

Record Retention Obligations of Research Students and Staff - Guidelines

Navitas Professional Institute

Document

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Version Control

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24 September 2015	Guidelines established	September 2020
25 January 2016	Minor template technical amendments	September 2020

Record Retention Obligations of Research Students and Staff - Guidelines

1. Purpose and Scope

The College, in managing the retention, storage and disposal of research data, primary materials and research records, is committed to ensuring staff and students engaged in research understand their individual obligations and good practice in relation to their storage and disposal of research records and other associated research materials, consistent with the *Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 (Cwlth)* ('the Code'), 'Section 2: Management of Research Data and Primary Materials'.

2. Guidelines

These guidelines serve as a guide for research staff and staff engaged in research and supervising research students, in relation to their individual obligations and good practice regarding the retention, storage and disposal of research records and associated materials. These guidelines serve as a guide. They do not constitute legal advice.

2.1 Retention

Research data, primary materials and research records must be retained in an accessible form in accordance with the provisions and minimum retention periods set out in Section 2 of the Code, namely: 5 years from date of publication of research data and; 12 months from completion of short-term student research projects undertaken for the purpose of assessment only. In circumstances where work has community or heritage value, research data should be kept permanently, preferably within a national collection.

Principal researchers and research students (in consultation with their research supervisors) must ensure that sufficient data and primary materials are retained to justify the outcomes of research, and if necessary, defend them against challenge.

Research data and primary materials must be retained for sufficient time to allow reference to them by other researchers and interested parties. For published research data, this may be for as long as interest and discussion persist following publication.

Researchers working with human participants must seek informed consent from all participants to retain and re-use research data and primary materials for research and education purposes.

2.2 Storage

The College recommends that wherever possible and appropriate research data, primary materials and research records should be stored safely and securely in a method appropriate for the format of that data in the principal researcher's department or other appropriate College repository. Researchers are permitted to hold copies of the research data for their own use. Arrangements for material held in other locations must be documented.

In projects that span several institutions, an agreement should be developed at the outset covering the storage of research data and primary materials within each institution.

2.3 Disposal

Authorization should be sought from the College, prior to secure and safe disposal of research data, primary materials and research records when specified period for retention has ended.

Disposal and destruction of research data must involve methods to ensure that the data is no longer usable. It is particularly critical that confidential or sensitive data remains unreadable and cannot be recreated.

2.4 Digital Data

Deleting files may not be sufficient to destroy the data. It may be necessary to utilize software which permanently erases the data. Assistance may be sought from the College IT Help Desk Services.

2.5 Non-Digital Data

Non-digital data should be physically destroyed using appropriate methods which are as secure and environmentally friendly as possible. Physical records must not be discarded using paper recycle bins or ordinary waste bins. Secure destruction services should be employed for the destruction of physical records, including paper and digital media such as CDs, DVDs and other media formats.

The principal researcher must notify the Human Research Ethics Committee secretary in a timely manner when research materials have been properly disposed.

3. Responsibilities

The **Dean Academic** is accountable for the ongoing development, approval, implementation, awareness and effectiveness of these guidelines and the supporting processes and documentation and ensuring that all academic heads, functional managers, committee chairs, research supervisors and other relevant college academic and professional staff are aware of these guidelines and their responsibilities defined herein.

Research Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that all principle researchers and research students are aware of these guidelines and their responsibilities defined herein.

Research Students are responsible for being aware of, and complying with these guidelines.

Navitas employees are responsible for being aware of, and complying with these guidelines.

4. Definitions

Unless the contrary intention is expressed in these guidelines, the following words (when used in these guidelines) have the meaning set out below:

Academic staff / teaching staff refers to permanent and casual employees engaged in teaching and assessment of courses at the institution.

College (the)/ Institution (the) means the Navitas Professional Institute and its colleges (see registration information below).

Destruction – the irreversible physical obliteration of all existing copies of data carried out using appropriate methods such as shredding or pulping or in the case of electronic data ensuring data is unreadable.

Disposal – destruction of data including transfer of custody or ownership of data.

International student/ Overseas student means a student required to hold a student visa for study in Australia.

Research Data – the data, records, files or other information that comprise a research project's observations, findings or outcomes, including primary materials and analysed data.

Research Records – information created, received, used or maintained as evidence of, or information about, the decision-making related to research activities in print, digital or physical forms.

Researchers - all College staff, students and adjuncts engaged in research through the College.

Retention - the process of retaining research data according to the periods specified in the Code and archives and records legislation.

Third party research data - any kind of research data that is owned by another researcher, individual or entity that is being used for different research purposes from that for which it was originally created, or that is being used by researchers other than the owner.

Unit means a unit of study in a higher education course or a unit of study, subject, module and/or unit of competency in a vocational education and training course.

5. Review

This policy is reviewed at a minimum of every 5 years by the policy owner (or designate) to ensure alignment to appropriate strategic direction and its continued relevance to Navitas' current and planned operations.

The next scheduled review of this document is listed in the Version Control section on Page 1.

6. Records

Records in association with this policy will be kept in accordance with this policy and in consistency with the College Records Management Policy and Records Retention and Disposal Schedule. Confidential files related to the implementation of the policy must be maintained according to relevant privacy processes.

7. Related documents

Navitas Professional Institute- Records Management Policy- Record Retention and Disposal Procedure and Schedule, Record Disposal Authorisation Form, Research at ACAP Introductory Guide (Research Data and Records), ACAP Code of Practice (Records & Archives).
Navitas Privacy Policy.

8. Related legislation

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research 2007 (C'wlth) (the Code), 'Section 2: Management of Research Data and Primary Materials'. Other relevant Acts and legislative requirements including the Guidelines under Section 95 of the Federal Privacy Act 1988 and the NSW Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act, 1998 (refer to ACAP Code of Practice). Higher Education Support Act 2003; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency Act 2011; National Vocational Education and Training Regulator Act 2011; Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000 and National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2007; and associated Commonwealth and State legislation; Australian Qualifications Framework.

Registration information

The Navitas Professional Institute is a group of colleges in the Navitas Professional and English Programs (PEP) Division of Navitas Limited the colleges being the Australian College of Applied Psychology (ACAP), Navitas College of Public Safety (NCPS), Health Skills Australia (HSA), and the Australian TESOL Training Centre (ATTC) with respect to ATTC's 39296QLD Graduate Certificate in TESOL and 39297QLD Graduate Diploma in TESOL courses. Navitas Professional Institute Pty Ltd (NPI Pty Ltd), ABN 94 057 495 299, National CRICOS Provider Code 01328A, TEQSA HE Provider Registration Code 12009, RTO 0500. Health Skills Australia Pty Ltd ABN 53 123 479 201, RTO 21646.