Office of the Vice Rector for Research, Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship

UOC Policy on Research Data Management

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Contents

Universitat Oberta
de Catalunya

1. General principles

The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) is committed to open science, scientific integrity and the responsible management of knowledge. The aim of this Policy is to ensure that research data are managed in an ethical, secure and sustainable manner and in accordance with national and international data management standards and laws.

This Policy is based on the following principles:

1. **Scientific integrity**: Ensuring that research data are generated and managed honestly and transparently and in a way that maintains traceability, ensuring that the scientific process is documented and verifiable and has not been manipulated in any way.

2. **Data quality**: Ensuring that data are reliable, coherent, consistent and methodologically sound so that research results can be reproduced and confirmed.

3. **Open access and reuse**: Helping to ensure that research data comply with the FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable) data principles[1] and the applicable legislation.

4. **Security**: Ensuring that research data are managed in a secure, confidential and ethical manner, particularly if they include personal or special category data, in accordance with the UOC's internal policies and regulations.

5. **Efficiency and sustainability**: Encouraging an efficient use of institutional resources by preventing the unnecessary duplication of research data and ensuring their long-term preservation.

6. **Regulatory compliance**: Complying with the current legislation on universities, open science, trade secrets, intellectual property, data protection and access to information, as well as other legislation and internal regulations that may apply to data management.

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[1] The FAIR principles are a set of guiding principles aimed at ensuring that research data are findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable (Wilkinson et al. 2016).

2. Object of the Policy

The purpose of this Policy is to establish the institutional framework for the management of the research data generated, collected, used or reused as part of the UOC's research activity, whether it is carried out under a contract or by the teaching and research staff on their own initiative, either independently or together with other institutions, and with or without external funding.

The aim is to ensure that the processing, documentation, storage, preservation, dissemination and, where applicable, destruction of these research data are carried out in accordance with the UOC's internal regulations and policies.

In the case of externally funded research activities that are subject to research data management requirements other than those set forth in this Policy, the conditions stipulated by the funding institution shall prevail, provided that they do not conflict with the UOC's fundamental principles of security, integrity and confidentiality.

If data arising from collaborative research are managed by an entity other than the UOC but are processed by UOC staff or in UOC systems, the requirement to apply the UOC's own security, integrity and confidentiality standards and policies shall still apply.

3. Parties subject to the Policy

The Policy applies to all UOC teaching, research and administrative staff taking part in any kind of research activity.

This Policy also applies to any persons who, despite not having a contractual relationship with the UOC, conduct research activities as part of projects coordinated by the UOC and carried out under its responsibility.

4. Data management plans

Research data encompass all information collected, observed, generated or created from the beginning of the research activity until its completion. They therefore include all the data arising from a research activity collected while carrying it out, regardless of type of information, structure, storage method or file format.

Research data must be organized and managed throughout its life cycle by means of a data management plan (DMP) that sets out how the data will be handled from the beginning of the research activity until its completion.

The DMP is a formal document that helps to ensure good data quality. It must set out the processes for data acquisition, extraction, storage, processing, preservation and deletion.

The DMP is a living document that can be amended or updated at any time during the research project or activity.

In externally funded research projects, any specific requirements established by the funding body must also be set out in the DMP.

5. Roles and responsibilities

Details of the roles and responsibilities covered by this Policy are provided below:

5.1. Teaching staff, research staff and administrative staff who carry out research activities

- Collect, document, file and publish data in accordance with the principles of this Policy: findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable data.

- Draw up the DMP.

- Request the relevant documents regarding ethical conformity and specific data protection and security measures, as provided in Article 3.e) of the Regulations of the Research Ethics Committee.

- Ensure that the data in the research project or activity are properly recorded and processed and can be accessed by the members of the project team.

5.2. Offices of the vice rector and deputy general manager with responsibility for research, knowledge transfer and entrepreneurship

The Office of the Vice Rector for Research, Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship and the Office of the Deputy General Manager for Research, Knowledge Transfer and Entrepreneurship are the bodies in charge of fostering and ensuring compliance with the UOC Policy on Research Data Management. Specifically, they must:

- Define the strategic lines and present the internal regulations implementing this Policy for approval.

