



Heritage Science
Data Service

HSDS Collections Policy

Version 1

Document Control Grid

Title:	HSDS Collections Policy
File name:	HSDS Collection Policy Version 1
Location:	Website:
Status:	Final
Version:	1
Last updated:	21 August 2025
Created date:	21 August 2025
Review due:	21 August 2026
Authors:	Jo Tozer, Katie Green, Julian Richards, Kieron Niven
Maintained by:	HSDS Collections Development Manager
Required Action:	None

Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Designated Community	3
2. Nature & Scope of Collections	4
2.1.1 Thematic Range	4
2.1.2. Geographical Range	4
2.1.3. Chronological Range	5
2.1.4 Data Types	5
2.1.5. A Layered Collections Policy	5
2.1.6. Paper Records	5
3. Payment of Relevant Fees	6
4. Standards	6
5. Access and Use	7
5.1 Rights Management, Open Access and Data Re-Use	7
5.1.1 Rights Management	7
5.1.2 Open Access & Data Re-Use	7
5.2 Embargo Periods	8
5.3 Metadata Aggregation	8
5.4 Allocation of DOIs	8
5.5 Usage Statistics	9
5.5.1 Visits to the Archive	9
5.5.2 File Downloads	9
5.5.3 Page Views Within the Archive	9
5.5.4 Totals Since Date of Creation at hsds.ac.uk	9
6. Preservation	10
7. Disposal/Withdrawal of Data	10
8. Associated Policies & Procedures	10

Note: This Policy includes links to further relevant policies and procedures. Many of these policies and procedures overlap with those established for the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). Where appropriate, and in order to best serve the needs of the community, the HSDS and ADS will release combined policies and procedures. While these are under development we will follow the [Archaeology Data Service policies and procedures](#) as our framework. Where applicable, they are clearly noted in the Policy text below.

1. Introduction

The [Heritage Science Data Service](#) (HSDS) provides core digital research services as part of the [United Kingdom's Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science](#) (RICHeS) Programme, funded by the [Arts and Humanities Research Council](#) (AHRC), part of [United Kingdom Research and Innovation](#) (UKRI).

The HSDS's key aim is to unlock potential for innovation in heritage science and conservation research and its capacity to advance understanding, preservation, and management of UK heritage.

The HSDS provides:

- A FAIR¹ repository for heritage science and conservation (HSCR) research data, encouraging access and re-use, and ensuring datasets are preserved into the long term.
- An aggregating function, making HSCR data collections navigable and searchable.

The HSDS Collections Policy explains the nature and scope of the content that the HSDS makes available in its Catalogue of Data and how our collections may be used.

¹ [FAIR data principles](#) to make data findable, accessible, interoperable, and re-usable.

1.1 Designated Community

The HSDS is established to serve the UK heritage science and conservation research sector. Heritage science is understood as “the application of scientific techniques and technologies to improve our understanding, conservation, management and engagement with cultural heritage. It ensures that heritage assets remain safe to view, display, handle and study, and is therefore critical to the continued economic viability of the heritage sector.”²

The designated community is anticipated to comprise:

- academic and non-academic organisations that hold objects, records or data, or which generate records or data of relevance to heritage science and conservation research;
- disciplines including archaeology, environmental sciences, conservation, materials science, art history, biology, chemistry, physics, robotics and computer science;
- national and international interest groups (facilitated by open access data and cross-searches provided by aggregating platforms, see Section 5.3).

2. Nature & Scope of Collections

2.1.1 Thematic Range

The HSDS adopts the AHRC’s RICHeS definition of heritage science (see section 1.1) and welcomes all research data falling under this umbrella subject to them meeting the requirements set out in this Policy.

The HSDS recognises that there are other trusted digital repositories relevant to the heritage science and conservation community. Where such repositories exist, the HSDS will not duplicate any existing provision and will work with the community to ensure FAIR data.

² AHRC RICHeS Programme: [What is Heritage Science?](#)

2.1.2. Geographical Range

The primary geographical remit of the HSDS is the UK. Where there are established CTS-certified national heritage repositories (including HES-Canmore and RCAHMW-Coflein), the HSDS will work with these organisations to ensure that HSCR datasets are safeguarded and that appropriate links are made to associated fieldwork archives.

