



Postgraduate researcher (PGR) Library checklist

Library Research Support Team
2023/24

Postgraduate researcher (PGR) Library checklist

This checklist highlights Library advice, information and resources designed to help you succeed as a postgraduate researcher at The Open University.

- **Attend a Library online training session as part of your OU induction.**

The Library's training sessions will introduce you to the OU library, show you how to use online resources effectively, and help with finding resources. [The Library offers a number of training sessions and events](#) that run periodically and cover topics such as "Reference management tools – an Introduction" and "Smarter searching with library databases".

- **Attend training sessions offered by the Library Research Support Team.**

The Research Support Team offers a range of training sessions across different areas designed to support you, including sessions on research data management, Open Access publishing, ORCIDiDs, and data sharing. [Sign up to one of our sessions.](#)

- **Visit the Library website to explore library resources.**

[The Library website](#) is your gateway to the extensive library content provided by The Open University. Use the Library Search box to start searching for resources such as Ebooks, databases, journals, or journal articles. Alternatively, use the Library Resources tab to browse for resources. Most of our content is available online.

- **Learn about Library Helpdesk and our 24/7 Chat to a Librarian Service.**

Find links to contact the Library Helpdesk on every page of the Library Services website, including details of our webchat service if you need assistance with library resources or services.

- **Discover key services for PGRs.**

The [Services for postgraduate researchers page](#) on the Library website contains links to relevant information and services to all PGRs.

Visiting the Library building and accessing services.

- **Opening hours and support.**

The Library building is open from Monday to Friday, 09:00–17:00. During this time, you can access our collections, borrow items, and use study areas and meeting spaces. Library staff will be located on the ground floor to welcome and assist you with any library-related enquiries you have.

The PGR Common Room, located on the ground floor, is open 24/7. You will need to activate your ID card with Security to gain access. Please note that you will not be able to access the main Library building areas out of hours.

- **How to join the Open University Library.**

Find out [how to join the Library](#) and [borrow, renew, and return items at Walton Hall](#). You will need to activate the barcode on your staff ID card.

- **Suggest new titles.**

Can't find a book in our Library collection? Open University PGRs may [suggest new titles](#) for the library stock.

- **Set up Google Scholar to link to full text resources provided by Library Services.**

[Instructions for setting up Google Scholar](#) are available on the Library website.

- **Check out LEAN Library and BrowZine tools.**

The [LEAN Library access browser extension](#) will alert you whenever you are on a website that The Open University has a subscription for, helping you to find the content you want with a single click!

[BrowZine](#) offers Library users a different way to browse content by subject across a range of journal publications, allowing you to build a personal bookshelf of favourite journals, and also to save articles to other services such as EndNote and Dropbox.

- **Find out about the SCONUL Access scheme.**

[The SCONUL Access scheme](#) allows all UK-based PGRs access to other libraries near you. Join the scheme early on to make sure your application is processed ready for you to use at all participating libraries in the UK.

Find out about our Document Delivery and Inter-Library Loan services.

You can use the [Document Delivery and Inter-library loan services](#) to get items that the Library doesn't have in stock. You will need to join the Library before accessing this service.

Use our print research methods and academic writing books.

Covering a wide variety of topics, these resources can be found on the second floor of the Library building (near The Park) and are available on a reference basis (i.e., they cannot be taken out of the library) in order to maximise the number of people who can use them. Alternatively, the SAGE Research Methods online database is a great resource for beginner and advanced researchers alike. Find it via [the Library Resources Databases webpage](#).

- **Learn about tools that will help you manage your references.**

See the [Bibliographic management page](#), and take a look at our tips and tricks guides to [Mendeley](#) and [EndNote](#).

- **Copyright, plagiarism, and your thesis.**

We recommend you think about [securing permission for any third party copyrighted material](#) early on. Take a look at the [Research Skills site \(OU login required\)](#) to help you make a start. Follow this activity to [learn about different forms of plagiarism and how to avoid them](#) during the production of your thesis (OU login required).

Data management

- **Write a data management plan (DMP).**

[Data management plans \(DMPs\)](#) help formulate how you'll store and manage your research data throughout your project. Research data is the evidence on which researchers build their analytic or other work, collected, observed, or created for the purposes of analysis to produce and validate original research results. Examples are images, video, and audio; survey results and interview transcripts; experimental observations; text corpuses; notebooks and lab books; models and software. Contact the Research Support team for advice; we can check your DMP for you.

- **Read about the potential benefits of sharing your data.**

There is lots of [information and guidance on data sharing](#) on the Library Research Support website.

Open Access

- **NEW FOR 2023/24 – join our new Open Research Community on Viva Engage.**

The Research Support Team have just launched a new Open Research Community on Microsoft Viva Engage (formerly Yammer). This will be a forum for posting relevant news, developments, and policy updates and for prompting questions, debates, and discussions on the direction of Open Research; as well as for sharing services and tools to support researchers in navigating this fast-paced world. This will be an inclusive, supportive, and active community for researchers and research support staff across the Open University to interact, discuss, share knowledge, and encourage good working practices to embed a culture of Open Research. Why not join the conversation today by joining the [Open Research Community](#).

- **Find out about Open Access publishing.**

[Open Access](#) aims to make the research process more transparent and published outputs from research accessible to all. Making research outputs Open Access can increase their readership and impact. Research funders increasingly require research data and published outputs to be made Open Access. If your research degree is funded, please [check our list of funder requirements](#).

- **Check out our deals and discounts on Open Access publishing fees.**

Library Services has deals with certain publishers, meaning you can publish your research Open Access without any direct cost to you. We also have discount deals. [Visit our page on publishing deals](#) for full details, including terms and conditions.

NB: deals are only available to current OU-affiliated research staff and postgraduate research students (excluding visiting researchers and ARC students).

- **Familiarise yourself with Open Research Online (ORO)**

[Open Research Online \(ORO\)](#) is The Open University's Open Access repository of research publications. It contains records of research outputs published by OU staff and postgraduate research students and theses of former research students. Many of the ORO records also have the full text of the publications attached. All postgraduate research students are required to deposit the full text of their thesis in ORO and a DataCite digital object identifier (DOI) will be created which provides a permanent, citable web link.

- **Find out about Open Research Data Online (ORDO)**

[Open Research Data Online \(ORDO\)](#) is The Open University's research data repository, where Open University researchers can upload their data for long-term preservation and, where appropriate, sharing e.g., at the end of a project or supporting a publication. Data stored in ORDO will be kept for a minimum of ten years after project completion. Published data will be

given a DataCite digital object identifier (DOI), providing a permanent, citable web link.

- **Investigate tools that help you find Open Access versions of research publications.**

Take a look at [Open Access Button](#) and [Unpaywall](#). There is also [CORE](#) and [EndNote Click](#), formerly known as Kopernio.

- **Set up ORCID.**

[ORCID](#) is a unique digital identifier that helps ensure you get credit for your published work.

- **Securing approvals for your research project.**

For guidance and advice on securing the required approvals for your research project join us at a Research Approval Advice Drop-in. [Use this link to join on the 3rd Tuesday of every month 11:00am - 12:00pm](#), hosted by Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), Information Rights, Library Research Support and Student Research Project Panel (SSRP).

Stay connected.

- Library Helpdesk and Chat service details on every [Library Services webpage](#).
- Contact the Library Research Support Team via webform found on every [Research Support webpage](#).
- Follow the OU Library on X (formerly Twitter) @OU_Library.

- Get Involved with [the Open Research Community](#) over at Viva Engage (formerly Yammer).
- Chat with us on Teams.

