Open research and the REF2021 open access policy

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Open Access (OA) week
Summary

- Introducing UK Research and Innovation and Research England
- Our vision for open research
- The policy landscape
- REF2021 OA policy
- Where next?
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• Introducing UK Research and Innovation and Research England

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• REF2021 OA policy
• Where next?
UK Research and Innovation

- More than £6.5 billion per year
- 3900 research and business grants each year
- 151 universities funded
- 38 research and innovation performing organisations
UKRI vision

UK Research and Innovation intends to be an outstanding organisation that ensures the UK maintains its world-leading position in research and innovation

- We will do this by creating a system that maximises the contribution of each of the component organisations and which creates the best environment for research and innovation to flourish
- We will preserve the strengths which have made today’s system successful, in particular around the Haldane Principle, dual support and recognition for the particular strengths and roles of each partner body
Research England creates and sustains the conditions for a healthy and dynamic research and knowledge exchange system in English higher education institutions.
Our roles

• **Funding** for HEIs to deliver research and KE, unlocking potential, generating impact, meeting national priorities and global challenges

• **System intelligence and analytics**: gathering evidence of impact of current and future research and knowledge exchange policy on English university sector, including on effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability

• **Engagement with HEIs**: understanding HEI strategy, capability and capacity, delivering policy to support continuous improvement and behaviour change

• **Close working with devolved administrations** on UK-wide activity to help UKRI deliver national priorities and become experts on UK HE system.
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Open everywhere

Research is a process of investigation leading to new insights, effectively shared.
Willingness to Share Research Data Is Related to the Strength of the Evidence and the Quality of Reporting of Statistical Results

John M. Witteveen, Harleen Dabas, Dylan Wohlgemarz

Abstract

Background: The emotional reaction to the sharing of research data is often hypothesized to be due to the author's desire that readers may opt to use their work in any science conclusions that contradict their own. However, data hypothesis have not previously been studied systematically.

Methods and Findings: We evaluated the strength of the evidence and the quality of reporting of statistical results in 196 randomly selected publications. IPR articles published in four large, reputable journals. We found that the strength of the evidence in the work is not associated with positive evidence regarding the quality of reporting of statistical results. The significance of the sharing in particular when reporting was any journal on statistical methodology.

Conclusion: Our findings on the basis of psychological arguments suggest that statistical results are particularly to verify when work is less likely to lead to new conclusions. This highlights the importance of publishing transparent data and accuracy of publication.

Introduction

Statistical analysis of research data is quite a norm, and decision to share or not may depend on the possible value of the work. As a result of research, a proportion of data may not be published. However, it is important to be shared in a way that is accessible and can be used by researchers and policymakers. The sharing of data in research can lead to new insights and conclusions. However, data sharing is not always straightforward. Researchers and policymakers must consider the potential benefits and risks of sharing data.

Methods

In the present study, we evaluated the strength of the evidence and the quality of reporting of statistical results in 196 randomly selected publications. IPR articles published in four large, reputable journals. We found that the strength of the evidence in the work is not associated with positive evidence regarding the quality of reporting of statistical results. The significance of the sharing in particular when reporting was any journal on statistical methodology.

Conclusion: Our findings on the basis of psychological arguments suggest that statistical results are particularly to verify when work is less likely to lead to new conclusions. This highlights the importance of publishing transparent data and accuracy of publication.

Open for accountability
Open for innovation

- Minimising the barriers to:
  - Ideas
  - Data
  - Tools
Open for researchers

- Researchers in developing countries can see your work
- More exposure for your work
- Practitioners can apply your findings
- Taxpayers get value for money
- Higher citation rates
- Compliant with grant rules
- Your research can influence policy
- The public can access your findings

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OA in the UK

Finch (June 2012) report pivotal moment for UK open access:

“The principle that the results of research that has been publicly funded should be freely accessible in the public domain is a compelling one, and fundamentally unanswerable”

• Set clear direction for UK open access and framework for policies to be developed

