

# (Interim) Open Access Policy

May 2024

<b>Reference Number</b>	<b>Version Letter</b>	<b>Executive Sponsor</b>	<b>Officer Responsible for Policy/Procedures</b>	<b>Consultation Process</b>	<b>Date of Approval and Committee and/or Executive Officer</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
1		PVC (R and E)	Director Information Resources and Research Services, Library Services	Research Committee	Research Committee and Executive Team	December 2015
2		PVC (R and E)	Director Information Resources and Research Services, Library Services	Research Committee	Research Committee 30 October 2019	December 2019
3		PVC (R and E)	Research Services Lead, Library Services	Research Committee	Research Committee 4 February 2021	February 2021
4		PVC (R and E)	Open Research Manager, Library Services	Research Committee	Research Committee 15 May 2024	May 2024

## **1. INTRODUCTION AND SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

Aston University fully supports the practice of Open Research, with Open Access being a crucial part of this. There are two methods of Open Access (OA), the Green or Gold route. The Green route is our default way of ensuring compliance with OA requirements and makes the full text freely available on Aston's research repository ([Aston Publications Explorer](#)) at the end of a publisher embargo period (typically between 6 and 24 months). Gold Open Access typically requires payment of an Article Processing Charge (APC) and makes the final published PDF open access immediately from the publisher's website; Gold OA charges may be covered by a transformative agreement with a publisher or by a one-off payment. Authors will be supported in making their publications OA by Library Services.

### **1.1. Purpose of the Interim Policy**

[Plan S](#) is driving global change in open access, with an implementation date of 1 January 2021. Associated with this is the updated UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) open access policy that was announced on 6 August 2021. The new UKRI open access policy will also inform the open access policy of REF 2029, which has not yet been finalised. In light of the Plan S guidance and the intention of UKRI to adopt some of these points we need to implement an interim open access policy at Aston University to ensure that our authors are adhering to current open access policies and best practice.

### **1.2. What is covered by the Policy**

The policy sets out which publications should be included in Aston's open access repositories and how open access is to be achieved. It is closely aligned with Research England's [REF 2021 Open Access Policy](#), which is still in place until a new REF 2029 open access policy is announced, and takes account of the direction provided by Plan S.

### **1.3. Who is Covered by the Policy**

The policy covers current Aston University staff members with research in their contract, until such point that their contract with Aston ends. Other Aston staff members who publish are also welcome to make their research outputs open access through Aston's transformative agreements or via [the Green route](#).

Authors with funding from external bodies such as UKRI, European Commission, Wellcome Trust, etc. must also adhere to their funder's open access policies.

## **2. WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN ASTON'S OPEN ACCESS PUBLICATIONS REPOSITORIES**

### **2.1. Research Publications**

All journal articles and conference proceedings by Aston authors must be made Open Access. Where full text has been deposited, the publication is included in Aston Publications Explorer. All publications are included in [Aston Research Explorer](#).

Although, monographs, book chapter, working papers and other output types are not explicitly covered by this Policy, authors, where possible, should make them Open Access. UKRI funded authors must adhere to the updated UKRI Open Access Policy, which includes long-form outputs from 1 January 2024.

Any digital material that relates to research outputs in any supported format including multimedia should also be included.

Where Research data needs to be made open it should be added to Aston Data Explorer in accordance with the [Aston University Research Data Management Policy](#), and Library Services staff will create links between related datasets and publications where that link is apparent.

### **2.3. What outputs are not included in Aston's Open Access Policy**

Publications where any of the following apply should not be made public, although they may need to be included in Pure for internal use purposes. Authors should contact [Library Services](#) so to ensure that access is properly restricted:

- If the material is to be commercialised, i.e. it relates to a patent
- It contains confidential information
- Its inclusion would infringe a legal commitment by the University and/or the author

Aston Publications Explorer and Pure focus on research, therefore, university administrative reports and learning and teaching materials are excluded.

### 3. HOW ARE OUTPUTS TO BE MADE OPEN ACCESS

#### 3.1. Open Access for Standard Research Outputs

Where Aston has agreements in place with publishers for a single payment covering journal subscriptions and APCs (a Read & Publish Deal), Library Services will fund that payment and Gold OA will be available to Aston corresponding authors publishing in these titles. All current transformative agreements and Read & Publish deals are listed on the [OpenAccess LibGuide](#)

Note that some agreements have yearly consortium or institutional caps and not all article types are included in these deals. It is possible that not all articles will be published as gold open access if the cap is reached or the article type is not eligible. Authors should contact

[openaccess@aston.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@aston.ac.uk) if there are any questions as to eligibility. All authors are required to use their Aston affiliation(s) when publishing.

- Papers in hybrid journals in transformative/Read & Publish agreements

Authors taking advantage of these agreements must select a CC BY licence or their request may be denied. Current, contracted Aston staff (on Teaching, Research and Teaching & Research contracts) and current students are eligible for these deals if they are the corresponding author. Honorary, emeritus and visiting academic authors are not eligible.

- Papers in hybrid titles without a transformative/ Read & Publish agreement

OA requirements for papers in these titles will be met by the Green route only. The Library is not responsible for payment of APCs incurred by author(s) without prior agreement.

- Papers in gold titles with a transformative/ Read & Publish agreement

Authors taking advantage of these agreements must select a CC BY licence or their request may be denied. Current, contracted Aston staff (on Teaching, Research and Teaching & Research contracts) and current students are eligible for these deals if they are the corresponding author. Honorary, emeritus and visiting academic authors are not eligible.

