matters:

- what type of data will be created, its value and sensitivity, including confidentiality requirements;
- the format and volume of the data;
- management/storage procedures and facilities, with arrangements including ownership and responsibility for data management in the case of collaborative research;
- identification and management of risks emanating from storing research data other than on University-approved networks and in University facilities (for example, when travelling or collaborating overseas);
- in the case of digital storage, that metadata describing the research data complies with accepted standards regarding identification, retrieval, terms of access and retention/disposal; and
- arrangements for longer term storage and disposal after the research is completed.

**Researcher** means any individual who is engaged in research, as defined above, under the auspices of Flinders University, including staff, students and affiliates.

**The Code** means the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

### 3. Policy Principles

#### 3.1 Management of Research Data

**3.1.1** Research data must be retained and stored appropriately to enable the accuracy, veracity and basis of findings and methods to be established, scrutinised and tested.

**3.1.2** Research data created under the auspices of Flinders University are University records. Researchers have primary responsibility for their own research data storage and record keeping in accordance with the provisions of this policy, the *Records Management Policy*, and any relevant strategies, guidelines and procedures established pursuant to these.

**3.1.3** It is recommended that the lead researcher / chief investigator for a research project establish a [research data management plan](#) prior to commencing the research. This is essential when required by funding agency regulations. University eResearch software is available to support this purpose.

#### 3.2 Storage, Retention and Disposal of Research Data

**3.2.1** Unless there is a binding agreement that provides otherwise, all research data and materials generated from research conducted under the auspices of Flinders University must be stored on Flinders University approved computer networks (soft copy) or in Flinders University facilities (hard copy or form). Support can be obtained from University Records and/or eResearch. If not stored at a Flinders approved site, prior approval is required by the Dean / Head of the relevant School / Business Unit.

**3.2.2** Researchers will ensure that research data and materials are retained in accordance with the minimum periods prescribed in GDS 24 (refer Appendix 1). If legislative or contractual requirements, or

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discipline conventions, necessitate retention for longer periods than the minimum periods prescribed in GDS 24, researchers are responsible for notifying the Manager, University Records to ensure appropriate retention is provided. Where there is a conflict, the longest retention period applies.

### **3.3 Secure Research Data Storage and Record Keeping**

**3.3.1** Hard-copy research data should be stored in a secure and well-managed storage facility.

**3.3.2** Electronic research data should be stored on University file servers for which data are backed-up on a regular basis.

**3.3.3** Research data should be kept in durable formats to aid preservation and access.

**3.3.4** Data obtained or generated externally to the University (e.g., recordings of interviews) should be stored as safely, securely and confidentially as possible until such data can be stored within University facilities or on University servers, depending on the data format.

**3.3.5** Appropriate records must be prepared and maintained for all research data, both in the active research phase and for longer term storage, in accordance, where applicable, with a research data management plan. Metadata describing research data must comply with accepted standards, and must provide information regarding identification, retrieval, terms of access, and retention/disposal.

**3.3.6** In projects that span more than one institution, an agreement should be developed at the outset covering the storage of research data and primary materials within each institution, which should comply with relevant legislation, policies, guidelines and contractual arrangements.

### **3.4 Security and Access to Research Data**

**3.4.1** Researchers must ensure that access to their research data is restricted to approved staff and students, or to third parties in adherence with existing contracts, on a 'need-to-know' basis. In the case of electronic research data, password protection should be used to restrict access to individuals requiring such access.

**3.4.2** In determining the level of security relevant to the management and storage of research data, consideration will be given to factors including: the requirements of a funding body, ethics clearances and regulations, privacy, confidentiality, and cultural and intellectual property requirements.

**3.4.3** At the completion of a project, or suitable project phase, research data should normally be made available under an open access licence (such as a Creative Commons licence) or by controlled access through a system of permissions and authentications, in accordance with relevant contractual and other requirements.

**3.4.4** Access to research data may be limited by confidentiality provisions, normally for the purposes of protecting:

- a third party who is the subject of the research;
- intellectual property that may be the subject of a commercial or contractual arrangement; or
- confidential source materials.

Any confidentiality provisions that apply to research intended for publication should, as far as possible, provide for data and records to be kept in a way that will enable a third party to have access to them without breaching confidentiality, and, where practicable, for data and records to be available for discussion with other researchers.

**3.4.5** Researchers given confidential access to research data and information must maintain that confidentiality.

**3.4.6** Requirements in regards to information security can be found in the University's *Information Security Policy*.

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### 3.5 Ownership of Research Data

**3.5.1** Research data generated by Flinders University staff and students are the property of Flinders University, unless otherwise specified in an agreement, e.g., with an external funding body.

**3.5.2** Ownership of intellectual property generated by Flinders University researchers is subject to the *Intellectual Property Policy*, unless otherwise specified in an agreement.

## 4. Responsibilities

**4.1** The Dean of a School or Head of a Business Unit, assisted by the School Associate Dean of Research (if applicable), is responsible for:

- promoting and implementing this policy within their School or Unit, and for monitoring compliance;
- ensuring that the School or Unit operates within strategies, policies, guidelines and procedures that promote appropriate research data management; and
- reporting on compliance with this policy to the Executive Dean of Faculty as required.

**4.2** For issues identified regarding potential non-compliance with this policy, which are unable to be resolved at School level, advice must be sought from Associate Heads/Deans of Research (or equivalent positions) via the Faculty Research Committee, or equivalent research monitoring body convened at the Faculty level. Where this is not appropriate, due to a conflict of interest or similar, issues should be raised with the Executive Dean directly. The Manager, University Records may also be contacted for advice.

**4.3** Executive Deans are responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy within their Faculty, and reporting any significant issues to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research).

## Appendix 1

Type of Research Data / Record / Primary Material	Minimum Retention Period
General research data and results.	TEMPORARY – Can destroy 5 years after date of publication or 5 years after conclusion or abandonment of project
Research data from projects involving gene therapy, e.g., patient records.	PERMANENT
Research data created in the conduct of a research project, including clinical trials, which: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• are controversial</li><li>• arouse widespread scientific or other interest</li><li>• involve the use of major new or innovative techniques</li><li>• involve eminent researchers, or</li><li>• have the potential to cause major impacts on the environment, society or human health.</li></ul>	PERMANENT
Research data from clinical trials.	TEMPORARY – Can destroy 15 years after action completed

Research data created in the conduct of clinical trials that lead to a patent.	TEMPORARY – Can destroy 10 years after expiry of patent
Records relating to the actual practice or performance of research including clinical trials. Includes monitoring of progress.	TEMPORARY Adults – Can destroy 15 years after research project completed Minors – Can destroy 30 years after research project completed
Research data created in the conduct of research projects that are not clinical trials, but the outcomes of which lead to a patent.	TEMPORARY – Can destroy 7 years after expiry of patent
Research data for short-term research projects that are for assessment purposes only, such as research projects completed by students.	TEMPORARY – Can destroy 1 year after last action

## Related Links

[Academic Status Policy](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Copyright Act 1968](#)

[Information Security Policy \(PDF\)](#)

[Intellectual Property Policy](#)

[National Principles of Intellectual Property Management for Publicly Funded Research 2013](#)

[Privacy Act 1988](#)

[Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#)

[Records Management Policy](#)

[State Records Act 1997](#)

[Universities of South Australia General Disposal Schedule No. 24, version 3](#)