Overview of Policy

The purpose of this policy is to establish a set of principles to govern the management of data arising from the research activities of the University ("Research Data"\(^1\)). This policy is intended to cover active Research Data sets that are of potential current or future interest or value to the field. It will not apply where there are legitimate legal, ethical and/or commercial constraints on data use.

The University recognises that there is an increased requirement from funders to manage, share and provide open access to Research Data, and acknowledges that the wider benefits of this approach can include additional public interest and funding, increased validation of results, efficiencies through data re-use and novel use of existing data.

For clarity, this policy applies to all Research Data, regardless of whether the research is externally funded or subject to funder mandates. This policy applies to all staff that are authorized to use the University’s name and services in the course of their research, including post graduate students and visiting, honorary and emeritus staff. NHS and clinical trial data may be subject to additional governance as specified by the Director of R&D, Tayside Medical Sciences Centre (TASC), NHS Tayside.

Policy Statement

1. Principles

1.1. The University advocates the highest standards in the management, re-use and open accessibility of Research Data and subscribes to the Research Councils Common Principles on Data Policy and the Concordat on Open Research Data.

1.2. The privacy, confidentiality and other legitimate interests of any participants involved in the gathering of Research Data must remain protected at all times.

1.3. Where appropriate, and adhering to item 1.2, Research Data should be made openly accessible for access and re-use by others.

---

\(^1\) Research Data are the evidence that underpins the answer to the research question, and can be used to validate findings regardless of its form (e.g. print, digital, or physical). These might be quantitative information or qualitative statements collected by researchers in the course of their work by experimentation, observation, modelling, interview or other methods, or information derived from existing evidence (definition from the Concordat on Open Research Data, July 2016).
1.4. Research Data sets that are of a sensitive nature are not exempt from this policy by default, but may lie outwith this policy where restrictions on data use apply. Prior to commencing research, informed consent (including consent for data sharing) should be gathered, and plans for data anonymisation and access restriction should be made.

1.5. Research that is commercially funded, including clinical research sponsored by the University of Dundee, will lie outwith this policy only if restrictions on data use apply. Where research is jointly funded by commercial and non-commercial funders, appropriate collaboration agreements must be put in place to define ownership of the Research Data and ensure compliance with the data sharing requirements of the non-commercial funder(s).

1.6. The primary grant holder (Principal Investigator) is responsible for Research Data management and planning throughout their research project or programme. The most senior researcher associated with a project at the University of Dundee holds responsibility for the data stewardship for all Research Data relating to that project. In the absence of the senior researcher, responsibility for the data stewardship will transfer upward to the Dean of School.

1.7. New research projects must include research data management plans that cover items such as: data capture, management, integrity, confidentiality, retention, sharing and publication. Any specific funding body, ethical, legal or School level requirements should be taken into account in the development of data management plans.

1.8. Where there is a need to establish proprietary rights to protect the intellectual property of the University, Principal Investigators should discuss the intention to place Research Data in the public domain with Research & Innovation Services (RIS) before doing so. Every effort should be made to ensure that the timeframe to establish such rights is kept to a minimum.

1.9. All research data gathered by students during the course of their study are the responsibility of the supervising staff member to manage in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

1.10. The Library & Learning Centre (LLC) will provide support, guidance and information on appropriate research data management activities, including planning for funding applications, availability of internal and external research data repositories, licensing of datasets and allocation of persistent identifiers for datasets.

---

2 A research data set that is sensitive is defined as data that can be used to identify an individual, species, object, process, or location that introduces a risk of discrimination, harm, or unwanted attention. The legal definition of sensitive personal data (also referred to as special categories of data) is that which reveals racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation.

3 Under the UK Policy Framework for Health and Social Care Research all health and social care research requires a Sponsor. The Sponsor is the individual, organisation or partnership that takes on overall responsibility for proportionate, effective arrangements being in place to set up, run and report a research project. Sponsors of clinical trials of investigational medicinal products have particular legal duties.
2. Storage and Accessibility

2.1. All Research Data of potential current or future interest, or that which substantiates published research findings, should be assessed by the Principal Investigator for deposition in an appropriate external or University led research data repository.

