

The Open University Open Access Publication Policy

1. In line with its mission¹, The Open University (OU) believes that the ideas and knowledge from its research should be made available and accessible for public use, interrogation and scrutiny, as widely, rapidly and effectively as possible, and should be preserved and remain accessible for future generations.
2. OU research-active staff (including postgraduate research students) are required to publish their peer-reviewed research outputs in accordance with the [Code of Practice for Research at the Open University](#), any applicable research funder's policy on open access, e.g. [RCUK](#), and to fulfil all requirements outlined in the UK Higher Education (HE) funding bodies' [Policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework](#).
3. All OU-affiliated research outputs², including journal articles (mandatory), published peer-reviewed conference proceedings (mandatory)³, book chapters and similar material (recommended), either in the form of the author's final peer-reviewed manuscript⁴ or the formally-published version, where copyright allows, should be deposited in Open Research Online (ORO) upon acceptance for publication⁵ or as soon as possible thereafter and no later than three months after the date of acceptance. This version may be replaced or augmented with the final published version of the output, with publisher's type setting and formatting, at a later date if appropriate.
4. The output must be deposited in a form so that it is discoverable manually to anyone with internet access and by automated tools such as search engines. Readers should be able to search electronically within the text, read it and download it without charge.
5. An output subject to a publisher's embargo must still be deposited as soon as possible and no later than three months after the date of acceptance for publication. Embargoed publications will remain closed so that they are discoverable but not available in full text until the end of the embargo period when it becomes publicly accessible. Both RCUK and the UK HE funding bodies stipulate that the maximum embargo period for STEM disciplines is 12 months and for the arts, humanities and social sciences is 24 months.⁶
6. Researchers should ensure that they apply the appropriate Creative Commons (CC) licence to their publications. Applying a CC licence to an open access publication enables the author to allow the public sharing and use of their work, while retaining and protecting their copyright of the material.⁷ There are a range of licences available and the particular licence required varies by funder, therefore researchers should ensure that they check their funder's policy.⁸

¹ [The Open University's mission is to be open to people, places, methods and ideas.](#)

² 'OU-affiliated research outputs' refers to any published research product where at least one of the authors is associated with the OU, and where the OU is given as the author's home institution.

³ Authors should refer to the additional guidance on the deposition of conference proceedings to ensure that they comply with their funder's guidelines.

⁴ Alternatively referred to as the 'accepted author manuscript' or 'final author version' or 'post-print'.

This is the peer reviewed version after revisions have been made and, in terms of content, the version which will be published. Publishers may subsequently change type setting and formatting.

⁵ Point of acceptance refers to the author's receipt of confirmation of acceptance from publisher.

⁶ This refers to RCUK's policy during a transition period which will be reviewed in 2016 and 2018. It is possible that the embargo period will change following RCUK's review of its policy.

⁷ <http://creativecommons.org/>.

⁸ HEFCE have recommended the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Non-Derivative (CC BY-NC-ND) as an acceptable licence for open access publications which have been deposited in an institutional or subject repository to be entered into post-2014 REF exercises. RCUK policy stipulates that all outputs made available by gold open access where an APC has been paid must be