• Recommended all stakeholders work together
OA policy landscape

• Funders of research have OA policies (including the Wellcome Trust, the Gates Foundation, UK Research and Innovation)
  • Some include financial support to cover OA costs
• Complexities in the system: funder policies, publisher policies, institutional policies
• Gold OA, green OA
• OA journals, hybrid OA journals
• Subscriptions and offset deals
Policy instruments – UK Research and Innovation

RCUK Policy on Open Access and Supporting Guidance

1. Introduction
(i) Free and open access to the outputs of publicly-funded research offers significant social and economic benefits as well as enabling the development of new research. The Government, in line with its long-standing commitment to transparency and openness, is committed to ensuring that published research findings should be freely accessible. As bodies charged with investing public money in research, the Research Councils take very seriously their responsibilities in making the output from the research publicly available – not just to other researchers, but also to potential users in business, charities and public sectors, and to the general tax-paying public.

(ii) The Research Councils have had policies on Open Access since 2005 and this revised policy takes account of the evolving policy landscape, both within the UK and globally.

(iii) This document contains both the policy statement (Section 2) and the supporting guidance (Section 3) aimed specifically at researchers, their host institutions, and the publishers of peer-reviewed research papers.

Key Points to Note

- This policy applies only to the publication of peer-reviewed research articles (including review articles not commissioned by publishers) and conference proceedings that acknowledge funding from the UK’s Research Councils.
- The Research Councils UK (RCUK) policy supports both ‘Gold’ and ‘Green’ routes to Open Access, though RCUK has a preference for immediate Open Access with the maximum accessibility for readers.
- Funding for Open Access arising from Research Council-supported research will be available through a block grant awarded directly to research organisations.
- RCUK recognises that the journey to full Open Access is a process and not a single event and therefore it expects compliance to grow over a transition period anticipated to be five years, RCUK will undertake a comprehensive, evidence-based review of the effectiveness and impact of its Open Access policy in 2014 and periodically thereafter (probably in 2016 and 2018).
- When assessing proposals for research funding, RCUK considers that it is the quality of the research proposed, and not whether an author has or is intending to publish, that is of paramount importance.
- RCUK is clear that its policy on different disciplinary areas is likely to be varied and has therefore made allowance for a different pace of adjustment to permitting different embargo periods across the disciplines supported by the Research Councils. It will also be mindful of the differences between disciplines when monitoring the impact of the policy and, in future processes, when looking at compliance.

Policy for open access in Research Excellence Framework 2021

Updated November 2016

This document sets out the details of a requirement that certain research outputs should be made open-access to be eligible for submission to the next Research Excellence Framework (REF). This requirement will apply to journal articles and conference proceedings accepted for publication after 3 April 2015.

Concordat on Open Research Data

The Concordat on Open Research Data has been developed by a UK multi-stakeholder group. This concordat will help to ensure that the research data gathered and generated by members of the UK research community is made openly available for use by others whenever possible in a manner consistent with relevant legal, ethical, disciplinary and regulatory frameworks and norms, and with due regard to the costs involved.

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HefCE

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The Research Excellence Framework (REF) and open research

To be eligible for assessment, journal articles and conference proceedings must be deposited and available OA with maximum embargo periods of 12 or 24 months.

Environment template will require information on:
- OA beyond minimum requirements
- Approach to open research data
- Other aspects of open research

Overall quality

- Outputs: Outputs required
  - 60%
- Impact: Impact case studies
  - 25%
- Environment: Environment data and template
  - 15%
REF2021 OA requirements

- Journal articles and conference proceedings with ISSN accepted for publication after 1 April 2016
- **Deposited** in a repository (institutional or subject) as the peer-reviewed manuscript/AAM within three months of acceptance
- **Discoverable** via search tools
- **Accessible** and free to download following embargo (12 or 24 month maximum). REF doesn’t set licencing requirements
- Exceptions to the policy requirements (deposit, access, technical, and other)
## REF2021 timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2018</td>
<td>Panels meet to develop criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summer to Autumn 2018</td>
<td>Publish draft guidance, and consultation on panel criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winter 2018-19</td>
<td>Publish final guidance and criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>2019</td>
<td>Complete preparation of submission systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>2020</td>
<td>Submission phase</td>
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<tr>
<td>2021</td>
<td>Assessment phase</td>
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REF2021 OA policy

