Open Access at London Business School

What is Open Access?

Open Access is the practice of providing full, unrestricted (‘open’) access to peer-reviewed scholarly articles and other research outputs via the internet without expectation of payment. It includes the access, use (including printing and download) and reuse (with acknowledgment) of published scholarly research in journal articles, book chapters, conference proceedings and theses.

Why Open Access?

The government’s commitment to transparency and open data means it seeks to ensure that publicly funded research findings are freely accessible for all to read and re-use. Funding bodies now increasingly require outputs arising from publically-funded research to be easily accessible.

Traditional publishing models limit access to research literature to those who can afford it. Many researchers are unable to access the latest research through traditional print or e-journal subscriptions due to its cost and availability. Rapidly increasing journal subscription prices and budget cuts have reduced the number of subscriptions available to libraries and hence reduced the exposure and impact of new research in published journals.

Open access utilises digital technology to allow the dissemination of research outputs to a wider audience via the internet. Open access publication of peer-reviewed research outputs enables researchers to read articles as they are published or after a short embargo period imposed by the journal publisher.

Benefits of Open Access to the researcher, the author and the School are numerous and include:

- Global visibility of the research undertaken at the School;
- Maximum impact for an individual author’s research with improved citations and usage;
- Ensuring research dissemination is in line with other research-intensive institutions;
- New opportunities for collaboration and further research;
- Enabling the tracking of research outputs and preservation of ‘corporate memory’;
- Ensuring legal compliance with research funder’s open access requirements including submission to future REFs.

Funder requirements

Open access to research is strongly supported and encouraged by all HE funding bodies; most now already mandate that publications based on funded research must be made publically available. To check a research funder’s open access policy, use the SHERPA/JULIET service.

- HEFCE have made open access a requirement for the next REF for all journal articles and conference proceedings. Those research outputs not meeting open access requirements will not count towards REF;
- Research Councils UK (RCUK) stipulates that peer reviewed papers resulting from research wholly or partially funded by RCUK must be published in journals compliant with RCUK’s policy on Open Access;
- The European Research Council (ERC) ‘strongly encourages’ ERC funders to make their publications publically available via an institutional repository.

Find out more about open access publishing with this short video from Wiley: Understanding Open Access
Routes to Open Access publishing

Research outputs are made publically available and open access through the deposit of an electronic copy in an institutional repository. Research outputs that may be deposited include articles, conference proceedings, theses, working papers, graphs and data. There are 2 routes to open access, Green and Gold.

Green

The author publishes their work in an appropriate publication and deposits (‘self-archives’) the final copy of the accepted, peer-reviewed paper in an institutional or subject repository (such as SSRN) at the same time as the print copy is published in a print version.

The publisher states which version may be deposited (usually the author’s pre-publication manuscript in Word or PDF format) and may impose an embargo period (usually between 12 and 24 months) before the full text of the deposited version can be made publically available. To check a journal publisher’s open access policy, use the SHERPA/ROMEO service.

Gold

The author publishes their work in such a way that it makes it immediately available from the publisher’s website. The usual method is known as the “author pays” model – the author pays an Article Processing Charge (APC) to the journal publisher who then provides immediate open access to the article on their website. A copy of the final, publisher’s version of the article can also be deposited in an institutional repository at the same time, without an embargo. Not all journal publishers allow this Gold route, however; check the SHERPA/ROMEO service.

Another route to Gold open access is to publish in a peer-reviewed, free-to-view Open Access journal (ie: a scholarly journal set up specifically to enable open access to research). A list of such journals is available at DOAJ the Directory of OA Journals.

Publishers copyright requirements

Authors of journal articles usually sign 'assignment of copyright' forms when their articles are accepted for publication and by doing so, forgo some copyrights in their work. Rights to the ‘post-print’ version are usually retained but not always; some publishers only allow authors to make their papers publically available if it is mandated by the institution or funder.

Many research funders now require any Open Access articles published under either Green or Gold routes to be made available under a Creative Commons licence - CC-BY (Gold or hybrid journals) or CC-BY-NC (Green journals).

Consequently, authors should seek to amend their agreement with a publisher, or add an addendum before signing, so that they grant a licence of copyright to a journal rather than assigning copyright. The JISC SURF Licence to Publish offers a way of doing this. The web site, Sparc (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) also provides advice on adding an addendum.

In selecting a journal in which to publish a peer-reviewed article and before depositing research outputs through a Green OA route, researchers are strongly encouraged to be aware of and to comply with:

- the funder’s requirements on open access;
- the availability of funds for Gold open access publishing;
- the copyright-holder’s (usually the publisher’s) embargo terms.

Check if the journal in which you wish to publish complies with your funder’s open access requirements through the SHERPA/FACT service (the Funders and Authors Compliance Tool).