Research Data Management Policy

1.0   INTRODUCTION

In 2022 Senate approved the policy and procedure for the management of research data. This policy supersedes and updates the first research data management policy of June 2011. This policy will be reviewed by the Research, Impact and Innovation Committee on a yearly basis or amended in response to changes in the scholarly landscape, future legislation and/or case law.

2.0   OWNERSHIP

Research Support owns and manages this policy on behalf of The University of Northampton.

3.0   ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

This Research Data Management policy is a corporate policy and applies to all employees (and workers, as applicable) of The University of Northampton including any wholly owned subsidiaries, unless an alternative policy exists, subject to any qualifying conditions.

4.0   POLICY STATEMENT

4.1   The University of Northampton recognises that good research is underpinned by good research data management.

The UON Research Ethics Code & Procedures defines 'failures to adhere to UON policy and/or funder requirements in relation to open access and good data management' as a form of research misconduct. The Research Misconduct Policy outlines the University of Northampton's powers and procedures in the event of allegations of research misconduct by staff or students.

This policy specifically covers research data management for all UON Staff and doctoral students at Levels 7 and 8. Principles of good data management should be a required element of research training at Levels 4-6.

a) Integrity

Research data that is generated and used by University researchers will be managed to a high standard throughout the research data lifecycle as part of the University's commitment to research excellence. The definition of research data for the purpose of this policy is digital or analogue information that is collected, observed, created or reused to produce, validate and enrich research findings and conclusions.

Research data management (RDM) refers to the organisation, storage and preservation of data created throughout a research project.

b) Responsibility

Responsibility for managing data is the Principal Investigators (PIs) or individual researchers (this includes all staff and doctoral students) working on their own.

All staff and students engaged in research should be familiar with the University's research data management solutions as well as disciplinary/subject specific tools and infrastructure that may be available. The researcher (person undertaking the research and/or managing a research project) must comply with the University's Information Security Policy, Intellectual Property Policy and Data Protection Policy, as well as Finance regulations, policies and procedures.

When a researcher from University of Northampton (UON) is collaborating with any external partner, they should agree between them the rights and responsibilities of each party with respect to data collected, including key decisions about data storage, backup and security,

registration, access, transfer, retention, destruction or archiving and licensing. (See Rights section below for when data sharing agreements may be required).

c) Funded Research

The PI/Researcher should choose methods, platforms and services for managing data that are affordable through their research grant (if applicable) and comply with University policy and procedures, as well as their funder's requirements and those of any external data controller.

In accordance with the recommendations of Research Councils UK, the University of Northampton expects researchers to:

- keep clear and accurate records of the research procedures followed and the results obtained, including interim results
- hold records securely in paper or electronic form
- make relevant primary data and research evidence accessible to others for reasonable periods after the completion of the research – data should normally bepreserved and accessible for at least 10 years from the date of last use
- manage data according to the research funder's data policy, best ethical practice and all relevant legislation

To meet these expectations, the Principal Investigator/Researcher is, prior to applying for ethical approval, required to produce and then follow a research data management plan (DMP). The [DMP Online](#) tool has been provided for staff and students at UON to use and is recommended for this purpose.

4.2   Research data management procedure

At the start of every funded project, the researcher or lead researcher if part of a group will produce a DMP in line with the funder's specific requirements, or if no requirements

are specified by the funder, then in accordance with the good practice described by DMP Online.

DMPs should cover data types and volume, capture, storage, integrity, confidentiality, retention and destruction, sharing and deposit. A suggested minimum period of retention is ten years from the end of the project, however requirements by funders and data providers, as well as disciplinary guidance should be observed.

DMPs must specify how and when research data will be made available for access and reuse. Underpinning research data should be made available as soon as findings are published, under appropriate safeguards when necessary. Academics may choose to have six months (STEM)/12 month (HAS) embargo period applied to the data. A risk assessment is required whenever data pertaining to individuals is used. This must be approved by the relevant Research Ethical Committee prior to research commencing. Research outputs that convey findings from research data must include a data access statement that clearly provides directions for readers to obtain the data or a statement as to why the data is not available (e.g., commercial sensitivity).

Costs such as extra storage, long-term retention, or data management effort must be addressed and included in costings to funders whose policies accept RDM costs. Note - All UK Research and Innovation funders explicitly state that all costs associated with research data management are eligible under UKRI funding.

