

Internal guidelines for collecting data in student assignments (Bachelor and Master level)

(adopted by the Rectorate 22.11.2021)

Background

Student assignments at bachelor's and master's level are supposed to give students an introduction to research methodology and to questions concerning data collection and relevant regulations. This means that principles that apply in research must be followed.

Research data are data that have been collected or produced for use in or as a result of research. The term "research data" includes data that form the basis of publications. Both, completely new data and data generated through analysis of existing data are also included in the term.

Personal data include all information and assessments that can be linked to an individual. If personal data are collected, a documentable consent must be obtained, and the project should be notified to SIKT.

The following guidelines apply to student assignments

(see supplementary information about each item below):

- As a main rule, students are not supposed to collect personal data in student assignments. The need to notify SIKT is thus avoided.
- Students must be guided to collect anonymous data [link to supervision]. Anonymous health information may be collected, but students' supervisors must ensure that the students exercise caution when addressing serious health challenges.
- Students shall never collect health data or other sensitive personal data that requires, for example, REK approval and use of the Service for storing sensitive data (TSD) in student assignments. This applies even if the material and data are to be anonymised at a later stage.
- Kristiania University College aims at following the FAIR principles for data [link] which dictate that data shall be findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable.
- Student assignments can be subprojects in larger research projects that include personal data or health information.
- In exceptional cases, personal data may be collected in Master's theses.

Collection of anonymous data

SIKT notification is not required when collecting anonymous data, thus unnecessary delays are avoided. [link to guidance]. When project participants are to contribute actively with anonymous data in a research project, this requires that they are informed orally or in writing about the project's purpose, and that they agree to contribute. It is not possible to obtain documented consent from a project participant who is to remain anonymous.

Data collection in surveys shall take place through immediate anonymization or the use of tools that do not collect IP addresses (Nettskjema recommended). No more data than the strictly necessary to answer the research question shall be collected. Students own their collected data and project ideas. Archiving collected data at Kristiania University College for reuse after a student's assignment has

been completed (cf. the FAIR principles) requires the student's approval. Before collecting data, supervisors must assess whether the student assignments can be based on the use of existing, anonymised data. If not, supervisors shall attempt to coordinate data collection for several student assignments within the same school or subject area.

Student assignments as part of larger projects

Student assignments can be a subproject of a larger research project where data are collected in a larger context. A research-skilled academic employee shall be the project leader and shall apply for the necessary approvals. Kristiania University College (i.e., the project leader's employer) owns the data. Students may contribute to data collection, but they shall never be a project leader, and shall not be in charge of SIKT notifications or REK approvals for the project. Consideration shall be given to how the data can be built on/supplemented in future (sub) projects.

Exceptional collection of personal data in master's theses

In exceptional cases, Master students may collect personal data as part of their master's thesis, after agreement with their supervisors. All collection of personal data requires informed consent that must be documented [link to NSD]. The FAIR principles should be followed, and supervisors must first consider the possibility of reusing existing data and coordinated collection. Supervisors shall be project leaders, while students shall notify SIKT including the name of their supervisors as contact person. Notification should be made at least 30 days prior to the start of data collection. SIKT calculates 30 days of processing time. Students own their collected data and the project idea. Personal data must be deleted when the master's thesis is approved, or can be archived if it is anonymized and the students give their consent.