• REF OA policy is not there to catch institutions out
• REF aims to assess excellent research

• Exceptions to the policy, policy flexibility (1 April 2016 – 1 April 2018)
• Policy presentation

• Increased open access to research is resulting from considerable effort on the part of researchers, libraries, research offices
REF policy compliance

- For the 1st year of the policy (April 2016 – March 2017):
  - 61% of eligible outputs meet the full policy requirements
  - 20% of outputs have exceptions
  - 86% of exceptions are the deposit exception for ‘gold’
  - 19% don’t meet requirements

Research England (2018) Monitoring sector progress towards compliance with funder open access policies (forthcoming)
REF policy compliance

• REF-like outputs
  • Data shows some are focusing on making outputs which are likely to be submitted compliant with the policy

• 19 per cent of outputs are not meeting the REF 2021 policy requirements/have an exception
  • Many outputs already determined as not being submitted for assessment
  • Disciplinary differences
  • Tools
  • Institutional approaches

Research England (2018) Monitoring sector progress towards compliance with funder open access policies (forthcoming)
The 15,000th deposit for Act on Acceptance at Oxford was a journal article co-authored by Richard Stevens, Julie Evans and Jason Oke (pictured) and colleagues from the Nuffield Department of Primary Care Health Sciences in *CMAJ: Canadian Medical Association Journal*, entitled ‘Kidney age, not kidney disease.’ The article is due to be published shortly.

For more details see the [ORA record](https://ora.ox.ac.uk/), which will link to the published version when it appears, and display the deposited manuscript in accordance with publisher copyright permissions, enabling anyone with an internet connection to read a version of the article in full without need of a subscription.

Monthly deposits of newly-accepted articles into the university’s repository ORA (Oxford University Research Archive) have been steadily increasing since 1 April 2016 when HEFCE’s open access policy took effect, and we are delighted to have reached this milestone.

**Over 4,000 Oxford researchers have Acted on Acceptance**

Another milestone: articles by over 4,170 authors affiliated with the University of Oxford were deposited in ORA for Act on Acceptance between April 2016 and February 2018. These are articles and conference papers which were accepted for publication since 1 April 2016.

Huge thanks to everyone involved in this collective endeavour.
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National progress towards open access

Proportion of UK-authored articles in 2016 published under immediate Gold OA or accessible within 24 months through Green OA online postings in line with journal policies

37% of UK-authored articles in 2016 were openly accessible immediately on publication, 54% within 12 months

Progress at cost

- UUK monitoring report presents rise in open access since Finch
  - Gold OA 12% 2012, 30% 2016
  - Green OA from 23% in 2016 to 48% in 2016

- But questions about financial sustainability
  - APC costs rising (16%)
  - Hybrid options increasing

- RCUK policy in 2013 set five year transition period to 2018 – targets for gold and overall compliance not met
Effect of the UK policy environment

• Changing researcher and university behaviour
• Leading to significant progress on OA
• Resulting in increasing costs
• Stimulating move to hybrid journals rather than fully OA
• Limited evidence on open data
• Need to consider promotion and recruitment criteria
Where next?

- UKRI review of open access policies:
  - A future open access policy for UKRI
  - Cap on APCs? Preference for gold or green? Preference for fully OA journals? Linkage to off-setting policy?
- Monographs and other long form outputs
  - REF-after-next policy (will apply to monographs published from 1 Jan 2021 onwards)
- Open research data
- Publication practice and author choice
  - Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), Leiden Manifesto, Metric Tide
OA - a global transition

• Robert-Jan Smits
  • appointed as a special envoy on open science at the European Commission
  • push efforts to make all publicly funded research in Europe freely available by 2020

• ‘Big deal’ negotiations
• Interventions such as the boycott of Elsevier subscription in Germany, France and Sweden

What can we learn?