

University of Aberdeen Research Publications Policy

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Date of next review	01 11 2025
Policy guidance	https://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/support/rights-retention-1451.php
Related policies	Policy for Intellectual Property Exploitation and Revenue Sharing

Introduction

Research staff at the University of Aberdeen have traditionally, when publishing scholarly articles, signed a copyright transfer agreement. As a result, research staff have assigned their copyright to academic publishers, which results in many scholarly articles now being under partial or complete ownership of the academic publishers.

In order for the University of Aberdeen and its researchers to comply with funder requirements, and to enable the University of Aberdeen to disseminate its research and scholarship as widely as possible, whilst enabling its research staff to publish their scholarly articles in a journal of their choice, the University of Aberdeen will adopt the following policy.

This policy will be reviewed on a regular basis and updated where necessary.

1. The University of Aberdeen supports open research as an essential component of being ‘open to all’ and makes commitments to it in Aberdeen 2040 and as part of a healthy, inclusive and supportive research culture.
2. The University of Aberdeen supports research funders that require scholarly works associated with their grants to be open and provides ways for research staff to comply with open access policies associated with the terms of their funding.
3. This policy applies to scholarly works that are either:
 - a. **“Scholarly articles”**, defined as journal articles and conference proceedings, authored or co-authored while the person is a member of research staff of the University of Aberdeen.
 - b. **“books and chapters”** comprising monographs, edited collections, and book chapters.

Outputs for which a publishing contract was signed prior to the adoption of this policy, and which lack a compliant open access option, are exempt.

4. The policy does not currently apply to textbooks, collections of essays, datasets, or other outputs that do not fall under the definitions of scholarly articles or books and chapters defined in section 3. The University of Aberdeen nevertheless strongly encourages researchers to make such outputs as openly available as possible.

5. This policy applies to all staff who have a responsibility for research (referred to in this policy as “**research staff**”) and who publish scholarly works that fall within the scope of this policy.
6. The University of Aberdeen recognises that, subject to third party agreements, the University of Aberdeen waives its rights of ownership of copyright in “Scholarly Works” (these are defined in the [Policy for Intellectual Property Exploitation and Revenue Sharing](#) (the “**IP Policy**”). The University of Aberdeen confirms this current practice and policy which means that copyright is owned by the authors of the Scholarly Work and that they have the right to publish scholarly works in the destination of their choice.
7. The IP Policy establishes that the University of Aberdeen is granted a perpetual, royalty-free, non-exclusive licence by research staff to use, copy, publish and distribute Scholarly Works created by research staff, including for archival and open access purposes.
8. This allows the University of Aberdeen to make manuscripts of scholarly articles, books and chapters created by research staff publicly available in an open access repository and in a manner that will comply with any specific research funder requirements.
9. This policy requires all University of Aberdeen scholarly articles, books and chapters to be easily identified as being from the University of Aberdeen in order to ensure full credit is given in bibliometric searches carried out for the assessment of research, league tables or other purposes. The University of Aberdeen must be correctly named in the author affiliation and contact details provided for any member of staff or research student named as an author.
10. The University of Aberdeen recognises that there may be situations outwith the member of research staff’s control where it is difficult to follow this policy exactly. In this case it will be permissible for research staff to opt out of the requirement for immediate open access upon publication if no other option is available. However this may cause the research output to be non-compliant with funder policies and may render it ineligible for submission to a Research Excellence Framework (**REF**) exercise. To opt out, authors should [use the form](#) to contact the Library’s Open Research Team with publication details.

Scholarly articles

11. Research staff will provide an electronic copy of the accepted manuscript (**AM**) of each scholarly article (at no charge) no later than the date of publication to an appropriate representative of the University of Aberdeen in an electronic format (such as PDF).
12. The University of Aberdeen requires the AM to include wording advising the publisher of this policy and support to do this will be provided to research staff prior to submission of the AM.
13. The University of Aberdeen will deposit the AM in a digital repository under a licence which grants permissions for reuse. The University of Aberdeen will use a [Creative Commons \(CC\) licence](#) to do this unless there is a valid reason to use a different licence (such as an Open Government Licence for research subject to Crown copyright).
14. The University of Aberdeen will encourage the use of a Creative Commons attribution licence (**CC BY**) licence to maximise reuse but will also use a Creative Commons Non-Commercial licence (**CC BY-NC**) where there is a requirement to prevent commercial use. Where there is a specific

requirement as a result of a funder policy (e.g. UK Research and Innovation (**UKRI**) requirement to use CC BY), the University of Aberdeen will advise of the appropriate licence to be applied.

Books and chapters

15. For outputs that fall into this category, research staff will provide an electronic copy of the AM under a choice of Creative Commons licence that meets funder conditions, within 12 months of publication.
16. The University of Aberdeen will deposit the AM in a digital repository under the assigned licence and with an embargo period that does not exceed funder requirements.
17. Third-party material contained in the work can be included under more restrictive licences or removed from the open access version if rights cannot be obtained for reuse.