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Data Deposit Policy

Introduction

Queen’s University Library (QUL) provides Research Data Management (RDM) support for Queen’s researchers (faculty, graduate students, and staff) according to the following principles: Value, Openness, Inclusivity, Collaborative platforms, and Engaged researchers (VOICE). We provide services to support collection development throughout the research life cycle, including:

- Planning for data management
  - Data management plans – on their own, or as part of research funding proposals
- Preparing data for deposit
  - Coding, formatting, anonymizing
- Documenting data
  - Describing data so others can understand and use it
- Depositing data
  - Finding an appropriate repository
- Making data discoverable
  - Promoting open access, indexing, assigning Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs)

For more information, see QUL’s Research Data Management Workflow and the Queen’s Research Data Management guide.

As part of these services, the welcomes researcher-generated data, from all disciplines, for deposit into an appropriate data repository. Our collection development goal is to ensure that researcher-deposited data are:

- Complete
- Well-documented
- Ethics-compliant
- Sensitive and responsive to intellectual property arrangements
- Open
- In preservation-friendly formats
- Stored in appropriate archives/repositories
Deposit Criteria -- Details

QUL welcomes researcher-generated data from all disciplines including those produced by Queen’s faculty, graduate students, research teams, groups, projects, and/or departments. The service is growing and evolving, and policies surrounding data selection may change.

QUL will work with researchers to deposit data that meet the following criteria:

Complete
QUL accepts datasets that are complete and not intended to be updated or revised. Revisions due to corrections/errors are accepted, but data should generally be in final, ready-to-use form. QUL can offer advice and support in this regard.

Well-documented
Data without good documentation is of limited value. Documentation consists of basic descriptive elements such as title, author, date, etc. but should also provide more detailed information. Accompanying documentation, such as user guides, codebooks, and questionnaires, ensure that data can be understood and used by future users. Ideally, the process of documenting data files starts at the beginning of the research life cycle. QUL can provide examples of good documentation and advice on how to approach the documentation process.

Open
Open access to data is an underlying principle of QUL’s RDM services. The ultimate goal is to make deposited data available to other researchers in alignment with the FAIR Data Principles. QUL acknowledges that not all data can be shared openly and will work with researchers to ensure that their data has an appropriate level of access. Reasonable embargo periods are accepted for research and publication purposes. Deposited files can be embargoed fully (e.g. data and documentation) or partially (e.g. data only), at the researcher’s discretion. Once an embargo is established, it is the responsibility of researchers to inform the Library if an extension of an embargo is required. During the embargo, the Library can provide researchers and designates with controlled access to deposited data and/or documentation.

Ethics-compliant
Guided by Queen’s Research Ethics policies, QUL can work with researchers to ensure that data (e.g. human-subject data) are de-identified and anonymized. For more information, see ‘Best Practices in Data Management’. For sensitive data, QUL takes appropriate steps to ensure the protection of respondent privacy.
Sensitive and responsive to intellectual property arrangements
In cases involving intellectual property, appropriate access restrictions will be established in consultation with the researcher. Contractual and other licensing issues will be taken into consideration.

In Preservation-friendly Formats
QUL can advise researchers on ‘cleaning up’ and formatting their data for preservation and future use. Where possible the use of data formats that are hardware- and software-agnostic is encouraged. Data in non-proprietary formats are preferred. QUL can provide advice and, in some cases, assistance with converting to a more open and accessible format.

Other Considerations:

Data Repositories
QUL supports depositing research data into recognized repositories. QUL’s membership in the Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) provides Queen’s with access to Scholars Portal Dataverse which serves as Queen’s institutional data repository. Optionally, data can be deposited into a subject-specific repository. QUL recommends re3data.org as an international registry of recognized disciplinary data repositories.

Data Retention and Preservation
As a rule, data that is accepted for deposit will be retained in alignment with the Scholars Portal Dataverse retention policy (pending). Datasets cannot be deleted but may be deaccessioned for a valid reason. For more information, see the Deaccession Dataset section of the Dataverse Guide.

Data archival tools and standards are being explored and implemented in Ontario and Canada. For example, Ontario’s Scholars Portal, and the national Portage Network, are both looking at the question of long-term preservation of research data. QUL is actively participating in these initiatives with the intent of taking advantage of one or more of these solutions as they become available.