UWE Bristol Research Data Management Policy (for staff research)

Introduction

The University considers the effective management of research data to be integral to good research practice. Sound research data management practices are important to the protection of research participants, the proper conduct of the research and validation of findings, and maximising the impact of the research, including appropriate re-use of data. UWE Bristol wishes to promote the highest standards of integrity in the management of research data as a key research asset. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that data produced by UWE Bristol researchers, or under its auspices, are created, stored, used and where appropriate re-used, and archived or destroyed according to good research practice and ethical requirements, legal and regulatory frameworks and funder requirements. This policy sets out the University's requirements of researchers, and the University's responsibilities, and should be read in conjunction with the guidance on research data management.

Scope

This Policy relates to all research conducted by UWE, researchers, or under the auspices of the University (as defined in the UWE Code of Good Research Conduct). The UWE Research Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that there is sound research data management practice in relation to the project, and all researchers are required to familiarise themselves with this policy and the University's research data management guidance, and comply with the following requirements.

Research Data is defined here as the evidence collected, created or observed, upon which knowledge from research is based. Research data will vary significantly across disciplines and may include 'textual data, numerical data, databases, geospatial data, images, audio-visual recordings and data generated by machines and instruments' (Corti et al 2014 page 57). Research data will include data held in electronic and paper form as well as physical data such as samples and physical artefacts.

Requirements

a. Research data must be created, maintained, accessed and shared in accordance with best practice, and in compliance with legislation and regulation, ethical requirements, contractual obligations, funder requirements, professional standards and University policies.

b. Researchers must make themselves aware of, and adhere to, relevant legislation and regulation, funders' requirements and University policies.

c. Project Managers must at the outset of a project set in place a Research Data Management Plan which covers the data throughout the whole data lifecycle, and follows the University's guidelines, or that of the relevant funding body if it has its own requirements.

d. Research data must be created according to best research practice, and researchers should apply measures to ensure research participants are protected at all stages of the life cycle of the research data.

e. Researchers must comply with the Data Protection Act. Where personal data is likely to cross national boundaries, the [Data Protection Officer](#) must be consulted. Cloud based data storage facilities which may mean data is sent outside the UK may not be appropriate for personal data.

f. All research data are subject to the University's [Intellectual Property Policy](#), and intellectual property issues related to research data must be considered at the outset. Exclusive rights to research data must not be handed over to a third party where this will restrict the ability to make the data openly available for re-use, unless this is a condition of funding or of a collaboration agreement. The intellectual property rights of others in third party data being used for research must be respected.

g. Collaborative research involving partners outside the university should normally be the subject of a collaboration agreement, and the arrangements for management of research data must be clearly set out in the agreement.

h. Researchers must comply with UWE's [data security requirements](#) as outlined in the guidance, including on where and how data should be stored. Data must be stored and backed up throughout the research, to protect its integrity and security, according to UWE's guidelines. Access to data should be controlled, and there should always be more than one person with access to the data. Where data is collected, transported or stored off site, this must be strictly in accordance with the [guidance on data security](#).

i. Research data must be assessed for retention, according to the University's data retention guidance. Data which may be of use to others, and which is not prevented for good reason from being re-used (as set out in the guidance), will normally be retained, and made openly available within 12 months of completion of the project, with as few restrictions as possible on use. Research which has been selected as allowable and appropriate for retention and re-use must be deposited in an appropriate national or international archive, and/or the [UWE data repository](#), and with necessary safeguards in place.

j. If the Project Manager leaves the university, it is the responsibility of the Head of Department to ensure that an appropriate hand over of data takes place, and a new UWE Project Manager with responsibility for the data is immediately in place. In the absence of such an arrangement, the Head of Department will be deemed the Research Project Manager in relation to the data.

k. Metadata to aid discovery of all research data must be provided to the [UWE data repository](#) within 12 months of the end of the project, whether or not it is deemed appropriate to be made publicly available. Where data is to be accessed by third parties via the repository, data documentation should be sufficient for the data to be understandable and re-useable. Reference should be made in any publication based upon the research as to its location and accessibility.

l. Any research data held elsewhere during its life course, such as within collaborating institutions, must be registered with UWE Bristol, and metadata included in the [UWE data repository](#) within 12 months of the end of the project.

m. The UWE Project Manager is responsible for ensuring that all legal, ethical and contractual requirements are complied with in relation to third party access to data. Where safeguards can be set in place which will allow access, it is the expectation that data will be made available. However, where research data cannot be accessed by others for good reasons, the data may still need to be retained for potential verification of the integrity of the research or future use by the research team.

Data selected for retention must be retained for 10 years, unless a longer period is specified by the funder, or legislative or regulatory or professional requirements, in which case the longer period will apply.

n. Data not selected for retention must be appropriately destroyed in a timely way, and a record of its destruction made. Destruction may need to take place because the data is not deemed sufficiently valuable to warrant the costs of storing and supporting it. However, data may need to be destroyed where consents, or legal or regulatory requirements, mean that this is necessary. Project Managers should include the plans for retention or destruction in the Research Data Management Plan.

o. Unless constrained otherwise, e.g. for reasons of sensitivity or commercial interest, researchers must cite the research data, and how to access it, in any publication based upon it. Where it is inappropriate for the data to be made openly available, a reference must be made to the location of the metadata.

p. Where funders allow for this, the direct costs of research data management, including the preparation of data for archiving, should be requested.

q. The University will provide facilities, advice and training to support research data management, including mechanisms for the registration, storage, deposit and retention of research data throughout its life cycle.

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