

## Purpose and Scope

This policy forms part of Murdoch University's governance framework and outlines the management of research data in compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018* (the Code) and other relevant requirements.

Murdoch University recognises that Research Data Management Plans (RDMPs) are a necessary part of undertaking research.

This policy applies to those undertaking research under the auspices of Murdoch University, including staff, students, and honorary staff.

### Objectives

- To ensure compliance with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, *State Records Commission Standards*, and the *Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority* requirements for research data management.
- To equip researchers with best practice principles in research data management.
- To ensure the requirements of funding bodies and publishers are met.

## Policy

1. In this policy, the following words have the following meanings:
  - 1.1. "Intellectual Property": as defined in the [Intellectual Property Regulations](#).
  - 1.2. "Metadata" means information about an object or resource that describes characteristics of that object, such as content, quality, format, location, and access rights. Adequate Metadata describes the research data in enough detail to enable its reuse.
  - 1.3. "Research Data": Research data include 'records, files or other evidence, irrespective of their content or form (e.g., in print, digital, physical or other forms), that comprise research observations, findings or outcomes, including primary materials and analysed data' (ANDS, 2017, p. 2). This includes all data created or collected during the course of original research activities and for which the University has a shared responsibility to store, maintain or otherwise curate.

Research data may be numerical, descriptive, visual, or tactile. It may be raw or analysed, cleaned or processed, experimental or observational, confidential or publicly accessible, and may be held in any format or media. Examples include laboratory and field notebooks, machine data in hardcopy or computer readable form, databases, clinical data including clinical records, questionnaires, photographs, audio-visual materials, test responses, physical collections of slides, artefacts, manuscripts, specimens, samples, or other forms to be developed in the future.

In the creative arts or other areas where the research component of a work may not be immediately apparent within a performance, exhibition or creative publication, a durable record of the work and or the response to the work should be retained as evidence of the research process. Examples may include an artist's statement, exhibition catalogues, critical reviews of a performance or publication, visual diaries, journals, drawings, photographs, manuscripts, musical annotations 3D models or audio-visual recordings of the creative work outcomes, including primary materials and analysed data.

It excludes organisational administrative data (such as finance, human resource, and student records), teaching related data (courseware and learning management) and research publications themselves.

Although there may be overlaps, 'research data' is distinct from 'intellectual property' as outlined in the Murdoch University *Intellectual Property Regulations* which refers to research outputs that normally have commercial value.

- 1.4. "Research data management" means all the processes and actions required to manage research data using good practice throughout and beyond the research life cycle for current and future research purposes and users.
- 1.5. "Murdoch University" refers to all its entities, including research institutes and centres.
- 1.6. "Researchers" refers to all staff (academic/professional, including Adjunct, Honorary and Emeriti appointments made through the *Honorary Titles and Appointments Policy*) and students who conduct research.
- 1.7. "Chief Investigator (CI)" refers to the lead researcher within a research project team.
- 1.8. "Data Manager" refers to a researcher within a research project team who has responsibility for the management of research data.
- 1.9. "Under the auspices of Murdoch University" means where the researcher is conducting research associated with being a staff member or student at Murdoch University.
2. Any research conducted under the auspices of Murdoch University must comply with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2018* (the Code), the *State Records Commission Standards*, and the *Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority* (WAUSDA), all legislation and policies relevant to research data, and best practice in respective disciplines.

3. Before a research activity commences, the Chief Investigator (CI) or the project's assigned data manager if this is not the CI, must ensure that there is an accompanying Research Data Management Plan (RDMP), as outlined in the *Research Data Management Procedure*.
  - 3.1. Existing research projects should develop an RDMP as soon as possible if one does not already exist.
4. Murdoch University is responsible for:
  - 4.1. ensuring compliance with the requirements of the *Code* and other relevant agencies;
  - 4.2. providing training and education to all relevant staff and students in regard to research data management, and associated policies and governance;
  - 4.3. overseeing the development, implementation, and maintenance of a digital storage facility for research data and the associated institutional metadata; and
  - 4.4. enabling research data sharing where appropriate.
5. All researchers are responsible for:
  - 5.1. ensuring the integrity of research data including its clear, accurate, secure, and complete retention in accordance with the *Code*;
  - 5.2. complying with relevant data management requirements, including any approval conditions, and any contractual obligations throughout the research process;
  - 5.3. ensuring all research projects have an accompanying RDMP;
  - 5.4. ensuring, where possible, costings for data management and storage are included in their research funding proposals. Where this is not possible, alternative funding for data management and storage should be identified prior to the research commencing;
  - 5.5. retaining and producing on request all relevant approvals, authorisations, and other administrative documents (e.g., ethics/safety/financial approvals, permits, receipts, consent forms, or essential communications);
  - 5.6. applying appropriate security controls to research data;
  - 5.7. ensuring the management of research data complies with any agreement made at the point of data collection including any consent obtained from research participants;
  - 5.8. reporting any suspected or known security breaches in relation to research data, in accordance with the Murdoch University *Research Integrity Procedure*; and
  - 5.9. engaging in any relevant training and education provided.
6. Students, usually in consultation with their Principal Supervisor, are responsible for seeking advice prior to signing any agreement relevant to research data.

