

UNIVERSITY OF READING STATEMENT ON OPEN RESEARCH

The University of Reading will increase the quality, integrity and accessibility of our research by supporting a growing culture and practice of Open Research. We will use modern technologies and practices of scholarship to improve access to research, transparency in the research process, and reproducibility of results, and to promote efficient methods of scholarly communication.

Open practices can increase the integrity, quality and productivity of our research, and bring benefits to individual researchers in terms of academic reputation and reward, opportunities for collaboration, and the generation of impact.

Research conducted on open principles is more collaborative, transparent and reproducible, and makes its outputs more accessible to a greater number of people. This best serves the University's mission to disseminate knowledge for maximum public benefit.

These benefits are being more widely recognised in the policies of research funders, research organisations and publishers, and within the cultures and practices of research communities. The academic system is evolving towards greater openness, and we have more to gain by embracing change, rather than responding to compliance requirements from behind the curve.

'As open as you can, as early as you can'

We encourage our researchers and students to be as open as possible, as early as possible (recognising that circumstances can constrain choices). To this end we identify [12 things that researchers can do to make their research more open](#). These are for the most part options to be explored by individual researchers; only Open Access publication of research findings and open sharing of data are requirements of University policy. Our purpose is not to impose new requirements, but to stimulate researchers to explore the possibilities and benefits of open practices for their research.

Not everything can or should be made open. There are ethical, legal and commercial reasons why some of the outputs of research cannot be made openly accessible; and the communication of results should not be at the expense of research quality or the researcher's own interests.

But all research must be open to some extent. The choice is often between being, at any stage of the research journey, more open or less open. At each stage we encourage you to ask the questions: 'Is there a more open way to do this? What difference will it make (to me, and to others)? Are there good reasons for making the open choice?'

What is Open Research?

Open Research is a set of principles and practices whose aim is to make the outputs of research freely accessible and usable, thereby to maximise the possibility of public benefit. It has been described as 'scholarly research that is collaborative, transparent and reproducible and whose outputs are publicly

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available'.¹ It is based on the principle that knowledge produces the greatest benefits if it is shared as widely as possible.

Open Research is relevant to all researchers, although the applications will differ according to discipline and research context. There are many different definitions of Open Research, but a number of themes can be identified (not all of which are relevant to all cases):

- making the outputs of research, including publications, data, software and other research materials **freely accessible**;
- using online tools and services to increase the **transparency** of research processes and methodologies;
- making scientific research more **reproducible** by increasing the amount and quality of information placed on the public record;
- using alternative models of publication and peer review to make the **dissemination** and **certification** of research faster and more transparent;
- using open **collaborative** methods to increase efficiency and widen participation in research.

The principles of Open Research are reflected in the policies of many public funders and research organisations that promote greater public access to research, and in the evolving models of scholarly communication. Change is also being driven by the needs of academic communities and stakeholders among the general public, in industry, and in the developing world.

Open research policies and support

Two core components of Open Research at the University are already underpinned by policies for [Open Access](#) and [Research Data Management](#). Support is provided by the Library and the Research Data Service and includes [funds for gold Open Access publishing](#), [CentAUR](#) and the University's [Research Data Archive](#).

We will work with you to further develop support for a broader range of open practices throughout the research lifecycle. We recognise that making open choices may entail changing the way researchers work, and can take time, effort and resources. Open Research is for the long haul. It is important that we understand how support and resources can best be provided to meet researchers' needs.

Please [contact us](#) if you want to find out more about Open Research at the University and support available to you.

Phil Newton, Research Dean for Environment

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Read online: <https://www.reading.ac.uk/research/research-environment/open-research.aspx>

¹ Integrated advice of the Open Science Policy Platform. <https://bit.ly/1RwTW9p>. The term 'Open Science' is widely used in the context of European discussions, where it is taken to embrace the full spectrum of knowledge. We use 'Open Research' in this statement as we wish to be clear that it applies to all disciplines, including those in the social sciences and the arts and humanities.