The HSDS also welcomes data from outside the UK where there is a meaningful association to the UK (e.g. from UK-based researchers working outside the UK). In such instances, the HSDS recognises that there may also be digital archives in other countries and will work with depositors and overseas repositories to define areas of responsibility and data sharing. In particular, the HSDS provides the UK DIGILAB hub for the [European Research Infrastructure for Heritage Science](#) (E-RIHS) and works with RICHeS, the UK national node for E-RIHS to foster international collaboration and elevate the impact of conservation and heritage science, ensuring that knowledge and best practices are shared across borders.

2.1.3. Chronological Range

The HSDS does not define a chronological range and welcomes data from all periods of human history, from earliest hominids to the recent past.

2.1.4 Data Types

The HSDS accepts a variety of heritage science and conservation data types in accordance with ADS's [Accepted File Formats](#). Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and the HSDS is open to discussing deposition of new and innovative techniques and datasets using alternative file types. Please contact collections@hds.ac.uk to discuss.

2.1.5. A Layered Collections Policy

In some cases, the HSDS holds metadata (data about data) for resources curated by other trusted digital repositories; in others the HSDS holds both metadata and primary research data.

2.1.6. Paper Records

The HSDS only holds digital information. The HSDS is not equipped for the adequate archiving of paper-based resources and does not hold any paper-based archives; it may however, provide advice about the digitisation of paper archives.

3. Payment of Relevant Fees

The HSDS implements a policy for the long-term preservation of a dataset or development of a bespoke interface in line with ADS's [Charging Policy](#). This Charging Policy recognises that digital archiving and bespoke interface design entails significant expenditure and that these costs should be recovered from the body funding the data collection and/or research.

The exceptions are datasets arising from the direct use of facilities or collections funded under [Tranche 1 of the RICHeS Programme](#). In accordance with the RICHeS programme requirements, all research data arising from the non-private use of the RICHeS equipment and facilities must be deposited in a trusted digital repository and made available for re-use. The HSDS is the default repository for RICHeS funded data and, as such, the deposition costs are currently covered by RICHeS core funding. Such usage must:

- take place before 31 August 2029,
- be non-commercial, and
- have been awarded through the RICHeS Access Fund.

Depositors will not be charged any fee for the deposition of such datasets.

All other data deposited with the HSDS will incur a charge. This includes, but is not limited to, the deposition of data arising from the use of RICHeS-funded Facilities and Collections where such usage arises from:

- Other UKRI-funded (including AHRC-funded) projects. In such instances, the deposition fee should be included in the project budget.

- Other funded projects (e.g. EU-funded, charity-funded). In such instances, the deposition fee should be included in the project budget.
- Any unfunded projects (e.g. internal or external staff usage).
- Commercial use of RICHeS-funded Facilities and Collections.

4. Standards

Data standards are essential to ensure that data can be preserved in open formats and are interoperable with other data. Datasets offered for deposit to the HSDS must meet the standards set out in the ADS's [Instructions for Depositors](#).

These include, but are not limited to:

- In the correct format.
- Collection-level metadata are provided.
- All digital objects have core metadata.
- All digital objects have additional technical metadata when required.
- All digital objects can be opened, are valid, and can be re-used.
- That the data collection is not and shall be in no way a violation or infringement of any copyright, trademark, patent, or other rights whatsoever of any person and does not and will not contravene any laws, including but not limited to the law relating to defamation, or obscenity.
- The data have no sensitive data concerns.
- No malware or malicious code.

5. Access and Use

5.1 Rights Management, Open Access and Data Re-Use

5.1.1 Rights Management

All depositors are required to sign a [Deposit Agreement](#) which gives the HSDS non-exclusive rights to take whatever steps are needed to ensure preservation of the datasets and make them available for re-use.

Researchers (and/or service-providers according to their agreements with users) retain copyright and intellectual property rights (IPR) for all research data deposited with the HSDS.

In instances where the depositor or data owner is unable, or unwilling, to accept the terms of the deposit agreement then the data cannot be accepted by the HSDS. In those instances in which data, and metadata associated with a collection, have already been submitted, those data will be removed from our systems and any media returned to the depositor.

5.1.2 Open Access & Data Re-Use

All data disseminated by the HSDS will be available to access openly and free from charge in the forthcoming HSDS Catalogue of Data.

