

Principles for Handling Research Data at Marburg University

of 19 December 2017

Preamble

The responsible handling of research data is essential for the traceability of research, for scientific progress, and for the dissemination of scientific knowledge to society and the public. For the purposes of these Principles, research data are understood to be all data generated in the course of scientific projects, for example through observation, experiments, simulations, surveys, or digitisation. Marburg University supports the sustainable management of such research data. This encompasses all measures that must be taken throughout the data life cycle to ensure the reproducibility and verifiability of research results and to enable the re-use of the data. The term data life cycle covers all processes within the research process in which research data are created, processed, analysed, archived, and made accessible and re-usable.

In accordance with good scientific practice, Marburg University has adopted the following Principles for handling research data.

Principles

I. Responsibility of Researchers

Project leaders of research projects, as well as independently researching individuals, are responsible for research data management. All researchers observe the standards and regulations on discipline-specific research data that are relevant in their respective fields. All researchers are obliged to instruct their staff, doctoral researchers, and students in the responsible handling of research data in accordance with these Principles.

II. Responsibility of the University

The University provides advice on research data management in research projects, from planning through implementation and beyond the end of the project. For this purpose, Marburg University maintains a central point of contact for research data management. Marburg University cooperates with other universities and scientific institutions in research data management and participates in the development of shared standards and structures. It ensures the necessary further development of its research data infrastructure and guarantees appropriate storage and provision of research data.

III. Handling Research Data in Research Projects

Research projects require structured research data management. For each project, a data management plan should be drawn up which sets out, among other things, access rights and restrictions for the research data. In particular, the use of the data collected or generated in the project must also be regulated for the period after the end of the project or upon the departure of individual researchers. Legal provisions (e.g. data protection and patent law) and ethical aspects must likewise be observed.

IV. Storage and Archiving of Research Data

All researchers ensure compliance with good scientific practice in accordance with the Principles and Procedural Rules on Good Scientific Practice and on Dealing with Scientific Misconduct of Marburg University. Among other things, this includes the obligation to securely retain research data for at least 10 years. Digital research data are stored and archived in the University's information infrastructure or in national or international subject-specific repositories.

V. Re-usability

In keeping with the principle “As open as possible – as protected as necessary”, research data should be made available for re-use. The University promotes free access to research data. It is the responsibility of the researchers themselves to decide when, and under what legal conditions, research data are made accessible. The protection of personal data under data protection law must be ensured, as must the protection of copyright and the legitimate interests of third parties. These interests are to be regulated by an appropriate agreement with the third parties concerned, either in advance of or in the course of research projects.