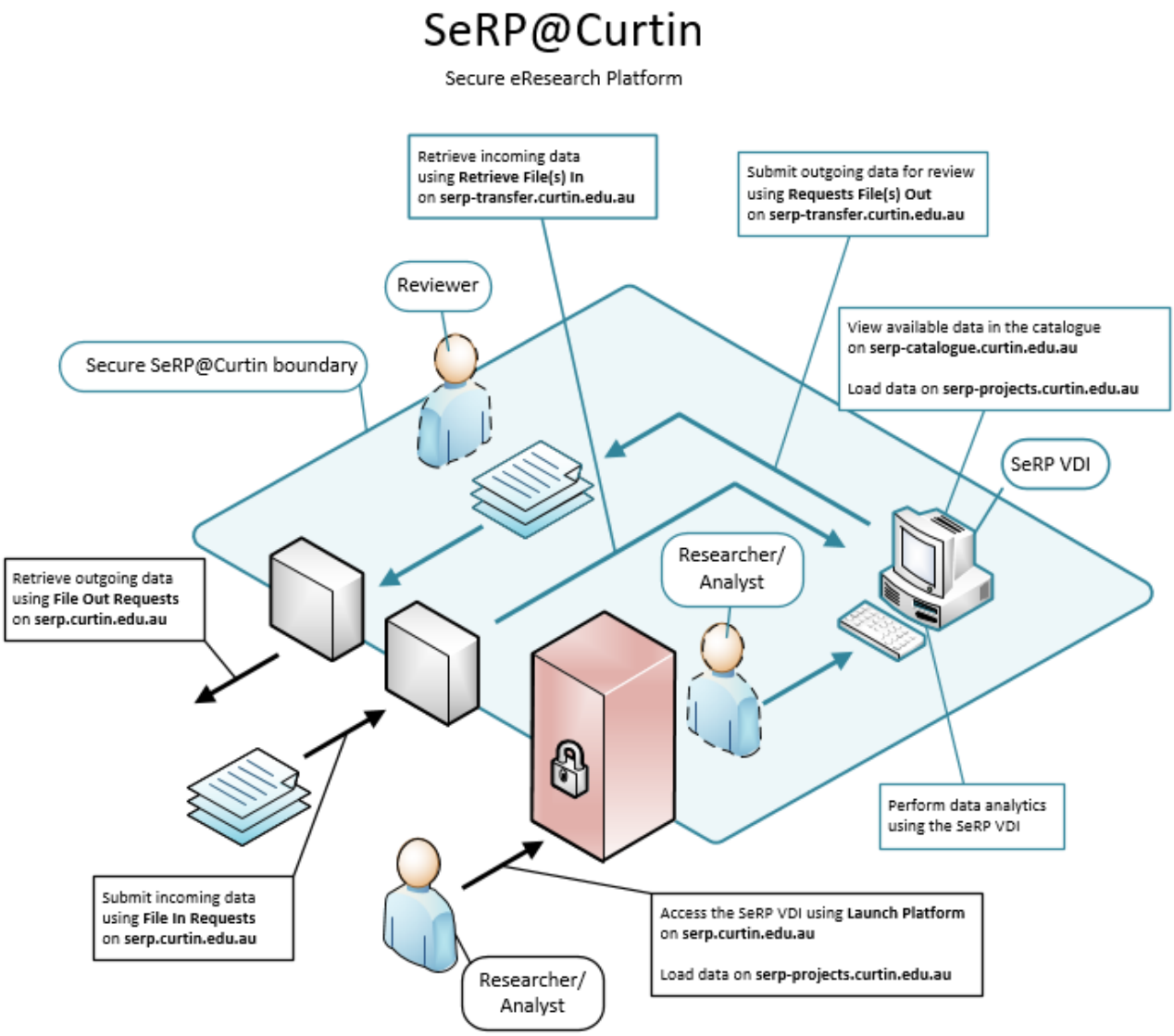
What is SeRP@Curtin?

