Guidelines for use of the Online Research Notebook (LabArchives)

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

VERSION	DATE	AMENDMENT	AUTHOR	DISTRIBUTION
1.2	20 Dec 2022	Updated links to LabArchives Knowledgebase	CA	Christopher Adda
1.1	28 Sept 2020	Updated information on the permanent deletion of content (4.2), based on an email from LabArchives	CA	Christopher Adda
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ENDORSEMENT

	NAME	TITLE	APPROVAL
Mandatory			
	Christopher Adda	Director, Research Infrastructure	

Contents

1. Introduction

These guidelines have been created to guide La Trobe researchers in their use of the Online Research Notebook (LabArchives). They address issues of ownership, policy compliance and best practice. All researchers who use the Online Research Notebook for managing, storing and sharing research data are required to read these guidelines.

2. Laboratory notebook guidelines

The Research Office has developed general [Laboratory notebook guidelines](#)[1] which apply to both digital and physical laboratory notebooks. They should be observed in conjunction with these guidelines for use of the Online Research Notebook.

3. Users

3.1 La Trobe researchers

All La Trobe researchers (staff and students) may use the Online Research Notebook for managing, storing and working with research data. La Trobe has purchased an enterprise level subscription, which means that there is no limit on the number of users.

3.2 Non-La Trobe researchers

Non-La Trobe collaborators may be invited to access a notebook by a La Trobe researcher with Owner or Administrator permissions for that notebook. Access for such collaborators is free of charge.

3.3 Level of access and permissions

Notebook owners are responsible for ensuring that all users given access to their notebook have the appropriate level of access and permissions. It is strongly recommended that notebook owners familiarise themselves with [User Roles and Privileges](#)[2] before adding users to their notebook.

Each user of a notebook should be provided with sufficient access to be able to access required content and contribute content if appropriate.

Both Owners and Administrators are able to invite new users into a notebook and set access levels. Therefore, an Owner should allocate Administrator level access with caution.

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[1] https://www.latrobe.edu.au/researchers/research-office/ethics/intellectual-property/laboratory-notebook-guidelines, accessed 1 May 2018.

[2] https://www.labarchives.com/labarchives-knowledge-base/6-2-user-roles-and-privileges/, accessed 20 December 2022.

4. System and Data security

4.1 IS endorsement

La Trobe Information Services (I)S has reviewed security provisions for the LabArchives application and data and endorses the Online Research Notebook as a suitable research data management solution for La Trobe's researchers.

4.2 Overview of security

The Online Research Notebook is a digital research notebook application cloud-hosted by LabArchives LLC. La Trobe's instance of LabArchives (and all associated data) is hosted in a data centre located in Sydney, Australia, with a secondary data centre in a different location in NSW, Australia. Both data centres are provided through Amazon Web Services.

All data is securely encrypted both in transit (including all user transactions) and in storage. Researchers can therefore store research data in the Online Research Notebook with confidence, including sensitive data, such as personally identifiable information. However, when determining whether to store particular research data in the Online Research Notebook, researchers should consider the following:

Is a cloud solution acceptable?

While cloud storage is increasingly accepted as a suitable and secure form of data storage, you should still check for any conditions. For example, in ethics approvals, agreements, legal contracts or other arrangements with your research funder, collaborator, partner or any other key stakeholder regarding data storage location, to determine whether or not cloud storage is permitted.

Perpetual nature of data

The comprehensive revision history and the ability to revert to previous versions of a page or entry, or to restore previously deleted folders and notebooks, makes permanent deletion of material difficult, but not impossible.

When sensitive data needs to be permanently removed from a notebook, the minimum unit that can be deleted is one page. The deletion is accomplished by LabArchives personnel emptying the Deleted Items bin for the notebook, so everything in Deleted Items will be purged - it is not selective.

In order to permanently delete content, the notebook Owner moves the content to be deleted (folder(s) and/or page(s)) to the Deleted Items bin (by right clicking on the page/folder in the notebook navigator). The notebook's Owner must then place an Ask Services request with IS, who provides LabArchives Support with written authorisation to delete all content from the notebook's Deleted Items bin. LabArchives deletes the content by purging the Deleted Items bin. In the not unlikely event that only some entries on a page need to be deleted, the notebook owner would need to move the entries to be retained to another page (using the "move" option in the cog menu for the entry) prior to moving the original page to Deleted Items.

In order to permanently delete a whole notebook, the notebook's Owner must then place an Ask Services request with IS, who provides LabArchives Support with written authorisation to delete the notebook.

