

RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT POLICY

Category	Research
Policy Owner	Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research
Last review	July 2025
Next review	July 2030
Approved by	Vice-Chancellor's Executive
Effective date	11 August 2025

1. PURPOSE

Good research data management is critical to public trust in research. The University is responsible for ensuring that the Research Data it holds is managed in a manner that preserves its integrity and value and reduces the risk of harm that can arise from data loss and the unethical use of data.

The purpose of this policy is to provide staff and students involved in research with clear and consistent direction on appropriate management of Research Data and to encourage effective research data management practices that are consistent with our commitment to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, our legal, ethical and security obligations, and with international standards.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- (a) Research Data managed under the auspices of the University.
- (b) All staff, students, supervisors and other members of the University community who are involved in generating, using or managing Research Data.

This policy does not apply to Research Data controlled by a third party, for example where:

- (a) Research is led by another institution which has responsibility for management of Research Data,
- (b) The University is accessing Research Data controlled by a third party, or
- (c) Responsibility for Research Data storage or management has been allocated to a third party through a written agreement signed by an authorised representative of the University.

3. POLICY

Research Data generated under the auspices of the University must be stored and managed in accordance with the following standards and commitments:

(I) Complete, understandable, retrievable and Accessible

In keeping with the standards of F.A.I.R, Research Data must be curated and stored to ensure they are:

- Complete and accurate.
- In formats that are understandable, retrievable, and Accessible to appropriate parties.

Research Data must be accompanied by appropriate metadata to support the accessibility, re-use, and reproducibility of the Research Data.

Metadata should include information on Intellectual Property Rights and licencing, the Provenance of the data, the legal, customary and cultural rights and interests of Māori and other Indigenous Peoples over their collective data and other taonga, and restrictions on access or use.

(II) Compliance with obligations

Research Data must be managed (i.e. stored, accessed, retained, returned, deleted and/or destroyed) in accordance with:

- Statutory obligations.
- The consent given by research participants and any additional ethics applications and conditions.
- The mana of Māori and other Indigenous Peoples over their collective data. ¹
- Commercial constraints.
- AUT's Research Data Management Guideline.
- Project specific third-party requirements.

Where there is a conflict between third-party requirements, and AUT's Research Data Management Guideline, storage and management arrangements will be negotiated with the third party and recorded in writing signed by authorised delegates of AUT and the third party.

(III) Alignment with Principles of Māori Data Sovereignty

Māori Data must be managed (i.e. stored, accessed, retained, returned, deleted and/or destroyed) in alignment with AUT's commitment to Article 2 of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including honouring Māori rights and interests in data as articulated in Te Mana Rauaunga Principles of Māori Data Sovereignty.

(IV) Alignment with CARE principles

Indigenous Data must be managed (i.e. stored, accessed, retained, returned, deleted and/or destroyed) in alignment with the CARE Principles for the Governance of Indigenous Data.

(V) Availability for Academic Discussion

In keeping with the standards of F.A.I.R, Research Data must be made available if requested to enable academic discussion or evaluation of research outputs, unless prevented by ethical or legal obligations, the terms of the consent given by research participants including collective consent, or data sovereignty considerations. If access is refused, the reasons must be transparent and justifiable.

(VI) Data Management Plans

A Data Management Plan must be in place in the following circumstances:

- When Research Data are classified as either Sensitive or Highly Sensitive in AUT's Data Sensitivity Classification.
- When Research Data includes Māori Data that is Tapu.
- When Research Data will be shared with an external party or will leave the University's premises or systems.
- When required by an ethics approval process, funder, or external Research Data provider.

Where the **Research Data includes Tapu Māori Data**, the Research Data Management Plan must be developed with appropriate hapū/ iwi involvement and addresses how the mana of Māori over their collective data will be recognised and protected, including:

- How governance structures will include appropriate iwi and/or hapū representation.
- Agreements on where Māori Data will be stored to ensure it is not subject to foreign jurisdiction (AUT's expectation is that Tapu Māori Data will be stored in Aotearoa New Zealand unless the Kaitiaki of the data has strong reasons for storing it elsewhere).
- Appropriate use of data provenance labels.

¹ For further guidance on ownership of data, collective consent and reciprocity with Māori see [Te Ara Tika Guidelines for Māori Research Ethics](#).

- Arrangements to return data to iwi and/or hapū.

