



Aston University
Open Access Research Policy

Context

Free and open access to research outputs has significant social and economic benefits and forms part of the Government's commitment to transparency and open data. The Finch Report on 'Expanding Access to Published Research Findings' reported in June 2012 and its recommendations have subsequently been accepted and implemented by Government, Research Councils and HEFCE.

Funders, notably HEFCE, Research Councils, the European Commission and the Wellcome Trust, mandate for open access publication of research outputs (journal articles and conference papers). HEFCE require that all outputs accepted for publication from April 2016, which are submitted to the post-2014 REF, comply with their open access requirements. To ensure that Aston is able to meet this requirement our Policy is that **all** journals and conference publications should meet the same open access requirements.

Research outputs should be made discoverable and accessible within specified time periods of the paper being accepted for publication and restrictions on reuse should be minimised. The goal is to transition from traditional publishing models to Gold Open Access where authors pay to publish and output is free at the point of use. A mixed economy is envisaged during the current transition period to open access publishing worldwide and HEFCE and funder requirements can be satisfied by either of two routes:

- **Gold Open Access.** Publishing in open access journals or choosing the open access option in hybrid journals is preferred. The publication is available from the journal's website without subscription charge. In hybrid journals the author generally pays an Article Processing Charge (APC) or Open Access fee to the publisher to make an article open access. This is distinct from other publication or pages charges. Open Access journals charge a "publication fee" only.
- **Green Open Access.** Publishing in a traditional subscription journal and depositing a copy (usually the "post-print" version) in an Institutional or Subject Repository is accepted provided the journal imposes an embargo period (before deposit is permitted) that does not exceed a specified period.

This policy has been produced to ensure that all publications resulting from research undertaken within Aston University comply with HEFCE and funder requirements to ensure that all publications are eligible for submission to the post 2014.

Aston University's Institutional Repository, Aston Research Explorer will be fundamental to Aston's compliance. Aston Research Explorer is the external portal of the PURE research information management system.

Who does this policy apply to?

This policy applies to all members of staff who publish journal articles and conference proceedings. Monographs and book chapters are not explicitly covered but it is good practice for authors to make these available on an open access basis if and when possible.

Responsibilities

The University has responsibility for ensuring that research outputs are made open access as required within this and funders' policies. Library Services will support this responsibility taking the coordinating and supporting role to ensure that Aston meets its obligations and is able to report accordingly to funders. They will coordinate the budget for payment of APCs or Open Access fees for Gold open access and advise authors on all aspects of open access publishing and policy compliance.

Authors are required to work with Library Services to:

- ensure that their work is published in such a way as to be compliant with this policy;
- ensure that the bibliographic record for their publication is deposited in PURE for inclusion in Aston Research Explorer;
- ensure that the post print version of their papers are deposited in PURE for inclusion in Aston Research Explorer;
- ensure that Library Services have all the relevant information to monitor and report on Aston's compliance with open access policies;
- ensure that the selection of licence and copyright agreements with publishers support their compliance with open access policies.

When co-authoring publications with researchers from other institutions, it is the responsibility of the lead institution to meet any APC required for open access publication. The publication should in any case be deposited in PURE for inclusion in Aston Research Explorer and the Aston University author should inform their co-authors of Aston's open access policy requirements. In exceptional circumstances a contribution towards open access charges when the corresponding author is not at Aston University will be considered. Such an example would apply if the paper is to be used in REF.

Monitoring

The Research Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor for Research, will oversee strategic monitoring and implementation of this policy.

Principles

1. Open Access Standards

1.1. Journal article papers and Conference Papers (with an ISSN)

These should be published in such a way as to ensure that they are compliant with open access requirements either:

- Gold by payment of an APC to either a pure or hybrid open access journal with a creative commons attribution (CC BY) licence
- Green by publishing in a ‘traditional’ journal with an embargo period until a ‘post print’ can be exposed in a subject or institutional repository, no longer than:
 - STEM subjects – 6 months;
 - AHSS subjects – 12 months;
 - Exceptions to this may be agreed where the most suitable journal imposes longer embargo periods.

1.2. Monographs, Book Chapters and Working Papers

There are no HEFCE or funder requirements for these to be published open access at present as the open access publication models are still immature. Conference proceedings published in book form (with an ISBN) are included in this category. However authors should take whatever steps are available to them to make these publications open access.

