Amsterdam Law School

Additional guidelines for research data management
18 January 2022

These guidelines apply to research conducted by staff of the Amsterdam Law School, as a specification of the [UvA Guidelines on Research Data Management (2019)](#) .[1] Unless specified otherwise, the UvA Guidelines are fully applicable.

This document first sets forth the Additional Guidelines of the Amsterdam Law School, which will be followed by an Explanatory Note.

Additional Guidelines for research data management at the Amsterdam Law School.

A) In principle, according to the [UvA Guidelines on Research Data Management (2019)](#), all UvA researchers must draw up a data management plan for new research projects.

B) If a research project involves qualitative research and the researcher(s) *exclusively* work with publicly available sources, the researcher(s) are exempt from creating a research data management plan. Examples of publicly available sources are journal articles, legislation, jurisprudence, books and materials from archives that are publicly accessible.

    The regular citation and references practices are sufficient; in addition researchers should clarify the choice of research methods, data analysis and the assessment of results. They should be transparent about the research method and working procedures. The line of reasoning must be clear and the steps in the research process must be verifiable. The research must be described in sufficient detail for it to be possible to replicate the data collection and its analysis.

    For all projects, it is relevant to safely store documentation and ensure the security of regular back-ups. Researchers are recommended to use the university research storage systems OneDrive, MS Teams and Sharepoint. For more information on secure storage of data, please see [here](#).

C) If a research project involves qualitative research and work with *sources that are not publicly available*, a research data management plan is *mandatory*.

    Examples of non-public sources are working documents, internal guidelines and regulations of institutions, confidential documents, (informal) meeting minutes and/or materials from closed archives or archives that are not easily accessible to the public.

    In principle, these documents need to be on file with the author and institution.

D) If a research project involves quantitative research, e.g. *statistical analysis*, a research data management plan is *mandatory*.

    This applies to two types of data:
    -   Data from sources that are publicly available (e.g. Open Research Data);
    -   Data from sources that are not publicly available e.g. datasets from third parties such as the police, the ministry of Justice, tribunals, census data, the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement or the European Banking Authority.

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[1] Decision UvA Executive Board, 15 January 2020

In principle, these documents need to be on file with the author and institution.

E) If a research project involves human subject research, a research data management plan is *mandatory*.

This applies to two types of research:
- Research which collects data through interviews, questionnaires, experiments and/or observations.
- Research which collects data about individuals from publicly available sources without evident consent for (re)use. An example is scraping public data from different types of social media accounts that may include (sensitive) personal data.

Research involving human subject research also will need ethical clearance. Please consult the website of the Ethical Committee of the Amsterdam Law School[2], before you start preparing a research data management plan.

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[2] Information in Dutch: https://arils.uva.nl/nl/ethische-commissie/ethische-commissie.html

Explanatory note

Research data
Research data are data which are collected as part of academic and practically-oriented research in order to answer a research question or to test a hypothesis. All researchers work with data, but what the research data are like depends on the academic discipline and the research method.

There is a great diversity in the research data collected and used by the academic staff of the law faculty. Examples are unique data generated by the researcher himself via observations, interviews, surveys or derived data e.g., annotations made to texts, selections from and adaptations of existing datasets, transcriptions of audio recordings etc. Also the use of existing data that are available via publicly – or not publicly – accessible sources (e.g. text from court cases, law, archives, databases) are 'research data'. The data may be in the form of text files, but also in the form of audio and video tapes or databases.

Importance of data management
With research data management researchers can ensure the integrity of their research. It assists in ensuring that research data are accurate, complete, authentic and reliable. It also ensures that on the basis of your data – and with an explanation of your research methods – others can verify your results. For further clarification, please check the UvA website.

Research data management plans
In principle, according to the UvA Guidelines on Research Data Management (2019), all UvA researchers must draw up a data management plan for new research projects.

A data management plan describes the data used and/or collected during the project; where and how this research data is stored, managed and protected during the project; and what happens to the research data once the project is complete (par 4.5 of the UvA Guidelines).

Research data management at the Law School
Due to the specific nature of some forms of legal research, not all guidelines contained in the UvA Guidelines on RMD (2019) apply fully to research conducted at the Law School. The Additional Guidelines d specify the UvA Guidelines to the Law School,

The Guidelines are only for internal purposes, external funding bodies may have their own demands with regards to research data management.

More information and support
For more information and support for research data management researchers can contact the data steward of the Amsterdam Law School, via **Research Data Management**