

DATA QUALITY POLICY

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD

INTRODUCTION

THIS DOCUMENT PROVIDES A DATA QUALITY POLICY FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S CORPORATE DATA. IT FORMS A PART OF THE UNIVERSITY'S INFORMATION STRATEGY AND IS COMPLEMENTARY TO THE INFORMATION SECURITY POLICY, THE INFORMATION ACCESS POLICY, THE DATA PROTECTION AND PERSONAL INFORMATION POLICY AND THE FOI PUBLICATION SCHEME. IT ADDRESSES THE FOLLOWING DATA QUALITY REQUIREMENTS AS DEFINED IN THE MODEL FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM BETWEEN HEFCE AND INSTITUTIONS:

“THERE SHOULD BE EFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROVIDING ASSURANCE TO THE GOVERNING BODY THAT THE INSTITUTION HAS EFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY ASSURANCE OF DATA SUBMITTED TO HESA, HEFCE AND OTHER FUNDING BODIES (WE RESERVE THE RIGHT TO USE OUR OWN ESTIMATES OF DATA WHERE WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE INSTITUTIONAL DATA ARE NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE). RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE QUALITY OF DATA USED FOR INTERNAL DECISION MAKING AND EXTERNAL REPORTING, WHICH MUST BE FIT FOR PURPOSE, RESTS WITH THE INSTITUTION ITSELF. DATA SUBMITTED FOR FUNDING PURPOSES MUST COMPLY WITH DIRECTIONS PUBLISHED BY HEFCE”

AS WELL AS COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE OF PRACTICE ON RECORD KEEPING UNDER SECTION 46 OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT:

“PERSONAL DATA SHALL BE ACCURATE AND WHERE NECESSARY, UP TO DATE”

AND THE UNIVERSITY STRATEGIC PLAN PRIORITY TO:

“CONTINUE TO ASSURE THE QUALITY AND SAFE STORAGE OF OUR DATA...”.

DEFINITION AND SCOPE

THIS POLICY AIMS TO PROVIDE A GUIDE TO ENSURING THE QUALITY OF CORPORATE DATA AVAILABLE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY. IT COVERS AIMS AND OBJECTIVES AND A RANGE OF SUPPORTING ACTIVITIES INVOLVING A WIDE RANGE OF STAFF AND DEPARTMENTS.

THE DEFINITION OF QUALITY ENCOMPASSES THE RELEVANCE, CORRECTNESS, COMPLETENESS AND TIMELINESS OF THE DATA IN OUR SYSTEMS, FOR USE WITHIN THE UNIVERSITY AND ALSO BY OUTSIDE STAKEHOLDERS.

THIS POLICY DOES NOT COVER ACADEMIC RESEARCH DATA, TEACHING MATERIALS OR DATA PUBLISHED BY OTHER ORGANISATIONS. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE UNIVERSITY'S DATA IS SHARED BY STAFF ACROSS THE WHOLE INSTITUTION.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

AIMS	OBJECTIVES
<p>1. UNIVERSITY STAFF SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DATA QUALITY:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENSURE ADEQUATE GOVERNANCE IS IN PLACE TO CONTROL DATA QUALITY VIA THE AUDIT COMMITTEE. • DEVELOP AWARENESS AMONG SENIOR MANAGERS OF DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE. • MAINTAIN HIGH QUALITY DATA FOR MANAGEMENT INFORMATION AND FOR EXTERNAL RETURNS. THE TIMETABLE OF STATUTORY RETURNS IS MAINTAINED PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES. • PUBLICISE MEASURES TAKEN TO IMPROVE DATA QUALITY IN TRAINING COURSES AND DOCUMENTATION AND OTHER APPROPRIATE CHANNELS. • EMPHASISE DATA QUALITY IN THE INDUCTION AND TRAINING OF STAFF INVOLVED IN MAINTAINING DATA, USING THIS POLICY AS A GUIDE WHERE POSSIBLE.
<p>2. STAFF SHOULD AIM TO INCORPORATE PRACTICES THAT ASSURE DATA QUALITY INTO SYSTEM DESIGN AND OFFICE PROCEDURES:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENCOURAGE CONSIDERATION OF DATA QUALITY DURING SYSTEM DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION. • ENSURE THAT WELL DOCUMENTED PROCEDURES EXIST TO DEFINE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR DATA COLLECTION, ENTRY AND MAINTENANCE. • PROVIDE SECURITY NECESSARY TO PROTECT SENSITIVE PERSONAL DATA. • PROVIDE SUPPORT AND DOCUMENTATION TO ENCOURAGE ACCURACY AND CONSISTENCY ACROSS ADMINISTRATIVE AND ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS.
<p>3. THE UNIVERSITY WILL ENSURE ADEQUATE AUDITING OF DATA AND COMPLIANCE WITH AUDITORS' RECOMMENDATIONS:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CARRY OUT PERIODIC DATA QUALITY REVIEWS OF VIA INTERNAL AUDIT AND OTHER APPROPRIATE MEANS. • USE THE ANNUAL TIMETABLE OF STATUTORY RETURNS, MAINTAINED PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES, TO MONITOR DATA QUALITY. • USE REPORTING TOOLS OR MANAGEMENT INFORMATION TO MONITOR QUALITY OF KEY DATA. • ENSURE THAT EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN DATA QUALITY ARE CORRECTLY PRIORITISED.
<p>4. STAFF SHOULD ADDRESS DATA QUALITY ISSUES AS AND WHEN THEY ARISE:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ANALYSE ISSUES AND MECHANISMS INVOLVED, E.G. SYSTEM DEFECTS, HUMAN ERRORS, ETC. • IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF DATA QUALITY PROBLEMS AND ENSURE THAT THE RELEVANT PEOPLE ARE MADE AWARE OF THE IMPACT OF THEIR ACTIONS. • MAKE THE NECESSARY CORRECTIONS TO INACCURATE DATA. • PROVIDE SUPPORT FOR THE ANALYSIS OF DATA QUALITY.

