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Research Records Stewardship Guidance Procedure

Appendix A: Research Records Management and Preservation Guidelines

Office of Administrative Responsibility:	Vice-President (Research and Innovation) University of Alberta Libraries
Approver:	Vice-President (Research and Innovation)

OVERVIEW

Researchers at the University of Alberta and the Institution share responsibility for the stewardship of the **research records** created, acquired, managed and preserved. Good stewardship procedures will ensure that research records are managed and preserved for future scholarship, that research findings can be verified and that confidential, **personally identifying**, **identifiable** and/or **sensitive** information is appropriately safeguarded.

PURPOSE

- To provide principle-based guidance for research records stewardship

- To advise on best practices in research records management, data sharing and preservation

- To define key considerations in the production of research records containing identifiable information on human subjects

- To define key considerations and minimum requirements for research records retention

GUIDELINES

1. RESEARCH RECORDS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Increasingly, funding agencies are requiring researchers to include a records management plan when applying for funds. Such plans recognize the stages through which research records will be produced, managed, documented, stored, disseminated and deposited (with either a staging or a preservation repository). Furthermore, these plans will identify the data stewards across a project's lifecycle. Such stewards may be an individual or an organizational unit. A plan should include a copy of a project's Records Policy [see below] outlining the principles and conditions of records sharing, access and preservation. Statements of agreement should be included from organizations identified and willing to provide services and act as records stewards through the project lifecycle and thereafter. A plan will also include a description about how sensitive records will be treated.

2. RECORDS POLICY

A Records policy formalizes the chain of accountability for managing research records and articulates the roles and responsibilities of research members. Topics covered in a records policy include a statement on ownership and stewardship; administrative, technical and physical safeguards for the research records; access conditions, including open and exclusive access; consequences of a security breach or violation; terms around the dissemination of research records; and deposit agreements with a preservation repository.

3. RECORDS CURATION

The University of Alberta Libraries, in partnership with other units on campus that have a mandate to support research activities, collectively provides services for records curation. Among the coordinated activities making up records curation are preparing records management plans, choosing and implementing metadata standards and ontologies, identifying procedures and mechanisms for managing and preserving sensitive records, selecting a repository service (staging or preservation), identifying digital objects for dissemination and preservation, and selecting tools and services to support these activities.

4. RESEARCH METADATA

Metadata consists of information describing activities performed across the research lifecycle that provides context for research records, including a project's proposal, data collection instruments, structured descriptions (such as ontologies), data documentation and research outputs. Collectively, such information is essential for long-term preservation. Standards-based metadata facilitates access, preservation, increases comparability with other data and enables interoperability. Researchers should consult with metadata experts, either with the University of

Alberta Libraries or metadata specialists within the primary discipline of the research, to identify appropriate standards and tools to assist in the production of metadata. Such consultations should include representatives from the dissemination and preservation services for the data (if the same agency or organization is not providing both dissemination and preservation, then each should be consulted since the metadata requirements often vary).

5. ATTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH RECORDS PRODUCTS

The norms around research records citation are changing in many disciplines. Many scholarly publishers are now requiring researchers to provide links to their records when they submit findings for publication. Support through new technologies, such as digital object identifiers (DOIs) and registries for DOIs (such as DataCite), researchers can obtain a permanent identifier for objects that allow a standard method for the long-term location for research records. These identifiers can be used in citations much in the same way that ISBNs are used to identify publications uniquely. Through the Web, DOIs allow linking published articles with the records upon which research findings are based. Credit can be attributed to researchers through the use of DOIs when others publish findings on the same records.

DEFINITIONS

Any definitions listed in the following table apply to this document only with no implied or intended institution-wide use.	[▲Top]

Research Records	Research information assets supporting both research and operational needs. This includes administrative information and records produced for analytic or evidentiary purposes. Research records include those documents and records and materials captured by or for a researcher that are necessary to document, reconstruct, evaluate, and validate research results and the events and processes leading to the acquisition of those results.
	Research records may be in many forms including but not limited to laboratory notebooks, survey documents, questionnaires, interview notes, transcripts, machine-generated data or performance outputs, recruitment materials, consent forms, correspondence, other documents, computer files, audio or video recordings, photographs including negatives, slides, x-ray films, samples of compounds, and components of organisms.
	With regard to research involving human participants or animal use, research records usually relate to the data collected about the

	subjects of the research, but may also include genomic sequencing and similar genetic information about animals used in research.
Personally identifying	Information that identifies a specific individual through direct identifiers (eg name, personal health number) or through a combination of indirect identifiers (eg, date of birth, unique personal characteristic, place of residence).
Identifiable	Information that may be reasonably expected to identify an individual, alone or in combination with other available information, is considered identifiable information (or information that is identifiable).
Sensitive	Personal information that is protected through confidentiality or anonymity.

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Research Policy (UAPPOL) Research Records Stewardship Guidance Procedure (UAPPOL) Research Records Stewardship Guidance Procedure Appendix B: Research Records Classification Guidelines (UAPPOL)

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