

Guidelines for Managing Research Data at the University of Kassel

– version 2.0 / as of August 21, 2023 –

<https://doi.org/10.17170/202309138767>

This English translation is provided for your convenience only. The original version in German takes precedence and is binding.

Preamble

Sustainability, interdisciplinarity, and the full spectrum of research, from basic to applied, characterize the profile of the University of Kassel. Professional research data management is an essential prerequisite for this.

In compliance with its [mission statement](#), the [Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice](#) [German], and in the spirit of open science, the University of Kassel supports responsible and sustainable management of research data. This includes following the [FAIR](#) (findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable) and [CARE](#) (Collective Benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility, Ethics) principles, as well as meeting discipline-specific regulations.

As a signatory of the [Data Literacy Charta](#), the University of Kassel not only regards data literacy as a prerequisite for academic work. It also acknowledges that fostering the capacity for judgement, self-determination, and responsibility in managing data provides a crucial foundation for participating in and shaping of educational processes. It is aware of the resulting scholarly and societal responsibilities and advocates for the proliferation of data literacy at every educational and instructional level.

Definitions

Research data comprises all data created, processed, or utilized during the course of a research process, or resulting from it. Research data may vary in form and format depending on the scientific discipline and may also include software developed as part of the research activities.

Research data management includes all aspects of data administration and data processing, especially the planning of data collection procedures, the generation and processing of data, ensuring data integrity, documentation, sustainable storage, and making data available for reuse.

Scope and Legal Aspects

These guidelines apply to all members and affiliates of the University of Kassel, such as researchers, visiting scholars, students, and staff.

Research data management shall adhere to the relevant data protection laws and intellectual property regulations, as well as to the specific provisions of the University of Kassel¹, and to any special cooperation agreements with third parties.

Principles for Managing Research Data

The University of Kassel is committed to the [Open Science Policy](#) of the European Commission, which states that research data should be "as open as possible, as closed as necessary." With its [Open Access Policy](#) [German], the University of Kassel encourages the publication of scientific research results based on the principles of Open Access (OA). In this context, research data should be contributed to the scientific discourse as far as legally feasible and reasonable, adhering to the FAIR principles. This encompasses, among other things, documenting and describing data according to discipline-specific standards, utilizing appropriate repositories/data centres and metadata schemas, assigning persistent identifiers, and regulating reusability.

If confidentiality or security concerns prohibit publication, alternative storage solutions should be implemented for the required minimum length of time.

Generally, research data ought to be preserved for 10 years corresponding to the [Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice](#) [German]. Shorter retention periods must be justified and recorded in writing as per Section 6, Paragraph 6 of the principles.

The retention period, in general, applies to all data and tools necessary for subsequent use that form the basis of published findings. Retention and publication of further data that may be of potential interest to one's own discipline or other disciplines is recommended in the interests of sustainability, interdisciplinarity and scientific transparency in accordance with the guiding principles formulated in the [Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice](#) [German].

¹ In particular, the following should be mentioned: the "Grundsätze zur Sicherung guter wissenschaftlicher und künstlerischer / gestalterischer Praxis der Universität Kassel" [German], (Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice) Mitteilungsblatt der Universität Kassel No. 8/2022 dated July 27, 2022, and the "Satzung für die zentrale Ethikkommission der Universität Kassel" [German], Mitteilungsblatt der Universität Kassel No. 9/2018 dated November 1, 2018, as well as other statutes, guidelines, and regulations, refer to: <https://www.uni-kassel.de/hochschulverwaltung/schnelleinstieg/uebersicht/mitteilungsblatt> [German].

The specific selection and scope of data to be retained and published are the responsibility of principal investigators and independent researchers.

Literacy / Integration into Higher Education

Data literacy is crucial for the responsible and sustainable management of research data in line with the [Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice](#) [German] and the [Data Literacy Charta](#).

Methods of discipline-specific research data management should, therefore, be appropriately incorporated into higher education and training at all levels by faculties, units, institutes, and centers. This includes not only early-on instruction covering theoretical foundations but also the continuous and practical application of methods and tools in student internships and projects.

Responsibilities

Projektleitende Principal investigators establish the principles for the management of research data within their respective areas of responsibility in accordance with the [Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice](#) [German] as well as the guidelines presented here. They instruct their staff and doctoral candidates in the responsible management of research data in accordance with these guidelines and are responsible for their implementation. Compliance with these guidelines is mandatory for all researchers.

Students doing research and early-career researchers are entitled to receive appropriate information, training, and support from instructors and supervisors.

Data management is documented by a data management plan, which is a part of every research project. It is updated regularly during the research process and sets out responsibilities, obligations, ownership/rights of use, and conventions for the practical management of data.

If personal data is processed as part of the research project, the researchers will also keep a record of processing activities in accordance with Article 30 of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which must be kept up to date.

The University implements and maintains a research data infrastructure to ensure the appropriate storage and technical availability of research data in accordance with the access permissions defined by the researchers.

Researchers coordinate their needs with the Forschungsdaten-Service (Research Data Service).

The University of Kassel supports researchers in planning, collecting, and storing of research data, as well as in the definition and maintenance of standards for the management of research data. This support includes training

and advisory services developed in collaboration with the respective academic disciplines.

The central point of contact for research data management issues is the Forschungsdaten-Service (Research Data Service), which is a joint unit of the University Library and the IT Service Centre.

Additional documents and information related to research data management

- Mission Statement of the University of Kassel:
<https://uni-kassel.de/go/leitbild> [German and English]
- Principles for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice at the University of Kassel (Satzung, Mitteilungsblatt Nr. 8):
<https://uni-kassel.de/go/gap> [German].
- FAIR Principles (FORCE11: The FAIR Data Principles):
<https://force11.org/info/the-fair-data-principles>.
- CARE Principles (Global Indigenous Data Alliance: The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance): <https://www.gida-global.org/care>.
- Data Literacy Charta v1.2 (Stifterverband 2001):
<https://www.stifterverband.org/sites/default/files/data-literacy-charter.pdf>.
- Open Science Policy of the European Commission (The EU's open science policy): https://research-andinnovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/our-digital-future/open-science_en.
- Open Access Policy of the University of Kassel (2018-07-04):
<http://doi.org/10.17170/kobra-202102193325> [German].
- General Publication Guidelines of the University Library: https://uni-kassel.de/go/publication_information.

The guidelines are licensed under the Creative Commons licence CC0 1.0 Universal (CC0 1.0) Public Domain Dedication. [Creative Commons Licence CC0 1.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/)

