

The University's Open Access Publications Policy Framework

In 2024, the University reviewed its Open Access Policy Framework. The policy, set out below, has been approved by the [Open Research Steering Committee](#). Previous versions of the policies are available via the [University's Institutional Repository, Apollo](#). Within this policy framework sits the University's [Self-Archiving Policy*](#), which came into effect on 1 April 2023.

The University maintains a site dedicated to open access at www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk. Here you will find information and advice relating to all areas of open access.

Open Access Publications Policy Framework

This document sets out the University's framework for ensuring that publications authored by University researchers, staff and students are made Open Access* (OA), where applicable. It complements other relevant frameworks, such as the [University of Cambridge Research Data Management Policy Framework](#).

Definitions for terms marked with an asterisk (*) are given at the end of the document.

Position statement

The University of Cambridge is committed to disseminating its research and scholarship as widely as possible to contribute to society as well as to academic advancement, in accordance with the [University's core values](#). All publications should be submitted to the University's Open Access Service based in the Office of Scholarly Communication at Cambridge University Libraries. The Open Access Service will make as many outputs OA as possible in accordance with copyright and licence agreements, prioritising where necessary those that are required to be made OA by their funders or for REF purposes.

The payment of additional funds to publishers on top of subscriptions (known as 'hybrid' publishing) is an ineffective transition mechanism towards a wider OA system. Therefore, the University is actively engaging with the negotiation of transitional agreements* with publishers and is supporting other OA activities that are deemed to improve the OA provisions available to the University's researchers.

The University will provide the mechanisms and infrastructure necessary to help researchers comply with funders' OA policies. However, researchers must bear some of the responsibility for complying with these policies, as well as with publishers' policies. The complementary responsibilities of the University and the researchers are detailed below.

The University is committed to supporting researchers' freedom to choose where to publish, provided that the journal of choice is not in conflict with their funders' contractual requirements.

Responsibilities of the University

- i. To provide a central OA service that helps authors to comply with all the relevant OA requirements and reduces the administrative burden of OA policies on academics.
- ii. To assist researchers in depositing their publications into [Apollo](#) in a timely fashion and in accordance with funders' requirements and respecting the copyright terms and conditions of publishers. This is done via the OA submission system, [Symplectic Elements](#). The University will also update and curate the records of the publications in the institutional repository, and manage any embargo periods, as appropriate.
- iii. To record the compliance of publications with the OA policy of the REF and apply exceptions to the policy where necessary for publications that are submitted through the OA system. The University will take responsibility for ensuring compliance if the publication is submitted through the OA system within the timeframe requirements imposed by the funders' policies.
- iv. To ensure the long-term preservation of publications in the repository and maintain the repository accordingly.
- v. To facilitate the 'request a copy'* feature in the repository for publications that cannot be made freely available due to copyright or other restrictions.
- vi. To advocate for OA to researchers, Departments, Faculties, Schools and Non-School institutions and communicate with them about OA requirements and the services offered by the University to help researchers comply.

vii. To manage in an effective and responsible manner, the University's Institutional Open Access Fund* as well as block grants* awarded to the University by UK Research & Innovation (UKRI)* and other funders. The University recommends green OA* as a cost-effective way to achieve greater public access to research outputs-and supports this through points i-iii above, and through the University's Self-Archiving Policy. Publication in fully gold OA* journals is supported through funds provided by block grants for those funded by a block grant funder (BHF, CRUK, UKRI or Wellcome Trust), and by the University's Institutional Open Access Fund for unfunded researchers. The University recognises that publication in OA journals might be the most sustainable way to support OA in the mid- to long-term; however, this requires a sustainably funded publishing ecosystem without payment barriers. With the introduction of the University's Self-Archiving Policy, publishing gold OA in a hybrid journal* is not needed to ensure compliance with funder policies and will only be paid on rare occasions when it meets [certain funding guidelines](#), or when the University has a Transitional Agreement* with the journal's publisher to allow publication without payment.

viii. To optimise publishing options available to researchers by investigating offsetting deals and signing up to these if they are deemed to be cost effective and in the researchers' and University's interest.

ix. To review the effectiveness of this policy internally through compliance reporting.

