SECURE DATA SERVICE

enabling the research community

USER GUIDE

What you need to know to access and use the Secure Data Service

Version 1.1

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This is Version 1.1. To download the latest version, go to securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/about/documentation.

WELCOME TO THE **SECURE DATA SERVICE**

It is my privilege to welcome you as a member of our trusted community of data professionals.

Within these pages, you will find what you need to know in order to access and use the highly detailed, sensitive data for which you have been trained and approved.

While the Secure Data Service team will always be available for individual help and guidance, we hope this User Guide will be a handy reference to the most common questions. Our aim is to help you launch your research using the Service as quickly, securely and responsibly as possible.

Melanie Wright
Director, Secure Data Service

LOGGING **ON**

Getting started

Before you can begin using the Secure Data Service, we will require the IP address of the computer you will be using to access the Service. To find this out, simply go to the website below and it will display your computer's IP address:

www.whatsmyip.org

If you have not done so already, you should contact the Secure Data Service to provide us with this information. This will allow our server to accept your incoming connection.

Anti-virus and anti-malware software

One of the conditions of using the Secure Data Service is that the computer that you are using has appropriate anti-virus and anti-malware software installed. Please ensure that you have such software installed on your computer, and that it is up-to-date at all times. For help, you might need to speak to your institution's IT support.

Logging on for the first time

If this is the first time you are logging on – or if you are logging on from a different computer – there are some steps necessary to initiate your session.

For step-by-step instructions, go to securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/member/system.

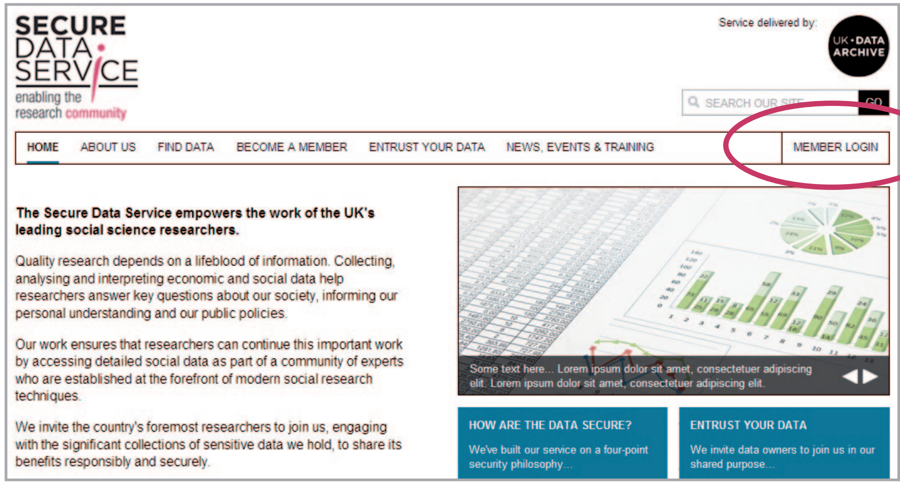
Username and password

Shortly before the training seminar, you should have received your Secure Data Service username. At the training session, you will receive the unique password necessary to log on to your account.

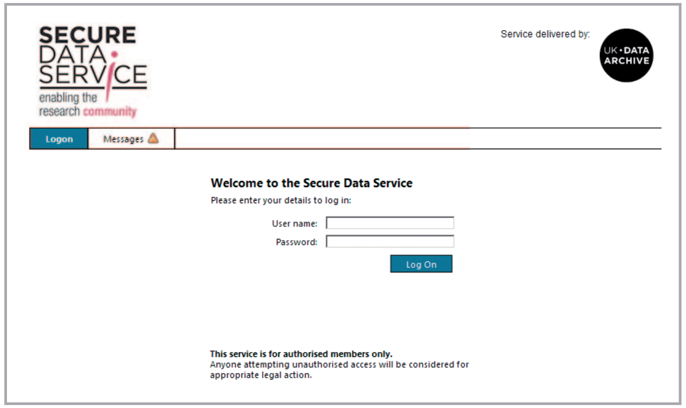
Remember to keep this password safe – don't write it down or share it with anyone else. If you forget your password, contact the Secure Data Service team immediately at securedata@data-archive.ac.uk or 01206 874968.

