# Research data management policy

**Purpose**

The University has policies and procedures in place to ensure good research practice and to sustain programmes of excellent and ethical research. Policies are also concerned with research quality promoting the highest standards of integrity, impartiality and respect for data. The University recognises that effective research data management through the research life cycle is a key component of good research conduct and contributes to a culture of research excellence.

Research data is a valuable asset and the University supports the principle of open access to research data as set out by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Research Councils UK (RCUK). Research data refers to any type of data created, collected or generated in a digital or non-digital form that is analysed to produce original research results.

The aims of this policy are to

- support openness and transparency in research undertaken at the University by ensuring research is of the highest integrity and is underpinned by accurate robust data
- promote open access to research data to facilitate data sharing and collaboration and support the University's charitable mission of disseminating research findings
- ensure that the University adheres to the Research Councils UK Common Principles on Data Policy, is compliant with the specific requirements of the EPSRC policy framework on research data and provides accountability for the use of public funds
- establish the responsibilities of researchers in relation to research data management and archiving and set out the University's processes for support and guidance

**Policy requirements**

1. Data management

   1.1. Responsibility for research data generated during a project lies with the principal investigator or in the case of a PhD project, the director of studies. It is their duty to ensure that all members of the research team with access to the research data adhere to good research data management practice. In the case of collaborative projects, if the principal investigator is based elsewhere, the lead researcher at Sheffield Hallam University must take responsibility for all data generated here.

1.2. A data management plan must be produced for all research projects before they commence. Researchers will comply with funder data management requirements. However, where this is not specified, the University will provide a data management plan template for completion.

1.3. A collaboration agreement must be in place with external partners before the start of the research that clearly addresses data management.

2. Live data

2.1. Researchers must comply with funder data management requirements. Where this is not specified researchers must ensure that all active research data is stored securely on the University networked storage system in both original and processed formats. The University has created a central research data file store (the SHU Research Store) for this purpose and will provide advice on technical solutions for research data storage and archiving. Metadata describing the structure and content of the data must be regularly created and updated for project continuity purposes.

If research data needs to be stored temporarily on portable storage devices, such as laptops in the field or cloud storage, the researcher must ensure that this is done securely and that they comply with the University's policies on electronic data encryption.

3. Archiving

3.1. Primary research data produced by University researchers that underpin a publication, which are of potential long-term value and/or support a patent application, must be stored centrally and published when possible to ensure good research practice at the University.

3.2. Primary research data, whether in digital or hard copy, may be archived in the SHU Research Data Archive or in an external research data repository. Data must be stored for a period at least as long as that required by any funder or sponsor of the research, any publisher of the research or as set out in the University's Research and Knowledge Transfer Records Retention Schedule.

3.3. It is considered good practice to archive all data in a format that will guarantee long-term access and with sufficient metadata to aid discovery to encourage follow-up research. Researchers must also comply with specific funder data management requirements.

3.4. All data that are retained must be registered with the SHU Research Data Archive, whether they are hosted by the University or maintained elsewhere, even if access to the data is restricted.

4. Open access

4.1. Researchers must be aware of, and comply with, their funders' requirements for data management including archiving and sharing. If applicable, data must be prepared and offered for deposit in an open access data repository within the timeframe stipulated by the funder unless there are valid reasons not to do so. The latter could include commercial confidentiality, infringement of intellectual property rights, contractual agreements, ethical, legal or regulatory obligations, or where the cost of doing so would be prohibitive.

4.2. Even if the funder of the research does not require it, researchers are encouraged to make their archived data accessible to others close to the publication date of any research outputs relying on the data. The data should be in citeable form. This supports the integrity of the University's research and will be beneficial for the research community.

4.3. Exclusive rights to re-use or publish research data should not be handed over to commercial publishers or agents without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for re-use unless this is a condition of funding.

4.4. Published research outputs reporting publicly funded research must include a short statement describing how and on what terms any supporting research data may be accessed. Research outputs deposited in SHURA should also include this statement.

5. Re-using third-party data

5.1. Researchers that gain access to and use open research data, or any data generated by others, must do so in a manner that respects the contexts under which it was created and must

adhere to the same frameworks and observe any restrictions that may have been imposed during data collection.

5.2. All users of research data must formally cite the data they use. The obligation to recognise through citation and acknowledgement the original creators of the data must be respected in all cases.

6. Support and further information

6.1. The University will provide guidelines, advice and training on research data management, including data management plans, costing of research data management into research proposals, storage and data protection, creation of descriptive metadata, intellectual property and Freedom of Information requests for all researchers.

7. Scope

7.1. This policy applies to all publicly-funded research, whether internally or externally funded, and is considered best-practice for all other research.

7.2. Contractual obligations from an external funder or sponsor of the research will take precedence over the stipulations in this policy.

**Good practice**

The University recognises the following external sources as providing agreed standards of good practice.

- The Digital Curation Centre provides expert advice and practical help to anyone in UK higher education and research wanting to store, manage, protect and share digital research data.
- RCUK Common Principles on Data Policy
- UK Research Integrity Office Code of Practice for Research

**Related Sheffield Hallam University policies**

- Sheffield Hallam University Research Ethics Policy and Procedures
- The Principles of Integrity in Research and Procedures for Dealing with Allegations of Research Misconduct

- University Research and Knowledge Transfer Records Retention Schedule (link to internal website)
- Electronic Data Encryption Policy (link to internal website)
- Open access publication policy

## Governance and infrastructure

- Policy owner: Pro Vice-Chancellor for research and innovation
- Operational owner: Head of Library Services
- Policy coordinator: Head of Library Research Support
- Monitoring board: Research and Innovation Committee

## Responsibility for implementation

- Pro Vice-Chancellor for research and innovation
- Assistant deans for research and innovation
- Research centre heads

This policy was last updated in January 2017.