

FAQ about Open Access

Uploading Articles

Q: What do I need to upload and when should I do it?

You should send us all peer-reviewed journal articles and conference proceedings with an ISSN as soon as they are accepted for publication. Upload your author accepted manuscript at www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk. It will only take you a few minutes per paper.

Q: What is the author accepted manuscript (AAM)?

The AAM is the final author-created version of the manuscript, which includes any changes made after peer-review and has been accepted for publication by the journal. Documents that have been typeset or copyedited by the publisher (such as proofs or the final published version) are not AAMs, but if you wrote your article in a publisher-supplied template then that is acceptable.

Q: I have no funders or my funder has no Open Access requirements (e.g. a College fellowship). Do I need to do anything?

Yes. You still need to send us the accepted manuscript upon acceptance as you will still be covered by the HEFCE policy. If you have co-authors whose funders have an Open Access policy, that will also apply to the paper and you will need to comply, even if you didn't receive the funding yourself.

Q: I'm using arXiv, BioarXiv or another preprint server. Do I still need to upload my article?

At present, yes. We need to know about your article for HEFCE reporting and so that we can advise you on any other action you might need to take (e.g., for [RCUK](#) or [COAF](#)). We are exploring ways of having these servers communicate with our Repository but this is not yet in place. You should also make sure that you are not breaching publisher copyright by making your work available in this way. If in doubt, please contact the Open Access team.

Q: My journal asks me to sign a copyright agreement or commit to an Open Access option on submission, not acceptance. Can I get in touch earlier?

Yes. Please upload your manuscript to www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk as soon as you are asked to make such a decision and before filling in any forms. It would be helpful if you could add a note in the comments field to tell us the article has not yet been accepted. We will then be able to advise you and if necessary commit funds, though we might have to ask for an updated version of the manuscript following acceptance for deposit into the Repository.

Q: Should I upload my back-catalogue of articles?

You can if you wish, however it is not necessary. HEFCE has a 3-month window from acceptance so anything older than that can't be made to comply. If you want to add articles older than 12 months to the Repository, it may be better to contact the Repository team directly at support@repository.cam.ac.uk.

Q: I'm publishing Gold Open Access in an OA journal (e.g. PLOS). Do I still need to upload the AAM?

Yes. There are several reasons why you should do this. First, according to current HEFCE guidance the article must be in a repository to be eligible for the REF. It is not sufficient to be freely available on a publisher website. It also needs to be deposited within three months of acceptance – which in some cases may be before publication. Second, it allows us to advise you on the correct Open Access option to select if there is a choice. Third, if there is a fee to be paid and you are funded by RCUK or COAF, it allows us to confirm your eligibility for financial assistance, to commit funds from our block grants and to provide you with instructions on how to have the publishers' invoice us directly.

Q: What happens after I upload my article?

The manuscript and the details you added to the website come to the Open Access team. We then check out which funder policies apply and what the journal's copyright policies allow. We'll then get back to you with advice on what you need to do (if anything) and – if you are eligible for funds from the block grant – we'll commit funds and give you instructions for how to have publishers bill us directly. We'll also add the manuscript to the Repository if publisher policy allows.

Multiple Authors

Q: If I've co-authored a paper with colleagues in the department, should we all submit the same article?

No, that's not necessary, so long as you are certain that one of your colleagues has done so. If all of you leave it to someone else, that will obviously result in none of you being compliant. The best way to proceed is for the person taking responsibility for uploading the paper to include the email addresses of the other Cambridge authors to the comments box in the website upload system. We can then copy them into correspondence and keep everyone up-to-date on the progress of the paper.

Q: My co-author in another institution has uploaded the manuscript to their system. Do I still need to submit it at Cambridge?

Yes. Current HEFCE policy requires that each institution take responsibility for its own researchers.

Q: The corresponding author doesn't always communicate when the article is accepted. What should I do if I don't find out the article is accepted within 3 months?

At the outset of collaborations you should make sure that all authors know that you are required to deposit the manuscript upon acceptance. If you do not receive the manuscript in time, you should send it to us as soon as you have it, but be aware that we will not be able to make it comply with HEFCE requirements. If this occurs after the policy begins being enforced on 1 April 2016, the paper's REF-eligibility will be affected.

Q: If an Open Access fee has to be paid and there are authors from multiple institutions, who pays?

If the article is eligible for Open Access funds under the RCUK or COAF policy, then we will pay in the following circumstances:

- The Corresponding Author is at Cambridge (even if the RCUK grant is held elsewhere).
- The Corresponding Author was at Cambridge at the time the research being published was carried out.
- The Corresponding Author is at a non-UK institution but there is one or more Cambridge author.
- The Corresponding Author is at another UK institution, but they have no Open Access funds available.

If the Corresponding Author is at another UK institution, we will advise you on the action you need to take, but will ask you to seek funds from them in the first instance. If that is unsuccessful, please let us know.

