

# Research Data Management Policy

<b>Policy code:</b>	RS1990
<b>Policy owner:</b>	Director, Research Innovation and Enterprise
<b>Approval authority:</b>	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
<b>Approval date:</b>	31 August 2016
<b>Next review date:</b>	27 June 2024

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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 Policy](#) covers the requirements articulated in The Code regarding the responsibilities for the management, storage, access, retention and disposal of research data and primary materials.

The University expects researchers to follow the FAIR Principles of research data management.

## Scope

This policy applies to:

- All staff, including sessional staff, employed by the University or any controlled entity;
- All persons, including adjunct staff, honorary staff, visitors or volunteers, engaged in research under the auspices of the University or any 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

- Electronic Transactions (Victoria) Act 2000 and as amended 2011.
- Evidence Act 2008 (Victoria).
- Information Privacy Act 2000 (Victoria).
- Health Records Act 2001(Victoria).
- Freedom of Information Act 1982 (Victoria).
- Public Records Act 1973 (Victoria).
- Privacy Act 1988.
- Copyright Act 1968.
- Protected Disclosure Act 2012 (Victoria).

## Definitions

Term	Definition
<b>Research data</b>	<p>Data generated in 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 reconstruction and evaluation of reported results of research, and the events and processes leading to those results.</p> <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).</p>
<b>Research data management</b>	All the processes and actions that control how data is collected, organised, used, stored, shared, disseminated and disposed of, incorporating the data life cycle, for current and future research purposes.
<b>Primary materials</b>	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).
<b>Research</b>	Original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight (as defined in The Code)
<b>Researchers</b>	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.

Term	Definition
<b>Retention</b>	How long data is to be stored.
<b>The Code</b>	The <i>Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)</i> .

## Policy Statement

Federation University Australia endorses the use of FAIR Data Principles as described by the Australian Research Data Commons. That is, data that is findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable. The University will promote the following strategies to achieve this:

### Findable

This includes assigning a persistent identifier (like a DOI or Handle, having rich metadata to describe the data and making sure it is findable through disciplinary discovery portals/repositories (local and international).

### Accessible

This may include making the data open using a standardised protocol. However the data does not necessarily have to be open. There are sometimes good reasons why data cannot be made open for example privacy concerns, national security or commercial interests. If it is not open there should be clarity and transparency around the conditions governing access and reuse.

### Interoperable

To be interoperable the data will need to use community agreed formats, language and vocabularies. The metadata will also need to use a community agreed standards and vocabularies, and contain links to related information using identifiers.

### Reusable

Reusable data should maintain its initial richness. For example, it should not be diminished for the purpose of explaining the findings in one particular publication. It needs a clear machine readable licence and provenance information on how the data was formed. It should also have discipline-specific data and metadata standards to give it rich contextual information that will allow for reuse.

Federation University Australia is committed to achieving research data management standards, including the retention of sufficient research data and materials to justify the outcomes of research, and to defend such outcomes should they be challenged. Individual University researchers, Deans, and Directors/Heads of Research Centres (or equivalent) will manage their research data and primary materials throughout the research cycle by addressing the issues of retention, storage, disposal, record-keeping, access, ownership, and security, considered in the context of ethical, privacy, confidentiality, and cultural requirements. Researchers will mentor and guide their research students in these management standards.

## Storage of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

The University is committed to ensuring 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. Storage of research data and primary materials must adhere to requirements stipulated by the Human Research Ethics Committee and/or the Animal Research Ethics Committee.

Where research data comprises Protected or Restricted data, appropriate security controls around access, storage, transmission and disposal must be implemented – refer [Data Storage Procedure](#).

## Access to Research Data Primary Research Materials

Research data and primary materials will be made available for use by other researchers for further research unless precluded by the conditions under which they were obtained (for example in accordance with any contractual or funding arrangements), or privacy and confidentiality matters.

## Retention of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

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

Given increased expectations around open access to research data, consideration should be given at an early stage of the research to making such data permanently available for storage and re-use. If this is not practicable for reason of privacy or confidentiality, then researchers must determine which data and materials should be retained based on conventions in their discipline, and legislative requirements, and in accordance with the provisions of the [Records Management Policy](#) and Procedure.

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

- Research data and primary materials should be held in a suitable institutional repository during the active phase of research. Any arrangements for data or material to be held in other locations should be documented and align with the researcher's approved Research Data Management Plan and Research Ethics approval.
- Completed data sets and their related primary materials need to be stored in an appropriate institutional repository.
- University researchers are permitted to retain copies of data and materials for their own use; however original data and materials will be controlled as per this policy and subject to external legislative requirements and other University policies and procedures as appropriate, including requirements of University Ethics Committees.

## Disposal of Research Data and Primary Research Materials

Disposal of research data and primary materials should be planned and deliberate, using secure disposal mechanisms so they cannot be used or reconstructed in unauthorised ways – refer [Records Management Procedure](#).

Research data and primary 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 data and materials must be retained until the matter is resolved, this includes following the expirations of legislative requirements. Research records that are known to be subject to allegations of research misconduct must not be destroyed.

## 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 8.2 - Intellectual Property and the [Intellectual Property Policy](#) subject to any relevant third party agreements, or licences in favour of the University. Intellectual property rights in research data created by students of the University are retained by the University.

In the event that a researcher leaves the institution, the University will remain the custodian of controlled research data and primary materials acquired during a researcher's formal association with the institution – refer Retention of Research Data and Primary Materials section.

## Collaborative Research Projects

When collaborative research projects are undertaken ownership of data must be established and agreed to in writing before a project begins.

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

## Register of Research Data

The University will develop and maintain a centralised research data register.

## Supporting Documents

- The Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018.
- National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research 2007 (updated 2018).
- OECD Principles and Guidelines for Access to Research Data from Public Funding (2007).
- [Research Data Management Procedure](#)
- Master Data Management Policy
- [Data Storage Procedure](#)
- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Records Management Procedure](#)
- [Research Integrity Policy](#)
- Research Integrity and Misconduct Procedure
- [Authorship Procedure](#)
- Research Publications Repository (FedUni Research Online) Policy
- [Staff Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- Statute 8.2 - Intellectual Property
- AVCC Code of Practice for maintaining and monitoring academic quality and standards in higher degrees
- [Information Privacy Policy](#)
- [Information Privacy Procedure](#)
- General Retention and Disposal Authority for the Records of Higher and Further Education Institutions – Public Record Office Standard PROS 16/07
- General Retention & Disposal Authority for Records of Common Administrative Functions Version 2007 PROS 07/01

## Responsibility

- The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) is the Approval Authority and is responsible for monitoring the implementation, outcomes and scheduled review of this policy and its accompanying procedure/s
- The Director, Research Services (*as the Policy Sponsor*) is responsible for maintaining the content of this policy as delegated by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)

- Research Services is responsible for the administration support for the maintenance of this policy as directed by the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research and Innovation).

## Promulgation

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

1. An Announcement Notice via FedNews and on the FedUni Policy Central's Policy Library 'Recently Approved Documents' page to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy;
2. Distribution of e-mails to University staff;
3. Distribution of a guide via website; and
4. Notification to Schools and Directorates via a memo.

## Implementation

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

1. An Announcement Notice via FedNews and on the FedUni Policy Central's Policy Library 'Recently Approved Documents' page to alert the University-wide community of the approved Policy;
2. Creation and distribution of a guide to inform staff and students on research data management requirements;
3. Training sessions, as required;