SeRP@Curtin is an e-research platform which allows researchers and data custodians to manage, store, share, analyse and link sensitive research data in a fully governed and highly secure environment, whilst maintaining full control of the data at all times. SeRP@Curtin comprises infrastructure, software, systems and analytical tools such as R and SAS in a highly secure environment allowing researchers to conduct data analytics to support their research.

The Getting Access page on the Curtin web site has information regarding use of SeRP@Curtin and the entry point (Gateway).

How do I interact with SeRP@Curtin?

Think of SeRP@Curtin as a secure room which you can enter or leave as required but only you may enter through the door, any luggage (file/data) you want to take in must enter or leave via a security scanner. Before entering the room, you must deposit luggage at the security scanner. Step through the door, and once inside the room, you can retrieve your luggage from the other side of the security scanner. Inside the room, you are free to work with your data. When you have completed your work and want to take luggage (file/data) out, you deposit your outgoing luggage at the security scanner. Once you leave the room, you can retrieve your outgoing luggage.



The Gateway to SeRP@Curtin (https://serp.curtin.edu.au) is the link between the Curtin network that you normally interact with and the secure environment where you will work with sensitive datasets. The Gateway provides access with the 'Launch Platform' option. This launches the Secure Desktop (VDI) which is your virtual desktop inside SeRP@Curtin (if you are not familiar with a VDI see **What is a VDI?** below). If you want to take files/data in, you can use the 'File In Requests' option.

Once inside the Secure Desktop you can retrieve your files/data from the Transfer website (http://serp-transfer.curtin.edu.au) using the 'Retrieve File(s) In' option.

From the Secure Desktop you can view the datasets available to you through the Catalogue (https://serp-catalogue.curtin.edu.au). The Catalogue provides details about the datasets and how to gain access to them.

Once you have completed your work and want to take files out of the environment, you can use the 'Request File(s) Out' option on the Transfer website. Your request is subject to approval by a Reviewer, and the data you want to take out will be reviewed to ensure no identifiable data is being released. Once approved, you can retrieve your data from the Gateway using the 'File Out Requests' option.

Note: When requesting data out is it important that the project selected, against which the request is recorded, is the research project to which the data relates. This is relevant when you have multiple research projects or have been granted access to other datasets within SeRP@Curtin.

How do I work in SeRP@Curtin?

The Secure Desktop is a Windows 10 desktop. The Secure Desktop gives you access to:

- A Data Catalogue listing the datasets that you have been given access to;
- Analytical tools, such as:
  - SAS (9.4 M5, components and Enterprise Guide)
  - R/RStudio including access to the Curtin CRAN mirror
  - Python 3.7
  - STATA (licence required);
- Connectivity to datasets in the Data Catalogue (see below for connection string examples).
- File storage:
  - U: drive – a home drive within SeRP@Curtin where you store files that you do not need to share with colleagues.
  - P: drive – a Project drive where you store files you wish to share with colleagues on the same Project.

  *Note: It is essential that no files are stored on the Secure Desktop (C: drive) as these are **not saved** between sessions. If you save files on the C: drive they **will** be lost once you leave the Secure Desktop.*

- A Git repository (https://serp-git.curtin.edu.au) is available for each Project, to store files such as scripts and programs if you require version management. A wiki is also provided with each Git project.

How do I transfer files into SeRP@Curtin?

To transfer files into SeRP@Curtin, access the Gateway (https://serp.curtin.edu.au) and click the 'File in Requests' option. Once you have done that, you enter SeRP@Curtin via the 'Launch Platform' option which will take you into the Secure Desktop. Once you have logged into the Secure Desktop, retrieve your files from Transfer (http://serp-transfer.curtin.edu.au) using the 'Retrieve File(s) In' option. You can then save the files into either the User (U: drive) or Project (P: drive) folder.

Note: Remember, files saved on the Secure Desktop (C: drive) will be lost once your session ends.

How do I transfer files out of SeRP@Curtin?

