

Aston University Open Access Policy and Code of Practice

1. Background

Aston University fully supports and complies with the policies of HEFCE, RCUK and of a growing number of research funders, which require journal articles and conference proceedings to be made Open Access. There are two methods of Open Access (OA), the Gold or the Green route. The Green route is our default way of ensuring compliance with the OA requirements and makes a parallel copy of the full text freely available on Aston's Research Repository at the end of a publisher embargo period (typically between 6 and 24 months). Gold Open Access requires payment of an Article Processing Charge (APC) and makes the paper open access immediately from the publisher site. Gold route is favoured by RCUK that also provides some funding towards the cost of Gold open access of papers arising from RCUK Grants. In summary, both Green and Gold are equally compliant with funder policies. There are potential or perceived advantages of the Gold route in terms of rate of impact, ease of access and prestige, although the cost limits its deployment.

2. Open Access Policy Statements

- 2.1.** All journal articles and conference proceedings by Aston authors should be made Open Access.
- 2.2.** Green is the default route and Gold is the exception.
- 2.3.** Copies of all journal articles and conference proceedings should be made available through our Research Repository.
- 2.4.** Definitions of Open Access will be as defined in HEFCE's 'Policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework' or with the Funder's Open Access Policy, whichever is the more stringent.
- 2.5.** Implementation of this Policy will be governed by the Precepts and Principles in the Open Access Code of Practice.
- 2.6.** Authors will be supported in making their publications OA by the Publishing Guidance in Appendix 1 and further information provided by Library Services.
- 2.7.** Monographs, book chapter and working papers are not explicitly covered by this Policy but authors should act where possible to make these Open Access.

3. Policy Implementation timescales and monitoring

The implementation target, in line with HEFCE Policy, is 100% compliance from 1 April 2016. Exceptions will be permitted in specific circumstances in line with HEFCE and by research funder Policies. Progress with implementation will be monitored by the University Research Committee.

4. Open Access Code of Practice: Rationale

This Code of Practice defines the rationale for the decision-making process and outlines the boundaries and interrelationships of decision making at Institutional and School levels.

The University is committed to providing an effective Open Access route to all papers arising from our research activities so that is fully compliant with our funders' requirements. This commitment has organisational, IT systems and financial implications that would need to be managed in a sustainable manner in the long term.

5. Open Access Code of Practice: General Precepts

The Code of Practice is underpinned by the following general precepts.

1. Green Open Access is the default route adopted by the University for all of our papers, to ensure compliance with funders' policies.
2. The Gold Open Access route will be utilised on a selective, quality and budget-dependent basis and represents the exception rather than the rule.
3. The University has in place an Institutional Open Access (IOA) budget that is appropriate to support its policy and commitment to Open Access.
4. The University fully utilises Gold route budgets from RCUK Grants and other funders, and encourages researchers, Centres and Schools to also develop funds to support Gold route.
5. The University developed and maintains the appropriate work flows and IT systems for Open Access publication and these are managed via the Library.
6. The University developed and disseminated amongst our researchers a generic "Publishing Guidance" (Appendix 1) explaining the implications of funders' policies, publishers' practice and budgetary constraints in terms of Open Access.
7. The Schools deploy swift, effective and transparent "Gold Funding Decision Processes" to deal with author funding requests. These processes comply with the Institutional Code of Practice and also reflect, in an appropriate manner, REF discipline characteristics in terms of paper publishing in each field. Using this process, Schools decide all requests from their authors for the IOA budget and any additional School based budgets.
8. Authors are expected to be aware of the content of the Publishing Guidance and the School based Gold Funding Decision Process as these may influence author's decisions before and after the paper is submitted for publication.
9. Quality levels for funding Gold route: (papers with Aston corresponding author and complying with the Publishing Guidance)
 - 9.1. We will consider 4* papers for funding Gold route from our Institutional OA budget. Based on the REF2014 quality profiles, this would cover around 25% of our papers that are eligible and do not have other Gold route funding.
 - 9.2. If budget is available and when there is RCUK or other funder support, we may be able to fund 3*/4* borderline papers. Schools, Centres and authors are encouraged to create additional budgets to cover a percentage of the remaining 3*papers.
 - 9.3. Exceptionally, 2* papers that directly underpin our Impact Case Studies will be eligible for Gold funding from our Institutional OA budget.
10. Paying for the Gold route is arranged via the Library, no matter where the budget is coming from, as the Library can ensure the best deal with each publisher.
11. In all cases, Green route and when budget is confirmed to cover the article processing charge (APC) for Gold, the Library provides operational support to authors to ensure compliant open access publication.

