Brief Committee Rationale

Best practice research data handling (RDH) is becoming more important for research success. It is now a pre-requisite for many international grant applications, and research funders regularly require the subsequent sharing of data resources generated from their research funds. Data legislation to protect personal data continues to improve internationally[1], adding further complexity for researchers working with human participants. While the data processing demands placed on researchers continues to grow, the training and facilities available to Caribbean researchers have not yet kept pace with these increasingly technical demands.

The development of guidelines and training for best-practice data handling, along with online tools to facilitate data collection and data sharing are key components in university RDH infrastructures elsewhere. Well constructed, this infrastructure could identify synergies between researchers, catalyse cross-faculty collaborations, and (eventually) enhance research quality and output.

There are a growing number of international universities building and offering data collection and data handling expertise in collaborations with Caribbean researchers. These developments mostly enhance data quality and data security and should be broadly welcomed. However, without a home-grown infrastructure available as a local alternative, the Caribbean region risks losing the opportunity to determine the destiny of its regional data resources.

Committee Purpose

The Research Data Handling (RDH) committee will be responsible for overseeing the development and maintenance of a RDH infrastructure. The committee has the following core aims. Committee members at the inception meeting (9-Sep-2020) recognised the long-term nature of setting up this type of infrastructure and approved a broad categorisation of aims into shorter and longer term.

Aims

Shorter term aims

1. To enhance campus-level support for the secure <u>collection</u> of research data
2. To develop and maintain guidelines for best-practice research data handling
3. To develop and maintain a research data governance framework in line with international best practice, national legislation, and facilitating harmonization across campuses
4. To support researchers in achieving best-practice research data handling
5. To disseminate the work of the committee to the campus community
6. To ensure that all staff are aware of and have the ability to adhere to international RDH standards and national data legislations.
7. To liaise with other relevant campus groups and external stakeholders as appropriate

Longer term aims

8. To enhance campus-level support for the <u>sharing</u> of research data
9. To monitor RDH activities and resulting outputs

Those activities requiring significant human resources (such as aims 8 and 9) will begin as resource availability allows.

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[1] The European Union's General Data Protection Rule (GDPR), the US Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the Barbados Data Protection Act (2020) are three examples of relevant legislation to protect personal data.

Committee Composition

The RDH committee has representatives from each Faculty, from each Research Unit / Centre, and from the following additional entities:

- Campus Libraries
- Campus IT Services
- The UWI / Ministry of Health and Wellness Institutional Review Board
- Office of the Deputy Principal / RICCH
- Office of Graduate Studies and Research
- Office of Institutional Planning and Infrastructural Services

Committee Quorum

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be 5 committee members.

Frequency of Committee Meetings & Attendance Requirements

In the first year (beginning September 2020) the Committee will meet once a month. At the end of this first year, meeting frequency will be revisited.

Notice of Committee Meetings

A meeting schedule was developed at the first meeting of the committee, will be available online, and will be revisited as membership changes. The proposed schedule of meetings for the first year is as follows (2nd Wednesday of each month). All meetings to start at 9am.

2020	Oct 14	Nov 11	Dec 9					
2021	Jan 13	Feb 10	Mar 10	Apr 14	May 12	Jun 9	Jul 14	Aug 11

Committee Reporting Responsibilities

Meeting agendas and minutes will be posted to a UWI MS Teams committee website. Ratified minutes will be posted online for wider dissemination.

Note: After the first meeting the Principal of the Cave Hill Campus will be notified of the formation of the Committee.

Prepared on 14-Sep-2020