Logging on

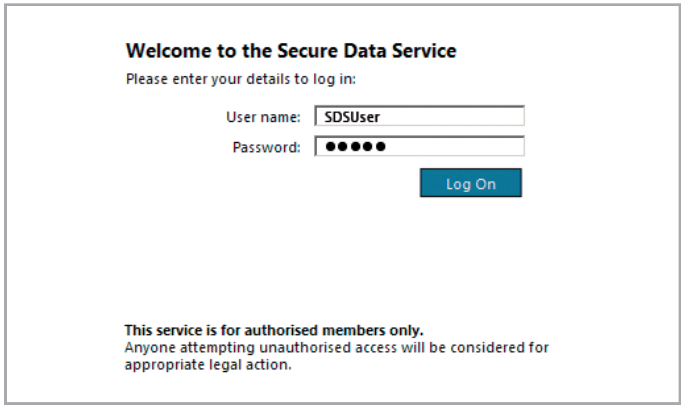
You can log on to your account via the Secure Data Service website at securedata.data-archive.ac.uk. Just click on the 'Member Logon' button in the top right corner.



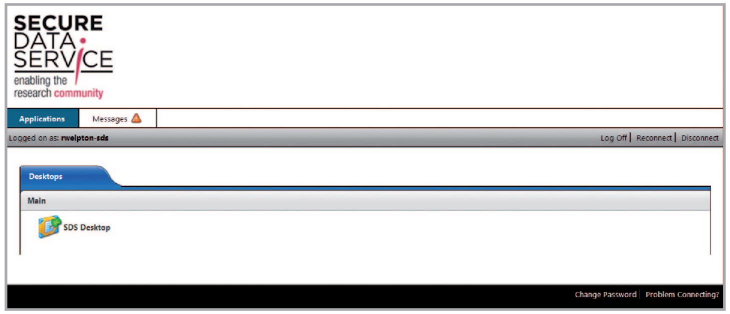
This will take you to the Secure Data Service logon screen, shown below.



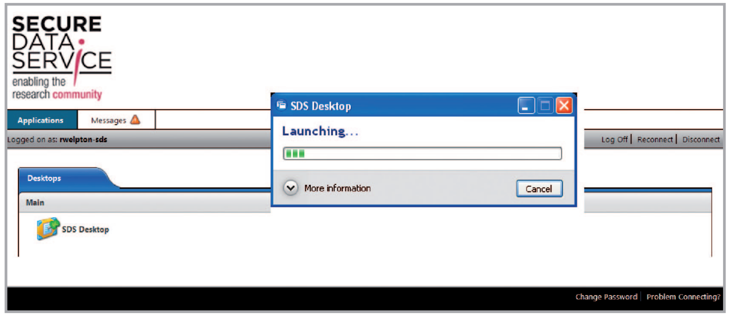
Enter your username and password.



The screen below should appear. Click on the 'SDS Desktop' to access your account.



A window will then appear that tells you that your account is launching.

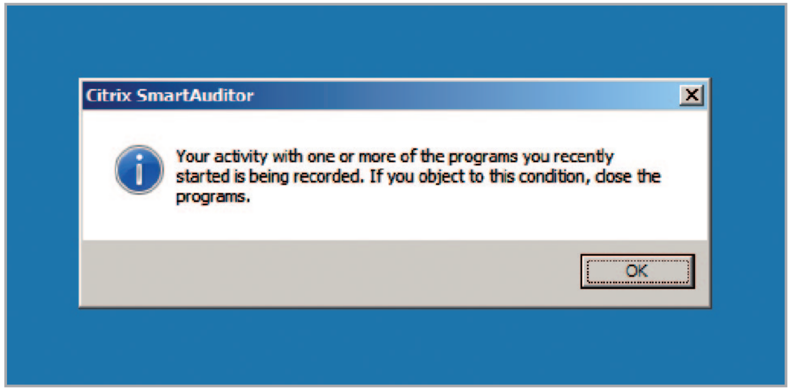


After a few seconds, a standard desktop will appear.