1.3. Budgets for Open Access Publication

Research Council and institutional budgets to fund open access publishing will be administered by Library Services in line with this policy.

2. Publishing

Authors should aim for the highest quality journal that is a good fit for the article, though authors are also encouraged to take note of open access standards and fees.

- 2.1.** It is the author’s and Library Services’ responsibility to work together to ensure that the journal satisfies the REF and funder open access requirements and that where there is a choice of Gold and Green routes to open access that the best route is selected taking account of budget. In exceptional circumstances, where there is doubt around this decision the Associate Dean for Research for the relevant School will be consulted. Aston’s Open Access Publication Process for authors and Library Services is Appendix 1 of this policy.
- 2.2.** The funder and grant reference number associated with research outputs must be visibly credited on any research outputs submitted for publication.
- 2.3.** Authors must identify in the publications how readers are able to gain access to the underlying research data.
- 2.4.** Authors must acknowledge Aston University and use an address in the form below when submitting an item for publication. If publishers place constraints on the space available for addresses, the phrase “Aston University” should be used.

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

3. Depositing Publications in PURE for inclusion in Aston Research Explorer

- 3.1. All publications must, in conjunction with Library Services, be deposited in PURE for inclusion in Aston Research Explorer. Corresponding authors must submit both bibliographic information and post prints. Post prints' (final, refereed, corrected, accepted drafts) accessibility will be embargoed within PURE in line with the embargo period imposed by the journal.
- 3.2. Where the Gold route has been selected the bibliographic details must be made discoverable within three months of the date of acceptance for publication and the post-prints (final, refereed, corrected, accepted drafts) of all journal articles and conference papers must be made accessible within one month of the first (often online) publication date. If one month from the first publication date falls within three months from acceptance the post print must be accessible within three months from acceptance. . If the online publication date is later than three months after the acceptance date then accessibility to the full text must be within one month of the online publication.
- 3.3. Where the Green route has been selected the post-prints (final, refereed, corrected, accepted drafts) of all journal articles and conference papers must be made discoverable within three months of the date of acceptance for publication and the post-prints (final, refereed, corrected, accepted drafts) of all journal articles and conference papers must be accessible within one month of the end of the embargo period.
- 3.4. Some funders also require that publications be deposited in a subject or other repository.

4. Record Keeping for Compliance Reporting and Budget Negotiations

- 4.1. Authors should ensure that Library Services are provided with all relevant details about their publications including the bibliographic details, licence and copyright information and costs of any APCs and pagination charges made from non-central funds. This is required to ensure that we are able to monitor and report on our compliance with open access policies and to ascertain Aston's total expenditure with publishers (journal subscriptions, APCs and page costs) to input to negotiations with publishers through the transition to open access.

5. Copyright and Licences

- 5.1. Authors publishing in a gold or hybrid open access journal should select the CC BY creative commons licence which allows for the greatest freedom of reuse and is mandated in funder policies. Full information on Creative Commons licences are available from their [website](#).
- 5.2. Authors should seek permission from their publisher, conference organiser or commissioning body to upload a full text version of their publication to a Repository. This may be achieved either at the submission stage or at the point of signing the Copyright Transfer Agreement. Further guidance is available through Aston's Research and [Library Services web pages](#).

- 5.3. Any work published by Aston University should be released under the [Creative Commons by attribution license](#) CCBY. This includes newsletters, working papers, discussion papers, reports and conference proceedings (held at Aston University or edited by Aston staff). Where published work is subject to conditions imposed by the Commissioning body for that work, the conditions of the commissioning body will take precedence.

6. Adoption & implementation

It is essential that Aston rapidly adopts this policy in order to comply with HEFCE and funders' requirements but it is acknowledged that the transition to open access requires significant cultural change. Compliance with the policy is expected to grow over a transition period and by 1 April 2016 the compliance with this policy will need to be 100%. In acknowledgement of the difficulties of reaching 100% compliance during a transition and implementation phase both HEFCE, with regard to REF submissions, and funders have built in some scope for accepting a proportion of non-compliant publications or publications in journals with an extended embargo period. These will be discussed on a case by case basis between Library Services, the author and the relevant Associate Dean for Research

The Open Access Publication Process to implement this policy is Appendix 1. Supporting information and guidance will be developed and made available through Aston's Research and [Library Services web pages](#).