Manuscripts and the Repository

Q: Should the AAM include figures and other supplementary materials?

Currently, the upload system at www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk doesn't allow multiple files. If you have figures or other supplementary materials, there are two main ways you can proceed. First, you could append them or otherwise incorporate them into the AAM document. Alternatively, once we reply to you with advice about your options you can reply to that email and include them as email attachments. We can then add them to the Repository alongside the main file.

Please do not upload multiple files relating to a single publication as separate submissions to www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk as it makes it harder to associate them in our system.

For uploading your data and complying with funder open data policies, see the [Open Data \(www.data.cam.ac.uk\)](http://www.data.cam.ac.uk) or contact the team at info@data.cam.ac.uk.

Q: When does the embargo period come into force?

Publisher embargoes run from publication. If we need to add your manuscript to the Repository before then we'll give it an infinite embargo initially. Once we know the publication date we'll update the Repository with the correct embargo end-date.

Q: I don't want people to read or cite my AAM. It's inferior to the published version.

The Repository record will include the full citation details for the final version when they're available, as well as the DOI link to the article on the publisher's website. If publisher copyright permits (for example, if the published article has a Creative Commons licence) we'll replace the manuscript with the final version when it's available.

Q: Is the Repository discoverable? How will people find it?

Yes. Articles in the Repository can be easily found with Google and other search engines. We'll also give you a link to your manuscript when we add it to the Repository. You can share this link freely.

Funder Policies and the Block Grants

Q: Are patents/review articles/ books/book reviews included in the HEFCE policy?

The HEFCE policy applies to peer-reviewed journal articles of any kind and to conference proceedings published in journals with ISSNs. Patents, monographs, book chapters and conference proceedings published in books with ISBNs or book series with ISSNs are not included. If in any doubt, please contact us and we can advise you further. Further advice is available in points 11-15 of the [HEFCE policy \(www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy\)](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy).

Q: Will the block grants from RCUK and COAF run out? If so what will happen?

We have received annual grants from RCUK since 2013, but no announcement has been made about whether this will continue in future. We are monitoring funds and creating contingency plans if they fall to critical levels. RCUK also have a clause in their policy which allows for longer embargoes under the free, green option if money to support gold has been exhausted.

Q: Do the block grants cover the whole fee? What about page and colour charges?

We will pay the Open Access charge from the block grants. We can pay other publication costs, such as page or colour charges, for papers that acknowledge RCUK funding only.

Q: I don't understand why an APC was paid for one of my articles but not for the next one.

Different journals and funders have different policies. If you publish in a different journal or acknowledge different funders, it might change what the best option is.

Copyright and Publisher Policies

Q: Will I get into trouble with my publisher for submitting my accepted manuscript to you?

No. Sending us your manuscript via www.openaccess.cam.ac.uk doesn't put it directly into the Repository or make it available immediately online. It comes to the Open Access team. We will check the publisher's copyright policies and make sure that we only add it to the Repository in accordance with what they allow.

If we were to receive a take-down request from a publisher, we would do so immediately. To date, this has never happened.

Q: If I put the article on my own website, will I get into trouble?

Different publishers have different policies on whether you can put articles on your own website and if so, whether you need to use a particular version or apply a particular embargo. You should check the copyright agreement or author rights, or contact us and we will be happy to advise you.

Q: Do I still have the copyright after I submit to you?

Yes. You grant us the right to add the paper to the Repository but we don't take your copyright. If you sign a copyright transfer agreement with your publisher, this usually transfers the copyright to the publisher and restricts what you are able to do with your work.

Q: Will there be any copyright issues if I sign my publisher's agreement before submitting the manuscript to you?

There may be. If you select the wrong Open Access option or no Open Access at all, it might mean you're not compliant with your funder requirements or not eligible for funds from the RCUK or COAF block grants. Some publishers will allow you to change options retrospectively if you make a mistake, but this isn't the case for all. The best thing to do is to make sure you get our advice before signing any agreements.

Q: Which journals offer a green Open Access publishing option? Can you provide a list of approved journals or a blacklist of journals to avoid?

A central tenet of the University's policy is that it does not tell researchers where they can and cannot publish. Apart from the sheer numbers of journals involved, offering such lists may be seen as breaching this policy. Most journals – especially those from major publishers – do offer both green and gold Open Access options. If you would like advice on whether a specific journal allows you to comply with your Open Access requirements, please contact us and we will be happy to check for you. Further guidance can also be found using external services such as Sherpa/Romeo, although the information there is not always up to date.

You should also be aware of so-called 'predatory Open Access journals'. These are journals which often approach authors directly inviting publication, but then charge mandatory and often high Open Access fees. Many are not properly peer-reviewed or have other questionable practices or reputations. An independently-compiled list of publishers about whom questions have been raised is available at <http://scholarlyoa.com/publishers/>. If you submit an article to the Open Access service that seems to be in such a journal, we will try to point it out to you, but publication there remains entirely a matter of your choice.