6. Open Access Code of Practice: Guiding Principles for Schools

The “Gold Funding Decision Processes” deployed by Schools would need to take account of the following guiding principles:

- Transparency - ensuring that this Code of Practice is made easily accessible to all staff and researchers who may be publishing journal articles;
- Consistency - applying the Code of Practice in accordance with the publicised criteria across the Institution;
- Accountability - setting out clearly the responsibilities of those making the decisions and ensuring this is done in line with this Code of Practice;
- Inclusivity - ensuring our approach is applied to all papers in research journals with an Aston corresponding author.

The University will ensure that it both adheres to Equality legislation and follows good practice as identified within the Higher Education sector and particularly by the Equality Challenge Unit.

Aston University Open Access Policy and Code of Practice Appendix 1

Publishing Guidance for Open Access

This guidance leads you through the publication process to ensure that you consider from the outset how your paper will be Open Access (OA) compliant. It supports Aston's Open Access Research Policy and Code of Practice leading you through the decisions and actions that you need to take. The corresponding author will do much of this but co-authors also have responsibilities.

Library Services can offer advice and support at all stages (openaccess@aston.ac.uk) and further details are provided in the Open Access LibGuide available from Aston's web pages. See <http://libguides.aston.ac.uk/openaccess> .

Guidance for Corresponding Authors

1. Consider the likely quality of your paper

Green OA is the default for Aston publications with funding for Gold OA reserved for 4* or maybe 3* papers. (See budget options below).

2. Which journal(s) will you submit the paper to?

You should aim for the highest quality journal that is a good fit for the article.

3. Is the journal Green and/or Gold OA compliant and how to choose?

Gold compliance requires a Creative Commons Attribution licence (CC-BY) licence option although some funders may accept a slightly less permissive licence eg CC-BY-NC-ND.

Green compliance requires the authors' final accepted manuscript (postprint) to be made available in a repository. Funders impose a maximum embargo period:

- 12 months for STEM
- 24 months for humanities or social sciences

Note that some funders have their [own OA Policy](#) which takes precedence eg EU (6 months for STEM, 12 months for HSS), MRC, Wellcome and COAF (6 months for medicine).

Making your choice in the light of these definitions:

- Gold and Green options both available – you can proceed with this journal leaving the final decision until the acceptance stage. If you have a high quality paper you can apply for Gold funding at that point; see below
- Green only available – You can proceed with this journal
- Gold only available – Before proceeding you need to be confident of the source of funding to pay the article publication charge, see budget options below
- No Green or Gold option. There may be scope for treating this paper as an exception under the HEFCE or funder policy, otherwise you should opt for an alternative journal. Please contact openaccess@aston.ac.uk (for advice on policy interpretation) and your Associate Dean for Research to discuss if you would like this to be considered as an exception.

4. Budget options for Gold OA funding

- Your research grant or by applying retrospectively to your funder. If funds are provided by the funder you must use these and the decision lies with the Principal Investigator who will be guided by their School's Gold Funding Decision Process. Payment needs to be arranged through Library Services to secure the best price.
- RCUK Budget for papers with an RCUK funder. This is held by Library Services and is intended to fund RCUK funded papers judged to be 3* or 4* by the School. To apply see under (6) below.
- The Institutional OA budget should cover papers gauged by the School as 4*. To apply see under (6) below.
- School or personal budgets may be available for papers judged by the School to be 3* or less. Where School budgets are in place apply in the same way as for the Institutional budget see under (6) below.

