RESEARCH SERVICES

Selecting Data for Archiving and Sharing on Open Access

Archiving research data is not about preserving and sharing every bit of data generated by a research project. Funders, journals, HE institutions, data centres, repositories and other researchers will generally only be interested in data that directly supports research outputs and contextual information that makes the data discoverable and understandable.

Why not keep everything?

A selection or appraisal process is essential in order to manage your research data effectively. Deciding what should be kept and what can be disposed of saves on storage costs, enables you to find meaningful data more easily, and ensures you abide by any funder or legal requirements relating to data retention and reuse.

Read the Digital Curation Centre's guide to data selection.

How do I decide what to keep?

Your funder or selected journal may have specific open data and sharing requirements with which you need to comply. See an overview of funders' data policies.
Does the data record a one-off event or observation that cannot be recreated?
Can the data be replicated or re-measured without considerable cost or new external funding?
Is the data of significant current or future value to your research community?
Have you published findings based on your research data?

Not all project data should or can be preserved or shared on open access.

What data should I deposit on open access?

Data that underpins research publications must be retained to ensure the integrity, transparency and robustness of the research findings, allowing others to confirm or challenge research results. A majority of research funders and University policy now mandate archiving on open access of data supporting published work.

Some journals will not publish a paper unless the related data is made available.
If a paper is likely to be submitted to the next REF, you should give consideration to making the underlying data open.

Deposit this data in an established repository.

Where can I deposit my data on open access?

Any repository you select should be stable, established and reliable. The preservation and accessibility of your data should be guaranteed for the required number of years, the metadata should be of a standard that permits easy discovery, and datasets should be allocated a DOI on deposit. The Digital Curation Centre has produced a useful guide to choosing a repository and a list of data repositories is available at the Registry of Research Data Repositories.

The University's UCLanData repository will accept and preserve data of any kind, size or format. All UCLan staff and research students can deposit essential data here.

Note that ResearchGate and Academia.edu are social networking sites, **not** repositories.

What about ethical or legal issues?

- What guarantees were made during the ethical approval process?
- Did you obtain informed consent from participants to make supporting data open?
- Are there any existing contracts or agreements that restrict your ability to make data fully open?
- Are there any intellectual property rights (IPR) issues relating to sharing or reuse of the data?

Make sure you notify your funding body as soon as possible if you are unable to make your data open, most funders expect at least a subset of data to be made available.

Is there anything preventing data sharing and reuse by others?

Was consent given for archiving or reusing the data? If not, you may not be able to make your data fully open.
Is the dataset in a format that allows others to reuse it without cost or other restrictions? Use open formats where possible.
Will people understand your data, how it was created, and what was done to it? Make sure you provide sufficient descriptive information (metadata) to ensure your data can be discovered by others.
Is your data of good quality, accurate and complete?

There is evidence that published papers accompanied by openly available data attract a greater number of citations.

What if my data is too sensitive to share?

Is it possible to anonymise the data so that there is no chance of identification?

You can still deposit in UCLanData and place a temporary or permanent embargo on access. If data can't be anonymised or is otherwise sensitive (for example, as defined under the Terrorism Act) it can be stored offline. In this case create a metadata-only record in UCLanData if possible.
Make sure data is stored securely, password-protected and if possible encrypted. Contact rdmsupport@uclan.ac.uk for further information.

Read the UK Data Archive guidance on working with sensitive data.

What about other data that I want to keep?

If data has significant value for one of the reasons outlined above, consider depositing it in UCLanData or an alternative repository.
Reasonable amounts of data can be kept on your personal N drive, the shared S drive or departmental network, if applicable. OneDrive provides 1 TB of storage and external hard drives are an option. Always keep at least one backup copy.

Consider deleting any data that you no longer require or will never reuse.

Where can I get help?

Contact rdmsupport@uclan.ac.uk, for further information, support with research data management, upload to UCLanData and training.

Scholarly Communications Unit | Research Services

CLoK
University of Central Lancashire's Institutional Repository

iD

UCLanData

Arts, Culture, & Heritage | Citizenship, Society, & Justice | Lifelong Health and Wellbeing | People, Place, & Environment | Sustainability, Business, & Enterprise | Transformative Sciences & Technology

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