When Research Data includes Pacific Data, a co-designed Data Management Plan is encouraged, including relevant Pacific stakeholders, such as Pacific research entities, leaders and communities, Pacific researchers, and indigenous knowledge experts, to ensure Pacific mana and collective rights over their data are upheld. This should address:

- Governance that ensures meaningful Pacific representation.
- Data storage that protects Pacific Data from foreign (non-Pacific) jurisdictions and aligns with collective Pacific interests.
- Use of Provenance tools and metadata to recognise source communities, cultural protocols, and usage conditions.
- Ensuring data use supports Pacific wellbeing, aspirations, and self-determination, including plans to return data to Pacific communities.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All Researchers and Research Students -

- Are expected to comply with this Policy and with all laws, standards and policies applicable to the Research Data and research, including the Privacy Act 2020 and the Customs & Excise Act 2018 (as the latter applies to export of sensitive data).
- Are required to deposit Research Data in suitable repositories; and are encouraged to make them open access to allow reuse by other researchers and maximise the value of research (unless prevented by legal or ethical obligations, the terms of the consent given by research participants, collective consent, or data sovereignty considerations).
- Deposited data should be in formats that meet disciplinary standards as well as being Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (F.A.I.R.). Data availability statements should be included in publications where possible.
- Are responsible for ensuring appropriate arrangements are made if they require and have rights to continued access to Research Data after leaving the University.
- Must ensure that the University has a record of ownership and responsibility for any Research Data and records they have transferred into the University's control (e.g., for storage on University facilities). Where no ownership or responsibility has been recorded, or the recorded responsible party is no longer a University staff member or student, the relevant Dean or delegate will hold authority to decide on storage, retention, disposal, publication or licensing arrangements in compliance with legal and regulatory obligations.

Principal Investigators –

- Are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy and are expected to establish and maintain clear roles and responsibilities for the governance, management, and storage of Research Data within their research project or group.
- Are encouraged to review arrangements for management and storage of Research Data collated before the Effective Date and to take reasonable steps to ensure they are aligned to this policy.
- Must ensure that ownership of and responsibility for Research Data is documented at the start of a research project and reviewed and updated as appropriate, with consideration given to the following aspects of ownership and responsibility.
 - **Authority** to decide on storage, retention, disposal, publication or licensing of Research Data or records.
 - Research Data **ownership** as outlined by the University's Intellectual Property Policy.
 - **Agreements** with funders, data providers, research partners and collaborators.
 - Arrangements for **researchers changing** institutions or withdrawing from collaborative projects.

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- Where required under this Policy, must ensure a **Data Management Plan** that complies with the requirements of the Policy is in place.
- Must ensure that rights and responsibilities for Research Data are agreed with third party research partners, such agreements to be in writing signed by an appropriate University delegate.
- Must ensure that non-University staff accessing University Research Data are subject to the requirements set out in this policy.

Supervisors –

- Are responsible for ensuring that Research Data generated by their students are stored and managed in accordance with this policy.
- Are expected to provide guidance and support to students on the application of this policy to student research projects and to ensure that their students prepare Data Management Plans where required under this policy.

The University -

- Is responsible for providing the infrastructure, services, training and guidance necessary to enable Researchers to meet their responsibilities under this policy.
- Is responsible for ensuring that staff working with Māori Data can access appropriate training and guidance on the principles of Māori Data Sovereignty and how they can be put into practice.
- Is responsible for monitoring compliance with this policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

Accessible	Means that access to Research Data is enabled through defined processes, for example providing a link to a stable location, authentication protocols (e.g. passwords), access instructions detailing how to retrieve the data, and licensing information.
CARE	Refers to the CARE Principles of Indigenous Data Governance (published by the Global Indigenous Data Alliance) being: Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility and Ethics.
Data Management Plan	A document that outlines how Research Data will be managed throughout the Research Data Lifecycle, including details such as project descriptions, software and systems being used, storage locations, security controls and retention arrangements.
F.A.I.R.	Refers to the F.A.I.R. guiding principles for scientific data management and stewardship (originally published in 2016) being: Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable.
Findable	Means that Research Data is discoverable to interested and authorised parties. For example, this could involve publishing the data in a trusted repository and assigning it a persistent identifier (PID).
Indigenous Data	Refers to data, knowledge, and information that relate to Indigenous Peoples at both the individual and collective level, including data about lands and environment, people, and cultures. ¹ It includes but is not limited to Māori Data and Pacific Data.
Interoperable	Means that Research Data can be effectively integrated with other data or be utilised by different applications or workflows (such as for analysis, storage or processing). adopting standard data formats, terminologies, and metadata standards.

