Management of Research Data and Primary Materials Policy

Section 1 - Purpose

(1) In accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#) [the Code], QUT and its researchers have a responsibility to ensure the safe, secure and traceable storage and management of research data, records and primary materials and, where possible and appropriate, to allow access and reference to these data. Additionally, research data and primary materials are considered public records under the [Public Records Act 2002](#) (Qld) and must be managed consistent with requirements of that Act.

(2) The purpose of this Policy is to address the requirements of the Code and these expectations. QUT recognises that the requirements will vary amongst disciplines and depend on the type of data or material generated or used.

(3) Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that the data they collect and store is accurate, complete, authentic and reliable. Sound management of research data and primary materials as set out in this Policy assists researchers to meet these responsibilities and for QUT to meets its institutional responsibilities.

(4) QUT encourages accessibility and sharing of research data and primary materials in order to:

   a. justify and verify the outcomes of research;
   b. maximise the potential for future research;
   c. maximise the value of research data, records and primary material;
   d. comply with the ethical principles of research; and
   e. minimise waste of resources of value to researchers and the wider community.

(5) Researchers should apply the FAIR principles (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable) and CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance (collective benefit, authority to control, responsibility, ethics) to their data and primary materials, subject to any constraints or considerations related to the funding body, contractual, commercialisation, ethical, cultural, privacy or confidentiality requirements.

(6) The Australian Research Data Commons has published a [Research Data Management Framework for Institutions](#) that will provide the underpinnings for QUT's research management data processes.

(7) Guidance on managing research data is available through HiQ (for [Students](#)) and the Digital Workplace (for [Staff](#)) (QUT student and staff access only).

Section 2 - Application

(8) This Policy applies to all members of the QUT community who are engaged in research activities, including:

   a. staff members, whether full-time, part-time, ongoing, fixed-term, casual or sessional;
   b. visiting and adjunct academics, or research collaborators; and
   c. students engaged in research activities, including Higher Degree Research students, honours students and

undergraduate students who participate in research projects.

Section 3 - Roles and Responsibilities

(9) The management of research data and primary materials is a shared responsibility throughout the research data lifecycle. Researchers, faculties, research centres, and service providers need to work in partnership to implement good practice and meet requirements in accordance with the [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018](#) and the accompanying [Management of Data and Information in Research](#) as well as relevant QUT policies.

Position	Responsibility
All researchers	All researchers are responsible for adequate and appropriate research data and primary materials management throughout the research lifecycle, including: 1. Being aware of and implementing research data and primary materials management practices; 2. Ensuring the development and maintenance of research data and primary materials management plans for all research projects they are responsible for; 3. Managing research data and primary materials in accordance with the research data management plan developed for their research project or activity.
Chief investigators and/or Higher Degree Research student Supervisors	Ensure that all researchers in their project(s) comply with their research data and primary materials management obligations. Act as the Data/Primary Materials Custodian, unless otherwise designated.
Heads of School Centre Directors	Promote best practice research data management. Coordinate with Faculty space managers, Facilities Management and Research Infrastructure to access appropriate facilities (physical and digital) for the storage of research data and primary materials. Approve requests for researchers to use infrastructure, facilities and services not provided by or managed by QUT for the storage of primary materials and research data when QUT provided or managed facilities and services are unsuitable or not available and the risks of using non-QUT services have been assessed and documented in the research data management plan. Endorse disposal of research data and primary materials, for approval by the relevant Executive Dean, on recommendation or request from the researcher.
Executive Deans	Develop and approve procedures relating to research data and primary materials management relevant to their faculty. Ensure the disposal of research data and primary materials is in accordance with QUT's [Records Governance Policy](#).
Director, Research Infrastructure Operations	Develops and maintains policy and procedures for the management of research data and primary materials. Supports the University Librarian in the development of training and support relating to research data and primary materials management. Develops and provides specialist training on contemporary data management technologies, techniques, and practices. Supports the University Librarian in maintaining a centrally supported institutional research metadata repository for the provision of open and/or controlled access to metadata records. Coordinates the design and maintenance of QUT's collection of research datasets (data registries and repositories). Establishes and maintains facilities and services for the storage of digital research data.
Head of Research Portfolio	Has overall responsibility for policy, procedures and infrastructure relating to research data and primary materials management.
University Librarian	Leads, develops and delivers training and support relating to research data and primary materials management. Provides advice and assistance on access to curated published datasets, publication, licencing and sharing of QUT research datasets. Leads the development and management of QUT's metadata and data repositories. Contribute to the co-development of the QUT Research Data Management Framework, including management of the QUT data management planning application.

Position	Responsibility
Director, Facilities Management	Facilitates safe and secure storage of physical research data and primary materials in consultation with local areas.
Vice-President (Digital) and Chief Digital Officer	Procures, establishes and maintains infrastructure for applications supporting research data management and for digital storage of data in collaboration with Director, Research and Director, Facilities Management.
Director, Office of Research Ethics and Integrity	Facilitates training and support relating to the research ethics and integrity requirements for research data and primary materials management. Provides regulatory oversight role for the management of research data and primary materials as it relates to research ethics and integrity.

Section 4 - Research Data and Primary Materials Management Planning

(10) All QUT staff and students must develop and maintain a research data and primary materials management plan at the start of their research projects that addresses creation, management, quality, confidentiality, retention, sharing and licencing responsibilities.

(11) All research should also comply with any ethical, legal and cultural requirements in accordance with the [Research Governance Framework](#).

(12) Research data management plans must comply and be consistent with any ethics approval for the research project.

