# Thesis and Dissertation Data: An Emerging Role for University Libraries

**Thomas Joyce**

University Copyright and Library Lawyer

The University of Queensland

[t.joyce@library.uq.edu.au](mailto:t.joyce@library.uq.edu.au)

**Alicia Dodemont**

Copyright Coordinator

The University of Queensland

[a.dodemont@library.uq.edu.au](mailto:a.dodemont@library.uq.edu.au)

## Introduction

In the last decade, universities have become more active and engaged in dealing with issues of the custodianship and accessibility of the research data which underpins their academics’ scholarly publications. This has arisen from a combination of opportunity and necessity – opportunity, in the emergence of technologies that easily and affordably allow collection and storage of institution-wide data; necessity, in the form of increasing requirements from public funding bodies of accessibility and transparency of data underlying published research.

But these policy and practice advances are yet to fully flow into another significant area of research output generated at universities, that of research higher degree theses and dissertations. It is an area often beset by confusion around ownership and access, and frequently suffers from the absence of adequate policies and infrastructure for data storage and dissemination.

The University of Queensland has invested considerable time, effort and resources in establishing policies and facilities for the availability and sharing of research data of its academics, and is now navigating the analogous, but qualitatively different, relationship it has with students and their research data.

The objective is to provide policy clarity around ownership and custodianship and also provide the infrastructure and support to allow research higher degree (RHD) students to store and share data, alongside, and underpinning, the open access versions of their theses and dissertations.

## Data ownership and sharing

Australian law, consistent with other jurisdictions, provides limited ‘ownership’ protection to data, and this becomes especially tenuous where data is publicly shared.

Into that environment, The University of Queensland asserts a ‘custodian’ role for data created under its auspices, and the relationship of the University to its employee researchers creates a clear legal connection to undertake that role. That said, the very nature of the RHD student relationship is more distant and nuanced, and can create uncertainties that inhibit sharing and collaboration.

The University of Queensland, as institutional data custodian, has an important enabling role in assisting its RHD students to understand the ‘how, why and when’ of data sharing.

## Role of the university

This paper explores the context and rationale for this initiative. It seeks to dispel the ambiguity that often accompanied discussion of data ownership and sharing, and explores a range of trends in managing data as an institutional custodian, both domestically and internationally.

The fast-developing role of university libraries receives close attention.

**Reference List**

Amanda L Whitmire, Michael Boock, and Shan C Sutton, ‘Variability in academic research data management practices: Implications for data services development from a faculty survey’ (2015) *49*(4) *Program: electronic library and information systems,* 382 - 407 <<http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PROG-02-2015-0017>>.

Asogwa, B. E. ‘Libraries in the information age’ (2014) *The Electronic Library, 32*(5), 603.

Australian National University Library, ‘Data Management: Data Archiving and Sharing’ (2015) *Australian National University* <http://libguides.anu.edu.au/content.php?pid=372387&sid=3050535>.

Australian National University Library, ‘Data Management: Data Organization’ (2015) *Australian National University* <<http://libguides.anu.edu.au/content.php?pid=372387&sid=3050534>>.

Australian National University Library, ‘Managing your data’ (2015) *Australian National University* <<https://anulib.anu.edu.au/training/research-data-management/managing.html>>.

Beardsley, Timothy M, ‘What's Next in Data Publication?’ (2015) *65*(5) *BioScience*, 455.

Brian M. Gaff, Heather Egan Sussman, and Jennifer Geetter, ‘Privacy and Big Data’ (2014) 47(6) *Computer* 7. Retrieved from http://ieeexplore.ieee.org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=6838869.

Brownson, Ross C, Colditz, Graham A, and Proctor, Enola Knisley (Ed.), ‘Dissemination and implementation research in health: translating science to practice’ (Oxford University Press, 2012).

Charlotte Waelde, Graeme Laurie, Abbe Brown, Smita Kheria, and Jane Cornwell, *‘*Contemporary Intellectual Property: Law and Policy, 3rd ed’ (Oxford: OUP, 2013).

