

OPEN RESEARCH POLICY

1. OVERVIEW AND PURPOSE

- 1.1 Open research underpins the University's strategic commitment to promote global knowledge equity, and aligns with the University's values of collaboration, inclusion, integrity and openness.
- 1.2 Open research practices enhance transparency, collaboration, and reproducibility, while accelerating discovery and innovation. Open research practices increase the reach, impact and visibility of research outputs. The University's commitment to open research is outlined in the *Statement on Open Research*.
- 1.3 The University promotes and fosters a culture of openness and professional integrity in research practices, ensuring research methods, results and data are open to scrutiny and sharing when appropriate.
- 1.4 This policy outlines expectations of researchers and the commitments the University makes to support and enable open research practices. While it is not always possible to share all research openly, the guiding principle is to make research outputs as open as possible, as closed as necessary.
- 1.5 The University supports various mechanisms by which research and scholarship can be accessed, used, reused, cited and built upon, thereby contributing to a fairer global knowledge economy and upholding the principles of open research.
- 1.6 The University is committed to maintaining a permanent record of its research and scholarship activities, and ensuring shared outputs remain FAIR — Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, and Reusable—into the future, as appropriate.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1 This policy applies to University staff conducting research and/or scholarship, and postgraduate researchers (hereafter collectively referred to as "researchers").
- 2.2 The policy relates to all research and scholarship outputs including, but not limited to publications, data¹, doctoral theses, methods and protocols, code, software and hardware, non-traditional and practice-based outputs, and preprints.
- 2.3 Where they are more stringent, funder requirements relating to open research must take precedence over institutional requirements. This includes REF requirements on open research.²

¹ For information about managing research data, including definitions and best practice, see the Library's Research Data Management guidance.

² REF requirements are issued by UK higher education funding bodies and carry compliance obligations that are equivalent in scope and impact to those imposed by funders.

3. **RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 3.1 Researchers are responsible for compliance with this policy and the *Code of Practice for Research*, which outlines standards for professional conduct expected by all staff and students engaged in research.
- 3.2 Researchers in receipt of funding are responsible for complying with the conditions of their funders' requirements regarding open research. In line with section 2.3, if these requirements conflict with University policy or procedure, funder requirements take precedence. Researchers should seek guidance from the Library in such cases.
- 3.3 Researchers must ensure that open research outputs comply with relevant law, policies and procedures, such as third-party copyright and data protection.

4. **POLICY**

4.1 **Visibility**

- 4.1.1 Researcher profiles on the University's Research Information System (Elements) must be kept up-to-date and accurately reflect research and scholarship outputs and activities.
- 4.1.2 Researchers must link their University profile (Elements) to an active ORCID record³.

4.2 **Publications and text outputs**

- 4.2.1 Researchers must deposit the Author's Accepted manuscript (AAM) for peer-reviewed journal articles and conference outputs published in proceedings with an ISSN into the institutional repository via the University's Research Information System, Elements, within three (3) months of acceptance.
- 4.2.2 The University recommends that researchers deposit (where possible and permitted by the copyright owner⁴) an appropriate copy of all other publications - including but not limited to monographs, book chapters and edited collections - into the institutional repository via the University's Research Information System, Elements, within three (3) months of publication.
- 4.2.3 Open access versions of publications must have a Creative Commons licence, with a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence preferred.

4.3 **Research data**

- 4.3.1 Researchers must create data management plans (DMPs) to document how they will manage their data across the research data lifecycle, which includes – but is not limited to – collection, analysis, anonymisation, processing, storage and sharing.
 - 4.3.1.1 Data management practices vary across disciplines, methodologies and data types. DMPs must comply with funder requirements where applicable. In

³ ORCID, which stands for Open Researcher and Contributor ID, is a unique, interoperable and non-proprietary persistent identifier that enables reliable attribution of authors. <https://orcid.org/>

⁴ See Publications and Copyright Policy for rights retention position.

the absence of such requirements, researchers should follow recognised disciplinary standards or appropriate funder guidance for comparable research, and seek advice where expectations are unclear.

4.3.1.2 Informed consent is an ethical requirement for research involving human participants and this includes seeking clear consent for data sharing. This must be considered as part of the DMP when planning how data will be shared.