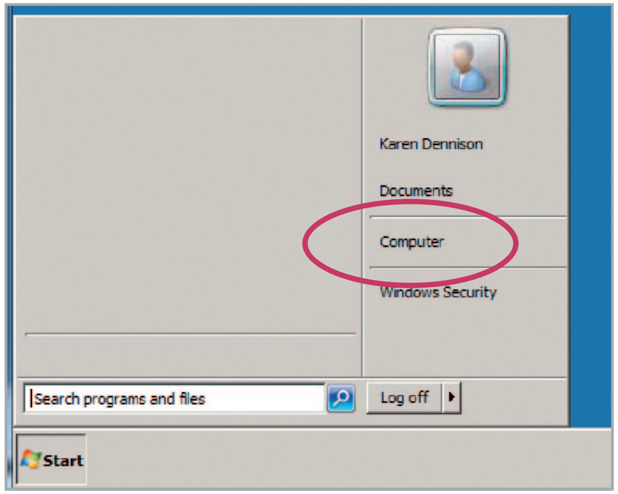
Note that after five minutes of inactivity, you will be asked to re-enter your password to access your account.

You will notice that none of the applications are available from the desktop itself. They are stored in a different folder which we will explain shortly.

You will also notice a Citrix SmartAuditor message. This will remind you that your session in the Secure Data Service is recorded for security purposes.



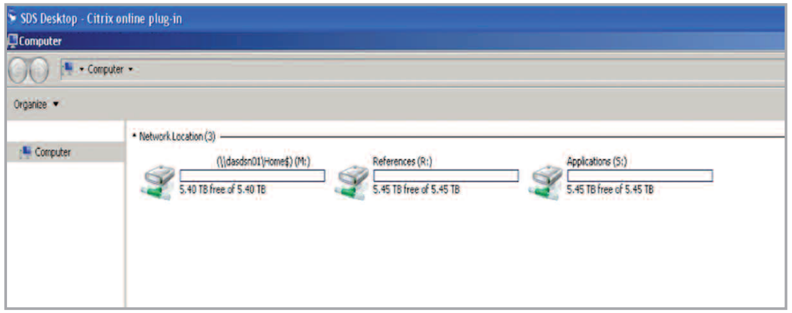
Now go to the 'Start' menu (bottom left corner) and select 'Computer.'



You're now logged on.

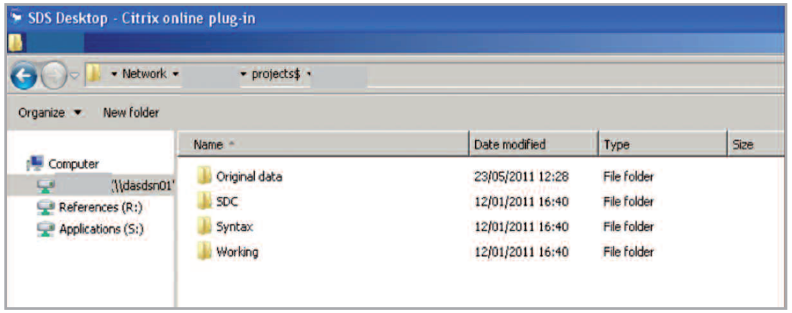
YOUR **ACCOUNT**

When you click on My Computer, you will see the following three drives:



Your M: drive

Inside your M: drive, you'll find a Project Folder for each Project that you are registered to undertake in the Secure Data Service. In turn, each Project Folder contains:



Original data folder

Here's where you'll find the data that you have applied to use for each project.

Each dataset will be stored in its own folder (for example, SN1, SN2). This is useful if you have applied to use more than one source of data for your project. Note, this is a 'read-only' section – you cannot overwrite any files saved in the Original folder.

SDC folder

When you have completed your project and you would like the Secure Data Service team to release your work to you, **save your files to the SDC folder** (for more information on this, see Requesting Outputs, page X).

Syntax folder

We recommend that you keep all of your syntax files in this folder.

It is important to note that after you have finished your project, **we will only keep files that have been saved in the syntax folder**. Storing datasets for all our members would become expensive for us – so we do not keep data files. Instead, we encourage our members to write good syntax that can easily recreate data files in the future, if necessary.

Also, if you accidentally delete a data file, you can use your syntax to recreate it (although we can recover deleted files, there may be some delay). The syntax folder is the place to store these syntax files.

Working folder

Your working folder is your project working area. You can use this folder to save data files that you are manipulating, drafts of papers, presentations and other outputs, draft results of your analysis etc.

We will place any files that you ask us to deposit into your Secure Data Service account, into the Working folder.

Important: Please Remember

Only files saved in your Working Folder and Syntax folder are backed up (each night). **Do not save files do your desktop: if you do, they may not be available the next time you log in**.