- Papers in gold titles without a transformative/ Read & Publish agreement

Authors are responsible for paying article processing charges in journals not covered by current deals. The Library is not responsible for payment of APCs incurred by author(s) without prior agreement.

### 3.2. Open Access for UKRI funded publications

UKRI updated their open access policy in August 2021. The updated policy and FAQs can be found at <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ukri-open-access-policy/>. This updated policy clarifies the guidance around publishing in journals, including the addition of a Data Access Statement, and sets out the requirements for open access publishing of long-form publications. Long-form outputs include: books, chapters and edited collections, though other long-form outputs may be in-scope in exceptional circumstances. Please email [openresearch@ukri.org](mailto:openresearch@ukri.org) if you have questions relating to whether your output is included in this policy or not.

UKRI funded authors include those who have received grants from AHRC, BBSRC, EPSRC, ESRC, Innovate UK\*, MRC, NERC, Research England\* and STFC. Innovate UK and Research England grants must be for a particular purpose with directly related research outputs.

While UKRI continues to provide Aston with an Open Access Block Grant, it will be open to Aston corresponding authors for APCs offering a [CC BY licence \(Creative Commons 'Attribution'\)](#) including for hybrid titles that are in a Jisc approved transitional deal. Each APC will be capped at £5000 (inclusive of VAT) to ensure that funds are available to as many UKRI-funded authors as possible.

- Papers in Pure Gold OA journals with a CC BY licence

Funding decisions will be made by Library Services after checking UKRI grant reference numbers, the funding acknowledgements and research data statements.

- Papers in hybrid journals in a Jisc-approved transformative/ Read & Publish agreements

Where Aston has agreements in place with a Jisc-approved publishers for a single payment covering our journal subscriptions and APCs, UKRI funded authors may use these deals without incurring additional cost. If the funded author is not the corresponding author, Library Services can arrange payment if required. Please email [openaccess@aston.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@aston.ac.uk) to discuss this further.

- Papers in hybrid titles without a Jisc-approved transformative/ Read & Publish agreement

UKRI funded authors can only comply with the UKRI open access policy via the green route (see the policy document [here](#)). Open Access Block Grant funds cannot be used to pay APCs for these journals.

- Gold open access for long-form outputs

UKRI have made funds available for payments of Book Processing Charges (BPCs) up to £10,000 including VAT, Chapter Processing Charges (CPCs) up to £1,000 including VAT, and Diamond/ non-BPC open access models (£6,000 + an additional £3,000 potentially; including VAT). UKRI-funded authors should contact [openaccess@aston.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@aston.ac.uk) as early as possible to discuss the process for making their long-form outputs open access. Only Library Services can apply for funding on the author's behalf. These outputs must have a CC BY or other permitted Creative Commons licence.

- Green open access for long-form outputs

Where a publisher does not offer a compliant gold open access option, authors may choose to make their long-form output open access via the green route. To be compliant the accepted manuscript must be deposited in Aston Publications Explorer via Pure within 12 months of publication and have a CC BY or other permitted Creative Commons licence.

*UKRI-funded authors are strongly encouraged to review the full [UKRI Open Access Policy](#) prior to signing a publishing agreement to ensure they can comply with the requirements.*

#### **4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

In line with the REF Open Access Policy, authors are responsible for depositing the appropriate full text of their publications along with sufficient basic bibliographic metadata so that the publication can be identified within the timescales specified on Aston University [Open Research webpages](#). Library Services will add any additional metadata, copyright statements, and any embargo periods prior to records validation. The validity and authenticity of the content of submissions is the sole responsibility of the author.

Funded authors must properly acknowledge their funding and be familiar with their funder's open access policy. Authors should follow the acknowledgement format from their funder, but if no guidance is available, authors must include the funder and grant reference number at a minimum. Authors should also include details on how readers are able to gain access to the underlying research data. Separate guidance is available for [research data management](#) or via [researchdata@aston.ac.uk](mailto:researchdata@aston.ac.uk). In all cases, the Library provides operational support to authors to ensure compliant open access publication.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

*Open Research:* **Open Research is the practice of researching in such a way that others can collaborate and contribute throughout the research process. Open Research is not limited to STEM subjects; it encompasses all fields and stages of research with the goal of making the results Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR).**

*Open Access:* Making research publications, principally journal articles, freely available online with all barriers to access removed. Open Access is achieved through gold Open Access journals and journal articles, and green self-archiving in institutional repositories such as Aston Research Explorer.

*Open Research Data:* Making your research data freely available to anyone, anywhere in the world and downloadable without restrictions.

*Author's accepted manuscript:* Final, peer-reviewed version of an article, before the publisher's layout and typesetting is applied; also known as the author's accepted manuscript or post-print version.

*Metadata:* Information held as a description of stored data. Typically, the metadata of a publication record is its bibliographic details.

## 6. RELATED REGULATIONS, STATUTES AND POLICIES

[UKRI Open Access Policy](#)

[REF 2021 Open Access Policy](#)

[Aston University Research Data Management Policy](#)

[Data Preservation and Open Research Data Policy](#)

[Aston University Open Access Publications Repositories Governance Policy](#)

[Aston University Cookies and Privacy Policy](#)

[Aston University Data Protection Policy](#)

[Aston University Intellectual Property Policy](#)