

Research Data Management Frequently Asked Questions

What is RDM and what does it mean to me?

RDM is Research Data Management and is about best practice in ensuring the information you generate during a Research Project is retained in a safe environment and is made openly available.

What is research data?

Research data is defined in RCUK's [Guidance on best practice in the management of research data](#) as including : "digital information created directly from research activities such as experiments, analysis, surveys, measurements, instrumentation and observations; data resulting from automated or manual data reduction and analysis including the inputs and outputs of simulations and models."

Do funders have policies regarding RDM?

Yes, RCUK and the individual research councils all have their own policies, as well as charities and the EU. See <http://www.hw.ac.uk/is/research-support/funders-policies.htm> for links to a range of funder policies.

What is Heriot-Watt's Policy on RDM?

HWU expects that a Data Management Plan (DMP) be initiated at the project proposal stage and that the Research Data from a Research Project be managed effectively so that it can be made available. For full details please refer to <http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/researchdata-management-policy.pdf>

Does HWU have any guidance or documentation on RDM?

There is a Web resource maintained by IS that contains guidance and reference material, this can be found at <http://www.hw.ac.uk/is/research-support/research-data-management.htm>

What is a DMP?

DMP, or a Data Management Plan, is a tool designed to enable a researcher to define how they will approach the management of their Research Data. It asks questions that should lead

to an effective way to look at, process, store and retrieve Research Data generated during a Research Project.

Who can I contact to talk about RDM?

Many Schools have a Research Administrator and an IT specialist who can help with various aspects of RDM, the former on costs and the content of DMPs and the latter on IT infrastructure to support RDM.

In the absence of local support then all enquiries on RDM and DMPs can be raised via open.researchdata@hw.ac.uk. Issues on computing infrastructure can be raised via ITHelp@hw.ac.uk.

Each School has an Academic Champion who sits on the Research Data Management Group and who can also advise on RDM Issues.

Is there a central contact point to ask about research data issues?

For all central Research Data issues please contact open.researchdata@hw.ac.uk

Who do I contact to arrange for storing research data?

Email ITHelp@hw.ac.uk to discuss your storage requirements or discuss with your local IT support staff

Is there a template for authoring DMPs?

HWU recommends the use of the DMPOnline tool (<https://dmponline.dcc.ac.uk/>); this offers both funder-specific templates (and associated guidelines) and a generic template.

Do we have to use DMPOnline for RDM?

We recommend the use of DMPOnline due to the flexible nature, supporting links and multiple templates it has to offer. In some cases a funder may require that their own template is used; should this be the case inform the pre-award teams in your School, and RES, so that they are aware.

Is the data management plan created in DMPOnline binding?

Your DMP should be a realistic representation of how you will manage your data through the project, but it can be updated. The DMP should be attached to your research proposal in the WorkTribe system, however, the University is not currently checking or assessing the content of DMPs.

Can DMPs be shared?

Within DMPOnline, you can share your DMP with collaborators, and set permissions – read only, co-owner or editor.

Do you have any draft text about institutional support for RDM that I can put in my bid? Currently, no, but support staff will be able to help with your specific enquiry. If you are sharing your data via Pure, please call this Heriot-Watt University's Institutional Repository.

Can I see examples of Data Management Plans?

The Digital Curation Centre lists examples [here](#) or contact colleagues.

How do we include a DMP as part submitting a research proposal?

A DMP can be attached to the Worktribe awards management tool as a document. Your School pre-award team will be ensuring that a DMP is in place before your proposal is submitted to RES.

Can I add the costs of RDM to my research proposal?

If the necessary storage requirements can be accommodated within the current computing infrastructure then costs will be included in the indirect costs associated with your proposal. If your storage requirements exceed the facilities on offer locally then these will need to be costed and fully justified as part of your proposal. Your School pre-award team will be able to advise on eligible costs.

Some Funders may specify where or how Research Data should be stored, e.g. using a data store external to HWU; costs associated with this should be included and justified.

I am generating very large amounts of data: what is the policy on storing this?

If your storage requirements exceed the facilities on offer locally then these will need to be costed and fully justified as part of your proposal. Your School pre-award team will be able to advise on eligible costs associated with your funder.

Can I use Pure to store Research Data?

Pure is being used to support two aspects of RDM:

- to store (or link to) both Research Data and metadata that underpin Publications and make both available via Research Gateway.
- to store metadata on Research Data not linked to Publications, with appropriate links to a repository where this is stored, for dissemination in the same way as above.

What data do I need to keep?

This depends on your own individual research project/discipline. RCUK guidelines state that “data with acknowledged long-term value should be preserved and remain accessible and usable for future research.”

As a minimum, data should be kept that is required to validate research findings or underpins research publications.

RCUK give the following examples of research data that have potential re-use value: “**Data that by their nature cannot be re-measured or re-created such as earth observations or people-based data.**”

Judgement should be used – for example, “in the case of simulated data or outputs of models, it may be more effective to preserve the means to recreate the data by preserving the generating code and environment, rather than preserving the data themselves”.

Does my data need to be made openly available (shared)?

In principle, all data generated during the research process should be made openly available (shared) unless there is a legal, ethical or commercial reason why access should be restricted. When the dataset is completed, you should consider making it available as soon as possible, or within twelve months of creation. However, researchers can be allowed periods of limited privileged use of the data to allow them to publish the results, or to file a patent, for example. Check your individual funder’s policy for details. Data supporting published findings should be published at the same time as the paper.

