

Research Data Management Procedure

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Purpose

Federation University Australia is committed to meeting its obligations consistent with the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018) ('The Code'). The [Research Data Management Procedure](#) covers the requirements articulated in The Code regarding the responsibility for the management, storage, access, retention and disposal of research data and primary materials.

Scope

This Procedure applies to:

- All staff, including sessional staff, employed by the University or any University-controlled entity;
- All persons, including adjunct staff, honorary staff, Emeritus Professors, visitors or volunteers, engaged in research under the auspices of the University or any University-controlled entity, including research undertaken as a representative of the University that is conducted in conjunction with another entity, whether in the public or private sectors;

- All students, including past students, of the University who engage or have engaged in research and / or research related activities, related to their studies, while enrolled at the University;
- All research data and research data materials regardless of format, and subject to the provisions of any relevant contracts or funding/collaboration agreements.

Legislative Context

- Federation University Australia Act 2010
- The Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011 (TEQSA Act)
- Victorian Electronic Transactions Act 2000
- Victorian Evidence Act 1958
- Victorian Information Privacy Act 2000
- Victorian Health Records Act 2001
- Victorian Freedom of Information Act 1982
- Victorian Public Records Act 1973
- Victorian Crimes (Documentation Destruction) Act 2006
- Commonwealth Copyright Act 1968
- Commonwealth Privacy Act 1988

Definitions

Term	Definition
FAIR data principles	<p>The FAIR data principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) enable the University to gain maximum impact and potential from research data assets through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the visibility of and citations to research • Improving the reproducibility and reliability of research • Attracting new partnerships with researchers, business, policy makers and broader communities • Enabling new research questions to be answered • Using new innovative research approaches and tools.
Federation.figshare	<p>Federation.figshare is an online digital repository where researchers can preserve and share research outputs, including figures, datasets, software/ code, images, videos, posters and presentations. Material stored on Federation.figshare is determined to be suitable for permanent retention.</p>
Research data	<p>Data generated during research projects. Research data can include data in the form of facts, observations, images, samples, computer program results, recordings, measurements or experiences on which argument, test or hypotheses, or another research output is based. Data may be numerical, descriptive, visual or tactile. It may be raw, cleaned, or processed, and may be held in any format or media. It includes laboratory notebooks, as well as any other records, including computer code, that are necessary for the construction and evaluation of reported results of research, and the events and processes leading to those results.</p>

	Research data is to be distinguished from the information about research performance and statistical data which is used by the University for planning and budgetary purposes and reported by the University to government agencies (for example and including the Higher Education Research Data Collection, HERDC, and Excellence in Research for Australia, ERA).
Research Data Management	All the processes and actions that control how data is collected, organised, used, stored, shared, disseminated and disposed of within the research data life cycle, for current and future research purposes.
Primary materials	Print, digital or physical objects collected and/or used during scholarly activity and investigation from which research data may be obtained. It includes materials such as biological samples, mineral samples, survey questionnaires, measurements, recordings, computer results, and artefacts (including design).
Research	The concept of research is broad and includes the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.
Researchers	Any person undertaking or piloting research in association or affiliation with Federation University Australia including, but not limited to, academics, students, Higher Degree by Research candidates, adjunct researchers, professional staff and third party associates.
Retention period	How long data is to be stored following completion of project.
The Code	<i>The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018).</i>

Actions

Federation University Australia, in accordance with a central principle of The Code, is required to retain sufficient data and materials to justify the outcomes of research, and to defend such outcomes should they be challenged.

The Code also contends that the potential value of data and material for further research should be considered, particularly where the research would be difficult or impossible to repeat. While it may not be practical to keep all primary material (such as soils, biological material, questionnaires, simulations or recordings), durable records derived from them (such as assays, test results, transcripts, and laboratory and field notes) must be retained where practicable and be accessible.

The University will provide secure storage for research data and research data records. Researchers are responsible for ensuring data is stored in approved locations and managed according to FAIR data principles, as appropriate to each project. Where possible, researchers should share completed research datasets with potential interested researchers through Federation.figshare. Researchers may retain a copy of research data when they leave the Institution, however the University retains ownership of research data collected for Federation University research projects which must be retained by Federation University.

Responsible Persons

The University

The University is responsible for:

- Policies and procedures which encourage best practice research data management;
- Providing infrastructure necessary and appropriate for the safe and secure storage of research data and primary research materials and records;
- Relevant training in best practice research data management, including training in the effective use of research data infrastructure.

