

Research Data Management Policy

2024 – 2027



Edge Hill
University

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Introduction

1. A systematic approach to research data management is central to good research practice and governance and underpins the University's commitment to Open Research, as outlined in the [Open Research Statement](#).
2. The University recognises the following benefits of effective research data management:
 - a. Opening research to the public and other researchers and increasing transparency, enabling the re-use of data and the replication and validation of research.
 - b. Enabling adherence to the [FAIR Principles](#) of data being findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.
 - c. Improving data integrity, security and access management.
 - d. Enhancing the visibility of Edge Hill research and the research reputations of both researchers and the University.
 - e. Maximising the potential for collaboration within and outside the University.
 - f. Demonstrating compliance with research funders' and assessment bodies' policies.
3. Responsibility for good management of research data rests with the Principal Investigator or lead researcher, supported by the University.
4. This policy applies to anyone conducting research across any discipline at Edge Hill University. For taught postgraduate courses, this policy only applies where the research findings are published.
5. This policy does not apply to undergraduate students. However, undergraduate students should manage any course-related research in line with the [Code of Practice for the Conduct of Research](#).

Definitions

6. The [UK Concordat on Open Research Data](#) recognises that the definition of research data varies between disciplines but, broadly, it encompasses information that has been collected, observed, generated or created to validate original research findings.
7. This includes a wide range of content and formats generated across all disciplines and could include statistical data, interview transcripts, software and code, laboratory notebooks, material held in libraries and archives, and practice as research, etc.
8. Research data management is a process covering the creation and stewardship of research materials to enable their use for as long as they retain value.

Policy Statements

9. Edge Hill University is committed to ensuring that the research conducted by its staff and students maintains the highest possible standards of integrity.
10. Research data are a research output and must be managed in accordance with the University's policies, guidance, and standards (listed at the end of this document), and funder, legislative and ethical requirements.
11. Research data should be made as open as possible under an appropriate licence in accordance with this policy, unless there are legal, ethical, contractual or funder requirements that restrict this. Exclusive rights to host, re-use or publish research data should not be given to other bodies without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for re-use, unless this is a condition of funding.
12. Researchers should manage their data in accordance with the [FAIR data principles](#) and in a manner that maximises the transparency, integrity, quality and reproducibility of research and ensures the long-term accessibility and reusability of research data.
13. A research data management plan (DMP) should be created, maintained and adhered to for every research project. The DMP should meet the requirements of Edge Hill University and any relevant external bodies.
14. The University provides services enabling registration, deposit, storage, retention of and public access to research data. [Edge Hill Figshare](#) is the University's data repository. Researchers should deposit their research data in Figshare or an appropriate external data service, funder, disciplinary or publisher repository if required by their discipline or funder. In that case, researchers should create a metadata record of their research data in Figshare, linking through to the original source.
15. Researchers should provide sufficient metadata and explanatory documentation about their data to ensure that they are discoverable, understandable, and reuseable, whether or not the data can be made open.
16. Data must be retained intact in an appropriate format and storage facility, such as a repository, for as long as the data have value or as specified by legislation, funders, regulatory requirements or disciplinary best practice. The University is committed to the long-term preservation of research content to maximise the public value of research. Research data deposited in Edge Hill Figshare will be retained for at least 10 years from the date of deposit.
17. Research-related administrative records for non-clinical or public health studies, for example completed participant consent forms, should be kept securely and separately from the research data for as long as the research data is retained, but for at least 10 years after the completion of the project, unless otherwise stipulated by funder or regulatory requirements.

18. Researchers should use open data formats where possible to reduce data obsolescence and increase reuse potential.
19. Where research data is not retained, it should be disposed of according to the [University Information Security Policy](#).
20. Research data must be managed according to legal and statutory requirements, including but not limited to: Data Protection Act 2018, Freedom of Information Act 2000, and intellectual property rights.
21. All research data management must adhere to Edge Hill research [ethics](#) and [governance](#) requirements.
22. The University will provide advice, training and support regarding research data management.

Responsibilities

23. All researchers are responsible for research data management requirements in their research. Principal Investigators are responsible for data management practices within their projects.
24. For research conducted with other institutions or independent researchers, an appropriate plan for research data ownership and management should be agreed.
25. If Edge Hill staff members or students take part in research led by another institution, the lead Edge Hill researcher is responsible for data management at Edge Hill and for ensuring data is appropriately deposited and shared in accordance with this policy, including creating a metadata record in Figshare.
26. If a researcher leaves the University,
 - a. They must ensure that data they have generated, collected or derived is shared with a supervisor or colleague before they leave the University to minimise the risk of data loss.
 - b. If they wish to retain data or copies of live data for personal use, they must obtain permission from the Principal Investigator and/or Head of Department. Where personal data is involved, the request must be refused unless it is clear that future use will be consistent with the terms of the consent given for the research (e.g. anonymisation). Permission is not required for publicly accessible data held in a repository unless restrictions are in place for access and/or re-use.
27. While it is recognised that managing data for a specific project lies with the individual researcher, institutional responsibility for research data management falls within the remit of a range of stakeholders across the institution, including and not limited to Library and Learning Services, the Research Office, IT Services, the research ethics committees and the Strategic Planning and Policy Unit.

28. Other roles with key responsibilities for data management include:

- a. Heads of Department ensure that staff and students in their areas are aware of their responsibilities.
- b. Departmental Research Leads support staff in understanding the operational aspects of their responsibilities, particularly in signposting new staff to institutional resources.
- c. Associate Deans for Research (or equivalent) ensure that policy developments are disseminated among all research staff and students in their faculty.
- d. Supervisors of postgraduate research students set expectations for research data management and support students to manage their data in line with this policy.

29. This policy will be reviewed every three years unless there are changes to legislation or funder requirements.

Related policies

30. This policy should be read in conjunction with other University policies and codes including:

- a. [Code of Practice for the Conduct of Research](#)
- b. [Research Ethics Policy](#)
- c. [Open Research Statement](#)
- d. [Open Access Policy](#)
- e. [Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- f. [IT Services Acceptable Use Policy](#)
- g. [Information Security Policy](#)
- h. [Data Protection Policy](#)
- i. [Policy on Researching and Handling Sensitive Material](#)
- j. [Record Retention Policy](#)
- k. [Research Information Policy](#)

Endmatter

Title	Research Data Management Policy
Policy Owner	Director, Research Office
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