The Secure Data Service operates a 'Fair Usage Policy'. This states that, if the size or number of files that you generate impacts other users or the overall system performance, we reserve the right to request that you removes files, or the Secure Data Service team can delete files.

References (R:)

In this folder you'll find reference files. The reference files contain useful information for all researchers to access. For example, References drive contains:

- The National Statistics Postcode Directory
- Standard Occupational Classification Codes
- Standard Industrial Classification Codes

You will find a folder called 'ADO'. If you are a Stata user, you can request the Secure Data Service team to upload ado files for you, and you can access them from this folder.

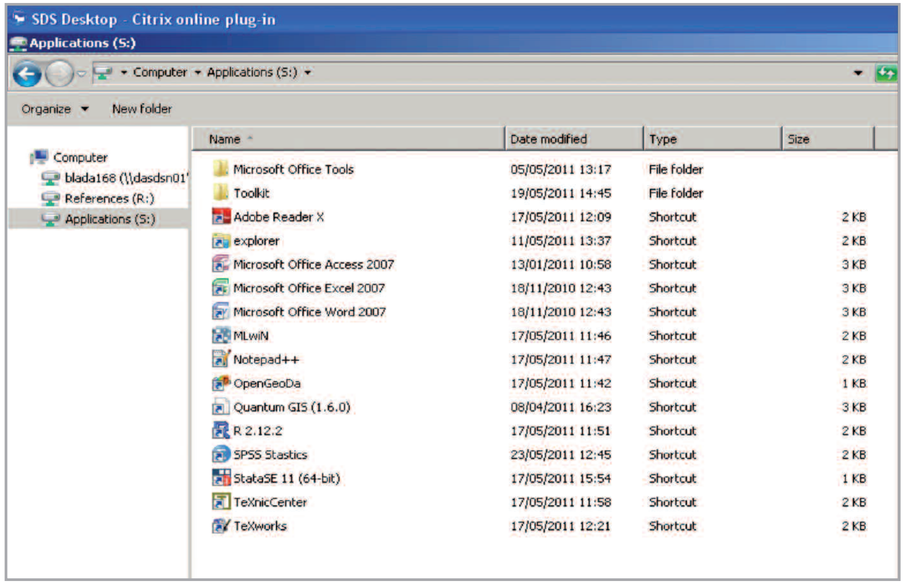
Applications (S:)

In this drive you can find your Toolkit folder. This contains the following documents to help you:

- An Output Request Form (required for requesting outputs, see Page X)
- An Acknowledgements and Citations document, so that you can include the correct statements in your outputs
- Guide to Statistical Disclosure Control (to provide you with guidance when you create your outputs)

The training slides from the Secure Data Service training seminar.

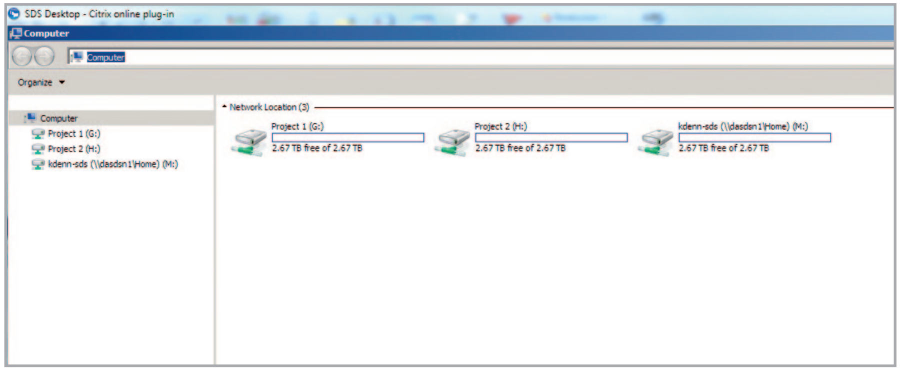
You'll also find shortcuts to a number of applications, including Stata, SPSS and Microsoft Office. If there are applications that you would like to use, but can't see, speak to the Secure Data Service team: we might be able to install these for you.



WORKING ON **MULTIPLE PROJECTS**

There is no limit to the number of projects that you can apply to undertake in the Secure Data Service. Often, members will be engaged in four or five projects at a time. As you become familiar with the Secure Data Service setting, we hope you will consider applying to use more of the data that we can provide access to.

Working on multiple projects should be a straightforward experience. As you apply for data to undertake additional projects, you will find that a new project folder will appear in your member account.