Deans of Institutes and Directors of Research Centres

Deans of Institutes and Directors of Research Centres (or nominees) are responsible for:

- Referral to guidelines and procedures on the retention of research data, including advice on data repositories relevant to their Institute/Centre's respective discipline/s and specialisation/s;
- Recording and maintaining records of the data creator and location of research data and primary research materials in a register;
- Completing a research data audit in an exit interview when a university researcher leaves the University, Institute or Research Centre.

Individual University researchers

Individual University researchers are responsible for maintaining accurate and complete records of their research data and primary research materials, and those of research groups for which they are Principal Investigators, and for ensuring secure storage.

University researchers are responsible for and required to:

- create and maintain full and accurate records of the research methods and data sources used;
- provide the same level of care and protection to primary research records, such as laboratory notebooks;
- manage research data and primary materials according to protocols approved by the animal or human ethics committee and legislative requirements;
- retain research data where practicable, including electronic data, in a durable, indexed and retrievable form;
- ensure that research data and primary materials are kept safe and secure in the storage provided during the active phase of research, even when not in current use;
- maintain a catalogue of their research data in an accessible form in (1) Federation.figshare or (2) link to their ORCID account or (3) on a public copy of their CV;
- ensure that where projects span several institutions an agreement is made at the outset covering the storage and retention of research data and primary materials within each institution in accordance with the research entity policy guidelines; and
- ensure that adequate backup, archival and monitoring strategies are in place to prevent the loss of research data and primary materials and delays in the completion of research.

All research data should be stored together with its associated documentation where possible.

Research Data Management Planning

All researchers should develop a [Research Data Management Plan](#) when planning research projects and other research activities. The Plan should include information in relation to:

- Data ownership;
- Data collection/generation;
- Data analysis;

- Data storage;
- Data retention;
- Data access and re-use; and
- Data disposal/destruction.

Researchers are encouraged to use the Federation University Research Data Management Planning tool available via a [link on the Library website](#) for this purpose. Further information about research data management can also be found via this link.

Researchers must comply with any of the following requirements that are relevant when developing the Research Data Management Plan:

- Contractual;
- Ethical;
- Copyright;
- Intellectual property;
- Confidentiality agreements.

Data Ownership

Research data created by staff of the University in the course of their employment is owned by the University in accordance with Federation University Australia's Statute 2021 Part 7 – Intellectual Property, subject to any relevant third-party agreements, or licence requirements. Intellectual property rights in research data created by students of the University are retained by the University, while the student retains copyright in any thesis produced. Refer to the [Intellectual Property Procedure](#) for further details.

When a researcher leaves the institution, the University will remain the custodian of research data and primary research materials created during a researcher's formal association with the University.

Data relating to research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

With respect to the ownership of data and information/intellectual property used in or generated by research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities, the University or its researchers may hold data or information; however, they should not make decisions about the access to or reuse of this data or information/intellectual property without proper consultation with its Indigenous owners.

Researchers undertaking research involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples must refer to the following:

- AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research
- A Guide to applying the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research

Data from Collaborative Research Projects

Where University researchers collaborate with researchers from other institutions, the researcher will retain those portions of research data or primary research materials created by that researcher, or which used Federation University Australia resources. These data or materials will be stored in a University-approved repository.

Data ownership and data storage arrangements must be established and clearly outlined in a collaborative research agreement prior to project commencement.

Use of Third-Party data

Use or incorporation of data which has been created and/or made available by third parties must be used in accordance with the licence or conditions which have been granted by the data creator or owner. As a minimum, this would generally require full and correct attribution and citation of the data.

Storage of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

In relation to data storage, researchers must refer to the Federation University Digital Research Data Storage Appendices:

Appendix A: [Data Storage Options Chart](#)

Appendix B: [Data Storage Options Flowchart](#)

Appendix C: [Research Data Management Practice Guidelines](#)

Active Research Phase

During the active research phase (data collection and analysis) researchers must use the University endorsed personal or shared file storage provided to staff and students.

It is expected that all working research data and drafts of research outputs will be managed within the systems provided by the University. This ensures that materials and files are backed up regularly.

If data is to be used off site for periods of time (e.g. by researchers working in the field, or with industry partners), copies must be kept on password protected devices and backed up as often as possible. However, portable media such as external hard drives, CDs, DVDs, and USB devices must not be used for long-term storage of primary materials, research data or records as they can be easily misplaced or corrupted due to damage.

Hard copies of research data must be stored within the relevant Institute or Centre in locked storage facilities, with the exception that during the active research phase, a research partner's institutional storage facilities may also be used.

Upon Completion of Active Research Phase

After the active research phase, all research data, primary research materials and related documentation must be stored in systems provided by the University, or an institutional or disciplinary approved location for storage of research data, for the minimum required retention period for the purposes of validating the research, furthering knowledge and to aid preservation and access.

