Pathways to Open Access

Baseline Report

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Project blog: https://blogs.ucl.ac.uk/open-access

Contents

1. Executive Summary

1.1   Background

Since the introduction of the RCUK open access policy[1] in April 2013, UK higher education institutions have faced the task of developing new institutional systems to manage APC payments, monitor publications and communicate open access requirements to researchers. This report presents an analysis of the approaches that the three partner institutions in the Pathways to Open Access Project – UCL, Nottingham and Newcastle – have adopted to manage these aspects of open access, both in response to the RCUK Policy and in preparation for the open access requirements of the next Research Excellence Framework (REF)[2].

The information on which the report is based was gathered through an initial survey[3] and follow-up discussions. The report is intended both to give initial indications of the appropriateness of different types of activity in different institutions, and to form the basis of the future work of the project.

1.2   Findings

Despite differences in institutional approach to funder compliance, this baselining exercise has enabled the three institutions to identify key areas in which further work needs to be done, both at institutional and sectoral level, to facilitate a more streamlined approach to publications management, APC payment processing, and open access advocacy. They are set out below. A number of projects, including this one, are already tackling particular aspects of them. There is more information on relevant projects throughout this report.

1. Through advocacy, departments and faculties need to be encouraged to take responsibility for compliance.
2. Funders' compliance reporting should be integrated with other author reporting, to reduce administration and inconsistencies.
3. Repository, publications management and CRIS software must incorporate reporting requirements, including RIOXX and the forthcoming CASRAI profile (which includes additional fields required for REF reporting).
4. Interim solutions should be adopted, in cooperation with publishers, to assist with REF compliance and to streamline APC processes.
5. Automation needs to be introduced into Gold payment processes (especially metadata recording and licence checking) where possible.

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[1] See http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/openaccess/
[2] See http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/rsrch/rinfrastruct/oa/policy/
[3] The survey questions appear at Appendix 1.

2.   Institutional Context

The three institutions represented in the Pathways project are of differing research intensity. UCL produces the largest number of peer-reviewed research papers per annum (an estimated 12,000), but Nottingham (with approximately 4,000) and Newcastle (with approximately 2,714) face similar challenges in tracking research outputs and identifying funding associated with particular papers. The value of the three institutions' RCUK block grants differs proportionately: in the first year of the policy the figures were £1.2m (UCL), £536,256 (Nottingham) and £348,773 (Newcastle). Two of the institutions, Nottingham and UCL, manage central institutional open access funds as well as RCUK and Wellcome Trust block grants. UCL and Nottingham have both adopted formal, top-down open access communication plans; in the first year of the RCUK policy, Newcastle took a faculty-led approach to compliance.

The table below contains data on the relative sizes of the three institutions' outputs and open access funding.

	University College London	Newcastle University	University of Nottingham
Annual research income (2012/13)	£313,712,457	£102,001,712	£112,000,000
REF: Category A staff submitted (FTE)	2348	888	To follow
REF: Number of outputs submitted	7604	3348	To follow
Value of RCUK block grant (2013/14)	£1,149,066	£348,773	£536,256
Actual expenditure on RCUK APCs (RCUK first reporting period - April 2013 - July 2014)	£1,219,987	£319,603	£505,000
Other APC expenditure - Wellcome and/or Institutional (2013/14)	£580,229 (WT); £1.7m approx (institutional fund)	£199,994 (WT)	£38,000 (WT); £526,000 (institutional fund)
Estimated number of peer-reviewed research papers per annum (2013/14)	12,000	2714	4000
Estimated proportion of peer-reviewed research papers deposited in the institution's repository (2013/14)	12%	11.36%	15%
Estimated number of outputs subject to RCUK policy (2013/14)	1540 (RCUK estimate)	441	690
Number of RCUK-funded papers made Gold OA (2013/14)	1014	170	336

	University College London	Newcastle University	University of Nottingham
Number of RCUK-funded papers made Green OA (2013/14)	203	126	12
Overall % compliance with RCUK policy (2013/14)	52% approx	67%	50%
Formal open access communication plan?	Yes		Yes

