



RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT SERVICES: FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION WITH SERVICE PROVIDERS

SCOPING DIGITAL REPOSITORY SERVICES FOR RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Scoping Digital Repository Services for Research Data Management project is a cross-agency collaboration in Oxford. This report presents the findings of the consultation with Oxford service units, the complementary workshop organized to hear about data management services and the recommendations made by the Oxford Digital Repositories Steering Group for continuing work in this area.

A total of eleven service units across the university took part in the consultation exercise to validate the requirements captured from researchers earlier on in the project and to help defining the services on offer, or planned to be offered, that support researchers with their data management duties.

A framework for research data management and curation services is presented below, this was derived from the researchers' requirements for services and complemented with some of the stages present in the DCC Curation Lifecycle Model and the feedback provided by service units in Oxford as well members of the UK Research Data Service and the Digital Curation Centre.

Research Data Management and Curation Services Framework												
DATA MANAGEMENT & SHARING PLANS	LEGAL & ETHICAL	BEST FORMATS & BEST PRACTICE	SECURE STORAGE	METADATA	ACCESS & DISCOVERY	COMPUTATION ANALYSIS & VISUALIZATION	RESTRICTED SHARING	DATA CLEANING	PUBLICATION	ASSESS VALUE	PRESERVATION	ADD VALUE
TOOLS & INFRASTRUCTURE												
ADVICE & SUPPORT												
Data Management and Sharing Plans	Support and advice to help researchers prepare their data management and sharing plans.											
Legal and Ethical	This service includes support to assist researchers with the legal and ethical implications of creating, sharing and using data.											
Best Formats and Best Practice	Support for researchers to decide which are the best formats and practice for producing and documenting specific data. This service may also include provision of support for database design.											
Secure Storage	Secure storage includes infrastructure that allows storing research data providing backup and version control capabilities amongst other things.											
Metadata	Tools and support to permit researchers describe their data from the moment of creation.											
Access and Discovery	A support service as well as tools to help researchers locate research data and access research data. This service could also include tools to help research groups to find about their data resources using the Data Audit Framework methodology.											
Computation, Analysis & Visualization	Software and computing resources that allow analysis and visualization of research data as well as the training needed to equip researchers with the appropriate skills.											
Restricted Sharing	Technical infrastructure to share research data with selected individuals or groups.											
Data Cleaning	Support to clean and prepare data to the standard required for publication. This service should include help with anonymizing data.											
Publication	Infrastructure that permits researchers to publish documented data and link them to											

	research articles and other materials located in other repositories. In some cases researchers may want to exploit their data commercially. DRAMBORA could serve as a tool here to assess repositories that publish the data.
Assess Value	One of the main challenges with research data is deciding what data needs to be kept and for how long.
Preservation	This service would be responsible for looking after the data in the long-term applying the required measures so that the data is accessible through time.
Add Value	Once the data is stored with the metadata associated with it, value can be added by organizing similar data in groups, promoting it, linking it to other materials or allowing annotations.

When examining the level of service provision in Oxford for the different research data management services proposed and organizing those into three levels of service, see figure below, it is apparent that most services from the framework are not fully available to researchers.

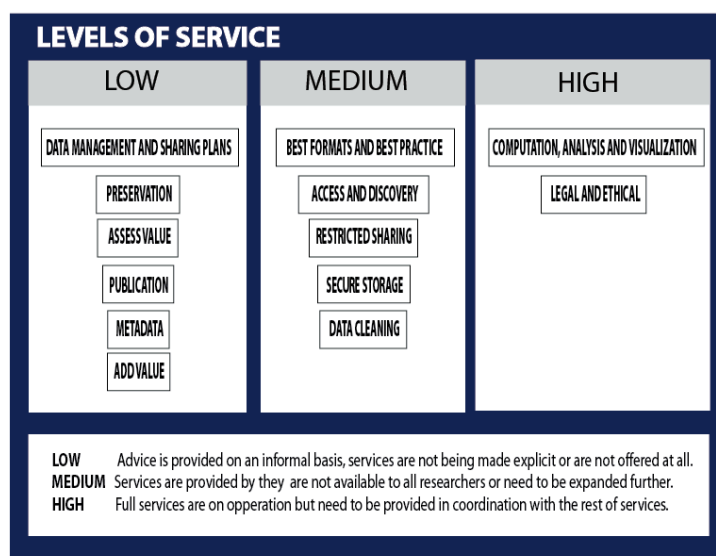


Figure 2. Level of service provision for the research data management services

Expertise in the different areas of data management and curation is widespread amongst service units at Oxford. In many cases support is provided in an individual and ad-hoc basis but services are not being made explicit as per the lack of resources to offer those.

On the whole, the vast majority of the research data management services identified are not being offered fully or at all by service units across the University. Moreover, those services currently on offer would benefit of coordination to make them more seamless to the researchers using them.

In addition to this, there is a need for a University wide policy for management and curation of research data as well as for provision of advice and guidance to service units at all levels.

The findings from this consultation were presented to the Oxford Digital Repositories Steering Group (ODSRG) in the November 2008 meeting and the following two main recommendations were produced:

- I. 1 FTE post should be created to be proactive in raising awareness and provide support for research data management;**
- II. Infrastructure services should be developed to support the research data lifecycle recognizing that resources already exist.**