

Virginia Tech seeks to encourage desirable behavior in the valuation, creation, use, storage, archiving, and deletion of information, all with the objective of ensuring data quality control and integrity. Specifically, it is the role of Data Stewards to facilitate the confidentiality, integrity, and appropriate availability of university data. Effective data stewardship is the process for maximizing the value of data as an institutional resource while striking an appropriate balance between security requirements and business use benefits. The vice president for each administrative area assign a Data Steward or Stewards for their administrative area. The main role of a Data Steward is to champion and facilitate the quality and appropriate uses/ access of the data that fall within their domain.

As defined in the [Standard for Administrative Data Management](#), Data Stewards classify data according to [Virginia Tech Risk Classifications](#) for access and sensitivity, define and monitor data quality, and craft and communicate data definitions. With delegated authority from Data Trustees, data stewards are the primary contact points for members of the university community who may have concerns with or need for access to data. Any issues unresolved at this level are to be taken to the respective Data Trustee. Data Stewards may delegate their operational tasks to others as needed.

To effectively fill the Data Steward role, an individual should have:

- Broad-based knowledge of the institutional data for which they are a steward. This knowledge should encompass all uses of the data and related business processes as viewed from the university's perspective.
- Be aware of policies and standards that govern their institutional data. For example, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act ("FERPA") dictates requirements related to the handling of student information. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) governs clinical and health insurance data.
- The flexibility to view their data as a university resource that should be leveraged appropriately for university objectives.
- The ability to work effectively within a team in performing the required tasks.
- The ability to communicate effectively in response to questions concerning the data.
- The ability to establish/ maintain business processes that ensure integrity, completeness and accuracy of the data within their domain.

Responsibilities

- Work with the relevant Data Trustee and Information Technology Security Office to assure that data is classified by the [Virginia Tech Risk Classifications](#) low, moderate, or high risk. Identify procedures for maintaining data confidentiality as they relate to data under the Data Steward's management. As needed, work with the IT Security Office to enforce the procedures.
- Assure that there are documented and published processes for granting access to data for appropriate university business units.
- Review and respond to requests for data based upon legitimate university business objectives that would benefit from the use of requested data. As needed, obtain a signed Memorandum of Understanding from the Director of a department requesting the ability to extract or use data from a system under the Data Steward's management.
- Work with Information Technology Security Office to validate that all systems, including externally hosted systems supporting business processes within the Data Steward's area, conform to Virginia Tech's standards for security and data handling.
- As needed, participate in the management of shared data in ERP systems (such as Banner) supporting the Data Steward's business area.
- Establish and maintain an appropriate structure and review process for responsible management of data access.
- Communicate to stakeholders regarding the enterprise use, policies and decisions around the stewarded data.
- Communicate for stakeholders in a way that represents their perspectives within the domain of stewardship.

For questions about these guidelines, please contact the ITSO at itso@vt.edu.