



What Researchers Want out of RDM Training

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Background

- Several Oxford-based RDM projects over the last five years
- Extensive requirements gathering
 - Researcher interviews
 - Surveys (results available from <http://damaro.oucs.ox.ac.uk/outputs.xml>)
- Development of RDM training began in 2010
- Training has evolved in response to requirements gathering and participant feedback

Oxford Research Data Management survey

- Major survey of Oxford researchers in late 2012
- Revealed some barriers that could be removed by better information...
 - Half the respondents who had not deposited data hadn't done so because they didn't know of an appropriate place to put it
 - 44% did not know whether their funder had RDM requirements for funding proposals

Oxford Research Data Management survey

- ... But also highlighted some more complex concerns
 - Time taken to prepare data for sharing
 - Worries about being scooped

Part of my reluctance to share data is that my data is fairly roughly organised, and in various stages of polishedness... so it would be quite a big project to get it all presentable, and I'm not sure in what format I would do it.

– Oxford RDM survey respondent

In principle, you want material to be available, and I believe in sharing. On the other hand, if you've just spent five or ten years collecting a dataset and you haven't yet milked it for what it's worth, and you've had funding to do the project, then you're very nervous about handing over that dataset.

– Senior researcher in Oxford

What do researchers want from training?

- Information
 - About institutional and funding body requirements
 - About the tools and resources available to them
- Practical solutions and strategies
 - For organising research data
 - For implementing good data management practice
- Examples
 - To help them apply principles to their own work

How do they want information presented?

- Researchers are busy people – they want training that's flexible, concise, and to the point
- Multiple formats
 - Face-to-face, online, and print material
 - Information that's easy to share with colleagues
- Language needs to be familiar to researchers
 - Even basic terms like 'data' or 'repository' may be problematic

Science researcher survey – 2012

- Asked about eleven key data management tasks
- Levels of confidence were lowest for tasks relating to what happens to data after the end of a project
- Key training priorities identified were:
 - Dealing with copyright, licensing, and IP
 - Preparing datasets for long-term preservation
 - Preparing datasets for sharing
 - Data documentation

However...

- While researchers are aware they need to think about long-term issues, day-to-day data management is generally higher on their immediate agenda
- Training needs to deal with both – and with how the two can be integrated
- Feedback indicates that researchers find time for informal discussion valuable
 - Opportunity to ask questions and share strategies

Practical strategies - data management plans

- Lots of positive comments about data management plans
- A straightforward and practical way of starting to implement what they've learnt
- Tools like [DMP Online](#) and [DMP20](#) are highly valued

The logo for DMP20, featuring the text "DMP20" in a large, blue, sans-serif font with a slight 3D effect, set against a white rectangular background.

Researchers would like to see...

Case studies that illustrate how the raw data looked when collected, the problems encountered during data collection and storage, and how the data was ultimately documented and stored.

A simple practical demonstration of how to prepare data for an archive.

Data Sharing and Management Snafu in 3 Short Acts



- [YouTube video](#) by NYU Health Sciences Library
- Uses a data sharing horror story to convey a lot of points very rapidly (under 5 minutes long)

Final thoughts

- Essential that training covers not just the *how* of data management, but also the *why*
- Funders' and institutional requirements can be effective as a means of compelling compliance – but they can also lead to weary resentment
- Training needs to stress the benefits
 - Good data management promotes good research!
 - Get credit for more aspects of the work
 - Ultimately, a major cultural shift is needed

Oxford training materials

RDM training materials by Oxford's
Research Support Team:

<http://research.it.ox.ac.uk/rdmcourses>

(Scroll down for slideshows and handouts from past events)

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Any questions?

Ask now, or email meriel.patrick@it.ox.ac.uk

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