



Open Access Publications Policy

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Summary of policy

This policy sets out the requirements of the University for publishing Open Access.

Summary of significant changes since last version

There are a number of significant changes from the previous version of this policy. These are:

- a) Clarifying who the policy applies to; research active central academic and regional academic staff and postgraduate research students.

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- b) Referencing funder body Open Access Policies alongside funders.
- c) Adding that monographs, edited books and book chapters should be deposited in Open Research Online (ORO) to reflect the widening of funder and funding body open access policies.
- d) Changing the requirement to outputs should be deposited in ORO on acceptance or as soon as possible (this was previously within 3 months of acceptance).

Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces the previous version of The Open University Open Access Publication Policy [version 2, 2020].

Scope

Who this policy applies to:

- all Open University staff, emeritus, honorary and visiting academics, independent contractors or consultants **conducting research at, or on behalf of The Open University**, regardless of location, whether working alone, or in collaboration, including in collaboration with researchers from third party organisations.
- Open University staff who manage or support researchers, or supervise postgraduate research students.
- external supervisors of Open University directly supported postgraduate research students.
- postgraduate research students registered with The Open University on a full-time or part-time basis, including those based at Affiliated Research Centres and other partner institutions.

Who this policy does not apply to:

- those undertaking scholarship projects at or on behalf of The Open University unless the scholarship project in question is at the interface between scholarship and research, i.e. corresponds to the Frascati¹ definition of research. If you are

¹ [Frascati Manual, 2015, OECD, p44 - 45](#)

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undertaking a scholarship project, please refer to the scholarship guidance on the [Scholarship web pages](#).

- students studying taught undergraduate modules and qualifications or postgraduate students registered for taught qualifications, or studying modules that form part of a taught qualification. If you are undertaking a taught course dissertation module, please refer to your course materials and your tutor for further guidance on good research practice in the context of your project.
- This policy does not apply directly to supervisors of postgraduate research students based at Affiliated Research Centres. Nevertheless such supervisors are expected to support their students in their understanding of and adherence to this policy.

Related Documentation

Refer to the following documentation in conjunction with this document:

Funder Open Access policies should be read in conjunction with this Policy. Further details of these can be found on the Library Research Support [website](#).

The Open University [Research Code of Practice](#).

Introduction

In line with its mission², 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.

Open Access publishing aims to make research publications "free to read" for everyone.

The Open University supports Open Access publishing through the maintenance and development of Open Research Online³ (ORO) – the University's repository of research outputs. By ensuring its academics and research students are aware of and complying with external funder and funding bodies open access policies. By the transitional and transformative journal agreements⁴ with publishers that are shifting journals for a pay to read to a pay to publish model and enabling our academics and research students to publish gold

² [The Open University mission](#)

³ [Open Research Online \(ORO\)](#)

⁴ [Transitional and transformative journal deals held by the Library](#)

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open access (where the output is immediately available to read or download by anyone with an internet connection).

Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to identify the Open University's position with regard to open access publishing and to outline the responsibilities and requirements of the University and its researchers and postgraduate research students.

The objectives of this policy are:

- To set out the University's requirements for open access publishing.
- To inform all OU staff and students, those we work with, and the public of how open access publishing is managed at the OU.
- To provide OU researchers, postgraduate research students and research support staff with guidance on the options to publish open access.

Policy principles

- The Open University is committed to enabling its researchers and postgraduate research students to publish open access
 - In keeping with OU principles of openness, it is expected that publications will be open and accessible to everyone, as soon as this is practicably possible.
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2. Responsibilities

OU research-active staff (including postgraduate research students) are required to publish their research outputs in accordance with the Research Code of Practice⁵ at the Open University alongside any applicable research funder or funding bodies policies on Open Access.

⁵ [The Open University Code of Practice for Research](#)

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3. Requirements

All OU-affiliated research outputs (including monographs, edited books and book chapters⁶), should be deposited in Open Research Online (ORO) upon acceptance for publication or as soon as possible thereafter. This version may be replaced or augmented, at a later date if appropriate.

The output must be deposited in a form so that it is discoverable to anyone with internet access and by automated tools such as search engines. Where the publisher allows the full-text to be publicly accessible readers should be able to search electronically within the text, read it and download it without charge.

An output subject to a publisher's embargo must still be deposited on ORO as soon as possible. Embargoed publications will remain closed so that they are discoverable but the full-text will not be immediately downloadable until the end of the embargo period when it will become publicly accessible.

Researchers should ensure that they apply the appropriate Creative Commons (CC) licence to their publications. Applying a CC licence⁷ 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. There are a range of licences available and the particular licence required varies by funder and funding body, therefore researchers should ensure that they check their funder's and/or funding bodies policy. Where possible this should be a CC BY license as this enables the maximum re-use.

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.

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 funders and funding bodies policy (including allowable embargo periods) and requesting open access publication charges on external research bids and/or retrospectively from funders where permitted. The Library Research Support team⁸ is available to provide advice and support.

Where external funding is available to meet the costs of open access article processing charges (APCs) (e.g. UKRI Open Access Publishing block grant), researchers are encouraged to publish their work with immediate (gold) open access upon publication.

⁶ Deposit of a version of the full-text of these will become a mandatory requirement of the [UKRI Open Access Policy](#) when they are published on or after the 1 January 2024

⁷ [Creative Commons Licenses](#)

⁸ Library Research Support Team can be contacted at library-research-support@open.ac.uk

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4. Routes to Open Access

The decision to follow the 'gold' or 'green' open access publication route for externally funded outputs will be a matter for Faculty or Unit judgment but will also be dependent on the funders or funding bodies policy and the availability of funding to pay article processing charges if required to publish 'gold' open access.

Researchers and postgraduate research students are encouraged to access the transitional and transformative journal agreements that are available through the Library. Further details can be found on the Library Research Support website⁹.

5. E-thesis deposition

All postgraduate research 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 (either the full or a redacted version for thesis where copyright clearance could not be obtained) will be made available by open access after deposition. Under the Research Degrees Regulations postgraduate research students can request an embargo on the full-text of their thesis and the full-text of the thesis will be made available after the embargo has expired.

6. Compliance and monitoring

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

Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement

Policies are inclusive of all Open University staff and Open University postgraduate research students, regardless of age, care experience, caring status or dependency, civil status, disability, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, gender reassignment, marital status, marriage and civil partnership, membership of the Traveller community, political opinion, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, socio-economic background or trades union membership status.

⁹ Library Research Support website ['How to publish Open Access'](#).

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Further clarification

If you have any queries around the content provided within this document and how to interpret it, please contact the Library Research Support team library-research-support@open.ac.uk

Alternative format

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