3.   Advocacy

3.1   Responsibilities

Strategic responsibility for open access rests, in all three institutions, with the Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research (or equivalent). Each institution has a steering or working group with representatives from professional services departments, including the library and research services. At Nottingham, responsibility for open access has been shared between research services and library services, though a new Research Support team has now been established in the library. At UCL, new working relationships have been forged between the REF Team in the Office of the Vice-Provost (Research) and UCL Library Services in order to deliver a coordinated message about the REF open access policy. This type of collaboration can work extremely well, but in the current shifting environment, and against the background of changing reporting and systems requirements, it can be difficult to delineate clear responsibilities.

3.2   Approaches

The three institutions have adopted a variety of open access advocacy approaches, informed by experience, advice from academic colleagues and identification of particular needs. While a clear, up-to-date suite of webpages, timely e-mail communications to researchers, and attractive printed materials form the bedrock of any advocacy policy, in order to influence researchers' behaviour the open access message needs to be delivered directly, to existing faculty and department committees and meetings, and reinforced frequently. It is vital that communication is tailored to the needs of researchers in particular disciplines, and preferable that departments and faculties take responsibility for REF compliance at a local level. Both Nottingham and UCL have made use of academic open access champions to assist with communication. All three institutions are considering the challenges of ensuring compliance with the HEFCE requirement of deposit of publications at acceptance. While academic staff in medical faculties are often already aware of and engaged with the concept of open access, those in AHSS (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences) often need more targeted support, particularly given the complexities of different types of output, and the likelihood of REF exceptions applying. The three institutions note the potential to include open access compliance in the promotions and appraisal process, but feel that this is not viable at present. All have adopted a number of other tactics to engage researchers, including visual workflows, open access events and a dedicated e-mail address (all three); video guides, Twitter, and training for early career researchers (Newcastle and UCL); and encouraging publishers to provide researchers with links to institutional guidance (UCL). These are important aspects of any open access communication plan, but none is any substitute for direct, department- and faculty-level engagement, in researchers' own space, with the aim of embedding open access in existing workflows.

4.   Monitoring Publications and Open Access

4.1   RCUK Reporting

The RCUK open access policy – and, in particular, the REF policy – means that UK higher education institutions now need to monitor publications more closely than ever before. Even where institutions use a publications management system (Symplectic Elements at UCL, and in-house solutions at Nottingham and Newcastle), records are not exhaustive, and metadata harvesting is only possible from particular sources (for example, Web of Science, Scopus and PubMed). All three institutions found the process of compiling their 2014 RCUK reports a very manual one. At Nottingham, temporary staff spent several weeks checking funding acknowledgements article by article. Similarly, at UCL and Newcastle, ResearchFish metadata was checked against repository deposits and Gold payment records. UCL found ResearchFish metadata to be very incomplete, and funder details inconsistent with other sources of information. It is easier to report on Gold compliance, because metadata is gathered directly from authors prior to payment, but funding details provided by authors still do not necessarily agree with the acknowledgements in the article itself, nor with ResearchFish reports. Monitoring Green compliance with the RCUK policy in real-time is very difficult: although extra fields can be added to repository software, repository staff still usually need to check acknowledgements sections manually. Managing the RCUK acknowledgements and data statement requirements is also problematical, and usually only retrospective checking is possible.

The three institutions agree that improvements in metadata, systems and standards across the scholarly communications ecosystem are essential to enable institutions to implement open access policies effectively. In particular, institutions and authors need an integrated reporting framework that combines existing funder reporting with open access compliance reports, avoiding duplication of effort for authors. It is felt that RCUK could take a more active role in communicating policy requirements to Principal Investigators (PIs), encouraging authors to acknowledge funders consistently, building systems for reporting compliance, promoting clarity in publishers' policies and ensuring a sustainable Gold open access framework.

