

University of Westminster Open Access Policy

Version Record

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2	December 2023	Nina Watts	Academic Council	Allow deposit of Version of Record of outputs where published under a Creative Commons licence; strong encouragement of ORCID; Rights Retention Strategy Support; statement on SDGs; EDI & open research recognition; practice research inclusion; Read & Publish agreements
1	March 2018	Nina Watts	Academic Council	

Accessibility

We are committed to ensuring our websites and content are digitally accessible according to the Public Sector Bodies Accessibility Regulations (2018). This policy is published on our website and can be requested in a range of formats, e.g., Word, PDF, plain text, and alternative formats such as large print or Braille. If you would like to request this document in a different format you can contact us for support by email at digitalaccessibility@westminster.ac.uk.

If you are unable to contact us by email, you can contact us for support by telephoning 0207 911 5000 and asking for the Clerk to the Court of Governors or the Governance Support Officer.

This document has been designed to maximise usability. Should you encounter an accessibility barrier, please report it to digitalaccessibility@westminster.ac.uk.

To implement this policy, users are asked to access other digital information or systems. The University has published accessibility statements which you can access from each system. If you need an alternative to using these systems to implement the policy, please contact the Repository and Open Access Manager for support by email at repository@westminster.ac.uk.

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1. Introduction / General Principle

The University's Research and Knowledge Exchange Strategy recognizes our research will only make a difference if it is visible, accessible, and openly available wherever possible¹. As such it supports the principle of making the results of publicly funded and peer-reviewed research available via open access to enable the widest possible dissemination and reuse of its research and to ensure compliance with Research England, UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) and other funders' requirements. Open access requirements are increasingly embedded in scholarly communications and to support this principle the University operates an institutional repository, WestminsterResearch² for 'Green' open access papers (the University's preferred route), and supports other models where funding permits.

Open access is part of the wider open research³ (or, open science) landscape, which extends the principle of open access to research publications and research data to all aspects, methods, and products of the research lifecycle. There is an expectation that open research, which improves the transparency, integrity, robustness, reproducibility, and reach of scholarly research, is embedded across the research and knowledge exchange lifecycle. It is acknowledged that open research looks different for each discipline and that making research data as open as possible also respects the Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Re-usable (FAIR) Principles⁴ where transparency of access respects intellectual property rights, for example in relation to non-traditional research created by practice research disciplines. As such this policy should be ready in conjunction with the University's Research Data Management Policy⁵ and guidance⁶.

Benefits of open access include:

- Rapid and open dissemination of the University's research across the globe, leading to greater visibility and sharing this knowledge as a public good
- Ability to make outputs and links to full-text available via researcher and university web profiles.
- The maintenance of a complete and accurate record of research will support the University's management reporting and preparation for external research assessment exercises.
- Increased discoverability via Google, Google Scholar, other search engines and discovery mechanisms.
- Contributing to a culture of openness and transparency as part of the University's research environment, in line with the University's Research & Knowledge Exchange Strategy and with external funder expectations.
- Enabling and connecting with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): the Goals themselves enshrine the need for open access to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms.

This policy aims to:

- Enable researchers to share widely, openly and legally the outcomes of their research to a global audience.
- Highlight that academic researchers are directly responsible for providing and maintaining details of their research outputs.
- Clarify the responsibilities of the institution.
- Raise awareness of funder requirements relating to open access of funded research. Failure to comply with these policies may result in publications not being accepted to external research assessment exercises, or funders withholding final grant payments or excluding non-compliant authors from further funding proposal submissions. This will include the promotion of uptake of the rights retention strategy by authors.

¹ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-governance/research-strategies-and-policies>

² <https://westminsterresearch.westminster.ac.uk/>

³ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/open-research>

⁴ FAIR Principles <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>

⁵ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/research-data/research-data-management-policy>

⁶ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/research-data>

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to any member of University staff whose job requires them to conduct research.
- 2.2. The metadata of all output types must be included in the VRE and made available in the University's institutional repository, WestminsterResearch. The full-text of all journal articles and published conference papers must be made open where permitted by the publisher. For all other output types the inclusion of attachments is encouraged, including practice research.
- 2.3. Art & design and practice research outputs have traditionally been underrepresented in repositories and the open access conversation. Changes have been made to the VRE and WestminsterResearch to better capture practice research output types, including portfolio functionality. Practice researchers are encouraged to make outputs open where possible.
- 2.4. Doctoral research theses must be added to the repository upon completion, unless there are legal, ethical, commercial, intellectual property or other reasons not to do so⁷.
- 2.5. Where a doctoral researcher is co-author of a paper along with a member of staff, the paper will be subject to the open access policy.
- 2.6. Scholarly material which contributes to the overall profile of the University of Westminster may be submitted for inclusion in WestminsterResearch.
- 2.7. The metadata about pre-prints may be uploaded along with a link to the pre-print server where it is published.
- 2.8. When staff leave research outputs will remain within WestminsterResearch.