The Principal Investigator/Researcher will be responsible for ensuring that the actions outlined in the DMP are carried out.

At the end of a project data will be deposited in the university's secure central storage solution. Complete datasets are to be uploaded to the Universities current research information system (Pure) to enable the research support team to deposit this in the university's secure storage solution (Arkivum). The data must include appropriate

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descriptive metadata and, if necessary, accompanying explanatory documentation.

Datasets within the university's central storage solution will be subject to review after ten years following date of deposit. The review will be undertaken by the researcher and the Head of Research Support. In the absence of the original researcher, an appropriate academic colleague will conduct the review with the Head of Research Support.

If required as a result of the review, data may be securely destroyed or kept for a further ten-year period.

4.2   Rights to use and access research data

In determining access rights for research data, the legitimate interests of the subjects of research data must be protected. The rights of the public to access publicly funded research should also be considered. When open access to datasets is not legal or ethical, information governance restrictions on access and use must be applied as necessary.

Written agreements are required when personal data (any information relating to an identified or identifiable natural person) is passed from a data controller to a data processor or another data controller, or to a country not bound by the General Data Protection Regulation or equivalent privacy legislation. Written agreements are also useful when the data being shared although not personal data, are confidential or valuable to the parties involved.

Exclusive rights to reuse or publish research data must not be passed to commercial publishers or agents without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for reuse unless this is a condition of funding.

4.3   Solutions for Data Management at UON

- Researchers have access to active research project space on sharepoint (each project should have a minimum of two spaces (contact research lead to arrange).

- Datasets should be deposited in PURE (or a link in PURE to the dataset in an existing data repository (e.g., Figshare or another Universities repository) on completion of research project, prior to the submission of any research outputs for publication.

- Long term digital preservation is achieved through Akivum, which is manged by the Research Support Team, who will action after dataset has been deposited in PURE.

5.0   DEFINITIONS

5.1   RDM – Research Data Management

5.2   DMP - Data Management Plan

5.3   OA – Open Access

5.4   Pure – Current Research Information System

5.5   Arkivum – Current Digital Preservation System

6.0   KEY PRINCIPLES

The University supports the broad global consensus that publicly funded research data should be made openly available as soon as possible and with as few restrictions as necessary. Many UK and international funders have embraced FAIR principles for data sharing (making data findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable). FAIR acknowledges legitimate reasons for restricting access to data, such as confidentiality concerns. Principal Investigators/Researchers and research students should consider how they can best make their data FAIR in their Data Management Plans.

Discoverability and access by machines are considered as important as access by humans. FAIR encourages the use of persistent identifiers, standard metadata, vocabularies, and licences to allow researchers and computer programs to directly access and process data. An emphasis on reusability means that any relevant documentation, protocols, or designs which add context and usefulness to the data should be included with research datasets in repositories (Pure). Links to relevant publications, people, projects, and other research products such as software or source code should be provided in metadata records, with persistent identifiers when available.

In some cases, research products such as models and software code can be deposited with research data in data/subject repositories. However, it may be more appropriate to utilise software repositories such as GitLab or GitHub, which offer the ability for partners or others to develop code into new directions while keeping track of versions. Research projects should plan for their software management as well as their data and consider whether it will be made openly available and if so, what licence is appropriate. In all cases code should be documented in a way that makes its functions transparent to improve quality and enable reuse of software and data. For long-lived projects software sustainability is a further consideration which requires updating and refactoring over time.

The University endorses the [FAIR](#) data sharing principles for maximising data reuse, and supports related initiatives such as [DORA](#) (Declaration on Research Assessment), [ORCID](#) (Open Researcher and Contributor ID), digital object identifiers (DOIs), and use of standard open licences for sharing research data and code.

7.0   ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- [Research Ethics Code & Procedures](#)
- [Research Misconduct Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity and Misconduct Policy](#)

- [Records Management Policy](#)
- [Data Sharing Agreement](#)
- [University Strategic Plan](#)
- [Open Access Policy](#)
- [FAIR Principles](#)
- [DORA](#) (Declaration on Research Assessment) – UON is a signatory

8.0   VERSION CONTROL

Version Control	Author	Approval	Date Written	Updates	Current Status	Approval of Revision
Version 3	Dawn Hibbert; Head of Research Support	Senate 26/10/22	6/10/22	N/A	Approved	N/A

9.0 Record of Amendments

Dates	Version Number	Details of Change	Approval