

Research Data and Primary Materials Policy

1. PURPOSE

To set out the requirements for university researchers to ensure that their research data and primary materials are managed according to university policy, and legal, statutory, ethical, funding body and publisher requirements.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

- This policy is based on guidelines in the Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research (**The Code**).
- The University has an ongoing role in the management of research data and primary materials in accordance with the [Records and Information Management Policy](#).
- Research data and primary materials management practices will be consistent with legal, statutory, ethical, funding body and publisher requirements and discipline best practice.

2.1. Collection of research data and primary materials

- 2.1.1. Research data and primary materials will be collected in accordance with legal, statutory, and ethical requirements, and discipline best practice.

2.2. Storage of research data and primary materials

- 2.2.1. The University will provide facilities for the safe and secure storage of research data and primary materials.
- 2.2.2. Researchers are responsible for maintaining records of where research data and primary materials for their research program are stored.
- 2.2.3. Research data and primary materials will be stored in the safe and secure storage provided by the University unless contractual agreements state otherwise.

2.3. Ownership of research data and primary materials

- 2.3.1. As a general rule, the University owns the research data for all research projects which it hosts.
- 2.3.2. Ownership may also be influenced by funding arrangements for the project and agreements with other organisations. The ownership of research data and primary materials will be determined and recorded before the commencement of a research project.

2.4. Access to research data and primary materials

- 2.4.1. To ensure integrity the University may access research data and primary materials in accordance with confidentiality requirements, legislation, privacy rules and other guidelines.
- 2.4.2. The principal investigator of a research project may grant access to the project's research data and primary materials in accordance with contractual obligations, confidentiality requirements, legislation, privacy rules and other guidelines.
- 2.4.3. The University may give third parties access to research data and primary materials as required by law or regulatory authorities.

2.5. Research data sharing

- 2.5.1. Research data will be made as widely and freely available as possible, in accordance with the [Authorship, Peer Review and Publication of Research Findings Policy](#), while safeguarding the privacy of participants, protecting confidential data and intellectual property, protecting sensitive data, and honouring any contractual arrangements including funding body and publisher requirements.

2.6. Confidentiality of research data and primary materials

- 2.6.1. Confidential information will be managed in accordance with the [Privacy Statement](#), [Information Security Classification Policy and Procedures](#), contractual and other legal obligations, and ethical approval provisions for that project, and only be used in ways agreed with those who provided it.

2.7. Retention of research data and primary materials

- 2.7.1. Research data will be retained for the minimum period specified in the [Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority](#) unless contractual agreements state otherwise. The retention period may be longer to allow reference by other researchers and to accommodate regulatory and sponsor requirements and archival and historical value.
- 2.7.2. Where practical, primary materials will be retained a minimum of seven years after completion of the project or publication, whichever is later, unless contractual agreements state otherwise.
- 2.7.3. Where it is not practical to retain primary materials, durable records derived from them (such as assays, test results, transcripts, and laboratory and field notes) must be retained and accessible.

2.8. Destruction of research data and primary materials

- 2.8.1. Secure and safe disposal of research data and primary materials may only occur after the minimum specified retention period has expired.
- 2.8.2. Disposal of research data and primary materials will be in accordance with the [Records and Information Management Policy](#).
- 2.8.3. If the results from research are challenged, all relevant data and materials will be retained until the matter is resolved. Research data and primary materials that may be relevant to allegations of research misconduct will not be destroyed.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION, COMPLIANCE MONITORING, MEASURING AND CONTINUAL IMPROVEMENT

- 3.1. [Properties](#) is responsible for the procurement and management of physical facilities that support the collection, access, use, storage, transfer, and retention of physical research data and physical primary materials.
- 3.2. [Curtin Information Technology Services](#) is responsible for providing information and communication technology systems and services to support the collection, access, sharing, use, storage, transfer, retention and destruction of digital research data and digital primary materials.
- 3.3. [Records and Information Management](#) is responsible for providing advice to support the collection, use, storage, transfer, retention, disposal and archiving of research data and primary materials. Records and Information Management is also responsible for providing approval for the destruction of research data and primary materials.
- 3.4. [University Librarian](#) is responsible for providing education, training and support in research data management issues such as copyright, licensing of data, embargoes, re-use and privacy.
- 3.5. **Researchers** are responsible for:
 - (a) the collection, storage, maintaining records of storage, access, sharing and retention of the research data and primary materials associated with their research program;
 - (b) seeking approval for the destruction of research data and primary materials from Records and Information Management;
 - (c) documenting arrangements for the collection, storage, ownership, access, confidentiality, retention and destruction of research data and primary materials when involved in a joint research project, collaborative research or research undertaken in accordance with a contractual agreement;
 - (d) the integrity, confidentiality and security of their research data and primary materials within the parameters of the facilities provided by Properties and Curtin Information and Technology Services; and
 - (e) reporting any breach of security or confidentiality to their Head of School or the Human Research Ethics Office as appropriate.
- 3.6. **Heads of School** are responsible for:
 - (a) ensuring that researchers are aware of their management responsibilities for research data and primary materials;

- (b) in consultation with the Office of Research and Development and/or Integrity and Standards Unit, providing access to University research data and primary materials to third parties as required by law or regulatory authorities; and
- (c) in consultation with Properties, providing shared storage facilities for physical research data and physical primary materials that meet security, confidentiality and safety requirements.

3.7. Research students are jointly responsible with their supervisor, for the collection, storage, sharing, security and use of research data and primary materials.

4. SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to University staff, University Associates and students.

5. DEFINITIONS

(Note: Commonly defined terms are located in the [Curtin Common Definitions](#). Any defined terms below are specific to this document)

Confidential data

Confidential data are those which require enhanced safeguards because their release may be commercially sensitive or damaging to the individuals involved, the University or its collaborators.

Primary materials

Primary materials include ore, core samples, minerals and rocks; biological materials; questionnaires; recordings; films; test responses; photographs; models; videotapes; and audiotapes.

Research data

Research data are facts, observations or experiences on which an argument, theory or test is based. Research data may be numerical, descriptive or visual. Research data may be durable records derived from primary materials such as assays, test results, transcripts, and laboratory and field notes. Research data may be raw or analysed, experimental or observational.

Sensitive data

Sensitive data are data that can be used to identify an individual, species, object, or location that introduces a risk of discrimination, harm, or unwanted attention

6. SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

Research Data Management Procedures (forthcoming)

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS

Internal

[Authorship, Peer Review and Publication of Research Findings Policy](#)

[Information Security Classification Policy and Procedures](#)

[Privacy Statement](#)

[Records and Information Management Policy](#)

[Research Management Policy](#)

External

[AIATSIS Guidelines for Ethical Research in Australian Indigenous Studies](#)

[ANDS Guide to Publishing and Sharing Sensitive Data](#)

[Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

[Department of Health Guidelines for human biobanks, genetic research databases and associated data](#)

[Western Australian University Sector Disposal Authority](#)

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REVISION HISTORY

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