

RCUK Policy on Access to Research Outputs

*Professor Mark Llewellyn
Director of Research, AHRC
m.llewellyn@ahrc.ac.uk*



Research Councils UK



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



£11.2B



Engineering and Physical Sciences
Research Council



**NATURAL
ENVIRONMENT
RESEARCH COUNCIL**



Science & Technology
Facilities Council



RCUK Position Statement - 2005

- Four key principles:
 - **Accessibility to publicly-funded research;**
 - **Rigorous quality assurance;**
 - Efficient and cost-effective access mechanisms;
 - Long-term preservation and accessibility of outputs.

RCUK Key Principles

- **Accessibility to publicly-funded research;**
 - Ideas and knowledge derived from publicly-funded research must be made available and accessible for public use, interrogation and scrutiny, as widely, rapidly and effectively as practicable.
- Rigorous quality assurance;
- Efficient and cost-effective access mechanisms;
- Long-term preservation and accessibility of outputs.

RCUK Key Principles

- Accessibility to publicly-funded research;
- **Rigorous quality assurance;**
 - Published research outputs must be subject to rigorous quality assurance, through effective peer review mechanisms.
- Efficient and cost-effective access mechanisms;
- Long-term preservation and accessibility of outputs.

Which means?

- Research outputs must be accessible to enable exploitation;
- Research funders have a responsibility to ensure accessibility;
- Dissemination is part of the research process and has to be paid for;
- Publishers have a key role to play in the process.

Implementation since 2005

- Individual Research Council policies:
 - required that ‘current’ copyright and licensing policies, such as embargo periods, are maintained by publishers and respected by authors;
- Overall, poor compliance:
 - Sub-optimal funding mechanisms;
 - Authors don’t do deposit in repositories;
 - Lack of compliance monitoring.

Transparency agenda

Transparency is at the heart of the Government's agenda, and this also applies to published research. In a recent discussion with members of the research community and publishers I stressed the importance of open access to this information for everyone, and I'm delighted that the Research Councils and HEFCE have committed to taking this forward.

David Willetts, Minister of State for Universities and Science,
May 2011.

Growing openness

- UK Government's commitment to openness and transparency;
- Make the results of publicly funded research open, accessible and exploitable;
- Transparency and openness to drive innovation and growth.

RCUK Policy on Access to Research Outputs

- Developed in parallel with and informed by the recommendations of Finch;
- RCUK implementation of Government's policy;
- Formally announced 16th July 2012.

RCUK Policy

- Defines what RCUK means by Open Access;
- States RCUK's expectations of Researchers and the publication options available to them;
- Sets out criteria for assessing whether any particular Journal complies with the policy;
- Applies to all peer-reviewed research publications submitted for publication from 1st April 2013. Whether wholly or partially funded by Research Councils.

And more

- Authors must include:
 - Details of funding that supported the research;
 - Statement on how the underlying research materials – data, samples & models – can be accessed.

RCUK definition of 'Open Access'

Unrestricted, on-line access to peer reviewed and published scholarly research papers.

Specifically a user must be able to do the following free of any publisher-imposed access charge:

1. Read published research papers in an electronic format.
2. Search for and re-use (including download) the content.

Allows unrestricted use of manual and automated text and data mining tools, as well as unrestricted re-use of content with proper attribution (as defined by CC-BY).

Journal compliance

- Gold with CC-BY;
 - Or if the publisher will not offer Gold CC-BY then they must offer:
- Green (at least post print) with a maximum embargo period of 6(12) months, and CC-BY-NC.

Funding

- Research Councils will provide funding for APCs through block grants to institutions;
- Institutions must establish Publication Funds and the processes and procedures for payment of APCs;
- Announcement soon on size of fund and the mechanism to distribute it between institutions;
- ‘Light touch’ guidance – use the money to best deliver RCUK Policy.

Policy in a nut-shell

- Authors must publish in a RCUK Open Access compliant journal;
- Journal achieves compliance through Gold CC-BY, else Green, 6(12) months, post-print, CC-BY-NC.
- RCUK preference is for Gold. However, choice is with Authors and their institutions.

Next steps

- Announcement on APC funding mechanism (Autumn);
- Engagement with universities about implementation of policy, especially on guidelines for how funds can be used (Autumn);
- Production of revised guidance of what the policy means and choice of gold vs green (asap).