Section 5 - Ownership and Custodianship

(13) QUT owns and retains any original research data and primary materials generated in the conduct of research, subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical, or funding body requirements. This does not override the intellectual property rights of researchers ([Intellectual Property Policy](#)).

(14) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research must be managed and shared in accordance with the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance. These Principles are people and purpose-oriented, reflecting the crucial role of research data in advancing Indigenous innovation and self-determination.

(15) The chief investigator of a research project or activity is the Data Custodian and is responsible for ensuring the proper management of research data and primary materials. The Data Custodian may delegate this responsibility. If they do so, they must document these arrangements in the research data management plan.

(16) Subject to any contractual, statutory, ethical or funding body requirements, researchers may retain a copy of the research data for future use.

Section 6 - Storage and Security

(17) QUT, through the roles listed in this Policy, provides facilities for the storage of research data and primary materials, including through external and offsite services. Researchers and students also have a responsibility to fulfil QUT's commitment to best practice in the management of research data and primary materials in accordance with this Policy.

(18) Non-digital research data and primary materials must be stored and managed by the individual researcher using

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facilities approved by the Head of School or Centre Director. Facilities Management may provide support in the identification and provision of appropriate storage options. Non-digital research data and primary materials should only be stored in QUT managed facilities, where possible to ensure appropriate storage, security and retention.

(19) Digital research data should be stored on centralised QUT infrastructure or storage solutions approved through Research Infrastructure. These facilities will ensure that there is appropriate security, back-up and data management. Storage of digital research data on local computers, external hard drives and personal network folders is not sufficient to meet the requirements for the management of research data.

(20) Infrastructure, facilities and services not provided by or managed by QUT should only be used for the storage of physical and/or digital primary material and research data in exceptional circumstances, and only when QUT facilities and services are unsuitable or unavailable. In such circumstances the researcher must assess the chosen facility, service, or storage to ensure it complies with:

   a. this Policy and related guidelines and legislation;
   b. any contractual and/or relevant legislation including funding agreements; and
   c. the QUT Information Security Policy.

(21) This assessment must be documented in the research data management plan and approved by the Head of School or Centre Director prior to the use of such facilities.

Section 7 - Description and Metadata

(22) Researchers must develop, as part of research data management practices, sufficient description of their research data, including metadata, to ensure that data and primary materials are FAIR (finable, accessible, interoperable and reusable). These metadata should be consistent with QUT research data management processes.

Section 8 - Retention, Preservation and Disposal

(23) Research data and primary materials must be retained, preserved and disposed of in accordance with the Records Governance Policy (specifically the Retention and Disposal of Records section) and any ethical, legislative, funding body and contractual requirements.

(24) Retention periods for research data and primary materials will be according to the Queensland State Archives University Sector Retention and Disposal Schedule and QUT guidance.

Section 9 - Access, Sharing and Reuse

(25) QUT encourages accessibility, sharing and reuse of research data, records, and primary material. As such, QUT encourages staff and students to share research data and primary materials, during the course of their research, at publication and at completion, subject to any constraints from the funding body, contractual, commercialisation, ethical, cultural, privacy or confidentiality requirements..

Section 10 - Definitions

Term	Definition
CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance	Are people and purpose-oriented, reflecting the crucial role of data in advancing Indigenous innovation and self-determination. These principles complement the existing FAIR principles encouraging open and other data movements to consider both people and purpose in their advocacy and pursuits.
Chief Investigator	Is an academic member of staff with principal responsibility for a research project.
Custodianship	Means the direct responsibility for protecting research data, including accurate recording and proper retention, maintenance, access, sharing, and disposition of the data. Normally, the Data Custodian is the Chief Investigator. In cases where a project has several Chief Investigators, the Data Custodian is the first-named Chief Investigator.
FAIR	Means the FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship. These principles are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable. QUT has adopted these principles to ensure best practice in the management of research data and primary materials. More information is available at FAIR Principles.
Metadata	Means information or facts about research data and its context, content, provenance, accessibility and licencing arrangements for the purpose of attribution, description, management, verification and discovery. It provides other researchers with the information needed to understand and reuse a dataset as well as making the dataset more findable. For example, metadata may include collection title, chief investigator/s, description, collection period, unique identifier, licence, access conditions and storage location.
Preservation	Means a series of managed activities necessary to ensure continued access to research data for as long as necessary.
Primary Materials	Means physical and digital objects collected and/or used during research from which research data may be obtained. It includes, but is not limited to, biological samples, mineral samples, survey questionnaires, measurements, recordings, artwork and photographs.
Research Data	Means data in the form of facts, observations, images, computer program results, recordings, measurements or experiences on which an argument, theory, test or hypothesis, or other research output is based. It relates to data generated, collected, or used, during research projects, and in some cases may include the research output itself. Data may be numerical, descriptive, visual or tactile. It may be raw, cleaned or processed, and may be held in any format or media. Research data may include the software, algorithm, model and/or parameters, used to arrive at the research outcome, in addition to the raw data that the software, algorithm or model is applied to.
Research Data Lifecycle	Means the various stages of creating the data, from point of creation or collection through to dissemination. The research data lifecycle typically continues beyond the research project during which the data was created.
Research Data Management	Means all the processes and actions required to manage research data and primary materials throughout the research life-cycle for current and future research purposes and uses.
Researcher	Means any academic, professional, or senior staff member, research student, or affiliate of the university, engaged in or supporting the conduct of research at QUT as per the application of this Policy in Section 2, Application.

Section 11 - Delegations

(26) Refer to Register of Authorities and Delegations (VC180) (QUT staff access only).

Status and Details

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