

## Research Data Management Policy

### BACKGROUND

Research funders increasingly require grant-holders and applicants to meet certain standards with regard to the management of the data produced as a result of their research. In 2011, Research Councils UK (RCUK) released seven Common Principles on Data Policy<sup>1</sup> core principles for research data management by which all seven of their member councils are bound. In brief, these are:

1. Publicly funded research data are a public good which should be made openly available;
2. Data management policies and plans should adhere to relevant standards and community best practice;
3. Metadata should be created to enable research data to be discoverable, accessible and effectively re-used by others;
4. Policies and practices should recognise legal, ethical and commercial constraints on release of research data;
5. Those who undertake Research Council funded work may be entitled to a limited period of privileged use of the data they have collected to enable them to publish the results of their research;
6. Users of research data should acknowledge the sources of their data and abide by the terms and conditions under which they are accessed;
7. It is appropriate to use public funds to support the management and sharing of publicly funded research data;

### AIMS

This policy is intended:

To ensure that staff involved in the research process are aware of their data-related responsibilities;

To ensure that the University meets its obligations with regard to research data management, as defined by research funders; and

To make explicit the University's institutional commitment to good research data management practice.

The policy is supported by a set of procedures (Appendix A) and institutional awareness raising and training activities.

### PRINCIPLES

1. The University affirms its commitment to data management as a core academic activity, and a key element of good research practice.
2. Research data will be managed to the highest standards as part of the University's commitment to research excellence.
3. The University will provide mechanisms and services for storage, backup, registration, deposit

stipulations of funders, and to support the needs of researchers.

5. The University notes its institutional responsibility to manage Freedom of Information requests, including those relating to research data.
6. The University believes that planning and communicating data management activities throughout the research lifecycle leads to better results.

## SCOPE

### What does it cover?

Research data in the Arts is not so easily defined as in STEM subjects. The data types cited in this policy are not intended to be exhaustive, and definitions of what constitutes research data will vary from funder to funder. Generally, research data can be considered anything created, captured or collected as an output of funded research work *in its original state*.

As an example, the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) says “The outputs of the research may include, for example, [...] electronic data, including sound or images; performances, films or broadcasts.”<sup>2</sup>

In essence, this policy covers raw materials and finished outputs, but not necessarily the stages in between. It applies primarily to externally funded, digital research data, although non-digital data (such as sketchbooks) may also be covered, and requests from researchers to digitise existing analogue research data will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Where data exists in a non-digital form, appropriate effort to manage this to meet the expectations is also likely to be required. No reasonable external request to access analogue research data resulting from externally funded research will be refused, and access should be arranged between the principal investigator and the department of Research Management and Administration (RMA).

### **Who does it apply to?**

This policy applies to all staff involved in externally funded research at the University of the Arts London, especially where the funding body requires a data management plan. Its primary application is to existing, live awards and future funded research, although consideration will also be given to legacy research outputs which have value to the University.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. The University has an overall institutional responsibility for the management of data created by its researchers. The University is committed to supporting research data management activities via the RMA department;
2. Practical responsibility for RDM rests with Principal Investigators. UK Research Councils “expect those who receive funding to: [...] take responsibility for the curation, management and exploitation of data for future use.” It is acknowledged that in practice, day-to-day data management activities are likely to be delegated to research assistants or equivalent;
3. Enquiries regarding Freedom of Information requests should be submitted to the University’s department of Legal and Governance Affairs.
4. Any enquiries regarding this policy should be submitted to the Director of Research Management and Administration (RMA), in the first instance.

## Appendix A

### WORKFLOW

#### Application stage-Pre-Award

1. When external research funding is being sought, a Grant Approval Form is submitted in College, approved by that College's Associate Dean of Research, then sent to RMA's Funding section;
2. When this is approved for development, the Funding section will work with the prospective PI to develop the application;
3. If the proposed funder requires a data management plan (or equivalent), this will be developed by the PI with support from RMA's Funding section, using the research data management plan template.

#### Post-Award

4. Once funding is in place, the project team should work with RMA and IT Services to ensure that:
  - a. Data is created in an appropriate – and ideally Open – format;
  - b. Appropriate metadata is created, ready for exposure after the project concludes;
  - c. Data is stored and backed-up securely and appropriately for its content;
  - d. The funder's specific data-related requirements are met, particularly where these exceed the standard RCUK principles.
5. Where research data is created in non-digital form, it may be necessary to arrange the creation of a digital version, although this is not always the case.

#### Post-project

6. On completion of the project, the Principal Investigator will review the research data management plan in a meeting with the RMA funding team and IT services. This meeting will identify any research data in a non-digital form that should be digitised, agree on the longer-term storage of the data<sup>3</sup> (including an appropriate depository for the storage of the data), the exposure of metadata to enable discovery of the resources, and mechanisms for access according to the principles this policy.
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