Appendix 1: Open Access Publication Process

This process complements and supports the 'traditional' publication process and aims to minimise bureaucracy. Widespread Open Access publication is a new activity for Aston so will be closely monitored to ensure that it is working as intended and that funding for Gold publication is allocated to appropriate papers. As we develop experience adaptation may be needed. This process aims to ensure that:

- It complements the publication process;
- We comply with HEFCE and funder policies including recording papers in PURE;
- We are able to manage and make best use of RC and institutional publication budgets.

Submission or Conditional Acceptance Stage

Author contacts Library Services, using the submission form that will be provided on the Open Access Publishing web pages, when they submit a paper to a journal or when they receive a conditional acceptance to agree whether the Gold or Green Route will be adopted when / if the paper reaches the final acceptance stage of publication.

1. Library Services and the author will decide whether the paper should be published Green or Gold, taking into account the following:
 - Whether the journal is compliant with HEFCE and Funders policies via Green and / or Gold route.
 - The budget available from individual funders, if specified in the grant application, or from RCUK or Institutional Budgets.

- The quality of the journal as defined by each School based on journal rankings, impact factors and immediacy index as appropriate.
- 2. Library Services will ensure where necessary that the publisher is set up on Agresso for any payments to avoid any delay when a paper is accepted.
- 3. The decision will be referred to the relevant Associate Dean for Research if a chosen journal is not compliant with funder's or HEFCE policy or if either the author or Library Services has concerns regarding the choice of Green or Gold route. Note that in many cases both will be compliant.

Final Acceptance Stage

The author notifies and liaises with Library Services.

1. Author provides Library Services with the bibliographic details and post-print version of the journal article or conference paper by depositing on PURE.
2. Library Services makes payments where appropriate.
3. Library Services ensures that the publication is set up on PURE with appropriate embargo periods and compliance information.
4. Author selects CC BY licence and completes publisher processes as required.

Monitoring

1. Library Services will report quarterly to the PVC for Research on Aston publications, their compliance with relevant policies by the Green /Gold routes and the expenditure on APCs from the RC and Institutional publications budgets.
2. Library Services will report to each Research Committee progress with publication compliance and budget expenditure.
3. Library Services will monitor Aston publications as recorded on Scopus and Web of Science to identify any papers that have been published outside of this process. This will allow us to feedback to authors on the Policies that they need to follow and to retrospectively address compliance.

Appendix 2: Definitions

Corresponding author: A Corresponding Author is a specified co-author of a publication that takes formal responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, acts as point of contact for all correspondence regarding the publication, and maintains related records. This position is determined by agreement amongst the authors.

APC (Article Processing Charge): This is the charge paid by the author or the author's institution to allow an article to be published in a Gold or hybrid open access journal. The APC varies from journal to journal, but is likely to be between £1000 and £2000.

Depositing / Archiving: Refers to the Green open access route where the author makes a version of his/her publication available in a repository or other online situation. This is usually an author-created version and is allowed by many publishers even when copyright is transferred to them.

Aston Research Explorer: Is the external portal for PURE showcasing the University's research, including publications and theses and also activities, awards, schools, research group and single academics' research details,

Embargo Period: Some publishers will have a restriction on when a specific version of an article can be deposited in a repository. This may vary from 6-24 months after (online) publication, and will normally be stated in the copyright agreement.

