

Identifying research data for archiving in Research Data JCU

This information sheet will be particularly relevant in non-STEMM disciplines and for researchers who are unsure if they have any research data that needs to be archived.

You probably do have some data, though it is entirely possible that your project does not generate research data. You may not be required to complete all of the metadata records (RDMP, Data Record or Data Publication) in [Research Data JCU](#).

- As a **general principle**, if you need to refer to something in your research output that you have generated, then it is research data or research information;
- Working notes, reflections and observations that are used to develop your findings or creative output, but that are not required for validation (referred to) do not constitute research data in this context;
- Academic referencing can be used for external source documents and materials, and these do not need to be archived in Research Data JCU;
- Research data and information does not need to be 'scientific', complex or large e.g. a spreadsheet in which you have summarised or applied categories or codes to the materials you are using in your project constitutes research data. More familiar examples in HASS disciplines include survey data and analyses, interview recordings, transcripts, thematic maps etc.

Please read through the examples below to develop further understanding.

The general principles will apply in disciplines, and for research methods other than those listed in the examples (e.g. screen studies, literary analysis, theoretical research and desktop review) but as each research project is unique it is always best to check with us at the start of your project by emailing researchdata@jcu.edu.au.

HDR students should always complete a RDMP and discuss it with their Advisors. This will help you decide what data inputs will be used and what working materials and research data (if any) will be generated and how best to manage (organise) them - in addition to fulfilling administrative requirements.

Example - Creative Arts

Creative arts projects generate non-traditional research outputs (NTROs) i.e. "original creative works" such as an exhibition or a work of fiction. Specifically for HDRs, the research project will also generate an exegesis to support their creative works.

For JCU researchers (and some HDRs) their research project may also produce a paper. Both the paper and exegesis refer to the critical explanation of their creative works and are used to justify the creative decisions, thought processes and choice of theme and techniques.

In most cases the material that supports the research output and that may be needed for validation will be included in the exegesis and/or paper, and no research data has been generated.

HOWEVER should the research project involve other research methodologies such as surveys or interviews then research data will be generated, and a RDMP, Ethics Application and consent documentation (i.e. Information Sheet and Consent Form), Data Record and Data Publication will need to be completed.

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Example – History

Applying the principles above, historical research may not generate research data.

Primary sources found in public records, archives and libraries as well as secondary sources can usually be referenced in footnotes and endnotes, and do not need to be archived via Research Data JCU.

The interpretation and discussion of people, meanings, events and ideas of the past are generally included in the narrative within the research output, and no research data is generated.

Working notes, reflections and observations that inform the work but are not referred to in the research output do not constitute research data in this context.

HOWEVER should the research project involve other research methodologies such as surveys or interviews then research data will be generated, and a RDMP, Ethics Application and consent documentation (i.e. Information Sheet and Consent Form), Data Record and Data Publication will need to be completed.

Example - Ethnographic Fieldwork

Research projects in anthropology or other disciplines that rely on ethnographic fieldwork may generate multiple forms of data. For example, interview recordings and transcripts, field notes, field maps, and photographs are research data that require an RDMP, Data Record and Data Publication (in Research Data JCU).

Field notebooks sometimes contain a combination of observations (data) and reflections.

If these reflections are not data themselves, i.e., something that you analyse and refer to in the research output, they do not need to be archived. In this case, the researcher may digitise the data portions of the field notebook (through transcribing or scanning pages, in the case of a physical notebook).

Researchers should carefully consider what access conditions may be applied to the ethnographic field data to ensure that confidentiality of participants is upheld. This needs to be (explicitly) reflected in the Ethics Application, consent documents (i.e., Information Sheet and Consent Form), RDMP, Data Record and Data Publication.

Note: this applies for any research project in any discipline that has human participation.

Please email the Research Data Services team at researchdata@jcu.edu.au if you need help archiving your data in Research Data JCU and/or to organize storage for large datasets (>100 MB) or sensitive data.