University of Stirling

FINAL Research Data Management Policy

Version number: 2.8

Introduction

The University of Stirling is committed to the pursuit of world-class research, learning and scholarship. We recognise the benefits of free and open access to publically-funded research to the economy, to society and to the pursuit of academic excellence. We support the principle that research outcomes should be made freely and publically available. Therefore, Stirling is committed to disseminating the outputs from research generated at the University. We view access to publications and the underpinning research data to be equally important in furthering the benefit of research. Publications are considered in the University's Open Access and Article Processing Charge Policy which was implemented in April 2013.

Stirling supports the position of Research Councils UK (RCUK) regarding data management and the common principles on data management set out in 2011. Stirling's Research Data Management Policy is consistent with RCUK expectations that research data should be made openly available in a timely and responsible manner that does not harm intellectual property and that data preservation should be planned for. Individual research councils and research funders have developed individual positions (or are in the process of doing so) with specific data requirements which we observe as appropriate.[1]

The higher education sector is in a period of transition towards greater accessibility of research data. In recognition of this, the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council expects compliance with its data management requirements by May 2015. Meeting these requirements is essential for continued funding from the council and without implementation income from other funders could also be at risk. This policy sets out the University's commitment to data management to be achieved by May 2015. The University's Research Data Management Roadmap sets out how we will achieve these commitments and the main phases of work. Although the University will transition to these objectives, Stirling will continue to comply with all funder requirements in the interim period. By May 2015 the additional and standardised approach set out by this policy will become a requirement. The Research and Enterprise Office maintains information about funder requirements.

Scope

For the purpose of this policy, research data is defined as evidence on which research conclusions are based. This includes but is not limited to results of experiments/simulations, statistics and measurements, models and software, observations, survey results, interview transcripts and recording, images, textual source materials and annotations, physical artefacts and samples.

This policy applies to all research data produced at the University. It applies equally to research staff and research students.

Exceptions to the policy apply where data is identified as commercially sensitive within the research data management plan. This may be because the research is funded by a commercial client or is in partnership with industry. In such instances it is not a requirement of the University's Research Data Management Policy that that the data is made publically available. The reason for not making data available should be recorded and well-articulated. However, the data may still be accessed using the Freedom of Information (Scotland) 2002 Act.

---

[1] This policy is consistent with Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act

Where Stirling is the lead partner on a collaborative project, collaborators are expected to adhere to the University Research Data Management Policy. Where Stirling is a collaborator on a project led by a different institution, the University will follow the lead-institution's policy on data management.

Policy

1. All research data will be managed in accordance with funder requirements. This is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator(s) (PI/s) and researcher(s). In the case of research students, responsibility for data management lies jointly with the student(s) and the PI of the project. The lead research student supervisor is responsible for advising the student on good research data management practice.

2. The University will make all relevant staff and research students aware of the expectations of research funders, and will provide training, support, advice, guidelines for effective data management.

3. New research proposals will include research data management plans/protocols that explicitly address data capture, management, integrity, confidentiality, retention, sharing/access and publication. It is the responsibility of the PI to ensure that a data management plan is produced.

4. The University will provide appropriate support and guidance to develop robust research data management plans which apply appropriate safeguards.

5. The legitimate interests and personal data of the subjects of research data will be protected. Data shared or deposited in any repository will not contain any personal un-anonymised information.

6. Research data must be supplemented with appropriate, approved and consistent metadata standards which enable data harvesting.

7. Research data of future historical interest, and all research data that represent records of the University, including data that substantiate research findings, will be offered and assessed for deposit and retention in an appropriate national or international data service or domain repository (which meets relevant requirements), or a future University repository. There is no requirement for data to be stored centrally or at the University as long as it is stored in a reasonable manner that facilitates sharing.

8. All reasonable steps will be taken to ensure that publicly-funded data is not held in any jurisdiction where the available legal safeguards provide lower levels of protection than are available in the European Economic Area.

9. Research data will be managed to the highest standards throughout the research data lifecycle as part of the University's commitment to research excellence.

10. The University will provide mechanisms and services for storage, backup, registration, deposit and retention of research data assets (including their curation) in support of current and future access, during and after completion of research projects.

11. A record of the research data produced at the University will be recorded within the University's Research Management System, with metadata records available to external viewers. The record will include information about when and how the data was produced, how it can be accessed and any other relevant information. Where data is not made publically available for valid reason, this will also be stated on the Research Management System.

12. Where data is not in digital format the University will make provision for research data to be made accessible either via an alternative format, or in person at the University.

13. Communication and monitoring arrangements will ensure that there is awareness of all external requests to access research data.

14. Exclusive rights to reuse or publish research data will not be granted to commercial publishers or agents without retaining the rights to make the data openly available for re-use, unless this is a condition of funding.

15. Research publications should include details of how (and on what terms) supporting research data can be accessed.

16. The University will ensure adequate resources are provided to support the management of data in accordance with this policy.

17. The Research Committee will be responsible for reviewing this policy on an annual basis. The policy will be updated appropriately as a result of annual monitoring.

Supporting documents/resources

- The University maintains a Web area containing links to training materials, procedures and guidelines http://www.stir.ac.uk/is/researchers/data/
- Research Data Management Roadmap
- Open Access and Article Processing Charge Policy http://www.stir.ac.uk/is/researchers/writing/publishingimpact/openaccesspublishing/
- STORRE http://www.stir.ac.uk/is/researchers/writing/publishingimpact/storre/
- Freedom of Information requests http://www.rec-man.stir.ac.uk/foi/index.php
- Contact researchdatamanagement@stir.ac.uk for further details

Research and Enterprise Office
January 2014