

## ***Open Access: A guide for busy researchers***

### **What is open access?**

Open access publications are publications that are freely available to everyone on the internet. Open access publications should still be rigorously peer reviewed.

### **Why should I make my publications open access?**

- Wider dissemination, increased citations
- Free to read
- Fairness and accountability

You want your research to be disseminated and read as widely as possible. Wider availability leads to increased citations and usage. Making your publications open access means that no one is prevented from reading your work because they cannot afford to purchase or subscribe to the publication. No university can afford to subscribe to all the journals of interest to researchers. Access costs are even more of a barrier for researchers in industry, charities and developing countries.

There is also the principle that publicly funded research should be publicly accessible. RCUK and other major funders require publications resulting from their grants to be open access and HEFCE require journal articles and published conference proceedings to have been made open access within three months of acceptance in order to be considered for the REF.

### **How open is open?**

At the very minimum, open access publications are free to access and read for non-commercial research. Higher levels of openness are encouraged, for example, allowing publications to be adapted and re-used provided they are properly attributed.

The phrase 'free as in beer or free as in speech?' is often used to illustrate these differences. 'Gratis' open access publications are free to read - like free beer there is no cost but you can't re-use it. 'Libre' open access, like free speech, is a stronger concept: it gives readers additional rights, e.g. to re-distribute, adapt and re-use the work.

Creative commons licences are increasingly used to make it clear what rights a reader has. Under the basic Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY) the author keeps ownership of the copyright but explicitly allows readers to copy, distribute and build upon the work provided it's properly attributed. Other Creative Commons Licences prohibit commercial use and/or derivatives works.

Many open access scholarly journals publish under Creative Commons licences.



## How? Green and Gold

There are two routes to making publications open access, known as the 'green' and 'gold' routes to open access. Generally these apply to journal articles and conference proceedings, rather than monographs and book chapters.

Gold open access publications are available free of charge to readers immediately on publication. To fund this, authors usually have to pay an 'Article Processing Charge' (APC). The average cost of an APC is £1727 + VAT.

Green open access, also known as self-archiving, is achieved by researchers depositing copies of the articles they publish in an open access repository, such as the University of Bath's research repository Opus. There is no charge at all for researchers for this option. Use of the publisher PDF is not always permitted, but use of the author's final, peer-reviewed accepted version usually is. To protect their revenues, some publishers require an embargo, typically of 6-12 months, on green open access versions of their publications.

## Open Access Policies

### University of Bath Open Access Mandate

The University of Bath Open Access Full Text Deposit Mandate requires researchers "to deposit full-text copies of their peer-reviewed journal articles and papers from published conference proceedings in the University of Bath research repository, Opus". You can see the Mandate here: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/services/eprints/deposit-mandate.pdf>

### RCUK Policy

RCUK have recently strengthened their open access policy to the effect that publications from RCUK funded work must be either Gold open access, published under Creative Commons CC-BY licence, or Green open access whereby the author's accepted version is in an open access repository within 6 (sometimes 12) months of publication. The Library manages a block grant to pay for Gold Open Access for papers that acknowledge RCUK funded research.

You can read the RCUK Open Access Policy via this link: <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/openaccess/>

### The REF

HEFCE has announced that in order to be considered for the REF all journal and conference proceedings (with an ISSN) accepted for publication after 1st April 2016 must be available in an open access manner.

This can be achieved by uploading your Authors Final Version (i.e. the version of the manuscript after changes from peer review but before the publisher has added their formatting) to Pure within three months of the date of acceptance. The Library Research Services team can arrange any embargos that are necessary. You can read the HEFCE Policy here:

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy/>

Other major researcher funders including Wellcome Trust and the NIH have similar open access policies.

Library Research Services staff are happy to help with questions about open access.

### Please contact:

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Or visit the Library website: <http://www.bath.ac.uk/library/>