Conditions under which data can be re-used depends upon the licence attached to a particular data collection by the data depositor. The access licence of a dataset is stipulated in the Deposit Agreement and will be clearly identified on each collection metadata page.

The HSDS recommends a [Creative Commons](#) CC-BY 4.0 licence to our depositors but some of our collections will be made available under other access licences such as the [Open Government Licence](#) and other forms of Creative Commons licences.

5.2 Embargo Periods

It is important that data are archived as soon as possible after creation to avoid loss of data or metadata and paradata, and our usual expectation is that research data are deposited within three months of completion of the analysis. This is to ensure that the data are in the correct format and accompanied by the appropriate documentation to ensure long-term preservation and sustainability. This does not mean that the data would be automatically accessible to the public. It may be deemed appropriate to establish an embargo period during which the data will be secured in the archive, but not accessible to the public, to allow for publication of research results for example. The length of the agreed embargo period will be by

agreement between the HSDS and the Depositor, but will not normally be longer than two years.

5.3 Metadata Aggregation

The HSDS encourages broad access to and use of its collections, both within the UK research community and beyond. By making metadata available at the level of collections, or individual items within collections, the HSDS actively develops opportunities to facilitate cross searches of distributed archaeological resources by metadata aggregators, such as [Europeana](#), the [ARIADNE Portal](#) and [MEDIN](#). Such metadata are normally made available under a [Creative Commons CC0](#) licence agreement.

5.4 Allocation of DOIs

A Digital Object Identifier (DOI), a unique and persistent identifier, will be assigned to all collections held by the HSDS allowing consistent and accurate referencing of digital content. DOI links will resolve to the collection metadata page and show summary collection-level information even in cases where content has yet to be fully deposited or where it is currently embargoed. The HSDS may also create IGSNs (International Generic Sample Numbers) in order to uniquely and permanently reference samples.

5.5 Usage Statistics

Open access usage statistics are provided for all archives. Statistics are collated by [Matomo Analytics](#). Please see our [Privacy Policy](#) for more information on how the HSDS uses your personal information and how we keep it safe.

5.5.1 Visits to the Archive

If a visitor comes to the website for the first time, or if they visit a page (or download a file) more than 30 minutes after their last page view, this will be recorded as a new visit. A unique visitor making multiple visits per day will register as several visits.

5.5.2 File Downloads

A download is a click on a link to something other than a web page. File extensions include: csv, doc, docx, gif, jar, jpg, jpeg, mp3, mp4, mov, odb, odt, pdf, png, ppt, pptx, txt, wav, wma, wmv, wpd, xls, xlsx, xml, zip but this is not an exhaustive list.

5.5.3 Page Views Within the Archive

Pages viewed is the number of HTML pages or scripts that visitors have looked at. A 'page' is a hit that is not an image, JavaScript or CSS file and which was not loaded by a search engine robot.

5.5.4 Totals Since Date of Creation at hsds.ac.uk

Statistics start from the date the archive is released on our website but if the values are zero to start with they are not shown. Zero values after the start of use for the archive are shown.

6. Preservation

All data and metadata are preserved in accordance with the ADS's [Preservation Policy](#).

7. Disposal/Withdrawal of Data

Once accessioned the HSDS will only dispose of data in line with its deaccession and data disposal procedures. This includes as a result of non-payment of any applicable fee. Procedures currently follow the guidance set out in the ADS [Deaccession and Data Disposal Policy](#).

8. Associated Policies & Procedures

This policy should be read and understood in conjunction with the following policies and procedures. Many of these policies and procedures overlap with those established for the Archaeology Data Service. Where appropriate, and in order to best serve the needs of the community, the HSDS and ADS will release

combined policies and procedures. While these are under development we will follow the [Archaeology Data Service \(ADS\) policies and procedures](#) as our framework. The relevant policy owner is clearly noted below.

- [ADS/HSDS Deposit Agreement](#)
- [HSDS Privacy Policy](#)
- [ADS Charging Policy](#)
- [ADS Deaccession and Data Disposal Procedures](#)
- [ADS Instructions for Depositors](#)
- [ADS Preservation Policy](#)
- [HSDS Harmful Language Statement](#)