

Management of Division of Population Health (DPH) resources on Departmental Storage (typically mapped as the “X: drive”)

This version (v2.2) approved at IG Committee Meeting 2026-01-20

This document details processes covering “X: drive” folder:

- [New requests](#)
- [Management](#)
- [User-requested archiving and deletion](#); and,
- [Automatic archiving and deletion](#).

NOTE: If you require evidence of secure deletion of data you should follow the guidance in the Division of Population Health [Certified Data Deletion Process](#).

Overview

Project leads are responsible for the appropriate management of research data.

University Departmental Storage provides access-controlled, backed-up file storage.

Access to the Division of Population Health space on Departmental Storage (typically mapped as the “X: drive”) is managed by the Division of Population Health Data Security team (Population Health DS - population-health-ds@sheffield.ac.uk).

Files are stored within a hierarchical folder structure. There are six types of top-level (“parent”) folders. More details about the types of top-level folders and what they should be used for can be found in [Appendix A: Types of top-level folder](#).

Users should be aware that *moving* versus *copying* files and folders within the university filestore has different effects on access permissions to such files/folders; these may not be as expected. See [Appendix B: Important information regarding the effects on access permissions of copying versus moving files/folders within the University filestore](#).

New requests

Process

Requesting a project, workgroup or user folder

To request a new project, workgroup or user folder, the information asset owner (IAO); i.e. the member of Division of Population Health staff responsible for the data at a local level, typically the Principle Investigator (PI)¹, (see the Information Asset Owner policy) must complete the “Request New X: Folder” form. This form gathers the following information:

- Type of folder (project, workgroup or user)
- Folder name
- A brief description (for project and workgroup folders)
- For a project folder, the access-controlled folders that are required within the top-level folder
- The name and username of the Information Asset Owner (IAO), and (if required) deputy IAOs (see [Management](#)) (a member of the Division of Population Health staff must be the IAO).

Requesting another folder-type

Requests are made by email to population-health-ds@sheffield.ac.uk. These requests may require a short meeting with Population Health DS to determine requirements.

Creating a folder

Population Health DS collects the information gathered by the request form and then:

- Creates a new support request in TOPdesk in the name of the requester
- Records the TOPdesk job number against the form data
- Sends a confirmation email to the requester, with the job number and a summary of the request
- Records the request in the X: Drive Folders log. A unique folder number is automatically assigned
- The request is checked, and errors are either corrected or clarification is obtained from the requester
- The job is updated and an email is sent to the requester containing the following:
 - a note that the folder has been listed with a provisional review date of 12 months, but a longer period can be requested
 - a request for the name and username of all users who need access to each access-controlled folder (this will be read only or full access).
 - The final folder details, reflecting any revisions
 - Details of the IAO's responsibilities
- The job status is set to 'In progress'

¹ Student folders must be requested by a member of staff, ideally a supervisor, who will be the IAO

- When the list of users and any final revisions are received (including review date), the new parent and any access-controlled folders are created in the Folder Management system
- Access is granted and logged in the current year's 'Folder Access Change Log'. Note that for each user ("trustee") access is only granted once all of the following criteria have been met:
 - The request has been authorised by the IAO or a Deputy IAO (or Head of Section in the case of extenuating circumstance, such as long term sickness)
 - The trustee has a current University of Sheffield computing account
 - The trustee has completed the appropriate Information Security training modules
- Confirmation is sent to the requester
- The folder is marked as 'Active' in the log

Management

Background

A full list of all active folders with descriptions and IAOs is available in the [X Folders Lookup](#) spreadsheet.

Information Asset Owners (IAOs)

All folders must have a designated IAO, and may have up to three Deputy IAOs. The roles are, collectively, known as "IAOs". If there is a conflict in requests from the IAO and deputies, the IAO's instructions will take precedence.

All IAOs must be contracted Division of Population Health staff.

If access is needed urgently and an IAO will not be available within an acceptable time-frame (e.g. long-term illness), the IAO's Head of Section may provide equivalent authorisation.

Responsibilities

- **Information Asset Owners²:**
 - **Authorisation:** to authorise changes to folder structure and additions to access in writing (by email).
 - **Management:** to ensure that data is stored in the correct locations, and is only accessible to authorised users. This includes:
 - responding promptly to emails from Population Health DS or IT Services colleagues regarding the management and administration of folders for which the IAO is responsible.
 - For the IAO, nominating a new IAO should they leave the Division of Population Health or otherwise seek to relinquish the IAO role.

² Refer also to the [Information Asset Owner \(IAO\) for Division of Population Health projects](#) policy

- **Closure:** to arrange for the folder to be archived or deleted (see [below](#)) when no longer required.
- **Population Health DS:**
 - ensure that users have an up-to-date Information Security training record at the time access is granted
- **All users (“Trustees”):**
 - ensure their own Information Security training record is kept up-to-date

Requesting access for users to an existing folder

An IAO should send an email to population-health-ds@sheffield.ac.uk containing the following information:

- Information about the person who needs access (the “trustee”)
 - Trustee name
 - Trustee username
- Information about the folder
 - Name of top-level folder
 - If the top-level folder is a project or transcribing folder, which access-controlled folder(s) the new user needs access to
- The access permissions the Trustee should be granted:
 - modify: read, write (create, update, and move), delete [**this is the default**]
 - read-only

If the email is not sent by an IAO, it will still be accepted if an IAO’s explicit authorisation is included in the email chain. However, if there is any doubt, the request is denied and the requester referred to an IAO.

