

## OPEN RESEARCH STEERING COMMITTEE

Minutes for Monday 13 December 2021, 10:00–11:30  
MS Teams

**Present:** Jess Gardner (Chair), Marta Costa, Emma Gilby, Peter Hedges, Sara Hennessy, Mandy Hill, Patricia Killiard, Amy Orben, David Owen, Niamh Tumelty, Debbie Hansen (Secretary).

**Apologies:** Holger Babinsky, Stephen Eglén, Ian Leslie, Steve Russell, Siddharth Soni.

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Jess Gardner welcomed the group to the meeting. The number of Committee members not able to attend the meeting was noted in relation to the breadth of the discussion planned for the meeting.

**1 Minutes of previous meeting (30 September 2021) — ORSC-70**

An update to the minutes was requested by Mandy Hill: during the previous meeting it was mentioned that it would be useful for academics to see, as a list, which journals are covered by transformative agreements. Niamh Tumelty confirmed that we already have a journal look-up on the University website and indicated that, because the list is continually being updated, a spreadsheet would quickly become out of date. However, the comment has already been passed on to the Open Access Team.

No other amendments were requested and the minutes were approved subject to this update.

**Action:** Debbie Hansen to update the minutes to include this part of the discussion from the last meeting

Marta Costa joined the meeting.

**2 Matters arising and Report on actions from previous meetings – ORSC-71**

Matters arising that were not complete or discussed during the remainder of the meeting:

1. *30.09.21 Minutes Item 4(a) Open Access:* A word version of the open access policy has been uploaded to the Teams channel as agreed, for editing by ORSC members. Update: The action had been left open to ensure that Committee members have added their suggestions for minor changes. The group confirmed that they had no suggestions to add. This action is now complete.
2. *30.09.21 Minutes Item 4(a) Open Access:* OSC to publish the updated University's open access policy (updated with minor changes). Update: The Committee confirmed that the policy updated with minor changes can now be published on the University website. Niamh Tumelty informed the group that the more major policy review will be discussed during the Open Research Operational Group meeting this week.
3. Elsevier negotiations: The next iteration of the draft open access publishing agreement between [UK Universities and Elsevier](#) is expected before Christmas. Reviewers will have until the end of January to analyse the content. Jess Gardner confirmed that in the meantime University researchers will not lose access to Elsevier content.

Jess Gardner introduced this agenda item by acknowledging that rights retention is complex, made more complex by the different perspectives surrounding it. Niamh Tumelty talked briefly about the University of Edinburgh approach to rights retention policy which is due to start on 1 January 2022. She explained that the policy is clear and simple, asserts rights for authors, grants a non-exclusive right to the University and authors can opt-out if needed. Once the policy is implemented, the University of Edinburgh will monitor the situation closely. Niamh Tumelty and Sam Moore (Scholarly Communication Specialist) will be talking to the University of Edinburgh to understand how they developed their approach.

In Cambridge, experience over the past year, since the start of the new Wellcome Trust open access policy, is that rights retention has been problematic for some authors. For example, publishers may challenge the assertion of rights as they are concerned about potential impact on their publishing models. The challenge for the University is to help researchers comply with their funders' open access policies and the Open Access Team is having to navigate a difficult position. The proposal here is that the University needs to have a clear position that the Open Access Team can reference. The new UKRI open access policy starts in April 2022 and it has been agreed that it is not realistic to have a full University policy and consultation by then. However, a pilot with authors able to opt-in is considered to be achievable. A small working group to take this on has been proposed.

Amy Orben joined the meeting.

Mandy Hill from Cambridge University Press expressed concern. If this approach is rolled out, why would authors then opt-in to read & publish deals? This could be a backwards step for publishers on the route to fully open access journals via the transformative agreements step. If authors stopped opting in to transformative agreements because their accepted version was compliant via the rights retention route, the publishing models could be negatively impacted and it would make it harder for publishers to meet their goals (e.g. UKRI will fund transformative agreements until 2024 which would imply fully open access journals are needed by 2025). Mandy Hill proposed differentiating between journals that are within transformative agreements and those that are not, in which a rights retention route could be selected. She also mentioned that the vast majority of publishers do not see rights retention as viable. It was noted that CUP would be included in any consultation.

Peter Hedges joined the meeting.

Other discussion topics included:

- Clarity for authors - making sure that advice is straightforward and not confusing.
- Preprint servers and the REF: David Owen asked why, when use of bioRxiv is so heavy in the biological sciences and clinical medicine fields, bioRxiv preprints do not apply to REF. Niamh Tumelty explained that there are many preprint servers. For journal or conference articles that have been submitted to the REF, the REF open access policy required the upload of the accepted manuscript to a subject or institutional repository within 3 months of acceptance, but also introduced additional flexibility if the accepted version were available on a preprint server before first publication of the output. bioRxiv is one preprint server that does not allow manuscripts that have been accepted for publication by a journal or conference. This is outside of our hands but there is a REF consultation in progress and views can be expressed via this consultation. Peter Hedges also offered a practical suggestion: if structured conversations are needed around topics such as this during the REF consultation phase there is some funding available ([CSAP](#)). *Post-meeting note:* there is a distinction to be made here between preprints that are in themselves REF eligible as working papers; and articles which have been peer-reviewed and accepted by a journal or conference with an ISSN and are subject to the REF open access policy.