In some cases, a two-pronged approach may be appropriate. For example, a researcher may have obtained personally identifiable information from multiple human research participants, and be obliged to dispose of it after the minimum retention period has elapsed. The identifiable

information could be stored elsewhere. It may be possible to store aggregated, de-identified data in the Online Research Notebook, and the personally identifiable information on another [La Trobe-endorsed storage solution](#)[3], from where it can be deleted at the appropriate time.

5. Limits

5.1 File uploads

- There is a file size upload limit of 250 MB per file.

- There is no limit to the number of files that may be uploaded to a notebook.

5.2 Notebooks

- There is no limit to the amount of data a notebook may contain.

- Each researcher may create or be associated with an unlimited number of notebooks.

- Each notebook may contain an unlimited number of folders and pages.

- Each folder may contain an unlimited number of pages.

- Each page may contain an unlimited number of entries.

5.3 Time

- There is no time limit for data stored in the Online Research Notebook; it is therefore suitable for long-term storage of research data.

- La Trobe's contract with LabArchives LLC explicitly provides for the export of all research data from the Online Research Notebook should La Trobe end its subscription to the LabArchives product.

6. Ownership

Each notebook in the Online Research Notebook has one, and only one, owner. Notebook ownership is informed by [Part E of the Research Data Management Policy](#).[4] Non-La Trobe researchers are not permitted to own notebooks in the Online Research Notebook.

The following ownership configurations are recommended:

6.1 Research group leaders (including Lab Heads or Principal Investigators)

The Lab Head or Principal Investigator (or their designated representative) should own any notebooks used by their teams, for example:

(a) Each member of the lab team or research group has their own notebook, with all notebooks being owned by the Lab Head or PI.

As for option (a), access can be provided and user permissions set by the notebook's Owner or one of its Administrators. Alternatively, each researcher can create their own notebook then transfer ownership to the Lab Head or PI. See the LabArchives Knowledgebase for [step-by-step instructions on transferring ownership of a notebook](#).[5]

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[3] https://www.latrobe.edu.au/research-infrastructure/digital-research/data/data-storage, accessed 19 June 2018.
[4] https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/status-and-details.php?id=106, effective date 6 Dec 2016, accessed 1 May 2018.
[5] https://www.labarchives.com/labarchives-knowledge-base/6-08-transferring-ownership-of-a-notebook/, accessed 20 December 2022.

(b) On a project basis where there is ownership of one shared notebook, with other members of the lab team or research group being allocated own folders within the notebook, with shared access to folders as needed.

Access can be provided and user permissions set by the notebook's owner or one of its administrators. See the LabArchives Knowledgebase for step-by-step instructions on adding a new user.

6.2 Individual staff researchers

Ownership of own notebook(s). Depending on the researcher's preference, a separate notebook might be used for each research project, or one notebook for all research data.

6.3 Individual HDR and Honours students and their supervisors

The student or (one of) their supervisor(s) may own the notebook, as agreed between them.

7. Exit planning

The following provisions for researchers who depart La Trobe align with the Research Data Management Policy, Part I.[6]

7.1 Staff researchers

La Trobe generally owns the research data created by staff researchers (Research Data Management Policy, Part E).[7]

Notebooks owned by departing staff researcher

When leaving La Trobe, Part I (46) of the Research Data Management Policy applies to the departing staff researcher's ORN notebooks. The researcher must transfer ownership of all notebooks they own to "an appropriate researcher as determined by the Head of School or other organisational unit. All original data must remain at La Trobe, unless otherwise agreed with the researcher or the researcher's new organisation".[8]

The Head of School or their representative may at their discretion permit a departing researcher to continue to have access to the notebook(s) they previously owned. In such a case, the departing researcher or the new Owner would invite the researcher into the notebook through the researcher's nominated email address.

Alternatively, a departing researcher may elect to make a copy (clone) of their notebook(s) and seek their Head of School's permission to transfer the cloned notebook(s) to a non-La Trobe user account. The procedure **Transfer notebook ownership to a non-La Trobe account** includes instructions for creating a clone of a notebook. It can be found in the **Exit planning procedures for the Online Research Notebook** document.

Other notebooks containing departing staff researcher's data

Staff who have access (with their La Trobe credentials) to notebooks owned by other La Trobe researchers will lose that access when IS disables the departing researcher's La Trobe user account.

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[6] https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/status-and-details.php?id=106, effective date 6 Dec 2016, accessed 1 May 2018.

[7] https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/status-and-details.php?id=106, effective date 6 Dec 2016, accessed 1 May 2018.

[8] https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/view.php?id=106, effective date 6 Dec 2016, accessed 1 May 2018.