Responsibilities of Researchers

i. To upload their publications to the University's OA Service as soon as possible after they have been accepted for publication and no later than 3 months after the date of acceptance. The version that should be uploaded is the author's accepted manuscript* and the upload should take place via the University's submission system, [Symplectic Elements](#).

ii. To ensure their journal choice is compliant with their funders' requirements. Researchers are encouraged to contact the Open Access Service for advice or use the [SHERPA/FACT](#) service.

iii. To ensure their publications are published with the correct licence according to their funders' requirements.

iv. To acknowledge the relevant research funders in their publications and link their funding to their publications in Symplectic Elements when it is possible to do so.

iv. To engage with the information offered by the University on OA issues and attend training sessions as appropriate.

vi. To ensure OA publication costs are budgeted for in grants (if appropriate) and to safeguard this money within research budgets for this purpose. Researchers are encouraged to contact the Open Access Service or their proposed funder for advice.

vii. To make their best effort to reply to any 'request a copy' communications and keep their contact details up to date with the University, especially if one of their outputs is archived in the repository but not freely available.

Definitions

Author's Accepted Manuscript (AAM)

The author's final accepted manuscript that contains all the changes made after peer-review but has not been typeset or copyedited by the journal/publisher in any way.

Block Grant

An annual sum of money received by the University from a funder specifically to pay for Open Access charges.

Gold Open Access

Open access at the time of publication. The final publisher's version is Open Access via the journal's website without any embargo period. Gold Open Access can be considered to be 'born Open Access'. Fully Open Access journals* sometimes (but not always) charge a fee for publication.

Green Open Access

Making a version of work (usually an AAM) available in an Open Access repository, for example, an institutional repository. This is usually allowed within the standard copyright terms of a journal and is not associated with any additional cost. Publishers may apply an embargo to manuscripts in a repository.

Hybrid Journal

A hybrid journal is a subscription journal where individual articles can be published Open Access on the payment of an article processing charge (APC). Some publishers recognise the extra cost burden on institutions with hybrid journals by offering 'offset' discounts.

Open Access

In the broadest sense this means the output is freely available online. This can be achieved through either Green or Gold Open Access routes.

Open Access Journal

Open Access journals are journals in which all the articles are available Open Access. There is no cost to the reader. The business model of these journals is either through support from learned societies, professional organisations or institutions, where there is no cost to the author, or through article processing charges which are generally met by funder grants.

Request a Copy Feature

This is a mechanism in the repository whereby if an item is not freely available to a reader they can send a request to the author via the repository for a copy of the work held in the repository.

Self-Archiving Policy

The University's [Self-Archiving Policy](#) came into effect on 1 April 2023. The policy applies to all peer-reviewed research articles submitted after 1 April 2023, including reviews and conference papers, that are accepted for final publication in either a journal, conference proceeding or publishing platform. The policy allows authors to make their accepted research articles available in Apollo immediately upon publication (i.e. to self-archive their paper). It is based on the researcher retaining their rights to apply a Creative Commons licence to the accepted version of the manuscript ('rights retention').

Transitional Agreement

A transitional agreement is where the University has an agreement with a publisher that enables University members to read articles and allows researchers to publish open access without payment (with the eventual aim of publishers transitioning all content to open access). A list of the University's current agreements with various publishers is available [here](#).

UK Research & Innovation

UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) is the national funding agency investing in science and research in the UK. Read the UKRI open access policy [here](#).

University's Institutional Open Access Fund

The University's Institutional Open Access Fund provides support to unfunded researchers across the collegiate University that enables them to publish their research papers in fully gold open access journals.

Policy Version:	4
Date of Policy Review:	February 2024
Name of Reviewers:	Alexia Sutton, Open Access Service Manager, Office of Scholarly Communication
Policy Notes:	Further revisions to this policy may be required before the Date for Next Review in response to changes in funder policy and changes in the level of the Open Access block grants received
Original Policy Creation Date:	January 2013
Name of Creator:	Open Research Steering Committee
Date for Next Review:	February 2025
Frequency of Reviews:	At least annually
Review is the responsibility of:	Head of Open Research Services
Location of Policy:	https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk/items/440f96b9-2dbc-4407-8686-78972b8af1ab