3. Researcher Responsibilities

- 3.1. Researchers are responsible for ensuring that they regularly maintain their research outputs record in the Virtual Research Environment (VRE).
- 3.2. For journal articles and published conference proceedings, a copy of the final accepted manuscript and date of acceptance must be included as soon as possible, and no later than 3 months from acceptance. If published under a Creative Commons licence⁸, the published version should be uploaded.
- 3.3. For all other types of research output, details should be added to the VRE as soon as possible and no later than the date of publication or completion. The author should consider adding attachments for other types of output and include a link to the published version, where available.
- 3.4. New staff will be required to add metadata and deposit their outputs, where relevant, into the Repository within three months of their start date at the University. A link between ORCID⁹ and the VRE is available to automate this deposit where a researcher has an active, populated ORCID account [See 3.6].
- 3.5. Where appropriate underlying data should be made available¹⁰.
- 3.6. Researchers are strongly encouraged to register with ORCID. An integration with ORCID ensures outputs are shared between VRE and ORCID accounts and can help reduce manual data entry.

⁷ See Research Degrees Handbook <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/research-framework>

⁸ See Copyright for Researchers: Creative Commons

<https://libguides.westminster.ac.uk/copyrightresearchers/creativecommons/>

⁹ See Persistent Identifiers <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/open-access/what-are-persistent-identifiers> for more information about ORCID

¹⁰ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/research-data>

ORCIDiDs should be included on personal webpages, when submitting publications, when applying for grants, and in any research workflow to ensure that the individual is credited for their work and that the correct institutional affiliation is recorded.

- 3.7. The author is responsible for ensuring compliance with any additional research funders' publication requirements.

3.7.1. Funding Agencies

The REF2021 open access policy and guidance¹¹ stated that from April 2016, to be eligible for submission to REF2021, all journal articles and conference papers published with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) must be made available through open access. This policy continues to apply until further notice¹². By following this policy and depositing papers in WestminsterResearch, via the VRE, within 3 months of acceptance, this policy will be complied with. Research England have stated that if an article is compliant with the new UKRI open access policy then it will be compliant for the next REF.

UKRI¹³, the Wellcome Trust¹⁴, the European Commission¹⁵ and other funding agencies now demand that authors of published funded research make their outputs openly available. Failure to comply with these policies may result in funders withholding final grant payments or excluding non-compliant authors from further funding proposal submissions.

3.7.2. University Gold Open Access Fund Guidance

A limited institutional publication fund is available for the payment of Gold open access article processing charges (APCs) where conditions are met. A full, transparent, list of institutional criteria along with application details is available in the University Article Processing Charges (APC) Application Fund guidance¹⁶. Applications are welcome from Early Career Researchers and potential none eligibility for the REF will not affect a decision.

- 3.8. Researchers are encouraged to submit their manuscripts for publication using a Rights Retention Statement (RRS). The RRS strategy enables authors to exercise the rights they have on their manuscripts to deposit a copy of the Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) in a repository on publication and provide open access to it immediately under a Creative Commons Attribution licence. Guidance¹⁷ on how to do this is provided by Coalition-S.

4. Institutional Responsibilities

- 4.1. The University provides a range of mechanisms to enable open access. This includes the Virtual Research Environment (VRE) Repository and its public facing discoverability interface WestminsterResearch (the University's institutional repository); the University of Westminster Press, a diamond open access publisher; and a team of experts to provide advocacy, training and promote best practice.
- 4.2. After submission, metadata will be checked and amended as necessary and a final check on copyright compliance will be made by repository staff.
- 4.3. Repository staff will apply embargoes where necessary. Outputs which do not have a publisher embargo will be made live shortly after deposit.

¹¹ <https://www.ref.ac.uk/guidance-and-criteria-on-submissions/guidance/additional-guidance/>

¹² <https://www.ukri.org/councils/research-england/how-research-england-funding-works/funding-we-allocate/publishing-the-findings-of-research-england-funded-research/>

¹³ <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-open-access-policy/>

¹⁴ <https://wellcome.ac.uk/funding/managing-grant/open-access-policy>

¹⁵ <http://ec.europa.eu/research/openscience/index.cfm?pg=openaccess>

¹⁶ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/open-access/making-your-research-open/article-processing-charges-apc-application-fund>

¹⁷ <https://www.coalition-s.org/resources/rights-retention-strategy/>

- 4.4. Records may be amended by Repository staff and other members of Professional Services to support external research assessment and other reporting purposes.
- 4.5. Members of the Library & Archives Service will provide advice and assistance to authors to comply with the policy, including checking publisher conditions. Information and advice is available at on the open access webpages¹⁸.
- 4.6. EDI and open research:
 - 4.6.1. The increase in the number of publishers Read & Publish deals allows for far more researchers to benefit from open access to their research articles, making gold open access an option to many beyond just those in receipt of external research funding to pay APCs.
 - 4.6.2. A full, transparent, list of institutional criteria determines how the University Article Processing Charges (APC) Application Fund¹⁹ is allocated and applications from Early Career Researchers are welcome. Potential non-eligibility for the REF will not affect a decision. Helping to ensure that there are fair and appropriate decision-making processes around what research is funded and supported.
- 4.7. The University's library subscribes to Read & Publish deals where appropriate deals are available. These provide access to read content, as well as publish research articles through gold open access in return for a single annual subscription cost.