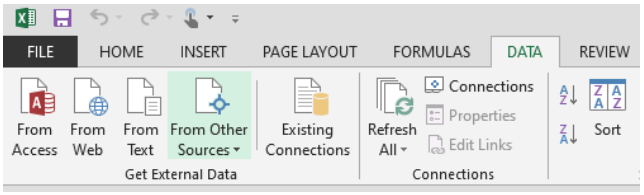
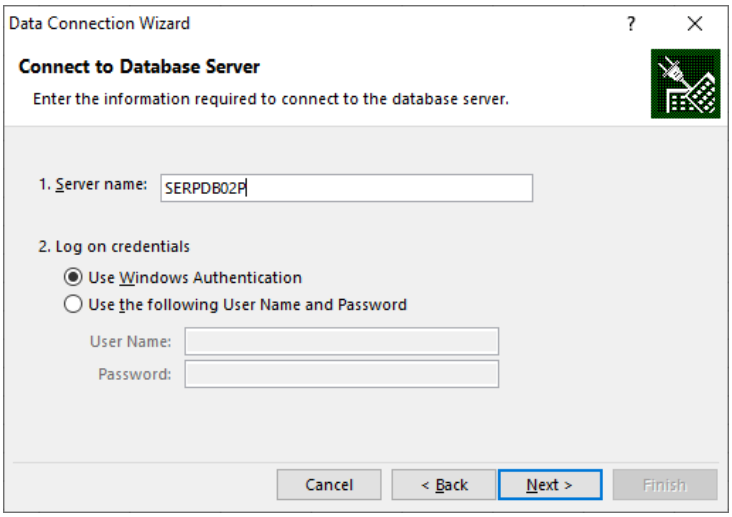
To transfer files out of SeRP@Curtin, access the 'Requests File(s) Out' option on Transfer (http://serp-transfer.curtin.edu.au). All data exiting SeRP@Curtin will be subject to review. Once approved, you will receive an email notification and the files can then be retrieved from the Gateway using the 'File Out Requests' option.

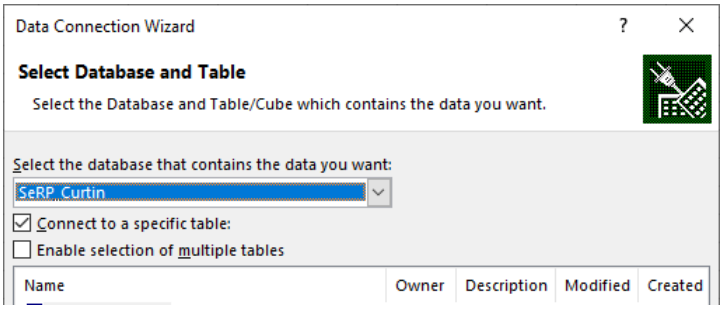
How do I get access to the datasets in the SeRP Catalogue?

Use the following settings to connect to the datasets.

Server Name: SERPDB02P

Database Name: SeRP_Curtin

Tool	Connection
R	`library(odbc)` `con <- dbConnect(odbc(), .connection_string='Driver={SQL Server};Server=SERPDB02P;Database=SeRP_Curtin;Trusted_Connection=True')`
SAS	`libname <NAME> odbc noprompt="Driver={SQL Server Native Client 11.0};Server=SERPDB02P;Database=SeRP_Curtin;Trusted_Connection=Yes";`
STATA	Use the **SERPDB02P** ODBC connection
Excel	On the 'Data' tab select 'From External Sources' from the 'Get External Data' section:  Enter the server name (SERPDB02P) in the dialog box and click the 'Next' button:  Next select the database (SeRP_Curtin) from the dropdown list:



What is a VDI?

Think of a VDI (Virtual Desktop Infrastructure) as a computer inside your computer (the host). When you access the VDI from your computer, you are presented with a complete environment with its own identity and software. In the case of the SeRP VDI (Secure Desktop), it is completely isolated from your host computer for security reasons. Think of the VDI as existing inside the secure environment that is SeRP@Curtin and that you use your regular computer to access it.

If you are not familiar with a VDI environment, the Getting Access page provides further information on the VDI environment.