

Birmingham City University “Open-Access by Default” Policy v1.0

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION

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Context of Open Access

“Open Access” (OA) refers to unrestricted, online access to the published findings of research. OA is an important principal to ensure that outcomes from public-funded research are accessible to anyone with an internet connection, in a timely manner and without the restrictions of publisher “pay-walls” or creating User-Accounts. An important element of OA is “discoverability”, i.e. the ability for common search-engines to find the meta-data associated with OA artefacts to enable these to be accessed by users from the OA source.

In an academic research context the general principles of Open Access are encapsulated in guidance documents from [HEFCE](#); [RCUK](#) and the [EC DG Research and Innovation](#). Individual research funding bodies may have very specific policies on OA and permissible embargo periods which are agreed to as a condition of receiving grant funding.

OA can be normally be achieved by two routes, commonly designated as Gold OA and Green OA. Gold normally requires the payment of article processing charges (APC) by the author to the publisher, to ensure the artefact is OA from the point of publication. Green OA can be achieved by depositing a permissible version of the artefact into an Institutional or Subject Repository, subject to the copyright restrictions of the Journal. Many journals provide a Green AA route after an embargo period has elapsed, prior to which the artefact is only available to paid subscribers (unless it has been deposited into Gold OA by the author). The copyright and self-archiving policies of individual journals can be found using the Sherpa / Romeo service: <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/index.php>

Open-Access is known to increase discoverability; citation and application of research findings, which are all pre-cursors to research impact.

This document summarises Birmingham City University’s commitment to Open Access and explains how this commitment is ensured through Research Policies ratified and monitored by the University’s Research Committee.

Background to HEFCE REF Compliance

HEFCE has introduced an open access policy that governs eligibility for the submission of research outputs to the next [REF](#). To be eligible for submission to REF 2021, authors’ outputs must have been deposited in an; institutional or subject repository and should be discoverable; free to read and free to download for anyone with an internet connection. This requirement applies **only** to journal articles and conference proceedings with an International Standard Serial Number. The policy allows for journal embargo periods to be respected, during which the meta-data will be discoverable but public access to the full-text will not be available via the repository. The policy applies to in-scope outputs accepted for public after 1-April-2016, which must be deposited within three months of acceptance (as given in the acceptance letter or email from the publication to the author). The REF OA requirements will not apply to monographs; books; book chapters; working papers; creative or practice-based research outputs or to data.

Birmingham City University “Open Access by Default” Policy

The University embraces fully the academic principles of Open Access for research outputs and research data, whilst simultaneously recognising the rights of individual staff and complying with copyright, intellectual property and other legal obligations, which may be in conflict with OA.

In recognition of the public benefit of unrestricted access to research, the University has adopted an “Open Access by Default” (OAbD) policy for outputs of all types emanating from research which has been supported in full or in part from public funding sources, where OA is legally allowable.

Whilst the OA requirements specifically for REF submissibility apply only to academic journals and conference papers carrying an ISSN, OAbD extends this to encompass all forms of research output recognised by REF (see Appendix A).

Given the diversity of research output types and the myriad of legal restrictions surrounding these, there will be many cases where the full-text or other digital artefact cannot be made available under OA and the University’s OABD commitment cannot, of course, over-ride legal copyright; intellectual property or other legal considerations.

Scope of University Repository Deposition Policy

This OAbD policy will apply to all University staff who are research active and who have a significant responsibility to undertake research. This will include all staff who receive a research-specific allocation in their Workload Allocation Model. Staff will be required, within three months of acceptance for publication or equivalent date for performances; exhibitions; public dissemination, etc to deposit into the University’s [Open Access Repository](#) the meta-data for their research artefacts and to provide a digital object identifier or other locator to the artefact where this cannot be held in the repository.

The meta-data deposition should be accompanied by the uploading of a searchable full-text copy or other downloadable digital artefact, unless there are legal barriers that prevent this. Deposited artefacts will normally be made available under a Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial Non-Derivative (CC BY-NC-ND) licence, which satisfies the HEFCE REF OA requirements. This licence allows the public to download and share the artefacts as long as the author / creator is credited but prevents modification or use for commercial purposes. In certain cases, where the intention is to enable users to download; build on or modify artefacts, a less restrictive form of CC licence could be allowed, after appropriate guidance and checking of the legal position.

The records held in the BCU Repository will create the publications list against which their research performance will be assessed against publication and dissemination targets set in their IPR and which will be used to evidence compliance with funder Terms and Conditions related to publications; Open-Access and Public Engagement.

CONCLUSION

The existence of a University Policy on Open-Access will be helpful to raise internal awareness of Open Access compliance and the role a Repository can play in aiding discoverability of research outputs of all forms, over and above those required by the fairly limited policies of HEFCE REF compliance.

The University Repository is already registered with the Directory of Open Access repositories, openDOAR http://www.open_doar.org.

Once approved, the University OAbD policy can be registered with the Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies (ROARMAP) <https://roarmap.eprints.org/>, a searchable international registry charting the growth of open access mandates and policies adopted by universities, research institutions and research funders .

APPENDIX A: REF Output Types

Output Type	
Type	Description
A	Authored book
B	Edited book
C	Chapter in book
D	Journal article
E	Conference contribution
F	Patent/published patent application
G	Software
H	Website content
I	Performance
J	Composition
K	Design
L	Artefact
M	Exhibition
N	Research report for external body
P	Devices and products
Q	Digital or visual media
R	Scholarly edition
S	Research datasets and databases
T	Other form of assessable output
U	Working paper