ACTIVITIES THAT SUPPORT THE AIMS OF THIS POLICY.

1. UNIVERSITY STAFF SHOULD BE AWARE OF THE SIGNIFICANCE OF DATA QUALITY...

- THE DATA ASSURANCE GROUP MONITORS AND PROMOTES DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE.
- THE FORMAL SIGN OFF FOR HESA AND HEFCE RETURNS IS CARRIED OUT BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR.
- A TRANSACTION LOG OF BUSINESS WITH HEFCE IS MAINTAINED BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE.
- UEB AND AUDIT COMMITTEE ARE ADVISED ON THE ANNUAL STATUTORY RETURN CYCLE AND ANY CHANGES TO COMPLIANCE.
- DATA QUALITY MONITORING IS UNDERTAKEN BY THE CICS DATA QUALITY OFFICE AND PLANNING AND GOVERNANCE SERVICES.
- DATA QUALITY IS EMPHASISED DURING THE TRAINING OF NEW DATA ENTRY STAFF, INCLUDING TEMPORARY AND SEASONAL STAFF.
- STAFF ARE MADE AWARE OF THE VALUE OF THE DATA THEY HANDLE AS WELL AS WHERE AND WHEN IT IS USED IN KEY PROCESSES.

2. STAFF SHOULD AIM TO INCORPORATE PRACTICES THAT ASSURE DATA QUALITY INTO SYSTEM DESIGN AND OFFICE PROCEDURES...

- STAFF LIAISE ADEQUATELY WITH COLLEAGUES WHERE DATA IS SHARED ACROSS OFFICES.
- DATA QUALITY RESPONSIBILITIES ARE BUILT INTO RELEVANT JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND INCLUDED IN THE SRDS PROCESS.
- SAP/CIS SECURITY PERMISSIONS ARE USED TO CONTROL ACCESS TO PERSONAL DATA.
- STAFF ARE ENCOURAGED TO COLLABORATE IN ORDER TO IDENTIFY, DOCUMENT AND PUBLICISE BEST PRACTICE.
- RELIANCE ON LONE INDIVIDUALS FOR KEY PROCESSES IS MINIMISED BY JOB SHADOWING, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER AND CLEAR DOCUMENTATION.

3. THE UNIVERSITY WILL ENSURE ADEQUATE AUDITING OF DATA AND COMPLIANCE WITH AUDITORS' RECOMMENDATIONS...

- INTERNAL AUDIT IS COMMISSIONED TO LOOK AT KEY AREAS AND BUILD DATA QUALITY MONITORING INTO STANDARD ANNUAL WORK PATTERNS.
- THE UNIVERSITY COMPLETES AN ANNUAL CROSS CHECK OF HESA AND HESES STUDENT DATA.
- STAFF ARE ENCOURAGED TO REPORT ISSUES TO THOSE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DATA.
- THE UNIVERSITY ACTIVELY IDENTIFIES KEY AREAS TO MONITOR AND SETS REASONABLE TOLERANCES WHERE APPROPRIATE.

4. STAFF SHOULD ADDRESS DATA QUALITY ISSUES AS AND WHEN THEY ARISE...

- STAFF MAY BE BROUGHT TOGETHER FROM SEVERAL DEPARTMENTS IN ORDER TO ANALYSE COMPLEX DATA PROBLEMS.
- RECURRING DATA PROBLEMS ARE REPORTED TO MANAGERS AND TRACED BACK TO THE SOURCE OF THE PROBLEM.
- DEPENDING ON RESOURCES, BULK CORRECTIONS MAY BE PERFORMED PROGRAMMATICALLY BY CICS OR MANUALLY BY DATA ENTRY STAFF.
- UREPORTS, SAP REPORTS AND CICS INFORMATION SUPPORT ARE ALL AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT DATA QUALITY ASSURANCE.