



RCUK Open Access report from the University of Hull

Report for the period 1st April 2013 to 31st July 2014

Introduction

This report provides information on compliance with the RCUK Open Access policy at the University of Hull during year-1, as identified in the RCUK document 'Data required by RCUK to support compliance monitoring'¹. It acts as a companion report to the written evidence supplied to the independent RCUK review².

Summary of experience

The introduction of the RCUK Open Access Policy produced a mixed response from RC-funded academics at the University, from full engagement and acknowledgement of the value of open access through to little or no acknowledgement of the issue. Initial awareness meetings were well attended and awareness of the policy is high. Response, as indicated above, has been varied, and an overall compliance rate of 35% is lower than anticipated. Staff development on open access and its advantages, and how to make use of it, is continuing.

Part of the reason for the compliance figure is technical: major issues in the integration of our CRIS and repository have hindered provision of Green open access, and we anticipate that as this integration issue is relieved during year-2 that compliance will increase accordingly. Gold open access compliance thus represents the bulk of open access usage; this stands at 29% and the University is taking steps to increase this as part of its overall research strategy. The University is a lead partner in the Jisc OA PathFinder HHuLOA project³, which will facilitate the development and sharing of good practice in use of open access to inform institutional developments.

The provision of the funds provided by RCUK to support adoption of Gold open access was widely welcomed, and the University completely spent its allocation for 2013-14: take-up in 2014-15 continues to be healthy. It is notable that all take-up so far has been within STEM subjects, as might have been expected, and efforts are ongoing to encourage HSS subjects to also engage with Gold open access where appropriate. As the figures show, though, use of Gold open access goes far beyond what can be supported through the RCUK funds, and investigation is ongoing to ascertain how other Gold open access has been funded to inform an overall institutional policy for future support. Individuals and individual departments have taken the initiative regarding use of the research core funding they have available to them for open access. Key to year-2 will be to identify how successful models can be extended.

¹ Data required by RCUK to support compliance monitoring, <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/ComplianceMonitoring.pdf>

² Independent review of the implementation of RCUK Policy on Open Access: Call for Evidence, <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/RCUK-prod/assets/documents/documents/CallforevidenceJuly2014.pdf>

³ HHuLOA project, <https://library3.hud.ac.uk/blogs/hhuloa/>

Lessons learned

The following are considered key lessons learned in implementation of the RCUK Open Access Policy since its inception:

- Engagement with academics has highlighted that use of open access is valuable for them, and that the RCUK policy and funds have helped individuals pursue what they consider to be the right path. Others need convincing that open access is appropriate in general; advocacy will usefully address broader open access benefits and not just compliance with a policy.
- There has been almost no use of journals that are marked as non-compliant in the Sherpa FACT service. This has been very welcome, and highlights how the large majority of major publishers are now in line with the policy.
- Compliance with the requirement to include relevant information about grants and open access support within publications was varied, and less than the general compliance with use of open access. Mechanisms to facilitate checking for this full compliance and closing the loop will be helpful.

Financial compliance

For the year April 2013 – March 2014 the University of Hull received a grant of £19,614. The grant from April 2014 – March 2015 is £23,075. Proportionately, the overall funding available during year-1 is £27,306. This has been spent as follows:

	Credits	Debits	Balance
Budget allocation from RCUK	£27,306.00	-	-
Payments to publishers			
• American Chemical Society	-	£2,189.00 (1)	-
• Company of Biologists	-	£2,400.00 (1)	-
• Elsevier	-	£4,818.00 (2)	-
• Geological Society of America	-	£1,867.80 (1)	-
• John Wiley & Sons	-	£4,684.80 (2)	-
• MDPI – Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute	-	£1,147.44 (1)	-
• Public Library of Science	-	£3,007.35 (3)	-
Total expenditure		£20,114.39	
Balance remaining			£7,191.61

Payments were at an average of £1,828.58 each.

The remaining balance is part of the April 2014 – March 2015 RCUK grant.

Policy compliance

Compliance with the policy has, as stated elsewhere, been mixed. Where there is compliance it has been found that licensing has been suitable and there have not been any instances of the wrong licence being applied. The choice of journal to publish in has also been suitable in the majority of cases and just one compliance

issues has arisen. The Sherpa FACT service has been very helpful in providing information here, though on one occasion the journal was not found but a check on the publisher website indicated they were compliant.

Publications	Count
Number of peer-reviewed research papers arising from RC-funded research by University of Hull researchers	114
Of this number, those that are compliant with the RCUK policy by Gold open access	33
Of this number, those that are compliant with the RCUK policy by Green open access	7
Number of papers published in journals which are non-compliant with the policy	1

The papers were produced by 54 authors, with minimal multi-authorship between them. Papers that were not published on open access were in compliant journals (with the single exception), but open access was not chosen. Investigation with the authors is underway to investigate why open access was not selected. Papers listed are those published within the year-1 review period.

Measurement

The figures provided have been gathered as follows.

Financial

Data is held within the Resource Acquisition Team ledger, and within the University of Hull purchasing system, Proactis.

Publications

Publications data has been compiled from two sources:

- An analysis of articles within Web of Knowledge for Hull authors quoting RCUK funding. Authors were mapped onto grant holder information held within the Research Funding Office.
- Information provided directly by authors via email.

It is recognised that these approaches risk there being gaps in reporting. Direct feedback from authors has flagged up a number of papers that were not in WoK. In year-2 we will be advocating use of ResearchFish for recording of outputs and establishing embedded workflows for capturing papers within the local digital repository. Personal contact will continue to be used where appropriate, as authors have found this valuable, and have responded well.

Conclusion

The introduction of the RCUK open access policy has provided a means through which to generate awareness of open access and additional take-up: compliance is reasonable given the lack of a substantive Green open access route, though lower than required. It is recognised that substantial effort is required to translate this awareness into action by all. In this respect, the parallels with the HEFCE OA policy will help provide a consistent message.