Where Federation University researchers collaborate with a researcher or researchers from other institutions, it is expected that Federation University will hold a copy of the portions of research data created by the Federation University researcher or created using Federation University resources.

Backup

It is expected that all research data and drafts of research outputs will be managed within the systems endorsed by the University. This ensures that materials and files are backed up regularly.

Sharing Research Data

Researchers are encouraged to store and make available their research data according to FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Re-useable) principles. This ensures that it can be discovered, accessed, re-used and cited by other researchers. Research data and primary research materials should normally be made available for further research under open access by use of appropriate Creative Commons or equivalent licences, or by mediated negotiable or controlled access. Human research participants should be explicitly advised of intent to

make research data available beyond the scope of current projects, to whom data will be available and the form in which it will be available and provided with the opportunity to consent to future use of their data.

Exceptions will be made for data and primary research materials when precluded by the conditions under which they were obtained (for example in accordance with any contractual or funding arrangements, or copyright, ethical or confidentiality requirements).

Major Australian funders have policies around sharing of research data from projects which they fund: the ARC encourages researchers to deposit data arising from ARC Funded Research in publicly accessible repositories; and the NHMRC strongly encourages researchers to take reasonable steps to share research data arising from NHMRC supported research.

Researchers should adhere to established national and international standards for data description and structuring to facilitate reuse and citation of research data. These standards include using Digital Object Identifiers for datasets, ORCiDs for researchers, and standard vocabularies or terminology for scientific concepts. Published research data generally require some kind of online description (i.e. metadata) and should be as FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Re-usable) as possible, both manually and with automated tools.

This requires researchers to include appropriate context (descriptive, technical, methodological, access, and provenance information) either within the data structure or in separate metadata records for the research data. Researchers should consider the options for licensing of research data in order to provide clear parameters around the use and re-use of this data. When considering licensing for this purpose, the least restrictive option, such as a Creative Commons Attribution licence, is encouraged. Researchers should be prepared to justify the use of more restrictive controls.

Researchers should store and publish their data, where possible, in Federation.figshare or other approved research data repositories, to facilitate finding, accessing and reusing the data. Researchers are able to link from their research datasets in Federation.figshare to related research publications. Researchers can also provide a link from research outputs to the underlying dataset stored in Federation.figshare.

All research data intended to be stored or transferred outside Australia must be assessed by the researcher to determine whether the transfer of the research data is affected by export control laws. All permit applications must be sought through Research Services, and records of transfers must be maintained for the approved duration period by the researcher.

For access to research data involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, refer to the following:

- [AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#)
- [A Guide to applying the AIATSIS Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research](#)

Retention of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

In order to ensure that the University is able to justify the outcomes of research, and to defend challenged research outcomes as required by The Code, it is necessary that the University remains the custodian of research data and primary materials acquired during research, unless the research data and primary materials are owned by a third party.

The Code also states that the potential value of data and material for further research should be considered, particularly where the research would be difficult or impossible to repeat. While it may not be practical to keep all primary research material (such as soils, biological material, questionnaires, simulations or recordings), durable records derived from them (such as assays, test results, transcripts, and laboratory and field notes) must be retained and made accessible to other researchers where practicable.

University researchers must determine which data and materials should be retained based on conventions in their discipline, legislative or contractual requirements, The Code, and in accordance with the provisions of these Procedures.

The minimum recommended period of retention of research data and primary materials (other than short-term research projects for assessment only) is 5 years from the date of publication (or equivalent) however, this may vary according to the nature of the research and to the respective discipline and specialisation. In some instances, researchers may be bound by the requirements of a funding body or external agency, unless those agencies or bodies stipulate a period of retention less than that required by law. Section 2.3 of the NHMRC's [Guide to Management of Data and Information in Research \(2019\)](#) provides further advice.

Factors which researchers may take into consideration when considering permanent retention of data include:

- **Relevance to mission:** The resource content fits the priorities of the University or Centre, including any legal requirement to retain the data beyond its immediate use.
- **Scientific or historical value:** Is the data scientifically, socially, or culturally significant? Assessing this involves inferring anticipated future use from evidence of current research and educational value.
- **Uniqueness:** The extent to which the resource is the only or most complete source of the information that can be derived from it, and whether it is at risk of loss if not preserved.
- **Non-replicability:** It would not be feasible to replicate the data/resource or doing so would not be financially viable.
- **Full documentation:** the information necessary to facilitate future discovery, access, and reuse is comprehensive and correct; including metadata on the resource's provenance and the context of its creation and use.
- **Participant privacy:** Participant request or reasonable expectation of privacy must be respected, which may require de-identification of data to be retained.
- **Peer review:** has the data undergone formal peer review to assess its integrity and completeness, or has the data been used in publications in peer-reviewed journals?