How do I choose which research data should be stored on Pure?

Research data supporting publications can be stored on Pure.

Do I need to deposit supplementary data in Pure, if it is available on the publisher’s website as an appendix to the paper?

No, you do not need to do this, unless you have concerns that the data will not be preserved by the journal.

What research data, not linked to Publications, needs to be stored?

All Research data with potential reuse value, irrespective of whether it has been used for publication, should be subjected to a risk- and value-proportionate assessment of whether to

discard or retain the data. This is ultimately an academic judgement based on the available guidance from both Heritage and Governance and the Funder.

How long do I need to ensure the data can be retrieved and is it my responsibility to do so?

Individual funders will define this period, but 10 years would not be unusual. Identifying Research Data for archive, making it available for archive storage, along with the tools required to interpret the Data are the responsibility of the academic leading the Research. Once the data is archived on HWU facilities the responsibility for maintaining that archive, or links to that archive, will lie with HWU.

How do I refer to Research Data in Publications?

This needs a persistent identifier such as a DOI. If your Research Data is stored in Pure then IS will generate one on your behalf. If it is held elsewhere then you will need to consult with the holders of that repository for something similar.

How do I request a DOI?

You should create a metadata record for data in Pure and email purehelp@hw.ac.uk to ask for a doi. There are guidelines on creating a record in Pure [here](#).

How do I store data not linked to Publications?

There are several options, see <http://www.hw.ac.uk/is/research-support/where-to-archiveyour-research-data.htm>. HWU is also working towards a longer central solution to this issue.

What if my data is hard copy and non-digital, or an object?

HWU is working towards a central solution on this but in the interim contact Heritage and Information Governance (HIG) at heritage@hw.ac.uk to discuss. Guidance can also be accessed at: <http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/research-data-management-policy.pdf>

My project didn't generate any publishable data so how does this relate to me?

All Research Data linked to any publically funded Research Project needs to be preserved, even if it leads to a negative result as this can still be used by others and is a record of activity.

Why do I need to have metadata entries in Pure for research data not linked to publications?

All Research Data needs to be auditable should it be requested and Pure provides an effective catalogue where that information is kept.

What do I do if I'm collaborating with another Institution? Who owns the data and who is responsible for making it accessible?

Consult with RES (RES@hw.ac.uk) to explore whether a Collaboration Agreement needs to be put in place. Avoid informal agreements with colleagues from other Institutions as this may fall foul of individual Institution Policies.

What do we do when we collaborate with Industry and they wish to retain the data?

Discuss with RES (RES@hw.ac.uk) in the first instance as this will be part of legal documents agreed between HWU and the Funder in order for the Research to take place.

Can I hold off publishing my research data until I've used it for other purposes?

Research Data can be embargoed, taking note of individual Funder policies on embargo periods - penalties may arise if this is exceeded. However, metadata should still be made visible.

What happens if my data is confidential?

Research Data should still be stored in some form of repository with metadata in Pure. Both the metadata and actual Research Data (if stored in Pure) can be made confidential and restricted to either campus or closed. If security clearances are required to view any type of Research Data, then details of this should be included as per the Funder requirements.

What do Postgraduate Research Students (PGRs) need to do with respect to RDM?

The same principles and policies apply as their employed academic colleagues, i.e. Research Data needs to be effectively planned and managed. Note that ownership of the Research Data depends on the IP Agreement between HWU and the PGR and where relevant funders' condition of grant.

What do I do regarding 3rd party data? Do I publish this or refer to it?

3rd party data should only be used in the context of its license and should be made reference to using a persistent link such as a DOI.

If my research data is held elsewhere do I need to store it in Pure?

If the data can be found via a persistent link (such as a DOI) then only the metadata and the link need to be kept in Pure.

The research data generated was from a software package using 3rd party data: do I have to make this available?

If you are re-purposing data in a way that provides a new outcome then the results will need to be made publically available (with the standard caveats regarding commercialisation etc.), along with details of how to access the software if it is not a standard package

Is there training on RDM for new researchers and PGRs?

The Centre for Academic Learning and Development (ALD) will be providing support in this area and will have an agreed schedule of appropriate events.

Will refresher training be made available for researchers and PGRs?

ALD will be providing support in this area and will have an agreed schedule of appropriate events; contact open.researchdata@hw.ac.uk for details.

Will staff in Professional Services (IT and Research Administrator Support Staff) receive training?

ALD will be providing support in this area and will have an agreed schedule of appropriate events contact open.researchdata@hw.ac.uk for details.

What do we as pre-award do if there is no DMP attached to Worktribe?

If a funder requires a DMP to be included then the PI is required to provide this and the proposal should not be forwarded to RES until this is in place. The University would expect a DMP to be provided with all proposals, thus even if a funder or scheme does not formally require a DMP the PI will still need to justify why they have not included one.

If I'm asked for a copy of my data do I need to inform or process it through HWU?

All contacts should be tracked so that exchanges between HWU and external sources are checked for compliance with any relevant legislation (e.g. Freedom of Information); Heritage and Information Governance (HIG) should be informed of any external contact using the FOI e-mail foi@hw.ac.uk .

What do I do if the Research Data is required for commercial purposes?

The Research Data can be embargoed or made confidential, depending on the nature of the Funder Policy and any Collaboration Agreement. Consult with RES on the appropriate way forward.

What happens to research data if I leave HWU?

Please contact open.researchdata@hw.ac.uk to discuss.