eThesis submission: research data

Types of research data

When you submit your thesis electronically, your submission must be comprised of a single PDF (Portable Document Format) file. During your postgraduate degree, you may have collected or created research data that you wish to refer to in your thesis submission or make available alongside the final version of your thesis.

Examples of digital research data:

- Numerical data, instrument readings, spreadsheets
- Image files
- Audio or video recordings of observations, experiments, performances, or interviews
- Text files of notes, transcripts, protocols

Examples of non-digital research data:

- Artistic performances
- Sculpture, models, works of art
- Physical samples
- Paper files containing notes from labs, fieldwork, or archival research

Why should I share my research data?

Sharing research data has numerous benefits, including facilitating new collaborations, allowing new research questions to be answered, and increasing the discoverability of research findings.

Data sharing is also mandated by many research funders, including the UKRI research councils (AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, MRC, NERC, and STFC). Funders, publishers, and institutions increasingly require researchers to share the data which underpins their publications, so it is good practice to think about this for your thesis.

What data should I share?

Please contact your supervisor ahead of sharing any research data from your PhD project. They will help you consider what research data you can share. For example, it might not be appropriate to make an interview recording or third-party data publicly available, due to ethical concerns or license restrictions. You must always have permission or consent from any participants or third parties before sharing your data. The Library's [Research Data Management Service](#), and the Library's [Copyright Service](#) can also provide advice and guidance on this. Any material or data which is not made openly available should be stored for as long as required by funders, regulatory requirements or whilst still of value.

How do I share my data?

There are several ways to share your research data. Firstly, you need to consider if and when you can share your data openly and/or whether you need to share your data privately (e.g. with an examiner).

Providing access to research data for thesis examination

It may be appropriate to share the data underpinning your thesis with your examiners. It is recommended that you upload the data to your [University OneDrive for Business](#) account. You can then create a sharable link, which you can provide to your Doctoral Administrator to pass on to your examiners.

Please note: once you leave the University you will no longer be able to access your University OneDrive for Business account.

If you have already openly shared your data on a platform such as Figshare, or another data repository, you should share the DOI assigned to the data.

Sharing data openly alongside your final thesis

Using Figshare

If appropriate to share your research data publicly, for example, at the point you submit your final eThesis following examination, you can do this using the University's institutional research data repository, [Figshare](#).

Figshare can be used to deposit and publish research data which is suitable for sharing openly and publicly, under an open licence, to enable others to freely access and reuse the data. This enables you to easily link your thesis, and any publications, to your data. This makes your data more accessible and reusable, and it prevents the need for other researchers having to contact you to access your data.

For guidance on using Figshare, please see this knowledge base article: How do I access and use Figshare?

You will receive a unique, permanent DOI (Digital Object Identifier) for your published data, which you can cite and share to enable users to locate and access your data publicly:

- we recommend including the DOI in your final eThesis file as part of a Data Access Statement to facilitate discovery of your data;
- we recommend including the link to your final thesis within the 'Related Materials' field in your Figshare data item(s).

If you have non-digital data, you can use Figshare to create a metadata record which describes your data. This metadata record will be given a DOI which can be shared and cited to let users know about your data.

Please note: once you leave the University you will no longer be able to access your University Figshare account to deposit or edit data. You will have ongoing public access to any data you have published and made openly available in Figshare, the same as any public user.

Other repositories and funder requirements

If you prefer, there are also discipline-specific data repositories available; you can find one for your subject via Re3data.

If your PhD is funded or sponsored, there may be additional funder requirements around depositing your research data. For example, the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) requires that all data arising from funded research is deposited to a specific subject repository.

Further help and guidance

The Library's Office for Open Research can provide guidance on data management, data sharing, funder requirements, and using Figshare:

- Email: openresearch@manchester.ac.uk
- Sharing Data Related to your Thesis
- Sharing research data
- How do I access and use Figshare?
- The University of Manchester Research Data Management Policy

The Library's Copyright team can provide information and guidance on reuse and sharing of content:

- Email: uml.copyright@manchester.ac.uk
- Website: http://subjects.library.manchester.ac.uk/copyright/