When a researcher leaves the institution, the University will remain the custodian of research data and primary research materials acquired or created during a researcher's formal association with the institution. As such:

- Research data and primary research materials should be held in a University system (OneDrive or SharePoint) during the active phase of research.
- Research data which is to be retained after the active phase of research should be held in a University-endorsed system, or an appropriate research data repository.
- University researchers are permitted to retain copies of research data and research materials for their own use; however the original research data and primary research materials will be controlled as per this procedure and subject to external legislative requirements and other University policies and procedures as appropriate.

Disposal of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

All research data and primary research materials are considered University records and must be stored, disposed of, or transferred in accordance with University policies and procedures, any relevant ethics applications, and legislative requirements.

Disposal of research data and primary research materials which are not to be retained should be planned and deliberate, using secure disposal mechanisms so they cannot be used or reconstructed in unauthorised ways. Researchers should refer to the Records Management Procedure.

Consideration should be given to assessment and disposal of research data (if appropriate) when developing a Research Data Management Plan for each research project. As a minimum, research data and primary research materials should be retained for sufficient time to allow reference to them by other researchers and interested parties.

In the event that results from research are challenged, all associated research data and materials must be retained until the matter is resolved. Research records that may be subject to allegations of research misconduct must not be destroyed

Responsibility

- The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this procedure
- The Director, Research and Innovation is responsible for maintaining the content of this procedure as delegated by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research.
- Research Services is responsible for the maintenance of this procedure as directed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Research.

Supporting Documents

- [Research and Research Training Policy](#)
- [Research Integrity and Misconduct Procedure](#)
- [Disclosing and Exploiting Intellectual Property Procedure](#)
- [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
- Federation University Australia Statute 2021, Part 7 - Intellectual Property
- [Federation.figshare subject guide](#)
- [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research \(2018\)](#)
- [Management of Data and Information in Research \(2019\)](#)
- [Retention and Disposal Authority for Records of the Higher and Further Education Institutions – Public Record Office Standard PROS 16/07](#)
- [Research Data Management Practice Guidelines](#)

Forms.

- [Research Data Storage Options Chart](#) (PDF 107.4kb)
- [Research Data Storage Options Flowchart](#) (PDF 55.1kb)

Promulgation

The [Research Data Management Procedure](#) will be communicated throughout the University community in the form of:

1. an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;
2. distribution of e-mails to InstituteDeans and Research Centre Directors / University staff; and/or
3. Notification to Institutes and Research Centres.

Implementation

The [Research Data Management Procedure](#) will be implemented throughout the University via:

1. an Announcement Notice via FedNews website and on the 'Recently Approved Documents' page on the 'Policies, Procedures and Forms @ the University' website to alert the University-wide community of the approved Procedure;

Records Management

Research Data	PROV Schedule	Responsible Officer	Minimum Retention Period
Records Disposal Authorisation Form		University Registrar	Assessment under relevant Retention and Disposal Authority
Summary record of data created as part of research activities within the institution	PROS16/07 3.3.1		Permanent
<p>Data and datasets created as part of research activities which are of regulatory or community significance -</p> <p>Includes data that is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • part of genetic research, including gene therapy • controversial or of high public interest • costly or impossible to reproduce • related to the use of an innovative technique for the first time • of significant community or heritage value to the state or nation • required by funding or other agreements to be retained permanently 	PROS16/07 3.3.2		Permanent
Data and datasets created from clinical trials as part of research activities. Excludes data and datasets included in class 3.3.2	PROS16/07 3.3.3		Temporary - Destroy 15 years after completion of research activity
Data and datasets created as part of research activities which involve minors. Excludes data and datasets included in class 3.3.2	PROS16/07 3.3.4		Temporary - Destroy 15 years after child reaches the age of 18

Data and datasets created as part of research activities. Does NOT include data created for specific research activities for which additional regularly requirements apply, including: clinical trials, gene therapy and research involving children. Excludes data and datasets included in class 3.3.2	PROS16/07 3.3.5		Temporary - Destroy 5 years after completion of research activity
<p>Records documenting the management and care of animals in the institution's custody, as required under the Australian Code for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes, the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act and Regulations and associated codes of practice.</p> <p>Includes information about the acquisition of animals, scientific procedures or research projects using animals, number and species of animals held, number and species of animals removed from the premises or destroyed, and records of any breeding conducted.</p>	PROS16/07 3.4.4		Temporary - Destroy 7 years after completion of research activity