¹ [Global Indigenous Data Alliance](#)

Kaitiaki	Means the individual, group or entity entrusted with the responsibility of protecting and managing data in a way that aligns with tikanga Māori.
Māori Data	Refers to digital or digitisable data, information or knowledge (including mātauranga Māori) that is about, from or connected to Māori. It includes data about population, place, culture and environment. ¹
Māori Data Sovereignty	Refers to refers to the inherent rights and interests that Māori have in relation to the collection, ownership, and application of Māori Data. Central to Māori Data Sovereignty is respect for Māori Data and Māori authority and governance over data use.
Pacific Data	Refers to digital or digitisable data, information or knowledge that is about, from or connected to Pacific peoples. It includes data about population, place, culture and environment.
Pacific Data Sovereignty	Refers to the inherent rights and authority of Pacific peoples to govern, manage, and protect their own data. It ensures that data practices align with Pacific values, cultural protocols, and collective aspirations, preventing misuse or misrepresentation by external interests ² .
Provenance	Means information about where the data comes from and the processes and methodology by which it was produced.
Research Data	Information, facts or observations that have been collected, recorded or used during the research process for the purpose of generating and/or validating research findings. Research Data does not include primary materials or research outputs.
Research Student	Any student involved in conducting research under the auspices of the University. This includes graduate researchers and coursework students enrolled at the University, and visiting students enrolled with other institutions. Student has a corresponding meaning.
Researcher	Any individual involved in conducting research under the auspices of the University who is not a Research Student. This includes staff, honorary staff and visiting researchers.
Reusable	Means able to be used by others for replication of research findings or additional research applications. This includes providing information about software, algorithms, protocols, models etc. needed for re-use of the data, and providing clear information about the Provenance of the data and any licensing requirements needed to use it.
Taonga	Means property or other prized things, including intangible things. Te Reo Māori use, in both oral and written form is considered a taonga.
Tapu	Means sacred, prohibited, restricted, under tikanga.
University staff	Means individuals with an employment relationship or formal academic appointment with the University or with AUT Ventures Ltd. “Staff” has a corresponding meaning.
Te Mana Raraunga Principles of Māori Data Sovereignty	<p>The principles are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rangatiratanga – the right of Māori right to exercise control over Māori data. - Kaitiakitanga - the guardianship and responsible management of data - Whanaungatanga – ensuring respectful and equitable partnerships between those who collect and use data and Māori communities, balancing of rights, risks and benefits.

¹ Kukutai, T., Campbell-Kamariera, K., Mead, A., Mikaere, K., Moses, C., Whitehead, J. & Cormack, D. (2023). Māori data governance model. Te Kāhui Raraunga.

² Pacific Data Sovereignty Network. (2021, February). *Pacific Data Sovereignty Network consultation document*. Moana Research.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Whakapapa - the principle of acknowledging the interconnectedness of Māori people, data, and the land - Kotahitanga – ensuring data frameworks enable Māori to derive individual and collective benefit - Manaakitanga - upholding the dignity of Māori communities, groups and individuals.
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6. LEGISLATION AND COMPLIANCE

- The University shall comply with all applicable New Zealand laws, regulations and standards and with the laws, legislation, regulations and standards of the jurisdiction in which data is being collected.
- See also the Register of Key Legislation and specifically, the Privacy Act 2020 and the Customs & Excise Act 2018 as it applies to export of sensitive data.

7. RELATED PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTS

[AUT Code of Conduct for Research 2019](#)

[AUTECH Guidelines and Procedures](#)

Information and Communication Technology Policy & Procedures

Intellectual Property Rights Policy & Procedures

Open Scholarship Policy

Privacy Policy

Records Management Policy

Policies and Procedures can be found on [TUJA](#)

[Research Data Management Guideline](#)

[AUT's Data & Information Governance Framework](#)

[Guidance on applying Te Mana Raraunga Principles of Māori Data Sovereignty in Research](#)

Guidance on applying Pacific Data Sovereignty Principles in Research

8. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT AND CONTROL

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