

RDM@UNSW: enabling Data Management “best practice”

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INTRODUCTION

From a recent review of research data management practices, UNSW identified key disconnects between policies, systems and support infrastructure with the end-users; researchers and research support staff who handle research data throughout its lifecycle. To address these issues and the associated risks to both the university and individual researchers, we embarked on a major initiative focused around providing a coordinated approach in redesigning data management systems, support structures and pro-active engagement of end users.

This work has culminated in the creation of RDM@UNSW, which has three dimensions. First, it acts as a single point of contact for all research data management matters from traditional user support to in-depth data consultations and strategic advice to both research end-users and central business units. Second, it distills the various data governance policies, handling guidelines and procedures into actionable outputs for the researchers, communicated through a blend of printed, video and training material. Finally, RDM@UNSW provides technical support in data handling issues ranging from setting data tools for specific research studies to movement of large datasets between storage end-points.

This presentation will outline how RDM@UNSW came about, a review of multiprong engagement/communication strategy over the past year and the direction it is heading to enable researchers enact RDM best practices. At present, RDM@UNSW has conducted activities including, rolling out of contextualized RDM training to the different target groups across the university, conducting showcases and technical training and hands-on user support of data tools to facilitate adoption, liaising with researchers and central business units to scope, design and develop new data management and handling tools, and assisting the university in identifying and reviewing RDM practices in key projects.