

# Management of Research Data and Records Policy (MPF1242)

## RELEVANT LEGISLATION

[Copyright Act 1968 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Privacy Act 1988 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Electronic Transactions Act 1999 \(Cwlth\)](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 \(Cwlth\)](#), pp2.1-2.3,

[National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#)

[Public Records Act 1973 \(Vic\)](#)

[Information Privacy Act 2000 \(Vic\)](#)

[Health Records Act 2001 \(Vic\)](#)

[Evidence Act 1958 \(Vic\)](#) and from 01/01/2010 [Evidence Act 2008 \(Vic\)](#)

[Protected Disclosure Act 2012 \(Vic\)](#)

[Statute 14.1 - Intellectual Property](#)

[Regulation 17.1.R8 - University Code of Conduct for Research](#)

## SCOPE

This policy applies to research undertaken by University of Melbourne students, staff and honorary staff.

## POLICY

### 1. Management of research data and records

1.1. The University will ensure that research data and records created by University students, staff and honorary staff are:

- accurate, complete, authentic and reliable
- identifiable, retrievable and available when needed
- secure
- compliant with legal obligations and the rules of funding bodies.

1.2. The University will retain research data and records for a minimum of five years after publication or public release of the work of research. Refer to pp. 485-517 of the Records Retention and Disposal Authority for full details of obligations.

### 2. Researchers

2.1. Researchers will:

- develop appropriate processes for the collection, storage, use, re-use, access and retention of research data and records associated with their research program, including confidential research data and records
- incorporate this information into their research data management plan
- register this information in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established.

2.2. Researchers will establish and document clear procedures for the collection, ownership and storage of research data and records when involved in a joint research project, collaborative research or research undertaken in accordance with a contractual agreement, noting that:

- when a research project is undertaken under a contractual agreement the principal investigator has overall responsibility for the management of data and records
- in the case of multi-institutional projects the institution of the principal investigator is ultimately responsible.

2.3. Researchers will:

- ensure that the integrity and security of their research data and records is maintained, and that this material is stored in a retrievable way
- be aware of confidentiality restrictions, any relevant agreements that affect access to or disclosure of information and report any breach of confidentiality to the head of department
- plan for the ongoing custodial responsibilities for the research data and records at the conclusion of the research project or on departure from the University, including information about access and potential re-use of the data and future deposit into open access research databases where such action complies with all legal, ethical and confidentiality agreements on the data, including copyright, privacy and intellectual property
- negotiate with their head of department for the relocation of data and records within the University
- make recommendations to the head of department for destruction of research data and records in accordance with all of the relevant requirements and legislation
- ensure that research students under their supervision are fully informed about this policy and take joint responsibility with students for the fulfilment of these responsibilities, including the registration of data at the conclusion of the project as outlined in section 4.4.

### 3. Heads of departments

3.1. Heads of departments will:

- authorise the procedures adopted by researchers and student researchers (following consultation with their supervisor) for the storage of their research data and records
- authorise the destruction of research data and records on the recommendation of the chief investigator and record details in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established
- authorise the destruction of student researchers' data and records and record details in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established
- establish and implement departmental processes for the storage and retention of research data and records, including recording of information about research data generated in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established
- ensure that researchers who leave the University have adequately planned for the ongoing custodial responsibilities for the research data and records in compliance with the policy as per

- section 2.3, and that these plans are recorded in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established
- ensure that University and departmental policy and procedures are adequately disseminated to researchers
- negotiate with researchers for the relocation of research data and records within the University and record details in a local department register, or in the Central Research Data Registry if a department register is not established
- ensure that staff and students conducting research involving human participants are aware of their responsibilities and related special compliance issues of research data and records collected in the course of their research
- ensure that staff are aware of the need to report any breach of confidentiality to the head of department
- secure and/or provide suitable physical and electronic (or virtual) storage space for research data and records.

3.2. Heads of departments will ensure the provision of expert advice on the creation, storage and retention of electronic data, including advice on technological obsolescence and migration requirements; ensuring systems reliability and continuing operation; and facilitating access to electronic data of continuing value over time. Where this expert advice is not available within the division, researchers should seek assistance from Central IT Services.

#### 4. Research students

4.1. Research students will be jointly responsible with their supervisor, for the collection, storage, security and use of research data and records including confidential research data and records, in accordance with University and department procedures.

4.2. Research students will establish collection and storage procedures for their research data and records that are acceptable to their supervisor. This information must be placed in a research data management plan.

4.3. Research students will negotiate appropriate arrangements with their supervisor for the security of research data and records involving human participants. These arrangements must be outlined in their application for ethics clearance.

4.4. Research students will deposit research data and records associated with their thesis within their department immediately following thesis submission (to ensure it is managed appropriately over time). Students will also provide their supervisor with full details of the location of research data and records.