In this example, you'll see a folder for each of two current projects.

Each folder will be set up, as explained previously on page 6.

When you request an output, make sure you provide the correct project number. The same applies for requests to have syntax and data imported into your account.

Using the same data for more than one project

We hope that you will use the Secure Data Service for more than one project. When you do, you should only access the data from the relevant project folder.

For example, if you are working on Project A, do not use data contained in your Project B folder. The data might be different, and you might not have permission to use these data for Project A.

Remember, always talk to us if you need advice. We can easily arrange permission to use additional data for your project if required.

Using a derived dataset for more than one project

If you have created a derived dataset – using Secure Data Service sources and/or your own data – that you are approved to use for more than one project, simply copy the data files over to the new project folder.

You are responsible for ensuring that you have permission to use the data with the new project.

Permission to use data

Please be warned: You should only use data for a project that you have permission to use. If you want to use a derived dataset for a new project, you must apply to use the data that generate the derived dataset.

If we review an output and we find that you have used data you have not been approved to use for that project, we will refuse to send you your output. There may be additional penalties.

Applying to use additional data sources is simple. For details, see Applying to use Additional Data on page 14.

Project expiration dates

When you are working on more than one project, you should be aware that one project is likely to expire before another.

When a project expires, we remove all the data files from a project folder. So if you have started working on a new project and you use data files from an older project that subsequently expires, those files in the older project folder will be removed and you will not have access to them for your new project (unless of course you have kept the syntax to recreate them).

If you require any files that you used in an old project to be transferred to your new project, just ask us. We will be happy to do this for you.

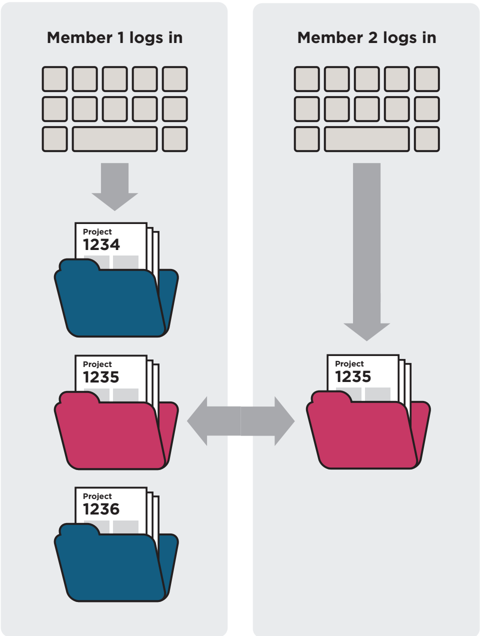
WORKING WITH **OTHERS**

The Secure Data Service has been designed so that researchers can easily work together on the same project.

Please note that **all** researchers who wish to work on a project must apply to access the Service, and therefore must be Approved Researchers or Accredited Researchers.

All researchers working on a project will be provided with their own username and password (as they are each provided with a Secure Data Service account).

For example, when two researchers are working on the same project, both will see the project folder relating to their joint project. This is illustrated in the diagram below.



In this example when Member 2 logs on, she will only be able to access one project folder (Project 1235), which she can work on collaboratively with Member 1. She cannot see the other projects Member 1 is working on.

If either member creates a file and saves it in this folder, then the other member will be able to access it. Therefore, results can be shared.

It is also possible for both members to open up the same file. This is useful if they wish to discuss their results over the telephone.

If you wish to add a new researcher to your project*

Adding a new researcher to an existing project is straightforward:

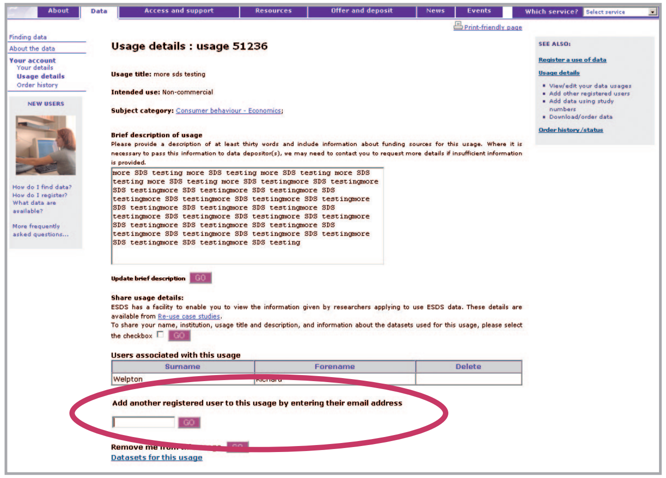
1. The additional researcher should be registered with the Economic and Social Data Service (ESDS).

