

Management and Storage of Research Data and Materials Policy

Section 1 - Rationale and Scope

(1) The Management and Storage of Research Data and Materials Policy outlines the responsibilities of the University, Heads of Schools, Research Centres and Institutes, and researchers, with respect to the retention, storage, accessibility, and disposal of all research data and materials in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) (ACRCR) and other legislative, ethical and contractual requirements.

(2) This Policy applies to all staff and students who carry out research under the auspices of UNE, that is, as part of their association with, employment by and/or enrolment at UNE. This includes theses and dissertations but excludes coursework units.

(3) This Policy must be read in conjunction with other related policies and guidelines.

Section 2 - Principles

(4) This Policy is based on the principle that research data and materials provide the basis from which all subsequent research publications and other outcomes are derived. Therefore, research data and materials must be managed to ensure their security and integrity, to allow for the potential of further research, and/or to allow claims made in publications to be verified and to honour any confidentiality, contractual or intellectual property agreements.

Section 3 - Policy

Responsibilities

(5) The University is responsible for:

- a. ensuring compliance of the University with the requirements of the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#);
- b. providing facilities for storage of research materials;
- c. funding the development, implementation and maintenance of institutional computer storage for research data; and
- d. enabling inter-institutional sharing where data are of national importance.

(6) The Director Research Services is responsible for:

- a. overseeing research materials and data management (retention, sharing and disposal) across the University, and where appropriate, on an inter-institutional basis; and
- b. developing and disseminating this policy and supporting documents for the management of research materials and data.

(7) The Director Library Services and University Librarian and the Chief Information Officer, as provisioned within the financial resources and priorities of UNE, are responsible for:

- a. developing, implementing and maintaining centrally supported computer storage for research data and a research repository for the provision of information regarding securely stored research data; and
- b. developing and disseminating procedures and providing training and support for UNE researchers and managers for research data management.

(8) Heads of School, Research Centres and Institutes are responsible for:

- a. implementing guidelines and procedures on the retention of research materials and data relevant to their research discipline(s) and specialisations;
- b. allocating facilities for the safe and secure storage of research materials and data, as appropriate to the discipline;
- c. engaging researchers within the cost centre with their obligations and training opportunities in the storage of data on the University's data storage system; and
- d. ensuring that the disposal of research materials and data within their School/Research Centre/Institute is undertaken consistent with UNE Policies, and legislative, ethical and contractual requirements.

(9) Researchers, consistent with confidentiality, ethical, legislative, University and/or contractual requirements, are responsible for:

- a. maintaining accurate records of research materials and data, and ensuring that these records and the research materials and data are securely stored, including data held in computing systems;
- b. managing the storage of and accessibility to their research materials and data in a durable, indexed and retrievable form;
- c. ensuring that their research data are stored in centrally supported storage and information is provided for the research repository;
- d. enabling the sharing of their data;
- e. retaining the research materials and data at a minimum, for a period identified in this policy, and, if the results of the research are challenged, until the matter is resolved; and
- f. disposing of research materials and data safely at the end of the retention period.

Storage and Retention

(10) Research materials and data, and records of those must be kept in a format and for a period that is consistent with legislative, ethical, and contractual requirements. The [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#), recommends that:

- a. in general, research data should be retained for a minimum period of 5 years from the date of publication;
- b. for short-term research projects that are for assessment purposes only, such as research projects completed by Students, retaining research data for 12 months after the completion of the project may be sufficient;
- c. for most clinical trials, retaining research data for 15 years or more may be necessary;
- d. for areas such as gene therapy, research data must be retained permanently (e.g. patient records); and
- e. if the work has community or heritage value, research data should be kept permanently, preferably within a national collection.

(11) Research materials should be retained locally in the School/Research Centre/Institute in which they are generated or in a recognised museum or collection for as long as is practical.

(12) Research data should be stored both locally and centrally where possible and documented in the research repository.

- a. Research data unable to be stored centrally (e.g. third party research data) should also be documented in the research repository.
- b. Individual researchers should hold copies of research data for their own use.

Ownership

(13) Research materials and data and the research records created or developed by researchers and the intellectual property in and associated with these are owned by the University, unless otherwise agreed in writing between the researchers and the University or the University and third parties.

(14) The University will remain custodian of research materials and data acquired through research undertaken by its researchers, as defined in this Policy, unless those research materials and data are owned by a third party or subject to a formal collaborative agreement.

(15) If a researcher moves from UNE, research materials and data must remain at UNE unless there is a written agreement produced through the Legal Services that states otherwise.

Collaborative Research Across Institutions

(16) Where a research project is undertaken in collaboration with another institution, any written agreement should cover the ownership, storage, retention and disposal of research materials and data (refer to UNE's Collaborative Research Rule).

(17) Data may be transferred to a nationally controlled inter-institutional database to facilitate collaborative research across institutions.

Data Accessibility

(18) Research data must be available for discussion with other researchers, subject to legal, contractual, confidentiality and ethical considerations.

- a. Researchers may place restrictions on access to research data in accordance with this policy and its related procedures but are encouraged to make the data as openly available as possible.
- b. The research repository must include information to enable identification of any restrictions on access to research data.
- c. Researchers given approved access to confidential materials and data must maintain confidentiality.

Disposal of Research Materials and Data

(19) Disposal of research materials and data must not occur prior to the expiration of the appropriate retention period as identified in this policy or prior to the resolution of any challenge to the results of the research, whichever is the longer period.

(20) Disposal of research materials and data must be in compliance with legislative, ethical, confidentiality, contractual and UNE policy requirements.

Section 4 - Definitions

(21) Research is defined in the Australian Research Council ERA 2012 Submission Guidelines as:

- a. the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way such as to develop new concepts, methodologies and understandings, and could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

(22) Research Data means data as facts, observations, computer results, measurements or experiences on which an argument, theory or test is based. Data may be numerical, descriptive or visual. Data may be raw or analysed, experimental or observational. Data include records that are necessary for the reconstruction and evaluation of reported results of research and the events and processes leading to those results, regardless of the form or the media on which they may be recorded.

(23) Research Materials are defined as primary materials which are physical objects such as biological samples, mineral samples, survey questionnaires, measurements, recordings, texts and computer notes, from which research data may be derived.

(24) Metadata are descriptions of research data and/or research material sets in accordance with established metadata schema.

(25) Research repository is a system which enables the gathering, storage and curation of metadata about research data, materials and collections, and facilitates their discovery.

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	27th July 2015
Review Date	7th December 2015
Approval Authority	
Approval Date	7th December 2012
Expiry Date	To Be Advised
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