Academic Policy Statement APS 27:

Research Data Management

1. Introduction

Middlesex University is committed to supporting and facilitating research excellence. Excellent research is underpinned by high quality data and as such it is essential that research conducted within the institution be subject to Research Data Management (RDM) best practice. Supporting the principles of the Universities UK concordat to support research integrity[1] and the Middlesex University Code of Practice for Research,[2] it is the institution's responsibility to encourage and enable researchers to engage with this best practice.

The benefits of managing research data effectively include:

- Improving the integrity, longevity and utility of research data
- Mitigating the risk of accidental data loss
- Enabling data sharing and re-use, increasing the visibility, impact and integrity of research.
- Mitigating the risk of inappropriate release of sensitive data.
- Ensuring appropriate long term preservation of and access to data.

Research Councils UK (RCUK) expect that "publicly funded research data are a public good, produced in the public interest, which should be made openly available with as few restrictions as possible in a timely and responsible manner that does not harm intellectual property [while recognising] that there are legal, ethical and commercial constraints on release of research data."[3]

Individual funding councils such as Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC)[4] and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)[5] have updated research data policy statements to set out responsibilities of both the individual researcher and research institutions. While other funders are not explicit in their expectations there is an implicit

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[1] http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Pages/Theconcordattosupportresearchintegrity.aspx
[2] http://www.mdx.ac.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/58387/Code-of-Practice-for-Res-July2011.pdf
[3] http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/datapolicy/
[4] http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/about/standards/researchdata/
[5] http://www.esrc.ac.uk/about-esrc/information/data-policy.aspx

understanding that researchers cannot meet expectations without support from their institution.

Definitions

Research Data Management can be described as "…an explicit process covering the creation and stewardship of research materials to enable their use for as long as they retain value"[6]

Research data can be defined as <u>any</u> digital object created during the course of research (which might include documents, still images, video and audio files, spreadsheets, software, computer code, databases or websites) in addition to physical objects such as sketchbooks, diaries, lab notebooks, portfolios, models or other artefacts. It also includes the documentation of Practice-as-Research.

Open Data is that which "…can be **freely used, modified, and shared** by **anyone** for **any purpose."**[7]

Research data lifecycle can include the planning, creating, using, appraising, depositing, publishing and preservation of research data enabling both discovery and re-use.[8]

This policy aims to:

1. Raise awareness of RDM best practice and funder requirements and the associated implications for both individual researchers and the University
2. Acknowledge that RDM falls within the remit of a range of stakeholders and that they will need to work together to develop a comprehensive and cohesive RDM infrastructure and support service.
3. Delineate what Middlesex University expects of its researchers and clarify the services that will be provided to assist them.

2. Researcher Responsibilities

As part of best practice, the University expects researchers to manage their data to appropriate standards throughout the research data lifecycle.

2.1 All research proposals will include a Data Management Plan to be submitted with their grant application.

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[6] Rans, J (2015) *Research Data Management: Middlesex University*. Presentation given on 22 January 2015.
[7] http://opendefinition.org/
[8] Rans, J (2015) *Research Data Management: Middlesex University*. Presentation given on 22 January 2015.
Adapted from: http://www.slideshare.net/edinadocumentationofficer/mantra-poster2[#](#)

2.2 The **senior researcher** involved in a research project is ultimately responsible for the management of research data. In the case of research students, the **supervisor** is responsible.

2.3 Relevant ethics guidelines[9], intellectual property rights (including commercial implications),[10] Copyright[11], and data protection[12] must be considered.

2.4 Appropriate data should be selected to preserve post-project for 10 years unless funder or legal requirements specify otherwise at which point a review process will be triggered.

2.5 Data selected for preservation must be registered in the institutional data catalogue within 12 months along with any associated restrictions and conditions of access. Appropriate metadata records should be included in the catalogue record, this should include reference to any disciplinary standards that have been applied to the data.

2.5 The Dean of School is responsible for decision making about preserved datasets in the absence of a responsible individual.

2.6 Each researcher must make themselves familiar with and adhere to the requirements of their particular funder, publishers and other relevant stakeholders.

2.7 Research data should be made as open as possible unless there are legal, ethical, commercial, intellectual property or other reasons not to do so. An appropriate licence should be applied to manage the re-use of this data.

3. Institutional Responsibilities

A programme of guidance and training in all areas of RDM for all relevant stakeholders will be developed by Library & Student Support (LSS) in consultation with all Schools, the Research & Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO) and the Computing and Communications Systems Service (CCSS) and Staff Development.

The University will develop infrastructure and support to enable compliance with this policy.

4. Policy Implementation and Review

This policy was approved by Academic Board on Thursday 25 June 2015. To be reviewed in June 2018.

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[9] http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/research-business/Research-ethics/index.aspx
[10] http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/working-here/policies/intellectualproperty/index.aspx
[11] http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/working-here/policies/copyright/index.aspx
[12] http://www.intra.mdx.ac.uk/working-here/policies/data-protection/index.aspx

Revision history	This policy was considered and approved by the Achievement Committee prior to approval by Academic Board at its meeting on 25th June 2015. This policy is to be reviewed in June 2018.
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