



University of Oxford: Open Research Position Statement

Statement

The University of Oxford encourages a culture of openness, transparency, and collaboration in research. We believe that applying principles of openness and accessibility to research processes and research outputs has strong benefits for research quality and impact, by improving reuse and reproducibility, and underpinning research integrity.

This Statement provides a framework for University researchers to conduct and disseminate research in a manner that promotes the sharing and accessibility of knowledge, trust in researchers and institutions, and societal impact.

This Statement has been informed by and aligns to external policy frameworks and sector concordats and applies to all staff and students of the University who conduct research, regardless of funding source. Externally funded researchers are expected to act in accordance with the requirements of those funding their research and regulatory bodies.

This Statement is archived in ORA (Oxford University Research Archive) at <https://doi.org/10.5287/ora-pdppwjwmn> and the text is free for others to use and adapt.

What is open research?

Open research is the practice of making the processes and outputs (e.g. publications but also datasets, software, materials) of research as transparent and freely accessible as possible. Research should, by default, be made openly available in a timely manner, unless there is a valid reason (e.g. ethical, legal, or commercial or sensitive) for restricting access or reuse. It is recognised that restrictions may apply, for example if the research is: subject to data protection requirements; commercially sensitive; subject to patent or contractual obligations; or has the potential for dual use or misuse.

Open research is relevant to all researchers, but its applications differ between disciplines. The terms 'open research', 'open science' and 'open scholarship' are sometimes used interchangeably but are based on the same principles of collaboration and accountability in any discipline.

The goals of open research are to:

- Support dissemination, validation, and re-use of research
- Promote research rigour, reliability, and reproducibility
- Enhance trust in research outputs and institutions
- Support collaboration and public benefit of research

The University supports the academic freedom of researchers to pursue new knowledge and to choose the means of dissemination; but within that free choice, the University encourages outputs of research, and where appropriate the accompanying data, to be as open as possible but as closed as necessary.

Expectations

Responsibilities of the researcher

The University relies on its researchers to uphold principles of scholarly rigour and transparency so that open materials are of the highest research quality and, where appropriate, will aid reproducibility. Researchers are expected to contribute to the development of best practice within their research area, by



complying with funder and open research policies as a minimum and advancing them where possible. When disseminating their work, researchers should consider publishing practices that support openness and transparency.

As far as is possible and appropriate, this will include:

- **Open access publications.** Researchers should strive to make all scholarly outputs freely available, e.g. for scholarly articles via preprint platforms, at the point of journal or longform publication if not before. As set out in the [Open Access Publications policy](#), the University strongly encourages the use of [rights retention](#) statements, where they are needed to achieve open access by means of self-archiving in the University's repository.
- **FAIR digital objects.** Any digital object underpinning research should be shared in a way that is [Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable \(FAIR\)](#), according to the FAIR Principles, by humans and machines. Accessible means as open as possible but as closed as necessary, according to legal and ethical requirements. To make digital objects FAIR, the use of community standards (to identify, cite, report and link information) and public repositories (generalist or discipline-specific to share the information) are required, along with clear terms of use.
- **Licences.** Researchers should adopt [permissive copyright licences](#) which support sharing and reuse for research outputs, including data, code, and publications, e.g. a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) licence or a CC-BY-ND licence by exception.
- **Transparent methods and protocols.** Researchers should share processes and methods used in obtaining and evaluating research results, as appropriate to particular projects and disciplines, e.g. by publishing research software using best practice techniques for reproducibility, by pre-registering protocols and analyses in advance of data collection when appropriate, using alternative models of publication and peer review to make dissemination and certification of research faster and more transparent.
- **Identifiers and credit.** Researchers should adopt persistent identifiers for individuals (e.g. an [Oxford-linked ORCID](#)) as well as for digital objects (e.g. [Digital Object Identifiers \(DOIs\)](#), PURLs), and organisations (e.g. Research Organization Registry (ROR)) to aid credit, identification, discoverability, and re-use. Researchers should also consider the use of [CRediT](#) (the Contributor Roles Taxonomy) in publications or documentation to describe the specific roles played by each contributor to research outputs.
- **Open peer review.** Researchers should consider participating in peer review models in which aspects of the peer review process are made publicly available, either before or after publication.

[Responsibilities of the University](#)

The University will engage in the long-term development of a research culture where open is the default, by creating opportunities to grow and foster good and FAIR research practices, as appropriate to the discipline.

The University will use up-to-date 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. Services to support open research and good research practices are provided by the Bodleian Libraries, IT Services and Research Services, in collaboration with Divisions and departments.

The University also celebrates good practice (e.g. via the Vice-Chancellor's Awards), and supports and develops infrastructure and builds communities of practice to help facilitate and promote open practices.



To achieve this, the University:

- Provides a range of support, services and information to enable researchers to practise open research, and ensure long-term sustainability and preservation of curated open materials and their continued open accessibility e.g.
 - [Open Scholarship Support Department \(Bodleian Libraries\)](#)
 - [Sustainable Digital Scholarship \(Bodleian Libraries\)](#)
 - [Open Access Oxford website](#)
 - [Oxford University Research Archive \(ORA\)](#)
 - [Research Computing and Support Team \(IT Services\)](#)
 - [Research Data Oxford website](#)
 - [FAIRsharing](#)
 - [Research Practice Training programme](#)
- Provides guidance and resources for managing and sharing digital objects, in line with the FAIR Principles, to enable and enhance their use.
- Provides training and development to support researchers in good research practice, computational literacy, reproducibility, and FAIRness.
- Supports the development of plans at departmental or faculty level to meet expectations for open research and research good practice, as appropriate for different disciplinary research cultures.
- Recognises research publications and other outputs in line with the Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA), which means considering the intrinsic merit of outputs rather than relying solely on the venue of publication or metrics such as a Journal's Impact Factor or the publisher.
- Collaborates with and leads on a number of relevant national and international initiatives set up to deliver training, guidance and technical infrastructure (e.g. UK Reproducibility Network, ELIXIR, European Open Science Cloud projects) and engages with government and sector organisations to contribute to policy development and compliance.
- Promotes a positive research culture which values rigour and transparency in research and empowers researchers to enact these principles.

Open Research – external policies

This statement is aligned to funder policies and other sector concordats with which the University and its researchers must comply. These include:

- [Concordat to Support Research Integrity](#)
- [Concordat on Open Research Data](#)
- [UKRI Policy on Open Access](#)
- [UKRI Policy Framework on Research Data](#)
- [Wellcome Open Research position](#)
- [Wellcome Open Access policy](#)

Other information

This statement has been informed by national and international sector statements and initiatives such as:

- [FAIR Principles](#)



- [Principles of Plan S](#)
- [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment](#)

Relationship with existing policies

This statement operates in conjunction with other University policies (where more detailed requirements are defined) such as:

- [Academic Integrity in Research: Code of Practice](#)
- [Open Access Publications](#)
- [Research Data Management](#)
- [Research Ethics](#)
- [Data Protection](#)

This Open Research Position Statement was approved by Research and Innovation Committee on 6 June 2024. It will be regularly reviewed and updated (at least every three years, or after major external policy changes).

For further information contact research.practice@admin.ox.ac.uk

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