EPSRC Requirements for research data

The EPSRC (Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council) have introduced a policy framework concerning the management and provision of access to publicly-funded research data.

From the 1st of May 2015 EPSRC Principal Investigators and the University must be able to demonstrate to the EPSRC that their expectations are being met. The expectations are detailed at: http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/about/standards/researchdata/

EPSRC will begin to monitor compliance from 1st May on a case-by-case basis. If it judges that proper sharing of research data is being obstructed then it reserves the right to impose sanctions.

What are the EPSRC’s Key Expectations for PIs?

Key Expectation 1: The data should be securely stored for at least ten years.

Key Expectation 2: An online record should be created within twelve months of the data being generated that describes the research data and how to access it.

Key Expectation 3: Published research papers should include a short statement describing how and on what terms any supporting research data may be accessed.

What must I do now?

As an EPSRC-funded PI it is your responsibility to meet these expectations. Here are three steps to allow you to do this.

Step 1: You should store your data safely:

- Research data that underpins your publication must be stored safely and made accessible.
- Your data may already be being managed by a domain specific facility outside of the university, in which case you may not need to store the data locally. However it must be verified that such an external store satisfies EPSRC requirements.
- If not then it must be stored in a suitable University of Edinburgh repository. Minimal compliance is achieved by having your data on Edinburgh DataStore (https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/x/Np9FD) and then making a secure copy of it into the Data Vault (this service is currently in development).
- For those who wish to, then you may go further and use Edinburgh DataShare (http://datashare.is.ed.ac.uk/), which is an open online digital repository of data produced by University of Edinburgh researchers. Datasets added to DataShare will be allocated persistent identifiers (DOIs) for citations.
- Non-digital research data should also be stored in a manner to facilitate it being shared in the event of receiving a valid request to access the data.

Step 2: You must ensure that a record describing the research data and how to access the data is published and made freely accessible online.

- The University is using PURE (http://www.pure.ed.ac.uk) to record descriptive data (metadata) about the research data in order to meet this expectation. Research staff are therefore expected to add a metadata record for any EPSRC-funded research data into PURE, normally within twelve months of the data being generated.
• To enter a new dataset description in PURE, click on the green ‘Add new’ button, and select ‘Dataset’.
• Once added to PURE via the dataset content type, the resulting record should link to the funding source and also link to any associated publications. If the dataset is available online, for example in DataShare, the URL of that dataset should also be added.
• Where access to the data is to be restricted, the published dataset metadata in PURE should give the reason and summarise the conditions which must be satisfied to grant access.
• Dataset metadata added to PURE will ultimately be publicly accessible via the Edinburgh Research Explorer subject to confidentiality and other such restrictions.

Step 3: You must include a statement in any published papers underpinned by EPSRC-funded research data:

• EPSRC state that ‘the expectation could be satisfied by citing such data in the published research and including in such citations direct links to the data or to supporting documentation that describes the data in detail, how it may be accessed and any constraints that may apply.’ Such links should be persistent URLs such as DOIs.
• An example of a basic data citation would be of the form: ‘Creator (Publication Year): Title. Publisher. DOI’ Further details can be found at: https://www.datacite.org/services/cite-your-data.html
• If compelling commercial, legal or ethical reasons exist to protect access to the data these should be noted in a statement included in the published research paper. A simple direction to interested parties to ‘contact the author for access’ may not be considered sufficient.
• The paper must also be made Open Access in PURE. Further details can be found at http://www.ed.ac.uk/openaccess

How can we support you?

The University is committed to providing high-quality research data management services and to support researchers with the management of their data throughout the research lifecycle.

The implementation of the EPSRC Policy at Edinburgh is being supported by the University’s Research Data Management (RDM) Programme delivered by Information Services. Full details of the programme along with training and support opportunities are available via the RDM website at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/is/data-management

Who can I talk to about meeting this policy requirement?

Contacts:
• Email: IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk with “Help with EPSRC data policy framework” in your subject line.
• Email: PURE@ed.ac.uk if you have questions about PURE.

Who can I talk to about research data management in general?

Contacts:
• Email: IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk with “Help with Research Data Management in general” in your subject line.
  Email: IS.Helpline@ed.ac.uk if you would like to arrange an RDM training or awareness raising session.