2. You should log in to your ESDS account and click on 'Usage Details.' Now click on the 'Usage Number' relating to the project that you want to add the additional researcher to.

*including an existing Secure Data Service member

3. At the bottom of the page, enter the email address of the additional researcher registered for ESDS, and click 'go.'

   This will generate an automated email that will be sent to the additional researcher with instructions on how to apply to use the data.



4. The additional researcher will be asked to complete an **Approved Researcher** or **Accredited Researcher** form in the usual way. We will then confirm that the application has been successful, invite the researcher to attend a training seminar, and set up an account for them.

IMPORTING YOUR OWN **DATA AND SYNTAX**

We have made importing data and syntax as easy as possible for our members.

Importing data into your account

This section applies to data not available from the Secure Data Service/ESDS Catalogue. To learn more about how to add these data, see Applying to Use Additional Data on page 14.

Please remember that in some cases, if you wish to bring in your own data sources to use in conjunction with data available via the Secure Data Service, we may be obliged to seek permission from the owners of the data.

If you know that you wish to use your own data when applying for access to data via the Secure Data Service, we recommend that you complete a **Request to Import Data** form, available in the Our Documentation section of our website securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/about/documentation.

This form asks you to provide:

- general information about the data you wish to import
- names of the data files
- variable names – and if possible, variable descriptions
- why you require the data for your research (for example, how they complement the data you have applied to use through the Secure Data Service)

Please return the form to us with your Approved Researcher or Accredited Researcher application form. Where appropriate, we will forward the form and your application to the data owner.

The same form can be used if you wish to add data to your account after you have been approved. However, depending on the source of the data, we may still be obliged to seek permission from the data owner.

Below is a step-by-step guide:

1. We will pass your completed Request to Import Data form to the data owner to obtain their permission (if necessary).

2. You will receive an email confirmation from us when permission has been granted.

3. The email will also contain a link to a Secure FTP website. Use this to upload your data to us.

4. We will add your data to your Secure Data Service account. The data will appear in the Original Data folder inside the relevant project folder. (For details, see the Your Account section on page 5.)

Please remember that all files will have to be screened by us for viruses, malware etc. before we can deposit the data in your Secure Data Service account. We advise that you contact us to discuss your requirements before making a request.

Importing syntax into your account

If you have created your own syntax file (for example, a Stata file or SPSS syntax file) and you would like this to be available in your Secure Data Service account:

1. Email the syntax file to securedata@data-archive.ac.uk.

2. Please remember to include your **name** and **project number**. (This will ensure we save the file in the correct location.)

You should be able to access your syntax file by the next working day.

We will place the syntax files inside the Working folder, within the relevant project folder.

APPLYING TO USE **ADDITIONAL DATA**

You may have started your project and realised that you need to use data from other sources, either from the Secure Data Service collection or the ESDS catalogue. This section helps you apply to use sources of data in addition to those sources in your original application.

If you're not sure what data you need

Please contact a member of the Secure Data Service team. We are happy to advise you about data that can assist you with your project. Alternatively, details of the data available only through the Secure Data Service are available on our website securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/find.

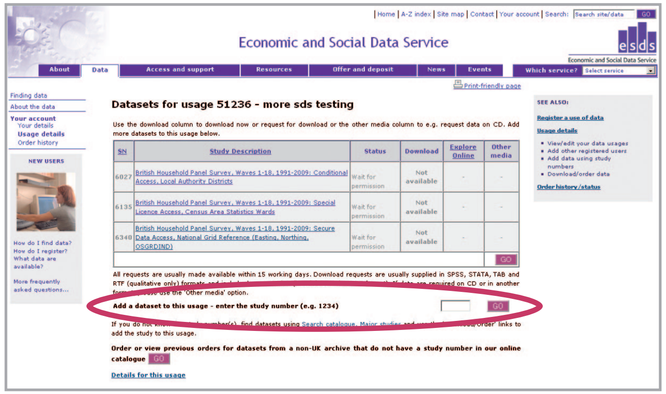
If you wish to use data available through other licences

You may wish to use data available through the End User or Special Licence agreements. Details about these data can be found on the ESDS website www.esds.ac.uk.

