

Open Access

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What is open access?

Open Access is the free and open availability of research outputs online. Typically those outputs are made available either in journals or by deposit in online repositories. The most common open access outputs are peer-reviewed journal articles. However, monographs, book chapters, conference papers, theses and research data can also be made open access.

Why choose or engage with open access?

Benefits for researchers

Open access to your research outputs leads to wider dissemination, more downloads, higher citation levels and increased possibilities for collaboration.

Compliance with funder policies

Many funders, including RCUK, The Wellcome Trust and The British Heart Foundation require papers they fund be made open access. They usually expect this to be achieved upon publication via the publisher's website or through prompt deposit in a particular repository. Understanding your funder's requirements is vital because non-compliance may affect future grant applications. For more information about funders and their requirements, please check our [Funder Policies](#) page.

Complying with HEFCE's Policy

Whether your funders have an open access requirement or not, papers accepted from the 1st April 2016 will need to be made open access to comply with HEFCE's [open access requirements](#). Only papers for which the necessary steps are taken will be eligible for REF2021 submission. The policy requires researchers to make journal articles and conference proceedings open access on a repository, within a time limit after acceptance. It will never be necessary to pay a fee to comply with HEFCE. See [this document](#) for a more detailed précis of how to comply.

Complying with King's Publications policy

In line with the HEFCE policy, [King's Publications Policy](#) requires that King's authors make all of their research outputs open access on the [Research Portal](#). This is achieved by uploading to Pure the final version permitted by the publisher. This should be done as soon as possible after the date of publication - taking publisher embargo periods and the policies of external funders and HEFCE into account.

What are the routes to open access?

As has already been outlined, open access can be achieved by two routes - Green (repository) and Gold (publisher's website). Below are brief summaries of each method. Please note that these two routes are not mutually exclusive. You are required to make every article you publish open access via the green route - that is, by uploading the author accepted manuscript to Pure, but you may also be required to make your article open access via the gold route to comply with your funder's policy.

Green open access

A copy of the research output is uploaded to an institutional repository (Pure) or subject repository.

There are no publishing charges.

There may be an embargo period, depending on the publisher's stipulations.

Version available via Green open access is usually Author's accepted manuscript (ie final draft post-refereeing), but can occasionally be the final published version.

Gold open access

Research outputs openly available to all on the publisher's site immediately upon publication.

May require payment of an Article Processing Charge (APC), the average cost is £1800.

Some journals funded by subscriptions also accept payment to make individual articles open access. These are commonly called "hybrid" journals. The alternative are "fully open access" journals, which charge no subscriptions, but for which payment of APCs is obligatory in order to publish.

How can the Research Support Team help?

- We can give detailed guidance on HEFCE's open access policy to ensure your papers are eligible for submission to REF2021.
- We can help you comply with your funders' open access mandates and where immediate open access (usually Gold) is required by a funder, we administer funds intended to cover APCs for which you may be eligible.
- We also have information on publisher's [membership schemes and deals](#) that can benefit King's authors - and which can offer APC discounts even when we aren't able to provide funds directly.
- We offer assistance creating publication records on Pure, and advice on the appropriate versions of documents to upload (primarily the author's accepted manuscript though sometimes final publisher's pdf).
- We can help inform your decisions about where to publish - especially when funder mandates come into conflict with publisher's embargo or licencing requirements.
- We can provide general guidance or answer specific questions on open access.

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