

University of Kent Research Data Policy

Context

At the University of Kent research data will be managed to high standards throughout the research data lifecycle as part of the University's commitment to research excellence. As stated in [University of Kent Intellectual Property policy](#):

1. Where no external contract exists, the University has ownership of datasets or software created during research undertaken by researchers in its employment.
2. Where no external contract exists, the University has ownership of data created during research undertaken by students registered at the University.
3. Where research is carried out under a contract or research agreement, the terms of the agreement will determine ownership and rights to exploit the data.
4. Data derived from processing third-party datasets will become the property of the University according to the criteria at point 1 and where licences and contracts with the third-party owner allow.

The policy sits alongside the University's Open Research Statement, Intellectual Property Policy and Research Publications policy.

Scope

Research data are any information that has been collected, observed, generated or created to support or validate original research findings. They include:

- Questionnaires and survey results.
- Interview recordings and transcripts.
- Videos and images of process, workshops and physical outputs, performances or exhibitions.
- Experimental observations, models and software code.
- Sketchbooks and developmental material.
- Observations - notebooks and lab books.
- Data generated by computer applications or hardware, e.g. Geographic Information System (GIS) data.
- Biological samples.

Data created as physical objects or materials, also known as analogue data, should be rendered into a digital format. Decisions about preservation and access to original objects and materials should be covered in a research data management plan, taking any relevant legislation and professional practice into account.

This policy applies to:

- The management, retention, publication, preservation and re-use of research data and the planning required to achieve this.
- Research data, and associated metadata, created, collected or reused at the University of Kent.
- All University staff and doctoral researchers who conduct research officially affiliated to the University of Kent.
- Born digital research data or digital surrogates of research data.

This policy does not apply to:

- Records created in the course of the University of Kent's business, the University's records and archives collection or the University's special collections.
- Materials created by taught course students, but taught course students are encouraged to follow best practice and research data management guidance
- Research not related to researchers' contracts with the University or not officially affiliated to the University.

All staff and students must comply with the separate [University Data Protection Policy](#)

Guiding principles and policies

"At the University of Kent we are committed to supporting our researchers to achieve their full potential, within a diverse and inclusive research and innovation culture."

"Our discoveries and research will emphasise existing and new signature areas, where we match the best in the world."

This policy formalises a commitment to the effective stewardship and dissemination of research data by the University and through:

- Use of [FAIR \(Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reproducible\) Data Principles](#) for the recording and management of research data.
- Adoption of [UKRI Common principles on research data](#) and the [UK Concordat on Open Research Data](#).

It also embeds the principles expressed in the University's:

- University of Kent's Open Research Statement that publicly funded research and scholarship should be openly available to all and free at the point of access. We aim to encourage data that are as open as possible and as restricted as necessary.
- University of Kent Intellectual Property policy: We aim to maximise impact by addressing commercial potential, privacy and sensitivity at an early stage.

This policy should be read in conjunction with legislation, institutional policies and government guidance. Researchers should also take account of funder and publisher requirements when considering how to process, store and share their research data

Institutional Responsibilities

Where research data is processed at the University, using University systems and by University researchers, the University of Kent is the data controller. The University will seek to:

1. Promote this policy and raise awareness of best practice in research data management.
2. Provide appropriate systems and infrastructure, supporting documentation, and services.
3. Provide online guidance to support researchers to appropriately manage their research data.
4. Maintain a research data management support service and guidance.
5. Monitor external and internal policy and operational needs to ensure the service continues to meet strategic priorities in alignment with institutional goals and stakeholder needs.

Researcher Responsibilities

Individual researchers (data creators) are responsible for applying best practice and policy guidance in relation to the management of their research data and research related records.

Doctoral supervisors are responsible for ensuring that PhD students (data creators) are aware of this policy and for signposting the support and systems available to them across the University in relation to management of their research data.

Researchers need to:

Early stages and planning

1. Comply with research data requirements of research funders, sponsors, publishers, and other external stakeholders, as well as the legal, ethical, and regulatory frameworks governing the processing of personal data and sensitive research data.

2. Assert University ownership of research data wherever possible. Agreements should not be made with any public funder that contradicts this policy. Where funding is from a private source the right to make data created as part of the research openly accessible should be sought wherever possible.
3. Complete a data management plan at the beginning of any research project, identifying measures and resources to protect commercially sensitive information and personal data.

Preservation and sharing

4. Consider commercial implications for their data when appraising how they should be stored and shared. Commercially sensitive data should be redacted or should have access restricted until a suitable time, e.g. after the publication of a patent.
5. Identify research data and research related records for preservation and sharing beyond the lifetime of research projects by engaging in an appropriate selection and appraisal process.
6. Make research data as open as possible, except where there are valid reasons not to do so. Doctoral researchers are encouraged to share research data as openly as possible alongside their open access doctoral theses, in line with FAIR Data principles.
7. Deposit research data selected for preservation in an appropriate research repository that meets [re3data minimum standards](#). This should happen no later than the publication of any associated research outputs. The [University of Kent Data Repository \(KDR\)](#) is available for data from un-funded projects, doctoral theses, and orphan datasets not preserved elsewhere.
8. Ensure datasets deposited in KDR or other research data archives are accompanied by full metadata and documentation in line with the archive's policies.

Project completion and publishing

9. Register all research data or software preserved in external repositories as an output in KDR as soon as practicable, and link preserved datasets to their publication's record in the [Kent Academic Repository \(KAR\)](#).
10. Include a [data access statement](#) in all research outputs, even where there are no research data associated with the output or the research data are inaccessible.
11. Plan how they will preserve websites used to gather, process, or disseminate research data, activities, or outputs at the end of the research project.
12. Make suitable arrangements for the preservation or disposal of physical data, objects, and materials and identify these arrangements in the data management plan.

Glossary

https://media.www.kent.ac.uk/se/46917/OpenResearchGlossary_September2023.pdf

Related policies & guidance - online links

Policies

FAIR Data Principles

UKRI Common principles on research data

UK Concordat on Open Research Data

University of Kent Ethics Code

University of Kent Data Protection policy

University of Kent Intellectual Property policy

University of Kent Open Research statement

University of Kent Research Publications policy

University of Kent Information Security Policy

University of Kent IT Management Policy

Guides

University of Kent Open Research guides and contacts

University of Kent research data management guidance

University of Kent guide to Data Access Statements

University of Kent Data Repository (KDR)

Registry of Research Data Repositories (Re3data)

Document history

Approved by Education and Student Experience Board on behalf of Senate 27/05/2025

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Authored by Open Research Team, Library Services

Reviews and replaces the Research Data Management Policy 2020

Next due for review June 2028