5. Things you must include in your paper

- The funder and grant reference number
- Details of how readers are able to gain access to the underlying research data. Separate guidance is provided on archiving research data. Research Councils require data to be deposited and archived and a DOI for that data included in the paper. To organise this contact researchdata@aston.ac.uk. This is good practice for all data.
- Acknowledgement of Aston University in the format:

School XXXX,
Aston University,
Aston Triangle,
Birmingham, B4 7ET

If there are space constraints use "Aston University"

6. Actions when your paper is accepted

To pursue the Gold option :

- Confirm funding source. If you expect this to be the RCUK, Institutional or School budget complete the [OA application form](#) or send a copy of your accepted manuscript and a short rationale for requiring Gold OA in this journal to openaccess@aston.ac.uk. Library Services will work with your School to confirm (or not) funding according to the criteria set by the School to determine 4* (or 3* for RCUK or School budgets).
- Select a CC BY licence. Some funders will accept less permissive licences eg CC-BY-NC-ND.
- Arrange payment through Library Services openaccess@aston.ac.uk

For Green :

- Ensure that the agreement you sign permits you to deposit the authors' final accepted manuscript (postprint) version in a repository.
- Make sure you have a copy of the final accepted manuscript (postprint) as you will need to deposit this to be compliant.
- If you have co-authors in other institutions send them a copy of the final accepted manuscript as they are likely to need it for their repositories. Aston co-authors will rely on you to deposit the copy in Aston's repository.

7. Depositing your paper in Repositories

- Aston's Repository

For Green you need to:

- Add the metadata (basic publication details) AND the full text (authors' final accepted manuscript or postprint) to Pure ideally within one month of acceptance to ensure that we meet the HEFCE timescales which specify within three months of the paper being accepted.
- If the paper relates to a research grant link it to the grant in Pure.

For Gold Library Services will add the metadata and published version of the full text and may ask you to link the paper to the research grant.

- Other repositories

Check whether your funder requires you to deposit in a specific subject repository in addition to Aston's. This applies to ESRC, BBSRC and MRC. Note it is common practice for publishers to do this on your behalf in the medical disciplines.

- Staying Legal

Library services will check embargo periods and licences to ensure that copies on Aston's repository are made available in line with our legal agreements. If you make your publications available Open Access in any additional repository or website you should reassure yourself that both the version of the publication and the timing of it being made Open Access are in accordance with your agreement with the publisher. Advice will be available from Library Services or from publishers. Making incorrect versions available or doing so within an embargo period may lead to legal action against the University or bring the University into disrepute. Aston takes its responsibilities in this area very seriously and in such circumstances disciplinary action may result.

Guidance for Co-Authors

As a co-author much of the detail will be the responsibility of your corresponding author but you still have a responsibility to ensure that the paper is OA compliant and included in Aston's repository.

1. Is your corresponding author aware of this guidance?

Be aware of the guidance for corresponding authors. You are relying on them to take the steps outlined in that section so please discuss this with them. They are less likely to understand this if they are not in a UK university.

2. Things you must ensure are included in your paper

- The funder and grant reference number
- Details of how readers are able to gain access to the underlying research data. Separate guidance is provided on archiving research data. Research Councils require data to be deposited and archived and a DOI for that data included in the paper. To organise this contact researchdata@aston.ac.uk. This is good practice for all data.
- Acknowledgement of Aston University in the format:

School XXXX,
Aston University,
Aston Triangle,
Birmingham, B4 7ET

If there are space constraints use “Aston University”

3. When the paper is accepted

If the Gold route is selected it is the responsibility of the corresponding author’s institution to fund the article process charges. Exceptionally Aston may contribute to these costs if the lead institution does not have appropriate funds and a Green option is not available.

Make sure the corresponding author gives you a copy of the final accepted version of the paper.

4. Depositing your paper in Repositories

- Aston’s Repository
If the corresponding author is not a fellow Aston academic you need, for both Green and Gold papers, to:
 - Add the metadata (basic publication details) AND the full text (authors’ final accepted manuscript or postprint) to Pure ideally within one month of acceptance to ensure that we meet the HEFCE timescales which specify within three months of the paper being accepted.
 - If the paper relates to a research grant link it to the grant in Pure.
- Other repositories
Check whether your funder requires you to deposit in a specific subject repository in addition to Aston’s. This applies to ESRC, BBSRC, MRC. Note it is common practice for publishers to do this on your behalf in the medical disciplines. If so check that your corresponding author understands this and has ensured the paper is deposited.
- Staying Legal

Library services will check embargo periods and licences to ensure that copies on Aston's repository are made available in line with our legal agreements. If you make your publications available Open Access in any additional repository or website you should reassure yourself that both the version of the publication and the timing of it being made Open Access are in accordance with your agreement with the publisher. Advice will be available from Library Services or from publishers. Making incorrect versions available or doing so within an embargo period may lead to legal action against the University or bring the University into disrepute. Aston takes its responsibilities in this area very seriously and in such circumstances disciplinary action may result.