4.2   REF Preparation

All three institutions have begun a programme to communicate the requirements of the REF open access policy, but foresee considerable difficulties with monitoring deposit within 3 months of acceptance. Nottingham has recently upgraded its EPrints repository software, and Newcastle is developing functionality to record open access compliance within its in-house system to try to streamline reporting. There is a need for enhanced metadata capture in repository software, and UCL, Nottingham and Newcastle look forward to the outcomes of the End-to-End Pathfinder project[4], CASRAI's work on consolidating open access reporting requirements[5], and the RIOXX metadata profile[6]. Metadata capture needs to be automated, so that critical information – for example, acceptance date, deposit date, embargo period and any standard REF exception – can be gathered with minimum confusion for authors. Systems should enable researchers to see, clearly and easily,

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[4] http://e2eoa.org/
[5] http://casrai.org/standards/working-groups/open-access
[6] http://rioxx.net/

which of their papers already comply with the REF policy, and which require action from them. It is a concern that no one system – whether repository, or publications management software, or CRIS – at present shows even the potential to capture all the necessary metadata for REF and funder reporting, and that institutions are unable at present to provide comprehensive reports on engagement with the REF policy to departments, to support their advocacy efforts.

4.3   Publisher Processes

Along with the Manchester Pathfinder project, opeNWorks[7], the UCL/Nottingham/Newcastle Pathfinder project has contributed directly to the establishment of a new RLUK Ethical and Effective Publishing Subgroup on Publisher Processes and Practices. The aim of this group is to identify, share and understand the challenges, barriers and other issues involved in open access publishing where they relate to publisher processes and practices; and to work collectively and with publishers to resolve problems, improve processes and achieve a better understanding of how best to support researchers and funders. The three institutions see considerable opportunities for working with publishers, both to develop long-term solutions to ensure compliance with the REF and funders' open access policies (potentially through Jisc Publications Router[8]), and to establish interim workflows to assist with gathering metadata (and possibly Author Accepted Manuscripts) at acceptance. There are also opportunities for third-party organisations such as ORCID[9], and for standards such as FundRef[10], to assist with tracking and directing metadata to institutions. This requires more widespread adoption of these standards by both institutions and publishers. UCL has implemented a project to bulk-register researchers with ORCID, and the three institutions are following the work of the Jisc-ARMA ORCID[11] pilot with interest.

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[7] http://blog.openworks.library.manchester.ac.uk/about/
[8] http://scholarlycommunications.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2014/10/20/helping-institutions-comply-with-the-ref-open-access-policy/
[9] http://orcid.org/
[10] http://www.crossref.org/fundref/
[11] http://orcidpilot.jiscinvolve.org/wp/

5. APC Management

5.1 Staffing

All three institutions have employed new members of staff to manage APC payments or deliver open access advocacy and training, or both, in the light of the RCUK and REF open access policies. In UCL's case, five new full-time members of staff have been recruited – an Open Access Funding Manager, Open Access Compliance Officer, and three assistants – alongside existing repository staff. Two of these posts are paid for from RCUK funds. At Nottingham a newly-formed Research Support team within the Library is leading on communications and advocacy for open access, while 0.4 FTE within the University's Research and Graduate Services department is dedicated to APC management. At Newcastle RCUK funds have been used to recruit an Open Access Support Officer, focusing on advocacy, and an Open Access Support Assistant to help manage APC payments. These roles are initially funded for two years, and the postholders will work alongside existing library staff already carrying out these duties.

5.2 Administration

The three institutions have taken different approaches to managing requests for funding from authors. Newcastle asks authors to complete a web form, and Nottingham an Excel-based form, but UCL takes all requests by e-mail, having found in the early stages of implementation of the RCUK policy that authors needed very targeted guidance on open access options, depending on their particular funder and publisher. The institutions note the value of the SHERPA/FACT and SHERPA/RoMEO services[12], but recognise that further refinements are needed to improve their accuracy and accessibility to authors.