How to apply

When you have decided that you would like to apply to add a dataset to your existing project, follow the steps below:

1. Make a note of the Study Number for the dataset that you would like to add.
2. Log onto your ESDS account.
3. Click on 'Usage Details' for the project you wish to add data to.
4. Click on the current project's title.
5. In the 'Add a Dataset to this Usage' section, enter the Study Number in the box and press 'go.'



6. If you have requested End User Licence data, then the new Study Number (dataset) will now appear in the 'Usage' box. Now click on 'Other Media' and press 'go.' If you have requested Special Licence data, skip to step 9.
7. The 'Data Format' drop-down menu allows you to choose which format you would like to work in (for example, Stata or SPSS).
8. Under 'Media', select 'Secure Data Service.'
9. Where applicable, click on 'Request Permission' and 'Accept Special Conditions.'
10. The Secure Data Service team will be notified of your request, and will add the data to your account.

REQUESTING **OUTPUTS**

This section is intended to help you request your outputs from your account. As you learned at training, in order to keep data secure, it is not possible for members to remove any files from our servers.

We also examine your analytical outputs to ensure that they cannot be used by anybody to identify an individual or organisation from the data you have used (known as Statistical Disclosure Control).

What is an output?

By outputs, we mean the finished statistical analyses that you intend to present to the public. For example, you may have written your results in a paper that you intend to submit to a journal for publication. Or you may want to produce some PowerPoint slides to present your results at a conference. Either way, we make the assumption that these outputs are 'finished outputs' – there is no need for further work to be carried out on them after they leave the secure confines of the Secure Data Service. Remember that members produce *all of their work* within the Secure Data Service.

Intermediate results

We will not return results to researchers if they are not 'finished outputs.'

For example, we will not return a log file to you that contains estimation results from a model you have repeatedly estimated. Nor will we release individual tables of descriptive statistics.

The above are examples of what we call 'intermediate' results. We do not release such results to members – only finished outputs as explained above.

A rule of thumb for remembering this is to ask yourself "What would I submit to a journal?" or "What would I present to a conference?" Clearly, you wouldn't submit one small table to a journal. Nor would you try to present a long log file of results to a conference.

If you are unsure of what you can request, please contact us. We're happy to answer your questions.

Why do we only release finished outputs?

When undertaking Statistical Disclosure Control of outputs, it is often useful for us to view the results in context. So reading the text that explains the results in a paper can help us make a quick decision about whether the output is suitable to release.

If we undertook Statistical Disclosure Control of intermediate outputs, we would have to ask you to explain the context and meaning for each set of results. This would be tedious for you and slow down the process of delivering analysis to you.

What if I want to present some initial findings to an informal departmental seminar?

In this case we are happy to assess your outputs, providing they are clearly presented and clearly explained. For example, a collection of tables could be produced in a Microsoft Word document, with an explanation after each table to describe the results.

How to request an output from your account

Inside your Secure Data Service Toolkit folder (see page 5), you'll find an **Output Request** form. Once you locate the form, follow these steps. (You may find the section 'Your Account' helpful).

1. Complete the sections in the **Output Request** form.

2. Create a new folder in your **SDC folder**.

3. Title it with the date of your output request and your project number.
   For example, if you make a request for an output relating to Project 1234 on
   3 October 2011, then the name of the new folder should be "1234 2011_10_03".

4. Make a copy of the output you would like us to release, together with a copy of the **Output Request** form. Save these files into the new folder that you have created.

Demonstrating impact

It is important to share how you think your research results may inform or benefit society.

Not only is this required by our funding council, the Economic and Social Research Council, but it also directly supports our shared purpose as a research community. Demonstrating that access to new data is valuable for research – and how that research may benefit society – helps us negotiate access to new sources of data and makes a strong case for continuing support.

On your **Output Request** form, you'll see a question about the impact of your research. Please give some considered thought when answering.

A note on acknowledgement

Data owners ask that you include an acknowledgement that you have undertaken analysis using the data. The exact wording for you to use can be found in the Acknowledgements and Citations document, which is in your Toolkit folder.

FINISHING YOUR PROJECT

What is the project expiry date?

When applying to access data for a project in the Secure Data Service, you will specify the start date and expiry date yourself.