Creative Commons, ‘Science’, *Creative Commons,* <https://creativecommons.org/science/>.

Debra Hiom , Dom Fripp, Stephen Gray , Kellie Snow and Damian Steer, ‘Research data management at the University of Bristol: Charting a course from project to service’ (2015) *49*(4) *Program: electronic library and information systems,* 475 - 493. Retrieved from <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PROG-02-2015-0019>.

Derclaye, E, ‘The Legal Protection of Databases: A Comparative Analysis*’* (2008) *Edward Elgar Publishing*.

Enoch, Charles, and Kibuka, Robin D., ‘The General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) - A Reflection on its First 12 Years and Plans for Taking it Forward: IMF Working Paper’ (2009) *International Monetary Fund* <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/cat/longres.aspx?sk=23460.0>.

Fitzgerald, Anne M, Pappalardo, Kylie M, and Austin, Anthony C, ‘Practical Data Management: A Legal and Policy Guide’ (2008) <<http://eprints.qut.edu.au/14923/1/Microsoft_Word_-_Practical_Data_Management_-_A_Legal_and_Policy_Guide_doc.pdf>>.

Goldblatt, C, ‘Database right’ (2013) *Drukker Solicitors* <http://www.drukker.co.uk/publications/reference/database-right/#.VkpwOmQrLJw>.

Gradmann, S., From containers to content to context: The changing role of libraries in eScience and eScholarship. Journal of Documentation, 2014. 70(2): p. 241 - 260.

Gunsalus, C. K, ‘Best Practices in Communicating Best Practices’ (2010) *16*(4) *Science and Engineering Ethics,* 763 - 767.

Heidorn, P.B., The Emerging Role of Libraries in Data Curation and E-science. Journal of Library Administration, 2011. 51(7-8): p. 662-672.

Hendrix, D. and Lyons, C., Textbook Affordability: Is there a role for the library? The Serials Librarian: From the Printed Page to the Digital Age, 2014. 66(1-4): p. 262 - 267.

Hjorland, B. and Jorn Nielsen, H., Curating research data: the potential roles of libraries and information professionals. Journal of Documentation, 2014. 70(2): p. 221 - 240.

Jian Qin, Bonnie Carroll, Joe Futrelle, Jon Jablonski and Tsering Wangyal Shawa, ‘Managing and disseminating scientific data and information: A technical discussion’ (2005) 42(1) *Proceedings of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* <doi: 10.1002/meet.14504201138>.

Jorn Nielsen, Hans, and Hjorland, Birger, ‘Curating research data: the potential roles of libraries and information professionals’ (2014) *70*(2) *Journal of Documentation* 221 - 240.

Kelman, C. W., Bass, A.J., Holman, C.D.J., ‘Research use of linked health data - a best practice protocol’ (2002) *26*(3) *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health,* 251 - 255.

Kruse, Filip, and Thestrup, Jesper Boserup, ‘Research libraries' new role in research data management, current trends and visions in Denmark’ (2014) *23*(4) *Liber Quarterly: The Journal of the Association of European Research Libraries,* 310 - 335.

Lyons, Charles, and Hendrix, Dean ‘Textbook Affordability: Is there a role for the library?’ (2014) *66*(1-4)*The Serials Librarian: From the Printed Page to the Digital Age,* 262 - 267.

Mark Vincent and Katrina Crooks, ‘Australia: Can a database be protected by copyright? Big data: Legal challenges’ (2014) *Shelston IP* < <http://www.mondaq.com/australia/x/290668/Copyright/Can+a+database+be+protected+by+copyright>>.

Mathews, B, ‘Librarian as Futurist: Changing the Way Libraries Think About the Future’ (2014) *14.3* *portal: Libraries and the Academy,* 453 - 462 <https://muse.jhu.edu/>.

Mathews, B., Librarian as Futurist: Changing the Way Libraries Think About the Future. Portal: Libraries and the Academy, 2014. 14.3, 453 - 462.

Monash University Library, ‘Ownership and rights’ (2015) *Monash University* <<https://www.monash.edu/library/researchdata/guidelines/ownership>>.

