

OPEN ACCESS POLICY

Supporting Open Access to our Research Outputs at the University of Aberdeen

1. Context

As an organisation which creates and uses knowledge to make a difference, the University of Aberdeen wishes to make its research outputs as freely available as possible, with the minimum of delay. Open Access allows research findings to be freely available to anyone throughout the world, including individuals and institutions currently unable to pay subscription charges. Institutions and their academic staff benefit from open access by raising their research profiles, and increasing the number of times that their research is cited. In the UK there have been important governmental, Research Council and other funding agency (notably Wellcome Trust) policies to accelerate the open access publication of UK-based research. Although the UK is leading efforts to increase open access publishing, there are a number of other initiatives elsewhere in Europe, the USA and other parts of the world which are likely to increase momentum relating to this activity.

2. Methods of Open Access Publication

Currently there are three main ways of making research available Open Access:

- i. Publication in a full Open Access journal, such as one of those published by the Public Library of Science (PLoS) and BioMedCentral. Readers of these journals can access full paper content free of charge. Authors pay an author payment charge (APC) to cover publication costs. The key advantage of this method is speed of publication- the article is accessible as soon as it is published. This model also enables text mining of documents in a repository. The main disadvantage is cost, although APCs for some full Open Access journals are less than those of 'hybrid' journals.
- ii. Publication in a 'hybrid' journal which allows authors to make a APC so that a journal article that would normally sit behind a pay wall (i.e. only available to readers by subscription or after payment of a fee) becomes freely available to any reader without payment (so called gold model of Open Access publishing by CC-BY licence). Like model 1, advantages of this model are speed of publication and ability to text mine documents. The disadvantage is cost- APCs can be high for some journals.
- iii. Publication in a 'hybrid' journal which allows authors to place a copy of their paper in a repository after an embargo period (so called green model of Open Access publishing by CC-BY-NC licence). The advantage is no cost. Disadvantages are delays in making the research available, and some of the embargo periods may be longer than those permitted by the funding bodies (see below).

3. University Policy on Open Access Publishing

Ideally, the University of Aberdeen would like to have all of its research made available via open access wherever possible and, where copyright allows, have a copy of each work placed in our institutional repository (<http://aura.abdn.ac.uk>).

It is acknowledged that there are journals which will not allow any open access route. The University of Aberdeen does not wish to restrict publication in such journals, unless this is in conflict with terms and conditions of grants that have supported the underlying research.

In the first instance, the University recommends that researchers seek to publish outputs using the Green Open Access model wherever possible. Where the underlying research has been funded by either RCUK or Wellcome, payment of APCs for Gold Open Access will be provided for journals that do not allow Green Open Access within the appropriate embargo period.

The University of Aberdeen will support open access costs related to RCUK/Wellcome grants for journal articles where the corresponding author is a member of staff.

It is recognised that a broad open access policy has major resource implications, especially if all outputs were made immediately available through the APCs. There needs, therefore, to be a phased implementation of support for open access publishing. The first phase of implementation will be to support grant holders to meet the open access publishing requirements of the Research Councils, Wellcome Trust, and other relevant agencies (the policies for different research funders can be found at <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet/index.php>).

The University will review after the first year or so of operation the systems and procedures put in place for phase one of implementation. It will then determine the priorities for next phase of implementation, and will seek to identify additional resource to permit further implementation.

4. Research Council UK (RCUK) Open Access Mandate

As a condition of receipt of funding, the RCUK has an Open Access Publishing Policy that all outputs (currently) peer reviewed journal and conference proceeding outputs arising from RCUK grants received since 2006 must:

- i. Acknowledge funding from RCUK with appropriate grant codes.
- ii. Have a statement of access to underlying research materials.
- iii. Have unrestricted on-line access to the peer-reviewed output, either through Gold (by CC-BY licence usually paid for by an APC) or Green (by CC_BY_NC licence) with an embargo of not more than 6 months (or 12 months for a transition period for AHRC or ESRC grants). Preference is for Gold as this offers the fullest access and text mining but it is recognised that the choice remains with the authors and institutions. If the journal does not agree to these options (Gold or Green with a short embargo) the work needs to be published elsewhere in a policy compliant journal.

The RCUK mandate applies to research wholly or partially funded by RCUK.

From 1st April 2013 the RCUK will be monitoring institutions for compliance with this policy; for all relevant publications submitted for publication from that date. It is accepted that there will be a transition period of a number of years, during which the percentage of papers available via the Gold route will steadily increase.

5. Wellcome Trust Open Access Mandate.

The Wellcome Trust's Open Access policy, applicable to all grant holders from October 2006, is that all outputs arising from projects that it has funded must be deposited in the UK PubMed Central. In order to do so, the author(s) can:

- i. pay an APC which permits immediate deposition of the published paper (as formatted by the publisher for formal publication)
- ii. or publish in a journal which allows the final version of the manuscript (i.e. with any changes made after referees comments) to be deposited in UK PubMed Central, followed by author deposit in Pubmed Central as soon as possible or in any event within six months of formal publication. This is the least preferred option.

6. Open Access Publishing Fund

The University has received funding from the Research Councils and Wellcome Trust, to support the costs of open access publication of research arising from grants made by them from 2006. This

money is held within an Open Access Publishing Fund. The Fund can be accessed by holders of grants from a Research Council, Wellcome Trust or other agency requiring open access publication as a condition of grant, **for APC costs of publishing in a peer reviewed journal or conference proceedings results arising from that grant.** The funds cannot be used for other costs associated with publication, such as page or colour charges. At the moment, this fund cannot be used to pay APCs for other types of outputs arising from RCUK or Wellcome funded projects, or any outputs arising from projects supported by other funders

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