Two months before the expiry date is due, we will email you to remind you that the expiry date is approaching. We will email you again one month before the expiry date is due.

You should consider whether you have finished your project, or whether you require more time to complete it.

If you require more time

If you require more time, then we will ask you to fill in an **Extension** form, available from the Our Documents section of our website securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/about/documentation.

Simply complete section B of this form, and email it to us at securedata@data-archive.ac.uk, quoting your project number.

We will then make an extension request on your behalf to the data owner. When this has been approved, we will send you an email confirmation, including the new expiry date.

If you have finished your project

We encourage you to maintain syntax that will allow you to recreate data and analysis. Remember that we are unable to keep members' derived data files in the long-term.

However, we will keep syntax – but **only those files saved in your Syntax folder**

The outputs that we release to you will also be saved, although not in the Secure Data Service area itself.

Other files in other folders will be removed when your project expires.

GENERAL **DOs AND DON'Ts**

There are a lot of things to remember about using the Secure Data Service.
As a reminder, here are some guidelines that we ask you to follow when using the service.

DO

- remember that your session is recorded by SmartAuditor for security and training purposes
- use the Secure Data Service in 'full-screen' mode only. There is no acceptable reason for using a different window size
- remember that the screensaver is activated after five minutes of inactivity
- remember that you will be asked to change your password every three months
- complete our e-learning refresher training course every two years
- familiarise yourself with the Code of Conduct

DO NOT

- write anything from the screen. We have installed Microsoft Office so that you can make notes and save them in your Secure Data Service account
- use 'suspicious' keystrokes. We will know if you use Shift-F2, Alt-tab, Ctrl-Alt-Del
- use more than one monitor on your computer if you want to access the Secure Data Service
- try to log on to the Secure Data Service from outside your institution

Finally... **DO** please tell us if there is any way we can improve our service to better suit your needs.

ADVICE AND TECHNICAL **SUPPORT**

If you experience any difficulties using the Secure Data Service, help is at hand.

FAQs

First, check the Frequently Asked Questions page of our website securedata.data-archive.ac.uk/about/FAQ.
We keep this updated as we receive similar questions from different researchers. There is a good chance that your question will be answered here.

Personal contact

If your question is not answered on the website, please get in touch with us directly:

T 01206 874968
E securedata@data-archive.ac.uk

You can also find contact details for each member of the Secure Data Service team on the website under Our Community.

Telephone support is normally available 9.00 to 17.00, Monday to Friday (excluding public holidays). We will also respond to emails on working days.

Support available

We are happy to provide information and guidance, including:

- advice on projects (for example, finding suitable data)
- how to apply to use data through the Secure Data Service
- how to use the service (for example, where files are stored)
- how to request outputs and Statistical Disclosure Control
- extending your project and using more data sources

In addition, we can negotiate with data owners for access to data, particularly as we meet strict international standards in data management and security. If you think that we might be able to help you to access data that are not currently available from the Secure Data Service, then please get in touch.

Our promise to you

Please remember that this is your service – and our shared responsibility as a research community. Our Service Promise details what you can expect from us. To read more, see our website.

Feedback

If you have any ideas about how we can improve the Secure Data Service, we would love to hear from you. Please contact us any time.

SECURE DATA SERVICE **ACTIVITIES**

We do more than provide secure access to confidential data. We also support researchers in other ways. Here are some of the ways we help to promote applied research.

Organise workshops

This is a chance for anybody with a stake in the Secure Data Service (members, staff, funders or data suppliers) to come together to share knowledge about general strands of research (such as labour markets), or particular data sources (such as the *British Household Panel Study*).

Negotiate for access to more data

The high security standards we meet put us in a strong position to negotiate for access to new data sources from a range of suppliers to enable our members to conduct more effective research.

Publicise research

We provide details of research undertaken using the Secure Data Service on our website and regular e-bulletins. Everybody in our community can see the research that the Secure Data Service is helping to support – which is especially useful for members, and good news for data owners in particular.

Data dissemination standards

The Secure Data Service is one of a number of core services provided by the UK Data Archive. We are at the forefront of developing technologies and improving standards to disseminate data, documentation and metadata. This benefits researchers because we can supply a better service to you.

SECURE DATA SERVICE
enabling the research community

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Service delivered by the UK Data Archive

In partnership with the Economic and Social Data Service

Funded by the Economic and Social Research Council