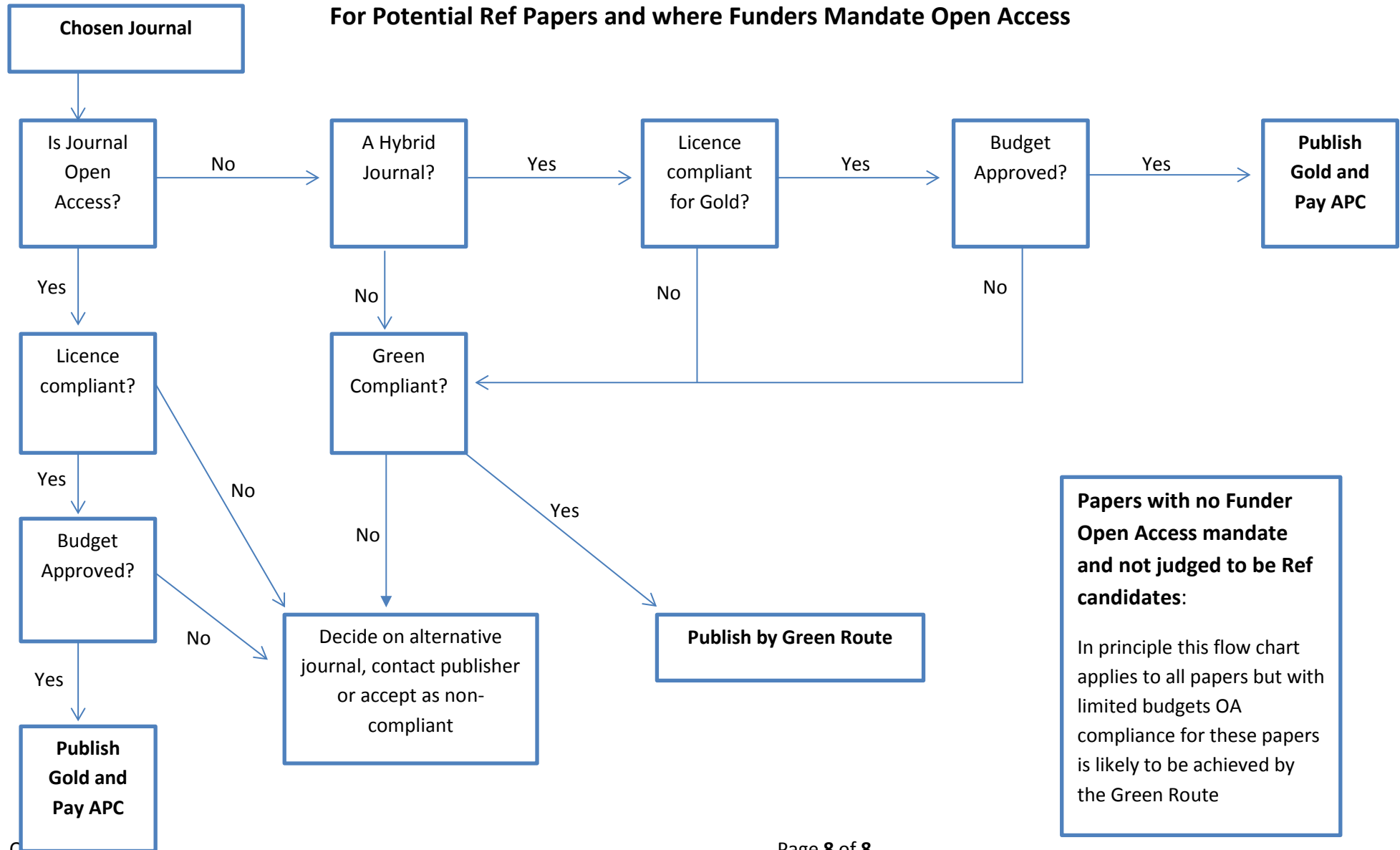
'Green' open access: The author publishes in a traditional, subscription based journal but also deposits a copy (usually the "post-print" version) in an institutional or subject repository, (eg Aston Research Explorer).

'Gold' open access: The full text of the article is accessible to anyone, without subscription charge, from the journal's website. Publishing may be via a fully open access journal (all articles are free to read) or a hybrid journal (a traditional subscription journal with some articles made freely available). In order to cover publication costs, the author may need to pay an Article Processing Charge (APC) to the publisher.

Open Access: Open access is free, immediate, online access to publications. Usually conditions to (re-)use are indicated.

Post-print (Final author version): This is the accepted, author-created version following peer review and editing. The text and any diagrams can be exactly the same as the published version (unless owned by third party copyright holders), but does *not* include the publishers' logos, final formatting or typesetting.

**Appendix 3: Selecting Green or Gold
For Potential Ref Papers and where Funders Mandate Open Access**



Papers with no Funder Open Access mandate and not judged to be Ref candidates:

In principle this flow chart applies to all papers but with limited budgets OA compliance for these papers is likely to be achieved by the Green Route