5.3 Funds Allocation

At UCL and Nottingham, APC funding has been allocated on a first-come-first-served basis, with separate institutional funds supporting authors not funded by RCUK or the COAF medical charities.[13] As demand for Gold open access continues to rise, both institutions are developing strategies for making best use of the finite institutional funds available. It is to be hoped that the Jisc work on Total Cost of Ownership[14] will lead to widespread adjustments to subscription models to take account of increased expenditure on APCs. Newcastle, with RCUK and COAF funding only, and keen to encourage faculty engagement in open access policymaking, initially took a faculty-based approach to allocating the RCUK grant. The result was a relatively conservative approach to use of the funds, with the medical faculty adopting a very narrow list of titles eligible for funding, Science, Agriculture and Engineering funding only top quartile journals, and HASS opting for a first-come-first-served approach. These different policies proved time-consuming to manage, and too restrictive. The faculties are now aligned, having all moved to first-come-first-served. Overall, this seems the most workable solution. All three institutions, though, caution that authors sometimes choose Gold open access without properly understanding the alternatives: anecdotal evidence suggests that many assume that it is easier, see it as more beneficial for their research, or fail to understand that the

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[12] http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/
[13] http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/About-us/Policy/Spotlight-issues/Open-access/Charity-open-access-fund/
[14] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=klt9Yu8tZYc

publisher's offering is not the only type of open access available. It falls to institutions to provide authors with clear guidance on when funds can be used, the costs of Gold open access, the benefits of Green, and issues with non-compliant and predatory publishers, so that they can make informed decisions.

5.3   Recording and Reporting

UCL, Nottingham and Newcastle have adopted a variety of in-house solutions to manage and record APC payments, with only Nottingham having experience of using an intermediary (Jisc APC[15]). None of the institutions links grants data with publications metadata, so recording funding information remains a manual process. The institutions see considerable potential for an APC management system (of the sort that could develop from the work of Jisc Monitor[16]) to streamline the process of recording and reporting payments, but their interim solutions work reasonably well. As part of its Pathfinder work, UCL has shared the design of its in-house Access database.[17] UCL and Newcastle collect similar metadata, including bibliographic information, funder and grant number/holder, licence type, full text deposit in the institutional repository (both) and publication date (UCL); Nottingham approaches this differently, with some data recorded in its finance system, and the rest captured in spreadsheets by staff managing APC payments. All three institutions provide management reports on a regular basis. Increasingly, though, new reporting requirements are emerging that cannot be satisfied by existing metadata fields, or that require information to be captured in a more standardised form. These include the ability to report on the status of authors in receipt of funding (members of staff, research students, early career researchers et al), take-up of Gold open access by research group/department, and percentage of the institutions' papers that have taken the Gold route.

5.4   Financial Management

Financial management at the three institutions differs depending on existing finance systems, and the location of open access funding staff. At UCL and Nottingham, most payment administration is handled by the Open Access Funding Team (in UCL Library Services) and Nottingham Research and Graduate Services respectively, while at Newcastle the library finance team and OA admin staff both participate in the payments process. UCL and Newcastle request invoices directly from publishers on behalf of authors; in Newcastle's case, in particular, this is done to avoid confusion with purchase order numbers and credit notes. In order to remove administrative barriers for authors as much as possible, UCL also completes open access order forms where appropriate. At Nottingham, authors are expected to request an invoice themselves, once funding has been approved. Newcastle is the only institution to have a purchasing card that can be used for APCs: this is an advantage where publishers delay publication or open access status until payment is received, though pressure needs to be brought to bear on these publishers to adopt different practices where payment is being made from central institutional funds. All three institutions find that prepayment schemes simplify and streamline the APC payment process for both authors and administrators, though they may also conceal the true cost of open access from authors. Reconciling APC payment data with reports from the institution's finance system and with prepayment reports from publishers can prove very time-

[15] https://www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/Jisc-APC-project/
[16] https://www.jisc-collections.ac.uk/Jisc-Monitor/
[17] https://twitter.com/UCLopenaccess/status/528169554329878530

consuming. Along with licence/open access status checking after publication, these are tasks that need to be carried out on a regular basis, and they cannot yet be automated. It is to be hoped that Jisc Monitor and CASRAI can pave the way to simpler collection of licence data, and Jisc Publications Router to automated depositing of Gold articles in repositories.

