



# Lessons learned from implementing the Data Audit Framework

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# Overview

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- Edinburgh DAF implementation
  - GeoSciences Pilot
  - Further data audits
- General issues
- Common data management issues
- Lessons learned



# Edinburgh implementation



- GeoSciences pilot audit
- Further data audits across three colleges:
  - Science and Engineering:  
The Institute for Astronomy
  - Humanities and Social Science:  
The School of Divinity, Economic and Social History
  - Medicine and Veterinary Science:  
The Centre for Integrative Physiology,  
Brain Imaging Research Group

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# GeoSciences pilot audit



- A leading international centre for research into GeoSciences
  - 80 academics, 70 research fellows, 130 PhD students
- Five main research groups
  - Earth Subsurface Science
  - Global Change
  - Human Geography
  - Edinburgh Earth Observatory
  - Centre for Environmental Change and Sustainability

# 1. Planning the audit

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- Desk research
  - School website, staff home pages, publications, technical documents etc.
  - Identifying key research staff and projects they are responsible for
- Initial meeting with IT Managers
- Setting up interviews with staff

## 2. Identifying & classifying

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- Conducting semi structured interviews with 35 staff mainly in Human Geography and Global Change research groups
  - Interview duration varied between 30 mins and 2 hrs
- Creating an inventory of 25 data assets
- Classifying these data assets

## 3. Assessing management

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- Assessing the most significant assets in detail, collecting a basic set of data elements based on Dublin Core
- Checking the accuracy of the information collected via emails

## 4. Reporting back

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- A draft report that feeds back on the results of each stage of the audit
- Draft recommendations to the school to improve data management
- Draft recommendations to Information Services to further improve their support to the research community





## College of Humanities & Social Science

- The School of Divinity
  - 30+ academic staff
  - Interviews with 6 staff
- Economic & Social History
  - 18 academic staff
  - Interviews with 5 staff

# Further data audits

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## College of Medicine & Veterinary Medicine

- The Centre for Integrative Physiology
  - 30+ academic staff
  - Online questionnaire: 50% response rate
  - Interviews with 2 staff
- Brain Imaging Research Group
  - Online questionnaire: 3% response rate



## College of Science & Engineering

- Institute for Astronomy
  - 20+ academic staff
  - Online questionnaire: 30% response rate
  - Interview with one staff

# General issues

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- Restricted or no access to the shared or personal drives
- Little or no documentation / knowledge of what exists
- Time required to arrange meetings and conduct interviews
- Low rate of response to the questionnaire



- Inadequate storage: data stored on personal PCs, laptops, external storage devices
- Lack of formal policies for creating and managing data
- Lack of training and guidance on best practice in data management

# Lessons learned



- A good starting point to recognise and address data management issues
- Outcomes preliminary but positive
- Inventory doesn't always have to be comprehensive but could be a representative sample
- Defining the scope and granularity carefully is crucial

# Lessons learned

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- Planning well in advance helps
- Time needed is longer than initially anticipated but still manageable
- Support from senior management speeds up the process
- Collecting as much information as possible in the interviews/surveys saves time later



## Further information

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*Thank you! Any questions?*

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