2.2. The associated costs of data management, analytics, archiving and sharing should be recovered from funders in the grant application, where funder’s policies permit.

2.3. Data must be stored securely, with appropriate measures taken to minimize the risk of unauthorised access, loss, destruction or theft.

2.4. Where personal data sets are being used in research they shall be used in a manner compliant with the applicable data protection legislation\(^4\), or any statutory modification or re-enactment thereof. In particular:
   - Only the absolute minimum of personal data necessary shall be processed for any project
   - The basis for lawful use of personal data shall be documented
   - Every research participant shall be given information on the project and the use of each individual participant’s information shall meet transparency requirements.

2.5. A central record of known datasets deposited in public access repositories, or curated by Schools, will be maintained by the LLC. Any Research Data to be deposited with external services, such as Research Council or international repositories, should therefore be made known to the LLC for recording in the University’s research information system (discovery@dundee.ac.uk). The University will ensure data continues to be discoverable and compliant with funder mandates.

2.6. Published research results should always include information on how to access supporting data. The LLC will provide a persistent and unique identifier for datasets (DOI) where required.

2.7. The University of Dundee will respect the requirements and policies of existing and future partnerships with third parties involved in the storage and safeguarding of Research Data. NHS and clinical trial data may be subject to additional governance as specified by the R&D Director, TASC, NHS Tayside (see TASC Publication Policy).

2.8. The length of time data is stored for should be determined as part of the Research Data management planning for the project, and should adhere to any particular funding body’s requirements and any additional conditions or practices within the field. The Concordat on Open Data states “data underlying publications should be retained for 10 years from the date of any publication which fundamentally relies on the data, unless specified otherwise by the funder of the research.”

2.9. Data are to be made openly available as soon as possible, and typically on publication of results. Embargo periods are permitted, but should adhere to any particular funding body’s

\(^4\) The General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) and the UK Data Protection Act (2018). Further information can be obtained from the University of Dundee data protection website and the website of the Information Commissioner’s Office.
requirements and any additional conditions or practices within the field. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to adhere to funder requirements for data publishing and, where necessary, to negotiate an extension to restrictions on placing data in the public domain.

2.10. Where data are published, the Principal Investigator is required to select an appropriate license under which their data will be made available and to ensure that the license permits sharing and re-use in accordance with their funder’s mandate and the terms and conditions of this policy. Guidance is available from University support services (see item 1.10 above). Electronic data published by the University Repository will be catalogued using structured metadata which includes details of licensing and a robust persistent digital object identifier (DOI).

2.11. The University of Dundee retains the rights to re-use Research Data or make it openly available for others to re-use. Exclusive rights to re-use or publish Research Data should not therefore be granted to any third party, including commercial publishers, without prior discussion with RIS (paragraph 1.8 refers).

2.12. The University of Dundee retains the intellectual property rights of the Research Data. Principal Investigators are entitled to be the first publishers of the data they have generated and have the right to be identified and credited as the creator. Original copies of data must be retained. Duplicate copies of data may be taken with permission of the PI or Dean where the re-use of the data are acceptable, as defined by this policy.

2.13. All clinical trials sponsored by the University of Dundee must be registered on an appropriate publicly accessible research register within 6 weeks of first participant recruitment in the UK. Summary results data from clinical trials must be made publicly accessible in an appropriate format within 12 months from trial completion (for further details see the TASC Publication Policy).

3. Assistance with Application of Policy

Guidance on the central record of Research Data sets, open access, appropriate internal and external research data repositories, and research data management planning is available from the Assistant Director, Research & Resources, LLC (h.whaley@dundee.ac.uk). Guidance on IPR and collaboration agreements is available from RIS (research@dundee.ac.uk). Guidance on clinical or health data is available from TASC (tasctayside@nhs.net) and HIC (hicsupport@dundee.ac.uk).

If there is uncertainty around the applicability or interpretation of this policy, the matter must be referred to the Convener of the University’s Research Governance & Policy Sub-Committee (contact the Assistant Director (Research & Resources), LLC, in the first instance: h.whaley@dundee.ac.uk).