6.   Conclusion and Next Steps

UCL, Nottingham and Newcastle have different levels of open access funding, different systems for monitoring and managing publications, and different approaches to APC management, but all identify extremely similar issues and challenges with delivering compliance with funders' open access policies. This is no surprise given the broad consensus within the UK HEI sector that there is a need for substantial changes not only to authors' behaviours, but also and critically to institutional systems, before compliance can be managed effectively. Key points emerging from this initial baselining exercise, and relevant cross-sector projects, are outlined below.

1. As part of an institutional open access communication plan, departments and faculties need to be encouraged to take responsibility for compliance. *(UCL/Nottingham/Newcastle Pathfinder Advocacy workshop, 20 March 2015.)*

2. Funders should integrate compliance reporting with other author reporting, to reduce administration and inconsistencies. *(RCUK Review of the Implementation of the RCUK Open Access Policy.)*

3. Repository, publications management and CRIS software needs to incorporate RIOXX, and other reporting requirements. Institutions are hampered in implementing the REF policy by a lack of effective real-time reporting mechanisms, necessary to ensure that departments understand and comply with the requirements. *(RIOXX, CASRAI, E2EOA Pathfinder project .)*

4. There is potential to engage publishers and develop interim solutions to assist with REF compliance, and to streamline APC processes. *(RLUK Publisher Publisher Processes and Practices group, JISC Publications Router, UCL/Nottingham/Newcastle Pathfinder project.)*

5. Recording metadata and checking licences for Gold payments is also very manual; automation is required in the medium- to long-term. *(JISC Monitor, UCL/Nottingham/Newcastle Pathfinder project.)*

    The information in this report will be used to inform the next stage of our Pathfinder project, an APC payments laboratory. Throughout 2015, the laboratory will track APC payment processes at the three institutions, identifying examples of situations where workflows are particularly time-consuming or difficult, either for academics or administrative staff, and extrapolating general guidance to contribute to the work of Jisc Monitor and other projects. Separate strands of work on publications management and monitoring, and on advocacy, will see the project contributing to improved interim solutions through direct engagement with publishers (as part of the RLUK Ethical and Effective Publishing Subgroup on Publisher Processes and Practices), and the development of an Advocacy Toolkit to inform best practice on communicating open access requirements.

Appendix

The information on which this report is based was gathered through an initial survey, and follow-up discussions. The survey questions are below.

Advocacy and communication		
Describe activity to date, lessons learned, and planned activity over the next 12-24 months		
Medium	**Description**	**Potential audience(s)**
Use of electronic media		
E-mail	E-mail briefings, reminders and guidance on open access	All research staff RCUK/WT Funded PIs only Deans of Faculty Heads of Department or Directors of Research Research Administrators School Managers
Webpages	Provision of web-based guidance on OA Online workflows to guide decision-making (static or interactive)	Staff and external stakeholders
Video	PVC message on importance of OA Case studies from academics advocating OA Policy explanations Video training on how deposit an article or arrange payment of an APC	All staff
Social Media	Use of an open access Twitter account	All (internal and external)
Embedding open access		
Who owns open access communication in the HEI?	VP (Research), Library Director etc.	
Discussion at institutional committees	Approval or discussion of institutional and REF OA policy at Research Board level Inclusion of OA as standing or regular agenda item for relevant committees	Research Board Faculty and School Research Committees
Academic advisory committees	Formation of dedicated committees from amongst the academic community to advise on and oversee OA policy implementation	Could operate at institutional, faculty or school level
Provision of management information	Reporting on APC spend, repository deposits and % of articles made OA	Research Board Faculty Research Committees School Research Directors/Research Committees Director of Library/Research Office / institutional publications board

