

Data Assurance Policy and Procedure

July 2019

Policy

The University is fully committed to a high standard of Data Assurance, including working to the best practices.

The University accepts its duty to ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the accuracy and completeness of all data involved in the full range of the University's undertakings.

The University recognises its responsibilities regarding the management of data within the requirements of the Data Protection Act (2018) and General Data Protection Regulation, the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and the Office for Students Financial Memorandum and Accountability and Audit Code of Practice.

It is the responsibility of every member of university staff to ensure that all data within their areas of responsibility are accurate and complete, appropriately coded in compliance with university requirements and properly managed and maintained.

Definitions

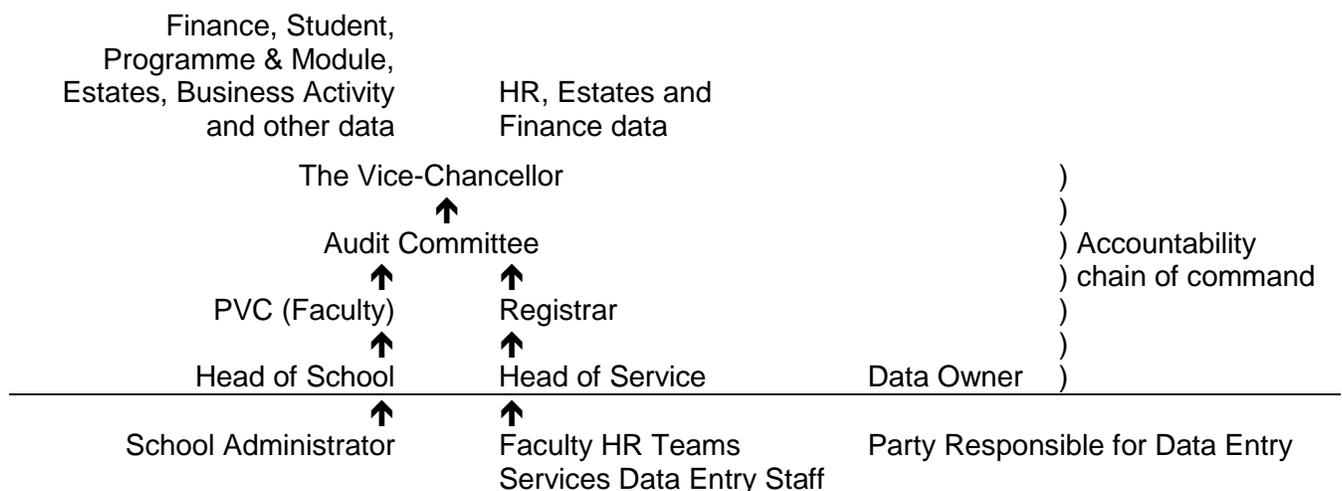
For the purposes of this report and this policy, Data Owners are those parties responsible for data provision/entry, who therefore have control over the quality of the individual data items entered into the IT systems that hold the university's data.

Statutory Return Owners are those parties responsible for extracting data from the university's IT systems and assembling that data into a format that is acceptable to the statutory body that requires it.

System Owners are those parties who have responsibility for maintaining and managing the data requirements of the university's data recording systems, defining the rules by which they operate and the data items/fields that must be completed for each data set.

Data ownership

Ownership of the majority of university data lies with the academic units, except for staff data where HR is the data owner, and finance data, where service units also do data entry. Sign-off on data quality must follow the accountability chain of command, with first assurance sign-off coming from the Head of School/Service -



It is recognised that there are some university data systems that schools and institutes do not have direct access to amend (eg Research Grants, Postgraduate Student Records, Estates, Programme and Module data). However, the school/institute is still the data provider and is therefore also defined here as the data owner (or joint data owner, in partnership with the service). The school/institute must

take responsibility for ensuring that the data is correct in the system, by liaising with the data entry staff.

