# Research Data Management for Scholarship projects

All Open University staff conducting scholarship projects are required to be aware of, and comply with [The Open University Research Data Management Policy](https://www5.open.ac.uk/library-research-support/RDM-policy).

If your scholarship is being undertaken in partnership with one of the scholarship centres, please contact them for guidance on how to complete a data management plan.

This webpage gives details on what you should do during your scholarship project to comply with the policy.

## Identify your research data

For most scholarship projects, research data is likely to be:

* Survey results
* Interview recordings and transcripts
* Transcripts and notes from focus groups
* Open University data about students/modules

However, there are many types of research data and depending on your project, this may differ. For more information, please refer to the [Library’s pages on Research Data Management.](https://www5.open.ac.uk/library-research-support/research-data-management/what-are-research-data)

## Write a Data Management Plan (DMP)

A Data Management Plan (DMP) is a project document which describes the data (or similar evidence) that a project will collect, how it will be stored during the project, how it will be archived at the end of the project and how access will be granted (where appropriate).

A [DMP template](https://openuniv.sharepoint.com/:w:/r/sites/Scholarship-team/Shared%20Documents/General/Data%20Management%20Plan/Scholarship%20Open%20University%20Data%20Management%20Plan%202025-02.docx?d=wa54e6329125e4256acac03b4b031ac22&csf=1&web=1&e=uNerUL) for scholarship projects has been developed, please complete this form before data collection starts and [email it to the Library Research Support team](mailto:library-research-support@open.ac.uk). Once approved, it will be uploaded to the Scholarship Exchange to sit alongside your other project documents.

## Ensure you are managing your data responsibly

Along with your DMP, you may have received approval from the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) and Data Protection. Throughout your project, revisit these documents, and ensure that you are managing your data responsibly by storing it in a secure location and organising your files in a way that means you know where everything is kept.

Take a look at the Library’s pages on [organising your files](https://www5.open.ac.uk/library-research-support/research-data-management/organising-your-files) and [storing data](https://www5.open.ac.uk/library-research-support/research-data-management/storing-data) for guidance.

You may also find it helpful to attend the following webinars, led by the Library Research Support team:

* Data Day-to-Day: Hints and Tips for Good Data Management
* Working with Personal and Sensitive Research Data

Details of dates, and how to book are on the [Library Research Support Training webpage](https://www5.open.ac.uk/library-research-support/researcher-skills/training).

## Upload your research data to the Scholarship Exchange

You will think about data sharing and retention when you write your Data Management Plan. Depending on your project, there are 4 possible options:

1. **Share the data internally only on the Scholarship Exchange**

In most cases, you will need to restrict access to your anonymised data to an internal audience only. This will help other OU staff to validate your results and may enable re-use of your data for other scholarship projects.

1. **Share the data publicly on the Scholarship Exchange**

Publicly sharing your anonymised research data on the Scholarship Exchange means that it can be found and used outside of the University. If you are publishing outputs from your project in a journal, then the publisher is likely to require this kind of data sharing.

1. **Upload the data to the Scholarship Exchange for retention, without sharing**

In some cases, it won’t be possible to share your data at all (due to ethical, legal or time constraints).

However, uploading your data to the Scholarship Exchange under permanent embargo (rather than retaining it in a Teams site or on OneDrive) will ensure that you will have long term access to the data.

1. **Do not upload data to the Scholarship Exchange – delete data**

In some cases, it will not be desirable or necessary to upload your data to the Scholarship Exchange. Justification for not sharing data should be included in your DMP. In these cases, the data (particularly personal data) should be deleted.