Advocacy and communication		
Describe activity to date, lessons learned, and planned activity over the next 12-24 months		
Medium	**Description**	**Potential audience(s)**
Open access champions	Identification of staff in the academic and administrative communities who are able to act as OA champions, promoting OA publication and providing advice to their colleagues	Researchers (via peer-to-peer interactions)
Promotions and appraisal processes	Promotions and appraisal processes amended to only take account of publications made available in OA form and/or deposited in the institutional repository	All researchers
Use of printed media		
Printed materials	Hard copy guides (how used and disseminated?) Brochures and flyers (how used and disseminated?)	All staff
Events		
Events	Institution wide awareness events, eg for OA week Discipline-specific events	All staff, or discipline-based staff groupings
Briefings	Attendance by library or research office staff at faculty/school/departmental committees to provide briefings and answer questions on open access Provision of briefings to key staff members, eg via one-to-one meetings with Heads of Department Provision of dedicated OA briefing events open to all staff	Members of relevant committees All staff
Training		
Face-to-face training	Inclusion of open access within researcher development/graduate school training programmes OA clinics and drop-ins run by library or research office staff Dedicated training events at faculty/school/department level	PGRs and ECRs All researchers
Online training	Development of online training materials	All researchers
Financial management		
Provision of funding	Provision of institutional funding to meet the costs of APCs, and/or for support staff to assist with repository depositions	N/A
Devolution of funding	Devolution of RCUK/Wellcome/institutional funding for OA to faculties or schools in order to promote ownership and engagement	N/A

Advocacy and communication		
Describe activity to date, lessons learned, and planned activity over the next 12-24 months		
Medium	**Description**	**Potential audience(s)**
Other		
Engagement with University marketing/ comms team	Inclusion of OA-related material in broader briefings, newsletters and other internal communications processes	All staff
Other	OA branded key-rings/pens/coasters etc Competitions and reward schemes, eg for staff who visit OA website, or deposit a given number of papers in the repository	Use in conjunction with awareness-raising events or as competition prizes Authors
Administrative support	Appointment of dedicated staff to support open access Adoption of dedicated mailing address and contact point(s) for OA	N/A
Third party interactions	Coordination with funders/ publishers/ suppliers/ societies in advocacy activities	External stakeholders
Development of an OA evidence base	Collection and dissemination of data on citation advantage or impact of OA publishing	All staff
Other	Please describe	Please describe

Monitoring and managing (open access and publications)
How do the HEIs monitor publications? Is it possible to capture all publications?
Has ORCID been implemented at the HEI? Has it made a difference to publications monitoring?
What steps is the HEI taking to introduce the REF requirements?
What are the key improvements that the HEIs would like to see to enable them to monitor REF compliance?
What problems did the institutions encounter in gathering the data for their RCUK reports?
What recommendations did the institutions make in their reports and evidence to RCUK?
Has the HEI introduced any sanctions to ensure that researchers comply with OA policies?
Other comments/problems/suggestions

APC Laboratory
Resourcing
Who is responsible for APC administration? Has the library recruited more staff to handle this, and how are they funded?
How have the HEIs managed access to the funds, and who is eligible for funding (are the funds restricted to corresponding authors only?) Has this had any benefits/disadvantages?
Systems to support OA
Has the HEI used an intermediary to manage APCs? Comment on the experience.

What tools does the HEI use to manage APCs?
Does the HEI use third-party tools, like Sherpa FACT? How useful are they?
APC processes
What information does the HEI collect when it pays an APC, and how?
What other systems affect APC payments?
What is the relationship between the Library and the HEI's central finance team?
At what stage in the APC payment process does the author contact Library staff, and how do they do so?
How much administration does the author/department do?
Eligibility of journals/publishers for funding: give some examples of where the HEI has refused to pay an APC, or particular publishers that have proved problematical.
How rigorously has the HEI implemented the RCUK acknowledgements and data statement requirements?
Has the HEI used its RCUK APC funds for publication charges? How much take-up has there been?
How does the HEI check that the article is made OA and that the correct licence is applied?
Is there a process to ensure appropriate acknowledgement of funding sources in publications?
Which prepayment accounts has the HEI signed up to?
Does the HEI have a purchasing card to use for APCs?