5. Acknowledgements and Affiliations

- 5.1. When submitting to publishers, a standard institutional affiliation, "University of Westminster" should be used in all articles and papers, in preference to School or College name. This ensures that full credit is given to the University in bibliometric searches.
- 5.2. The source of funding, including grant code if appropriate, should be acknowledged in all papers.
- 5.3. Providing an ORCID upon submission will help to ensure correct author attribution.

6. University Take Down Policy

Material which has been included in contradiction to publisher copyright policies or other third party intellectual property ownership may be removed immediately on request. If investigation proves no infringement has occurred the full-text will be re-instated. Where publishers have been contacted and not responded full-text will not normally be made available. This will not affect the inclusion of associated metadata.

7. Policy Implementation and Review

Implementation Date of Version 1: 18 April 2018

Updated version 2 Implemented: 7 December 2023

For review: June 2025, or if required, in Spring 2024 when the REF open access requirements will be updated.

Nina Watts, Repository and Open Access Manager, June 2023

¹⁸ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/open-access>

¹⁹ <https://www.westminster.ac.uk/research/researcher-support/open-access/making-your-research-open/article-processing-charges-apc-application-fund>

Appendix A: Glossary

Accepted Author Manuscript (AAM) is the version of an article that has been accepted for publication and includes author-incorporated changes suggested during submission, peer review, and editor-author communications. This is the version before copy-editing, formatting, technical enhancements and pagination.

Green and Gold Open Access: Items can be made available through open access in two main ways:

- The item is published in the normal way and then a second copy, usually the accepted author manuscript version, is deposited ('self-archived') in an institutional or subject repository and made available on here after any embargo period required by the publisher, usually 12-24 months, known as 'green open access';
- The publisher's version of the item is made instantly freely available on the publisher's website, in some cases in return for an Article or Book Processing Charge (APC/BPC) being paid to the publisher, or as part of a subscription to publish paid for by the library. This is known as 'gold open access'. Where charges are not made to read or publish this is additionally known as 'diamond open access'.
- The publisher's version of the item is made instantly freely available on the publisher's website but no charge is made to read or publish is known as 'diamond open access'.

Read & Publish Deals

Read & Publish agreements allow libraries to purchase both content and open access publishing with one subscription. Read & publish subscribing institutions can access all content and accepted articles are published with no APC fees to pay at the point of use. The library subscribes to Read & Publish deals²⁰ where appropriate deals are available. These are seen as a transformative, or transitional, stage in the move from paid access to fully open research.

Practice Research

Practice research is defined by the Practice Research Reports²¹ published by Bully & Şahin in 2021 as: "An umbrella term that describes all manners of research where practice is the significant method of research conveyed in a research output. this includes numerous discipline-specific formulations of practice research, which have distinct and unique balances of practice, research narrative and complementary methods within their projects."

Preprint

A preprint is traditionally an early version of a scholarly article that is published online before being published in a journal. These days, a preprint may or may not end up being submitted to a journal for publication. The preprint process involves uploading the work to a preprint server where it is publicly available for comment and feedback. It is possible to track the changes to a discussion when using a preprint server as it retains previous versions.

Rights Retention Strategy (RRS)

The Rights Retention Strategy²² (RRS) enables authors to exercise the rights they have on their manuscripts to deposit a copy of the Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) in a repository and make it openly available upon publication. This is done through specific wording added to any agreement to publish.

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The United Nations sets out its Sustainable Development Goals²³ as "[...] a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the planet. They recognize that ending poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, social protection, and job opportunities, while tackling climate change and

²⁰ <https://blog.westminster.ac.uk/researchoffice/how-to-make-your-research-articles-open-at-westminster/>

²¹ <https://doi.org/10.23636/1347>

²² <https://www.coalition-s.org/resources/rights-retention-strategy/>

²³ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/>

environmental protection. More important than ever, the goals provide a critical framework for COVID-19 recovery”.

Virtual Research Environment (VRE)

Our online tool for managing all elements of the research lifecycle and the doctoral researcher experience.

WestminsterResearch

WestminsterResearch, the University's institutional repository, is maintained as an open access, permanent and secure online archive that contains the research output of the University's academic community.