Access is only granted when all of the following criteria have been met:

- The request has been authorised by an IAO (or an appropriate substitute under certain circumstances)
- The trustee has a current University of Sheffield computing account
- The trustee has completed the appropriate Information Security training modules

All changes to access are logged, with an email listing the changes sent back to the authorising IAO as confirmation.

Requesting removal of access to an existing folder

It is preferable for requests to remove a user’s access to be made by an IAO, or a Section Head. However, any request made by a responsible person or a senior member of staff will be considered. The priority is to ensure that data is kept safe, and access can be restored later if necessary.

All changes to access are logged with an email listing the changes sent back to the requester and IAO as confirmation.

Removal of access to an existing folder other than via request³

When staff are about to leave the Division of Population Health, Population Health DS are informed via the “staff leavers” process, usually managed by DPH Operations (see Appendix C). Population Health DS will remove the leaver’s access on the first working day following their leaving date, wherever possible. This will not require the IAO’s authorisation and they will not automatically be notified. An IAO (who is not a “staff leaver”) may request that the leaver’s access should be retained; this may require the creation of a new University of Sheffield computing account for the leaver depending on which department they are moving to, or if they are leaving the University of Sheffield. All changes to access are logged.

Changes to access-controlled folder structure

Changes can be made to access-controlled folders within a top-level folder. This includes adding or removing access-controlled folders, or changing the access permissions of an access-controlled folder.

Only Population Health DS can make these changes, and changes must be requested by an IAO.

All changes to access are logged.

Transfer of folders to other departments

IAOs may request (by email to population-health-ds@sheffield.ac.uk) that folders be transferred to the control of other departments within the University of Sheffield. IAOs must either:

1. confirm in writing that folders do not contain any “risk-bearing data” (as defined by the current Division of Population Health IG Policy) and that the transfer complies with any and all applicable ethics approvals and/or contractual agreements; or
2. document how the proposed transfer complies with any and all applicable ethics approvals and/or contractual agreements, especially clauses relating to data management, information security or information governance.

If there isn’t a suitable IAO the matter will be referred to the appropriate IG section lead or the IG committee for further investigation and subsequent approval/rejection.

Routine maintenance

As part of routine maintenance, Population Health DS will periodically contact the IAO to check that the access permissions are still appropriate. See the [Routine maintenance of Division of Population Health resources on University Departmental Storage process](#). A similar process is followed with archives.

Anybody who needs to know who has access to a particular folder can email population-health-ds@sheffield.ac.uk to check.

³ See also the [Joiners, Movers, Leavers - Information Security staff principles policy](#)

Archiving and deletion

See the "[Division of Population Health Folder Archiving Procedure](#)" for details regarding archiving procedures.

Systematic Deletion of Unowned and Neglected Folders

Population Health DS is authorised to systematically delete any folder that meets all three of the following criteria:

- **Absence of Ownership:** There is currently no one assigned to (and no plans for) the Information Asset Owner (IAO) role.
- **Lack of Access:** No user currently has access permissions to the folder.
- **Overdue Review:** The previously recorded review date for the folder is overdue.

Upon identifying a folder that meets these three criteria, DPH DS will perform a final check and document the folder's history. To minimise any risk of accidental data loss, the implementation will include:

- A 30-day quarantine period where the folder is isolated. A final notification will be attempted if possible (e.g., if there is an existing member of staff who previously had access).
- Permanent deletion will occur only after the quarantine period expires without intervention or objection.

Leaver Policy Check

When Population Health DS are notified of a leaver, a check against the archive spreadsheet is made. If the leaver is responsible for any archive folders they will be required to nominate a new Population Health staff member so that responsibility can be transferred. Failure to do so before leaving results in the matter being logged as an incident and escalated, this may result in the above [Systematic Deletion of Unowned and Neglected Folders process](#) being followed.

Appendix A: Types of top-level folder

Files are stored within a hierarchical folder structure. There are six types of top-level (“parent”) folder: “project”, “workgroup”, “section”, “student”, “user” and “transcribing” (see below). The majority of the time either a workgroup folder (for simple working) or a project folder (for more structured control) will be used.

For “workgroup”, “section”, “student” and “user” folders, authorised user(s) can create files or subfolders within the top-level folder itself - and all files and folders within the directory tree below the top-level folder inherit the access permission rights of the top-level folder.

For “project” and “transcribing” folders, authorised user(s) cannot create files or subfolders within the top-level folder. Division of Population Health DS create one or more subfolders with specific permissions within the top-level folder. These second-level folders are called “access-controlled” folders, and are given specific access permission rights. See section below that explains how access permissions for subfolders and files are determined.