Natasha Simons, J. R., Samantha Searle, and Malcolm Wolski, ‘Librarians as partners in research data service development at Griffith University’ (2015) *49*(4) *Program: electronic library and information systems,* 440 – 460 <http://www.emeraldinsight.com/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PROG-02-2015-0013>.

P. Bryan Heidorn, ‘The Emerging Role of Libraries in Data Curation and E-science’(2011) *51*(7-8) *Journal of Library Administration,* 662-672 <<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/10.1080/01930826.2011.601269>>.

Patti Day, and Chieko Maene, ‘Legal Considerations in the Dissemination of Licensed Digital Spatial Data’ (2006)55(2) *Library Trends*, 236 - 253. Retrieved from <http://muse.jhu.edu.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/journals/library_trends/v055/55.2day.html>.

Peter Heim, ‘The quest for clarity on data protection and security’ (2014) 2014(2) *Network Security*, 8-10.

Pirog, M. A, ‘Data will drive innovation in Public Policy and Management Research in the next decade’ (2014) *33*(2) *Journal of policy analysis and management,* 537 – 543.

Purdue University Libraries, ‘Research Data’ (2016) *Purdue University Libraries* <<https://www.lib.purdue.edu/researchdata>>.

Queensland University of Technology Library, ‘Data management planning’ (2015) *Qu*eensland University of Technology <<https://www.library.qut.edu.au/research/data/planning.jsp>>.

Queensland University of Technology Library, ‘Data Publishing’ (2015) *Queensland University of Technology* <https://www.library.qut.edu.au/research/data/publishing.jsp>.

Queensland University of, ‘Manual of Policies and Procedures: F/5.1 Copyright’ (2015) *Queensland University of Technology* <http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_05_01.jsp>.

Retrieved from <http://bioscience.oxfordjournals.org.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/content/65/5/455.full>.

Richardson, Julie, and Hoffman-Kim, Diane, ‘The Importance of Defining 'Data' in Data Management Policies’ (2010) *16*(4) *Science and Engineering Ethics*749 - 751.

Rosie Higman, and Stephen Pinfield, ‘Research data management and openness: The role of data sharing in developing institutional policies and practices’ (2015) *49*(4) *Program: electronic library and information systems,* 364 – 381, <<http://www.emeraldinsight.com.ezproxy.library.uq.edu.au/doi/pdfplus/10.1108/PROG-01-2015-0005>>.

Science Commons, ‘About Science Commons’, *Science Commons*, <http://sciencecommons.org/about/>.

Serge Gutwirth, Ronald Leenes and Paul de Hert (Ed.), ‘Reloading Data Protection: Multidisciplinary Insights and Contemporary Challenges’ (Springer, 2014).

Stefan Gradmann, ‘From containers to content to context: The changing role of libraries in eScience and eScholarship’ (2014) *70*(2) *Journal of Documentation,* 241 - 260.

Thestrup, J. and Kruse, F., Research libraries' new role in research data management, current trends and visions in Denmark. Liber Quarterly: The Journal of the Association of European Research Libraries, 2014. 23(4) 310 - 335.

Thompson, J. ‘Changing Needs, Changing Roles: How Public Libraries are Expanding Traditional Service Models to Best Serve Their Communities’ (2015) *54*(3) *Reference & User Services Quarterly,* 2 - 5.

Thompson, J., Changing Needs, Changing Roles: How Public Libraries are Expanding Traditional Service Models to Best Serve Their Communities. Reference & User Services Quarterly, 2015. 54(3): p. 2 - 5.

Wells, A., Agile management: Strategies for success in rapidly changing times - an Australian University Library perspective. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 2014. 40(1): p. 30 - 34.

Wells, Andrew, ‘Agile management: Strategies for success in rapidly changing times - an Australian University Library perspective’ (2014) *40*(1) *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions,* 30 - 34.

World Intellectual Property Organisation, ‘Protection of Non-Original Databases’ <<http://www.wipo.int/copyright/en/activities/databases.html>>.