#### **Ownership of research data**

7. Unless otherwise specified in a written agreement or contract, Murdoch University, and not the researcher or third party, owns the research materials and

data which result from a research project conducted under the auspices of Murdoch University.

- 7.1. Students own their respective student intellectual property, subject to the exceptions outlined in the *Intellectual Property Regulations*.

### **Transfer of research data**

8. If a researcher transfers to a different institution, ownership, and custody of any research data they created may be transferred to that institution through a formal written agreement between Murdoch University and the new institution.

### **Access to research data**

9. Research data must be available and accessible to all participating researchers and co-authors, in accordance with the RDMP and subject to Clause 12.
10. Where appropriate, research data and materials will be made available for use by other researchers for further research unless precluded by:
  - 10.1. privacy and confidentiality matters;
  - 10.2. conditions under which the data or materials were obtained;
  - 10.3. intellectual property considerations, in accordance with the *Intellectual Property Regulations* and the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (2018)*; and/or
  - 10.4. national security issues in accordance with the *Foreign Interference Policy*
11. Researchers should apply a licence to all data that they share, in order to standardise conditions of access and reuse for users.
12. Publicly funded research data sets should, whenever possible, be openly accessible to other researchers, as set out in the *Research Data Management Procedure*.
13. Access to, or reuse of, research data involving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities should be made with proper consultation with its owners, if any.
14. Research data must be available to Freedom of Information applications, legal processes, and other authorised agencies or regulatory officials.
15. Researchers must obtain any relevant permission and abide by conditions set to access or reuse existing datasets from the respective custodians or owners.

### **Storage of research data**

16. Researchers must consider risks associated with the identifiability and re-identifiability of research data prior to storage.
17. Research data must be stored by the researcher in an approved, secure, accessible, and identified location, as provided and/or approved by Murdoch University.
  - 17.1. Research data of archival value must be stored and managed in accordance with the *State Records Commission Standards*.
  - 17.2. Research data may be published in repositories or databanks, in accordance with relevant agreements.

### **Retention of research data**

18. Research data must be retained for a minimum of five years post-publication, in accordance with the WAUSDA, *Recordkeeping Policy*, and other relevant standards; agreements; and ethical protocols.
19. Longer retention periods may be required for the following:
  - 19.1. clinical trials (at least 15 years);
  - 19.2. gene therapy (retained permanently);
  - 19.3. work with community, cultural or historical value at a level that it should be considered for inclusion in a university, state, or national collection;
  - 19.4. health records;
  - 19.5. results that are challenged; and
  - 19.6. investigations into allegations of breaches or misconduct.
20. Where it is not practical to retain primary materials, researchers should retain and make accessible durable records derived from them (e.g., assays, test results, transcripts, and laboratory and field notes).
21. Researchers must retain data associated with patents or protection of intellectual property for at least the life of the patent (and extensions) or in accordance with other intellectual property considerations.
22. Research data from student projects undertaken for assessment processes should be retained for at least twelve months after completion of the project, or until the Degree is awarded to the student.
  - 22.1. Researchers using data from student projects that are included in other publications must store and retain the data as outlined in Clause 18.

### **Disposal of Research Data and Materials**

23. Disposal of research data must be in accordance with the Murdoch Digital Media Disposal Standard and WAUSDA or any relevant procedures as determined by the University.

### **Collaborative research projects**

24. Inter-institutional collaborative research projects must have a signed RDMP before project commencement.

### **Roles and Responsibilities**

- All engaged in research under the auspices of Murdoch University must comply with the *Research Data Management Policy*.

### **Non-Compliance**

- Non-compliance with this policy will be managed via the *Research Integrity Procedure*.

### **Performance Indicators**

- There will be an increase in the use of Research Data Management Plans by researchers.

## Governance

Approval Authority	Academic Council
Owner	President Academic Council
Legislation mandating compliance	
Category	Primarily academic
Related University Legislation and Policy Documents	<i>Intellectual Property Regulations</i> <i>Digital Media Disposal Standard</i> <i>Foreign Interference Policy</i>
Date effective	08/08/2023
Review date	17/11/2024

## Revision History

Approved/Amended	Date Approved	Resolution No. (if applicable)
Administrative Amendment	08/08/2023	
Administrative Amendment	26/11/2021	
Approved	17/11/2021	AC/93/2021(i)

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