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# Research Data Management: life beyond the laptop

Library and Learning Services conference

Sunley Conference Centre

15<sup>th</sup> June 2012

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# Outline

- Research data management drivers at Northampton
- Current RDM practice
- The Northampton DAF project
- Moving from project to policy
- The university's Research Data Policy and Roadmap
- Implementing the policy





# RDM drivers at Northampton

- REF: research environment; impact
- Institutional reputation
- Pressure from funders: government; RCUK; EPSRC (sharing mandates)
- Legislative requirements: FOI/EIR requests; Data protection
- Publisher demands: evidence to support published work
- Long term (open) access: reuse and repurpose
- Good research practice





# RDM practice at Northampton

- Back in 2010, little was known centrally about university researchers' data storage requirements, or the research workflow that incorporated the creation and management of data
- No university wide data storage policy or procedure existed
- So we needed to find out more...
- [Data Asset Framework](#) **project** – investigated the types of data held by researchers throughout the university, researchers' data management practices, and the risks associated with these practices





# DAF at Northampton

- Project team:
  - two project researchers (graduate interns) plus a Project Board comprising staff with expertise in repositories, records management and collection development
- Ran from May to June 2010 (eight weeks)
- Data collection, three stages:
  - Initial interviews with research leaders in each School; online survey of researchers (80 responses); 16 one-to-one interviews with researchers
- Topics covered:
  - Types, sizes and formats of research data; data ownership; storage; security; sharing and access (short and long term); funders' requirements







## DAF project - findings

- RDM practice varies according to:
  - Researcher type (research student; independent researcher; collaborator)
  - File type (some commonality e.g. MS Office files; some disparity e.g. databases, audio and video)
  - Research cycle stage e.g. requirements for data storage and sharing
- Most very conscious of data security (protection and loss)
- Attitudes to open access to data covered the full spectrum
  - from highly in favour or vehemently against. Disciplinary differences were apparent.





## DAF project - concerns

Lots of good practice, especially in data security, but in some cases:

- Uncertainty over ownership of research data
- Some data still collected in out-dated formats
- Data management practices often *ad hoc* rather than informed by good practice
- Data sometimes neglected once a project is complete
- Researchers often ill-informed (or misinformed) of the services available to them







# Recommendations

- Nine recommendations made, covering:
  - Reporting to senior research managers and leaders
  - Creation of research data policy (and procedure to support it)
  - Clarification of ownership of research data
  - Training and guidance
  - Dissemination of findings

(Full results and recommendations are described in the project report – see [Alexogiannopoulos \*et al.\*, 2010](#))





# From project to policy (1)

- October 2010 – [DAF project report](#) presented to University Research Committee (URC)
- November 2010 - URC Research Data Working Group convened to discuss:
  - Scope of policy
  - Fit with research lifecycle
  - Procedure to support policy
  - Relationship with other university policies and practices (e.g. research ethics; academic misconduct)
- November-December 2010 – policies from [other institutions](#) reviewed





## From project to policy (2)

- January 2011 – discussions with the Data Curation Centre (DCC) re creation of a 'generic' version of the data management planning tool [DMP Online](#)
- January 2011 – first RDM proposal presented to URC
- Members of URC expressed concern
- Following further discussion between researchers, records managers and library staff, a revised proposal was eventually submitted to URC in June 2011
- ... and the University's [Research Data Policy](#) was approved





# UoN Research Data Policy

- The [Research Data Policy](#) :
  - Recognises that good research is underpinned by good RDM
  - Expects [RCUK recommendations](#) for good data management to be followed
  - Encourages each Principal Investigator to complete a data management plan at the start of every project ([DMP Online](#) recommended for this purpose)
- This to be supported by:
  - A central dedicated storage facility for research data
  - Support and training





# Meanwhile...

Rapid progress in the sector:

- RCUK and HEFCE [joint commitment to open access](#)
  - Research outputs to be “made available as widely as possible both within and beyond the research community”
- EPSRC [policy framework on research data](#)
  - Lays out principles and expectations concerning management and provision of access to EPSRC-funded data
  - All EPSRC-funded HEIs to produce and follow a roadmap describing how these expectations will be met
- JISC [Managing Research Data Programme](#)
  - Development and implementation of data management tools, technologies and services







# UoN's Research Data Roadmap

- Although based on EPSRC expectations, the UoN roadmap is designed to be relevant to all disciplines
- The expectations cover:
  - awareness of regulatory environment and good RDM practice; access to data (digital and physical); policy; provision of descriptive metadata; data curation and long term preservation; and resourcing
- For each of the EPSRC's expectations the roadmap outlines:
  - Current practice at UoN; action needed to fill any identified gaps; timescale for action; resources required
- Approved by Research and Enterprise Committee April 2012; now awaiting discussion by the university's Executive Team







# Implementing the policy

- Implementation of the Research Data Policy and Roadmap is now the subject of a DCC '[institutional engagement](#)'
  - 60 days of support from DCC experts
- DCC will be working with researchers and professional staff to:
  - Promote awareness and benefits of good RDM practice
  - Identify UoN researcher priorities in RDM
  - Implement a research data storage facility
  - Provide training, guidance and support





## For further information contact

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