- Ensure that the university has the necessary means and resources to apply the Policy and regulations effectively.

- Establish the responsibilities of the units and services involved in the management of research data.

- Oversee and coordinate the implementation of the Policy, as well as its monitoring and periodic reviews, with support from the units responsible.

5.3. Research Ethics Committee

- Assess and analyse the ethics protocols applicable to research projects and research activities, and ensure compliance with the data management and protection regulations and policies contained therein.

- Assess the possible risks that may be entailed in the processing of the data in order to identify them and propose mitigating measures and controls.

- Issue, together with the ethical conformity sheets, the specific mandatory measures concerning the security and protection of the data processed in the research activity.

- Draw up recommendations and guides on good scientific practices in the ethical management of data and information arising from research.

- Provide training on ethics and data protection in research projects and research teaching activities.

- In the event of failure to comply with this Policy, apply the procedure for addressing breaches in research integrity.

5.4. Open Science Office

- Provide teaching and research staff with support and training in drawing up data management plans.

- Provide research staff with training, support and advice in the management and publication of FAIR data in accordance with the applicable legislation, the requirements stipulated by funding institutions and any other relevant regulations.

- Draw up recommendations for research staff on the assignment of research data publication licences.

- Coordinate the necessary development and infrastructure for the management, preservation and open-access publication of research data.

- Establish a sustainable data storage system for any researcher.

- Foster the reuse of research data for knowledge transfer and innovation.

5.5. Research Methods & Data Science Lab technical team

- Provide advice on the methodological design of research projects and help give them a coherent structure.

- Provide the necessary tools and appropriate support for the efficient management of data in research projects.

- Advise on the collection and processing of data for research.

- Foster good data management practices among UOC research staff.

- Ensure that the analyses and advice provided by the service adhere to data management regulations.

5.6. Technology department and Tech Lab technical team

- Ensure the availability, security and integrity of the technological infrastructures required for the storage, processing and preservation of research data.

- Provide technical support in the implementation of data management systems, including institutional repositories, open data platforms and secure sharing tools.

- Ensure the interoperability of UOC systems with other national and international research infrastructure.

- Provide the necessary means and resources to establish the specific research data management service and infrastructure.

- Develop and provide the necessary infrastructure to securely store the research data generated, ensuring that they can be accessed by authorized persons during this time.

- Provide sufficient means and materials, and the appropriate formats, to digitally store and safeguard the data obtained and the documentation collected in the research in accordance with the applicable regulations in force.

- Advise the research community on the best format for hosting different types of data.

5.7. Information Security Office

- Advise and establish protection, detection and response plans that ensure the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the information arising from the research activity.

- Ensure the establishment of mechanisms to guarantee the continuity of activities in the event of security incidents.

- Monitor security incidents and escalate them to the Information Security Committee, where appropriate.

- Oversee the security measures put in place to protect the information and ensure the availability and proper operation of the services provided by the information systems to guarantee their effectiveness.

- Propose the implementation of information security tools and controls, and define the security dashboard.

- Carry out information security training and awareness-raising activities among UOC staff within their respective fields of responsibility.

5.8. Data Office

- Coordinate the various organizational units to ensure a holistic vision and coherent action in relation to data management and governance.

- Establish, implement and update data governance policies, and the corresponding regulations, processes, standards and procedures.

- Foster an institutional culture based on responsible data governance by means of continuing education, awareness-raising and the dissemination of ethical, secure and sustainable data management principles and obligations.

- Identify, manage and enhance opportunities for data reuse, exploitation and value creation, and encourage their open dissemination, including in collaboration with third parties, always in accordance with ethical principles and all relevant regulatory obligations.

5.9. Registry, Document Management and Archives Service

- Provide appropriate support for the management of documents considered to be archive documents under the UOC Document Management Policy to ensure their archiving, disposal, preservation or deletion.

6. Approval of the Policy

This Policy has been approved in accordance with the provisions of the UOC Policy on Roles and Responsibilities for the Approval of Internal Regulations.

7. Confidentiality

This document is the property of the UOC and may only be used for the purposes for which it was provided.