

Retention Periods for Research Data and Records

Retention Periods for UNSW Supporting Research Records

Research data is always supported by other records, such as those documenting:

- Ethics Committee Processes
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Research Reporting
- Project Administration



Research data is always supported by other records, such as those documenting ethics committee processes, intellectual property rights, and research project administration and reporting.

Effectively managing your research data and its supporting records reduces risk, eliminates unnecessary storage costs and enables better outcomes for your research and UNSW.

If there are no special arrangements for your research data and its supporting records, they may be destroyed once they have reached their legally defined minimum retention period.

For more information on managing your research data, go to <https://unsw.to/rdm>.



UNSW Ethics Committee and Process Records

Examples Data & Datasets	Retention Period
• Relating to Human Ethics	Minimum 15 Years after action completed
• Involving Bio-safety Ethics and/or genetically modified plants and organisms (GM)	Minimum 10 Years after action completed
• Involving Animal Ethics	Minimum 7 Years after action completed
• Relating to complaints and resulting investigations	Minimum 7 Years after action completed or after expiry of appeal period
• Relating to the treatment of animals in custody	Minimum 7 Years after action completed

Retention Period for Research Data

Category	Examples Data & Datasets	Retention Period
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involving community or heritage significance • relating to genetic research, including gene therapy • containing controversial issues or of high public interest, or has influence in the research domain • costly or impossible to reproduce or substitute if the primary data is not available • relating to the use of an innovative technique for the first time 	Permanently
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • from clinical trials • involving research with potential long term effects on humans • not covered by Category A 	Minimum 15 Years after completion of research or until patient would be 25 years old, whichever is the longer
C	General research data not covered by the Category A and B	Minimum 5 Years after completion or publication of research, whichever is the longer.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • for assessment purposes only • not covered by Category A, B and C 	Minimum 12 Months

UNSW Records Relating to the Ownership of Intellectual Property

Examples Data & Datasets	Retention Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relating to the organisation's intellectual property and all forms of copyright • Including patents, trademarks and designs 	Minimum of 5 years after intellectual property rights lapse
• Relating to agreements involving ownership rights and/or use of intellectual property (e.g. agreements to invest intellectual property/ copyright in another person)	Minimum of 70 years after date of agreement, or after specified expiry date whichever is the longer



UNSW Records Relating to Research Reporting

Examples Data & Datasets	Retention Period
• Final reports on the research project's outcome	Permanently
• All other reports on the project (e.g. progress reports and inspection reports)	Minimum of 7 years after satisfaction of all grant conditions or end of project

UNSW Records Relating to the Administration of Research

Examples Data & Datasets	Retention Period
• Final reports on the research project's outcome	Permanently
• All other reports on the project (e.g. progress reports and inspection reports)	Minimum of 7 years after satisfaction of all grant conditions or end of project



Please note that research data and its supporting records should never be destroyed without consulting the complete process. For more information, go to <https://www.recordkeeping.unsw.edu.au/recordkeeping/destroying-records> or contact rdm@unsw.edu.au.