Types of top-level folder

Projects involving risk-bearing data should use PR-type folders unless there are compelling reasons not to do so but there are six folder types for the top-level folder:

- **Project Folders**
 - Usually located either within X:\SchARR and prefixed PR_, or within X:\HAR_PR
 - No access is granted to the top-level folder
 - There are one or more access-controlled folders within the top-level folder
 - Access-controlled folders are created by Population Health DS
 - Each access-controlled folder has a group of one or more authorised users
 - Authorised users can create subfolders and files within access-controlled folders

- **Workgroup Folders**
 - Usually located either within X:\SchARR and prefixed WG_, or within X:\HAR_WG
 - Access is granted at the top-level folder level
 - Authorised users can create subfolders and files within the top-level folder

- **Section Folders**
 - Are not required; they were set up prior to the introduction of Google Drive for non-risk bearing data. A Shared Google Drive is a more practical solution for this type of data

- **Student Folders**
 - Either located within X:\SchARR or X:\HAR_SP

- Prefixed STU_
 - Named with the student's username
 - Access is granted at the top-level folder level
 - The student's Division of Population Health supervisor is always the IAO
 - Access is granted to the student and the IAO, plus any other users requested by the IAO
 - Users can create subfolders and files within the top-level folder
- **Transcribing Folders**
 - Located in X:\HAR_TR
 - A small number of older folders are located within X:\SchARR and prefixed TRANS_. These folders will be deleted when they are no longer needed.
 - The IAO is the manager of the Division of Population Health Transcribing Team
 - The Division of Population Health Transcribing Team are granted access at the Parent folder level
 - One access-controlled folder is created per transcriber, with access granted as requested by the Division of Population Health Transcribing Team - usually this is:
 - The transcriber
 - One or more members of the project, who are responsible for moving audio files and transcriptions between the transcribing folder and the appropriate storage location
 - Folders are securely deleted when no longer required

Other folder prefixes (e.g. FIN, TAG, SARG) are structured as either project or workgroup folder types, but are prefixed differently and/or located in different server areas for grouping purposes.

Appendix B: Important information regarding the effects on access permissions of copying versus moving files/folders within the University filestore

Access permissions for files and subfolders are modified (or not) differently depending on whether a file/folder is (i) *moved [cut + paste]*; or, (ii) *copied [copy + paste]*.

- **Newly created** files or subfolders inherit the access permissions of the parent/access-controlled folder within which they are created.
- Files and folders that are **copied** into a folder inherit the access permissions of the parent folder into which they are copied. This is because the copy is a new file.
- Files and folders that are **moved** into a folder **retain the access permissions that they had before being moved**. *This behaviour is likely to be unexpected by the user, but it prevents users from inadvertently sharing access with an unauthorised person when a file is moved accidentally.*

Appendix C: [Staff Leaver Process](#)

When a member of staff leaves the Division of Population Health, the DPH Starters and Leavers form is updated by DPH Operations, and is picked up from there by Population Health DS. A report is sent to the leaver which includes:

- instruction to transfer ownership of any files stored in Google Drive to an appropriate colleague
- a list of network folders of which the leaver is a trustee, and notification that their access will be removed unless a request is received from an IAO to retain the leaver's access
- a list of network folders of which the leaver is the IAO, with a request to nominate a new IAO
- a list of network folders of which the leaver is a Deputy IAO, and notification that they will not retain this role
- a list of archives of which the leaver is the Archive IAO, with a request to nominate a new Archive IAO

a list of network groups of which the leaver is a trustee, and notification that their access will be removed

All access is removed as soon as possible, ideally on the first working day following the leaving date, unless alternative instructions are received from an appropriate authority.

Version	Effective Date	Summary of changes
1	18th Feb 2021	n/a first version
2	6th May 2022	Updated folder naming conventions in Appendix A. Also to clarify that the Student's SchARR supervisor is always the IAO (or PGR lead if no SchARR supervisor). Naming of Administrators to Information Asset Owner (IAO). Section Manager to approve folder deletion
2.1	22nd July 2024	Updates throughout to clarify the process. Change to Division of Population Health
2.2	20th Jan 2026	Updated to clarify a request is made by an IAO and that it is the supervisor who requests Student's folders. Control folders replaced with 'Access control folders', this terminology is better understood. No requirement to follow up on additional information for new folders, the request just stays 'in progress' until it is received. The archiving section has been replaced by a new archiving process. New Systematic Deletion of Unowned and Neglected

		<p>Folders section added.</p> <p>Leaver's process is now University wide, not just DPH, updated.</p> <p>Equipment return is followed up as part of the University wide process, not DPH level process.</p> <p>Section manager role no longer exists, responsibilities replaced as appropriate.</p> <p>No longer users with access to ScHARR Qualtrics.</p> <p>Section folders are no longer recommended, recommendation updated</p>
--	--	---