Owners of notebooks to which the researcher has contributed data may at their discretion permit a departing researcher to continue to have access to the notebook(s). In such a case, the Owner would invite the researcher into the notebook through the researcher's nominated email address.

7.2 Student and honorary staff researchers

Student and honorary staff researchers generally own the research data they produce ([Research Data Management Policy, Part E](#)),[9] and in such cases the provisions detailed in this section apply.

However, if the IP is owned by La Trobe or another entity through some form of agreement (e.g. a commercial company that funds the research and owns the IP) then 7.1 above should be followed.

Notebook owned by departing student or honorary staff researcher

If the student or honorary researcher owns the IP, the ownership of the notebook can be transferred to a personal LabArchives account created by them, subject to the approval of the student's supervisor or the honorary staff researcher's Head of School. The request to transfer ownership to a non-La Trobe account needs to be made to IS.

Other notebooks containing departing student's or honorary staff researcher's data

Student or honorary staff researchers who have access (with their La Trobe credentials) to notebooks owned by other La Trobe researchers will lose that access when IS disables the departing researcher's La Trobe user account.

Owners of notebooks to which the researcher has contributed data may permit the researcher to continue to have access to the data they have contributed to the notebook(s). In such a case, the Owner would invite the researcher into the notebook through the researcher's nominated email address.

7.3 Making a copy of notebook content

Prior to leaving La Trobe, a departing researcher may elect to make a copy of the notebook content to which they have access. Depending on their level of access, a researcher may create:

- an [offline HTML copy](#)[10] or a [PDF copy](#)[11] of a notebook (where the researcher has access to the entire notebook)
- a [PDF copy](#)[12] of a portion of the notebook (i.e. only the part(s) to which the researcher has been granted access).

7.4 Failure to transfer notebook ownership

In the event that a departing researcher does not transfer ownership of their notebook(s) to their Head of School or their representative, La Trobe's primary IS contact can request the vendor (LabArchives LLC) to transfer ownership of the notebook(s) from the departing researcher to the appropriate Head of School or their representative.

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[9] https://policies.latrobe.edu.au/document/status-and-details.php?id=106, effective date 6 Dec 2016, accessed 1 May 2018.

[10] https://www.labarchives.com/labarchives-knowledge-base/8-04-2-create-offline-notebook/, accessed 20 December 2022.

[11] https://www.labarchives.com/labarchives-knowledge-base/8-04-1-download-your-notebook-to-pdf/, accessed 20 December 2022.

[12]https://www.labarchives.com/labarchives-knowledge-base/8-04-1-download-your-notebook-to-pdf/, accessed 20 December 2022.

8. Portable devices in laboratories

The Online Research Notebook is accessible by means of desktop computers, laptops, tablets and mobile phones, with the potential to streamline research workflows in the lab, at the desk, and anywhere in the world.

When considering the use of the Online Research Notebook within the lab, biosafety procedures must be followed, particularly for portable devices entering and exiting the lab. The La Trobe Institutional Biosafety Committee (LTIBC) is currently considering appropriate procedures. Researchers wishing to use the Online Research Notebook in their laboratories should seek advice on biosafety procedures from their School's Laboratory Services Manager.

9. Policies and legislation

9.1 La Trobe policies

Use of the Online Research Notebook for the management of research data is subject to the provisions of the following La Trobe policies and procedures:

Research Data Management Policy

Research Integrity Policy

Records and Archives Management Policy

Information Security Policy

Privacy – Health Information Policy

Privacy – Personal Information Policy

9.2 External legislation, codes and standards

Researchers are responsible for ensuring that their use of the Online Research Notebook aligns with La Trobe's policies and the external legislation and codes that underpin them. The latter include (but are not limited to) the following:

Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research

Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014

Privacy Act 1988

Health Records Act 2001

Public Records Act 1973

AS/NZS 2243.3: 2010 Laboratory safety, microbiological safety and containment (La Trobe login required)

9.3 Privacy and data breach reporting requirements

Any detected or suspected privacy breaches or notifications a researcher receives need to be reported to the University Privacy Officer as soon as possible via privacy@latrobe.edu.au or 03 9479 1839 in accordance with the University Privacy Policy and the Data Breach Response Guide.

10. Advice and support

- The Library's Research Team provides advice and support for research data management.

- The Research Office supports all researchers with funding applications, ethics, grants, contracts, commercialisation partnerships and publishing.

- The Director, Research Infrastructure is the Business Owner of the Online Research Notebook and provides high-level advice on its use.

- Technical support for the use of the Online Research Notebook is provided by LabArchives LLC.