The sign-off form is to be completed each year, in September, through the accountability structure shown above, starting with the Head of School/Institute/Service.

Risk assessment

IT Services maintain institution wide security processes for all electronically held data and these responsibilities are not part of this policy and procedure.

Statutory returns

In addition to the Data Quality sign-off, there must be assurance that all statutory returns have been compiled correctly.

The Statutory Return sign-off form will be completed by the responsible Heads of Service and the Registrar, certifying completion of the statutory returns, as follows -

The statutory returns are compiled by staff who are not necessarily the data owners. The person responsible for compiling the return takes action to check the quality of the data, requesting correction or assurance from the data owners, where error reports have identified issues. The compiler maintains records of all such communications and of any changes to the data they make, themselves.

The person responsible for compiling the return provides assurance to their Head of Service that all checks have been made. The Head of Service is the lowest level of accountability. The Head of Service signs-off assurance for the Registrar.

The Registrar provides assurance to Audit Committee for all of the statutory returns.

University systems

The system owners are the Heads of Service with responsibility for the overall integrity of the university's data sets:

SAP Finance & associated paper based procedures	Executive Director of Finance
SAP Staff & associated paper based procedures	Executive Director of Human Resources
SAP Student data & associated paper based procedures	Academic Registrar
SAP & MOFS Module/Programme data systems & associated quality assurance procedures	Director of Academic Services & University Librarian
Estates database & associated paper procedures	Director of Estate Support Service
Research & business activity incl My Projects & associated paper processes	Executive Director of Finance
Accommodation Database	Executive Director of Finance
Raisers Edge	Executive Director of Corporate Affairs

Each Head of Service will affirm to the Registrar, annually, that the IT systems used to store the university's data have been maintained and managed in accordance with good data quality principles and the requirements of the university's statutory funding and moderating bodies.

Newcastle University - Data Assurance

Signoff for data quality from data owners (to be completed annually, in September)

To: The PVC (Faculty)/Registrar

From Head of School/Institute/Service, Name

Data Quality Assurance for the academic year

Covering: Finance, Student, Programme & Module, Business Activity, Alumni, HR and Estates data, plus any information provided to the public via the university's website.

The Office for Students has a requirement for Newcastle University to confirm that it has effective arrangements for the management of and quality assurance of data submitted to the Higher Education Statistics Agency, The Office for Students and other funding bodies. This includes, but is not limited to, financial, student, module, programme, space, business and research data.

1. I certify that for my area of responsibility:

- There is/is not* a framework in place for the management and accountability of data quality, with a commitment to secure a culture of data quality.
- That all Academic/Service* Units have/have not* got appropriate policies and procedures in place to secure the quality of the data it records and uses for reporting.
- There are/are not* systems and processes in place which secure the quality of data as part of the normal business activity of the unit.
- There are/are not* arrangements to ensure that staff have the knowledge, competencies and capacity for their roles in relation to data quality.
- That all Academic/Service* Units have/have not* put in place arrangements that are focused on ensuring that data that support external reporting are also actively used in the organisation's decision making process, and are subject to a system of internal control and validation.
 - That all Academic/Service* Units have/have not* got appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure that data protection requirements are complied with.

* Delete as appropriate

2. Any material issues within my area of responsibility which may prevent you from making an unqualified confirmation to The Office for Students are listed below:

Item	Target date for full compliance

I recognise that you will rely on the statements made by myself and other members of the Executive Board, together with reports from Internal Audit and the Audit Committee when reaching your opinion of the adequacy of data assurance within Newcastle University.

Signed

Date.....

Sign-off for University Data Systems

To: The Registrar

From:

As Head of (service) I confirm that the

..... data management systems have been maintained in a consistent manner that complies with the requirements for good governance of the data they contain.

All queries have been investigated and to the best ability of this section, I confirm that this structure is fit for purpose.

The following items require further work to meet full assurance standards:

Item (to be identified from the data quality spreadsheet)	Target date for full compliance

Signed

Date.....