



PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING RESEARCH MATERIAL & DATA

UNSW Procedure	
Linked UNSW Policy	This procedure details actions pursuant to the UNSW Research Code of Conduct and the UNSW Code of Conduct
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Superseded Documents	Code of Conduct for the Responsible Practice of Research approved by Academic Board 2 March 2004 (AB04/21)
File Number	2009/0746
Associated Documents	UNSW Code of Conduct UNSW Research Code of Conduct Intellectual Property Policy Policy on Paid Outside Work by Academic Staff UNSW Delegations of Authority Conflict of Interest Policy Insider Trading Policy UNSW Recordkeeping Policy Procedure for Handling Allegations of Research Misconduct Procedure for Authorship and for Resolving Disputes Between Authors Statement of Authorship and Location of Data Form

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1. PURPOSE & SCOPE

- 1.1. This procedure covers the procedures for handling primary research materials and research data.

2. DEFINITIONS

- 2.1. Research “original investigation undertaken to gain knowledge, understanding and insight.”¹
- 2.2. Research Trainee Higher Degree Research student (PhD or Masters by Research) or early career researcher (postdoctoral research fellow or within 5 years of obtaining PhD).

¹ Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, page 1

- 2.3. Researcher All UNSW staff, conjoint appointments, and visiting appointments undertaking research at UNSW, including staff classified as “professional and technical” and casual staff undertaking research.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1. Data underpinning research conducted at UNSW (including electronic data) must be recorded in a durable and appropriately referenced form.
- 3.2. Researchers must maintain a catalogue of all research data in an accessible form.
- 3.3. Research Material and data related to publications must be available for discussion with other researchers (unless confidentiality provisions apply).
- 3.4. Research data and materials remain the property of UNSW, unless subject to a third party agreement.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES

- 4.1. UNSW has formulated a **Privacy Management Plan** to comply with the **NSW Privacy and Personal Protection Act 1998** (<http://www.privacy.unsw.edu.au/pmp.htm>). Researchers are responsible for ensuring appropriate security for any confidential material.
- 4.2. Researchers are responsible for ensuring appropriate security for any confidential material, including that held in computing systems. Where computing systems are accessible through networks, particular attention to security of confidential data is required.
- 4.3. Heads of Schools are responsible for maintaining a register of the establishment and ownership of databases containing confidential information within their School. Access to these databases must be restricted to researchers with approved involvement in a research project.
- 4.4. Researchers have a responsibility to keep full, accurate and legible records of research methods, research data and primary materials (including laboratory notebooks and electronic data) in a durable, organised and accessible manner.
- 4.5. Adequate records of the source of research material, experimental data and authorship must be maintained in a secure place after publication and must be recoverable should questions arise.

5. DATA STORAGE & RETENTION

- 5.1. Research material and data, and registers of that material and data, must be kept in a format, and for a period, that conforms to the requirements of the **NSW State Records Act**, funding agency or publisher guidelines or in accordance with discipline norms, whichever is the longer period. A table outlining minimum retention periods for the various classes of research data is at: <http://www.recordkeeping.unsw.edu.au/documents/Retention%20by%20type%20of%20research%20data%202008.pdf>

- 5.2. Wherever possible, original data (and, where relevant, materials or samples) should be retained in the School or research unit in which they were generated. If required, individual researchers can hold copies of the data for their own use. Retention solely by the individual researcher is not permitted, as it may not protect the researcher or UNSW in the event that the veracity of the data is questioned.
 - 5.2.1. If the original data are retained by the researcher, the Head of School or Research Centre Director must be formally advised of its location and have the ability to access the data.
 - 5.2.2. Researchers should also give consideration as to whether specimens or samples should be retained in research repositories such as a specified Museum or the UNSW Herbarium.
 - 5.2.3. Where research material is not kept within the School, a written record of the location of data must be retained by the researcher and School.
- 5.3. At the end of a research project which has been hosted by UNSW, research data and materials remain the property of UNSW, unless subject to a third party agreement.
- 5.4. Where a researcher moves from UNSW, original data must remain at UNSW, otherwise written agreement must be reached with the new organisation covering ownership and storage of research data.
- 5.5. When research is carried out at multiple organisations, agreement must be reached in writing and these must clearly specify the principles of storage and retention of research data within each organisation.
- 5.6. When the data are obtained from limited access databases (or an external database), or via a contractual arrangement, written indication of the location of the original data, or key information regarding the database from which it was collected, must be retained by the researcher or School.

6. IMPORT AND EXPORT OF RESEARCH MATERIAL

- 6.1. Researchers must ensure that they meet the relevant Customs, Australian Quarantine Inspection Service (AQIS), or other requirements for the import and export of research material.

7. DATA ACCESSIBILITY

- 7.1. Data related to publications must be available for discussion with other researchers. Where confidentiality provisions apply (for example, where the researchers or the institution have given undertakings to third parties, such as the subjects of the research), it is desirable for data to be kept in a way such that reference to them by third parties can occur without breaching such confidentiality.

8. DISPOSAL OF RESEARCH DATA AND MATERIAL

- 8.1. When the specified period of retention has finished, researchers have a responsibility to dispose of research data in a secure and safe manner, and in accordance with the **UNSW Records Keeping Policy**. Advice on proper disposal is available at: <http://www.recordkeeping.unsw.edu.au/Procedures/disposal.html>

9. FAILURE TO HANDLE RESEARCH MATERIAL AND DATA AS BREACHES OF THE CODE

9.1. This Procedure forms part of the *UNSW Research Code of Conduct*.

9.2. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) may determine that a breach of this Procedure may be dealt with as a Breach of the Research Code, or Research Misconduct.

10. REVIEW & HISTORY

10.1. Modifications

Version	Date	Approval	Sections modified	Details of amendments
1.0	27/04/2009	UNSW Council (CL09/17)	N/A	This is a new procedure