- Emma Gilby mentioned disciplinary differences. For example, in the Arts & Humanities there may be many authors who would have to opt out of rights retention, regardless of their wishes, because of copyright around images and music. It was noted that disciplinary elements can be worked into a policy document and indeed it is crucial to ensure that a policy document lands well with all disciplines.
- Amy Orben expressed concern that, with the new UKRI policy due to commence in April, there has not been any University guidance. Her group is MRC-funded and they have been looking at how to comply with the new policy, drawing advice from other sources. It was noted that guidance from UKRI on their new open access policy had been slow to appear and the University is not in the hoped-for position because of this.

**Action:** OSC to investigate what additional advice can be provided on the University website now.

**Action:** Niamh Tumelty to set up a working group on rights retention to plan an opt-in rights retention pilot.

**Action:** Niamh Tumelty to provide advice to David Owen offline regarding Wellcome Trust and bioRxiv.

#### 4 DORA Guidance and Metrics

– ORSC-73

Niamh Tumelty introduced this agenda item. Following the report to RPC in October, some questions now include: whether to proceed with a working group on bibliometrics; which groups, in addition to Schools, should receive the approved DORA guidance and timescale for this. Jess Gardner confirmed that RPC are happy for a working group on bibliometrics to be set up and this can proceed. ORSC would review the Terms of Reference once developed by the group and members should include a mix, for example, library and academic staff. She also suggested being inclusive in the distribution of the DORA guidance as people can then decide whether or not to reply. Regarding timescale, this will depend on what other items Schools are being asked to respond on.

**Action:** Niamh Tumelty to discuss timescale with Peter Hedges and Rhys Morgan.

The Guidance on the Implementation of DORA Recommendations for Research Assessment by the School of Biological Sciences (SBS) and School of Clinical Medicine (SCM) was found to read very well. Emma Gilby wondered whether the comment about narrative CVs - *'narrative elements come with their own biases (for example, they could privilege candidates with particular literary skills)'* - should be turned around (e.g. they may disadvantage people whose first language is not English, or those with dyslexia). David Owen expressed concern about narrative elements both in CVs and in funding applications: they may advantage those who are good at boasting about their successes. Marta Costa asked how the process for reviewers might be adjusted so that they pick out certain things and this led to a discussion around training and guidance. The next step will be for the SBS/SCM guidance to be sent to RPC with ORSC recommendations.

**Action:** SBS/SCM guidance to be sent to RPC with ORSC recommendations.

#### 5 Update from Open Research in the Humanities Working Group

This item was led by Emma Gilby. The group has had three meetings so far - in July, September and October - and there is a fourth this week. In July's meeting the group discussed Terms of Reference. This raised the questions of how to define open access in the Arts & Humanities context and how to implement open access and sustain quality of research. Arts & Humanities is a diverse field but there are certain features common to its different disciplines: e.g. i) that scholarly societies are a big part of this ecosystem and ii) that there is particularly intensive

editorial work involved in A&H publishing (e.g. translation, copyediting, etc.). Matthias Ammon has presented to the group about the LERU pillars of Open Research. The group agreed that the pillars were science-oriented and so they set themselves the basic goal of rewriting the pillars for Arts & Humanities; now in progress. Arts & Humanities research is very collaborative, including engagement with, for example, libraries, museums and performing arts. Cambridge University Press' working paper on different online fora for open access research was also discussed, and comments returned; many responses focused on the issue of labour and the concern about spreading people very thin in a 'scholar-led' landscape if the intensive editorial process is not acknowledged. With contributions in a further meeting from Sally Hoffman and Matt Day from CUP, and from Rupert Gatti from Open Book Publishing, the group also spent some time trying to get to grips with the funding of open access publishing. It was felt that, with the fast-changing landscape regarding open access and books, there seems to be a lack of transparency over how things will be funded. The group would like to see impact assessments, pilots and case studies around this. These would be of particular relevance to the future of scholarly societies, which also do more than publishing (e.g. they offer communities, conferences and support for early-career scholars); it is not clear what happens to that part of the field if income from subscriptions and royalties dries up (the main concern here being expressed as: 'Research isn't open if dead'). Turning to open research beyond the future of scholarly communications, the group is now returning to the other LERU pillars. For example, because FAIR data sounds science-based they are also looking at re-writing a data acronym for the Arts & Humanities. The working group will be producing a report after their meeting this week.

There was enthusiastic support following this update. Comments in general can be sent to Emma directly.

**Action:** Any comments on this verbal report to be provided to Emma directly (All).

## **6 \*Towards an Open Research Programme for Cambridge – ORSC-74**

This paper was a starred item and was not discussed during the meeting. Jess Gardner stated that this is a good piece to take forward, in iterative way, to develop a positive Open Research culture. She encouraged the Committee to review and feedback comments.

**Action:** All to review this document and post comments on this in the ORSC MS Teams channel or send to Niamh Tumelty.

## **7 \*Open Research at Cambridge Conference – ORSC-75**

This was a starred item and was not discussed during meeting.

## **8 Items to be referred to the Research Policy Committee**

The following papers will be forwarded to the RPC:

1. A copy of these minutes once approved.
2. SBS/SCM guidance on the implementation of DORA with ORSC recommendations.

## **9 Any Other Business**

None.

**Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 29 March 2022, 15:00–16:30, MS Teams

*Open Research Steering Committee Secretary:*

Dr Debbie Hansen - [dh554@cam.ac.uk](mailto:dh554@cam.ac.uk)

Office of Scholarly Communication, University Library, Cambridge, CB3 9DR