#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Procedures and Guidelines for the Management of Research Records and Data](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Records Retention and Disposal Authority](#) (pp. 485-517)
- [Records Retention and Disposal Procedure](#)
- [Research Data Management Plan template](#)

#### DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
<b>Central Research Data Registry</b>	This is an institution-wide record of all research data and records stored in the university. At a minimum, the Central Registry will include a description of the research data and records, the name(s) of associated researchers and projects, the

	location of the data (digital and analogue), access restrictions, and relocation, retention and disposal period.
<b>Confidential research data and records</b>	<p>Research data and records generated or compiled in research projects may be confidential or secret. Examples of confidential material include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research data and records which link the individual human participant with the study like signed consent forms, master lists of names and addresses or matching codes for a current study or similar listings which may be held for a period of time for a follow up study. Personal information is protected under Privacy legislation.</li> <li>• Data which is sensitive (for example identified highly personal data, data which may be incriminating either to the provider of the data or to a third party, personal data which although not identified by name is in such a form (such as a case study or life history that it may be able to identify the subject; data which even if not sensitive may identify people (for example photographs, videotape, audiotape).</li> <li>• Data that may cause harm to a third party should it be released.</li> <li>• Information protected by a contract of secrecy or non-disclosure. The research may be considered “commercially valuable” or “trade secret” (see below for “Commercial in confidence”. Similarly research conducted for Government or other third party, may also be under a contract of non-disclosure (confidentiality agreement). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o <b>Commercial in confidence</b> Research material of a sensitive or confidential nature which has possible patent, trademarks or intellectual property implications.</li> <li>o <b>Breach of confidentiality</b> Is considered to have occurred where: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> disclosure of research information with imposed confidentiality restrictions has occurred</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> a formal confidentiality or non-disclosure agreement has been broken</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> confidential data has entered the public domain, for example, published on web.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Electronic data and records</b>	Data and records created and/or maintained by means of electronic equipment and which may also be communicated through electronic means.
<b>Head of department</b>	The designated head of a recognised organisational unit, including a graduate school, department, cooperative research centre or research institute.
<b>Research</b>	<p>Research is original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight. It:</p> <p>“... includes work of direct relevance to the needs of commerce, industry, and to the public and voluntary sectors; scholarship; the invention and generation of ideas, images, performances, artefacts including design, where these [aim to] lead to new or substantially improved insights; and the use of existing knowledge in experimental development to produce new or substantially improved materials, devices, products and processes, including design and construction. It excludes routine testing and routine analysis of materials, components and processes such as for the maintenance of national standards, as distinct from the development of new analytical techniques. It also excludes the development of teaching materials that do not embody original research.”</p>

<b>Researchers</b>	A researcher is any staff member or honorary staff member involved in research at or in connection with the University of Melbourne.
<b>Research data</b>	<p>Data are facts, observations 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 includes: laboratory notebooks; field notebooks; primary research data (including research data in hardcopy or in computer readable form); questionnaires; audiotapes; videotapes; models; photographs; films; test responses. Research collections may include slides; artefacts; specimens; samples. Provenance information about the data might also be included: the how, when, where it was collected and with what (for example, instrument). The software code used to generate, annotate or analyse the data may also be included.</p> <p>In the creative arts, data includes the creative artefacts of human expression that have emerged via text, visual arts, performing arts and music where both the expressive artefact and the process of creating that artefact are the objects of investigation. Data can be ephemeral and multifaceted and should therefore be thought of as the shifting and constantly re-evaluated set of emergent possibilities, materialities and ideas that find embodiment in the final artwork. For this mode of research, a durable record of the response to the data should be maintained, for example, as a visual diary, recording or journal (see research records).</p>
<b>Research data management plan</b>	A research data management plan (DMP) sets out local procedures and responsibilities for the management of research data and records for a research group or project. The DMP must, at least, ensure that the requirements of this policy are met, but should also include details of specific local requirements (for example, those related to ethics approval, intellectual property and attribution).
<b>Research records</b>	Records are documents containing data or information of any kind and in any form (including both paper-based and electronic format) created or received by an organisation or person for use in the course of their work and subsequently kept by that organisation or individual as evidence of that work, or because of the informational value of the data that such documents contain. Records associated with the research process include correspondence (including electronic mail as well as paper-based correspondence); project files; grant applications; ethics applications; authorship agreements; technical reports; research reports; laboratory notebooks or research journals; master lists; signed consent forms; and information sheets for research participants.
<b>Research students</b>	A research student is any student enrolled at the University of Melbourne who participates in research or generates research data for any form of university assessment, or any student of another institution who participates in research at the University of Melbourne as part of a student exchange, or work experience in connection with a course at that other institution.

## RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) is responsible for the development, compliance monitoring and review of this policy and any associated guidelines.

## IMPLEMENTATION OFFICER

The Executive Director, Research is responsible for the promulgation and implementation of this policy in accordance with the scope outlined above. Enquiries about interpretation of this policy should be directed to the implementation officer.

## REVIEW

This policy is to be reviewed by 30 November 2013.

## VERSION HISTORY

Version	Approved By	Approval Date	Effective Date	Sections Modified
1	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research)	May 2011	19 May 2011	N/A
1	Academic Board	19 May 2011	19 May 2011	N/A
2	University Policy Officer	20 Nov 2013	20 Nov 2013	'Relevant Legislation' section: Whistleblowers Protection Act 2001 (Vic) replaced with Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Vic).