7. Researchers must ensure that the source of funding for the research is acknowledged in all publications, with the funding agency written out in full, followed by the grant number in square brackets, e.g. *This work was supported by the Medical Research Council [grant number xxxx]*, or following funders' specific requirements.
8. Researchers are responsible for ensuring their publications adhere to the above requirements as applicable, including checking journal and publishers' open access policies are compliant with this policy (including allowable embargo periods) and requesting open access charges on external research bids and/or retrospectively from funders where permitted.⁹
9. Where external funding is available to meet the costs of open access article processing charges (APCs) (e.g. RCUK block grant), researchers are encouraged to publish their work with immediate (gold) open access upon publication.
10. The decision to follow the 'gold' or 'green' open access publication route for RCUK-funded outputs will be a matter for local (Central Academic Unit (CAU)) academic judgment, but will also be dependent on the acceptability of publishers' embargo periods and the requirement for and availability of funding from the centrally-held RCUK block grant. If a local decision has been made to follow the 'gold' route, Library Services should be contacted with details of the publication and APC costs to arrange for payment of the APC from the centrally held block grant. The funding will be allocated on a first come first served basis. When block grant funding has been exhausted, an acceptable 'green' route should be followed.
11. For non- RCUK- funded research (where the terms and conditions of funding allow), peer-reviewed journal articles and published peer-reviewed conference proceedings must be published open access to ensure that these research outputs are compliant with UK HE funding bodies' post-REF 2014 open access requirements and be eligible for submission to future REF exercises. The decision to follow the 'gold' or 'green' open access publication route will be a matter for local academic judgment, but will also be dependent on the acceptability of publishers' embargo periods and the availability of budget for APCs. If a decision is made to follow the 'gold' route, Library Services should be contacted to discuss the availability of discounted APC costs with particular publishers.¹⁰

Postgraduate Research Students¹¹

12. Research outputs produced by directly-supported postgraduate research students at the doctoral level are expected to adhere to this policy.
13. ARC-supported students at the doctoral level are expected to honour the principle of the OU's open access policy. ARC-supported students are encouraged to publish their research outputs in an open access format via ORO. ARC-supported students should contact Library Services to create a user profile in ORO.

made available under the Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY), whereas green open access outputs made available in an institutional or subject repository may carry a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Licence (CC-BY-NC).

⁹ Guidance and advice are available from the [Library Services intranet](#).

¹⁰ Payments should be charged to specific externally-funded budget codes or other unit budget, using the APC analysis code, 4287. Where no budget is available, an acceptable 'green' route should be followed.

¹¹ Postgraduate research students should refer to the 'Guidelines on Open Access for Postgraduate Research Students' available on the Library Services intranet.

14. All research students who are funded by the RCUK through a Doctoral Training Centre, a Doctoral Training Partnership or other RCUK studentship are required to comply with the OU open access policy and the RCUK policy regarding the open access publishing of research outputs as outlined in the RCUK Training Grant Terms and Conditions and in paragraphs 1-9 above.¹² Publication costs arising from open access publishing of RCUK-funded students' research will be met through the RCUK Block Grant.¹³
15. Self-funded and institutionally-funded doctoral level students wishing to publish their research outputs by open access via the 'gold' route should consult first with their CAU. PhD students supported by other external funding bodies should refer to their funder's guidance on open access publishing.

E-Thesis Deposition

16. All PhD students are expected to submit an electronic copy of their thesis before the degree may be awarded. The electronic copy will be stored in ORO and the full text will be made available by open access within 12 months following deposition, where copyright allows. This policy allows for compliance with the policy for RCUK-funded PhD students. Other funders may have more stringent requirements; therefore PhD students are advised to refer to their funder's guidelines. Implementation of e-thesis deposition will be managed jointly between Library Services and the Research Degrees Management Group.¹⁴

Compliance and monitoring

17. Compliance with the Open University Open Access Policy and open access requirements of external funders and other bodies will be monitored and reported to Research Committee, the Vice Chancellors' Executive and external bodies as required.

Review

18. This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure fitness for purpose and any significant changes will be brought to the University Research Committee for its consideration and approval.

Contacts and further information

Further information on the Open University Open Access Policy can be obtained from research-strategy@open.ac.uk. For further general advice on open access and information on accessing the RCUK block grant or payment of other APCs, please contact library-research-support@open.ac.uk.

¹² RCUK Conditions of Research Councils Training Grants, esp. TGC 15, paras 97-104: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/TermsConditionsTrainingGrants.pdf>.

¹³ RCUK Conditions of Research Councils Training Grants, para 99: Publication costs arising from students supported by the Training Grant should be paid for using, where applicable, funds from the block grant for publication costs given to the Research Organisation from the relevant Research Council. If this is not appropriate then the flexibility within the Training Grant should be used to cover these costs.

¹⁴ RDC-2014-03-14 and RDC-2014-03-M-Minutes, minute 17.