4.3.2 Researchers must ensure that research data are managed and kept securely. They must familiarise themselves with and abide by University information security policies and requirements and seek guidance where existing documentation does not address specific circumstances.

4.3.3 Research data must be held on University approved storage, with appropriate access controls set by researchers.

4.3.4 Data must be retained in line with funder requirements. If no funder requirements apply, data must be retained for ten (10) years from the close of the project or the point at which the data is no longer actively in use.

4.3.5 Researchers must follow funder requirements on data sharing. Where there are no funder requirements, researchers must share their data within three (3) months of the end of a project or the point at which the data is no longer actively in use.

4.4 **Other output types**

4.4.1 The University recognises that open research practices are evolving, and that researcher requirements and best practice may change. If University systems and procedures are not suitable, the Library will work with researchers and relevant stakeholders to identify appropriate solutions to support open research excellence.

4.5 **Exceptions**

4.5.1 Rights holders, researchers or others who have concerns that material held on the University's institutional repository represents a breach of copyright, intellectual property infringement, defamation, plagiarism, breach of confidence or data protection, or presents a security risk or threat to an individual's safety, should contact the Library. Library staff will follow takedown procedures.

4.5.2 The University may restrict access to outputs shared on University systems where required to comply with publisher embargoes or contract terms. This will be done in consultation with the researcher(s).

4.5.3 There are legitimate constraints – such as confidentiality, commercial sensitivities, intellectual property, data ownership, technical capacity, ethical concerns, and obligations to communities – which may limit openness in some cases. Where researchers identify such constraints and determine that research cannot be made fully open, restrictions must be proportionate and justified.

4.5.4 The Procedures on Research Degrees outlines the reasons that a doctoral thesis may be embargoed permanently or for a fixed period or made available with redaction.

4.5.5 Where outputs cannot be made open, researchers must make every effort to ensure those outputs are FAIR (findable, accessible, interoperable, reusable). The Library can advise on publishing FAIR metadata and options for partial sharing.

4.6 **Non-compliance with this policy**

4.6.1 Failure to comply with the policy may result in related non-compliance with funder requirements or policies (where applicable) and future Research Excellence Framework open research requirements.

4.6.2 Where there is deliberate misconduct or behaviour amounting to a wilful breach of this policy, or gross negligence causing a breach of the policy, the matter may be considered under the University's Disciplinary Procedure under Regulation 31.

5. **LEGISLATION AND GOOD PRACTICE**

5.1 **Legislation**

5.1.1 In the UK, data protection is governed by the UK General Data Protection Regulation, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Data (Use and Access) Act 2025. Please refer to the University's Data Protection Policy and webpages for more information.

5.1.2 In the UK, the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 is the principal UK legislation governing intellectual property rights and granting creators of works rights over copying and sharing their work. Please refer to the University's Policy on Exploitation and Commercialisation of Research and Intellectual Property for more information.

5.2 **Good Practice**

5.2.1 The [FAIR Data Principles](#) are a set of guiding principles that state that data should be findable, accessible, interoperable, and reusable. Since 2016, the principles have achieved widespread acceptance and have been adopted as standards for management of data by [UNESCO](#).

5.2.2 The League of European Research Universities ([LERU](#)) identifies eight pillars for achieving Open Science and fostering an open research culture. LERU provides universities with a roadmap for implementing these pillars to promote a more open and collaborative research environment.

Review / Contacts / References

Policy title:	Open Research Policy
Date approved:	11 th March 2026
Approving body:	Senate
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Revision history:	Version 1 – March 2026
Next review date:	10 th March 2029
Related internal policies, procedures, guidance:	<p>Open Research Statement Code of Practice for Researchers Procedures on Research Degrees</p> <p>Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on Exploitation and Commercialisation of Research and Intellectual Property • Publications and Copyright Policy • Information Security Policy and procedures • Data Protection Policy • Research Ethics Policy • Records Management Policy <p>Guidance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open access and Elements guidance • Research data management guidance • Data Protection guidance • Records management guidance <p>Terms of use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sussex Research Online/Figshare terms of use • Elements terms of use
Division:	Library, Culture and Heritage
Policy Owner:	Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Prof. Maria Fasli)
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