

Open Access survey results

Earlier this year, we ran a survey to find out what researchers in St Andrews think about open access. We asked about attitudes to open access, funding, copyright ownership and use of our digital repository [Research@StAndrews:FullText](#). The survey was part of a national initiative to create a body of evidence about researchers' attitudes, and will help us develop our services to support research activity in the University.

A [summary report](#) of the collated national survey is available from the Repositories Support Project at <http://rspproject.wordpress.com/2011/12/02/unlocking-attitudes-to-open-access-survey-results/>

As part of [Open Access Week](#) 2011 we would like to share some of the results here, along with some of the actions we have already taken. We will add results of the collated national surveys when these are available.

Introduction

1. What is your age group?			
20-29:		32.9%	26
30-39:		29.1%	23
40-49:		21.5%	17
50-59:		12.7%	10
60 and over:		3.8%	3

2. Where are you in your research career?			
First Year PhD:		8.9%	7
Second Year PhD:		8.9%	7
Third Year PhD:		10.1%	8
Fourth Year PhD:		11.4%	9
Less than 5 years post doc experience:		10.1%	8
5-15 years post doc experience:		20.3%	16
16 or more years post doc experience:		17.7%	14
Practitioner researcher:		7.6%	6
Other (<i>please specify</i>):		5.1%	4

We had 80 responses representing a good spread across age and level of experience. Almost 40% were PhD students which may skew results towards this group with less experience of publishing, but we are encouraged with their interest in open access. One PhD student commented "I think Open Access is the future".

All Schools except History were represented, with most responses (18.8%) coming from Biology, followed by Computer Science (11.2%) and Physics & Astronomy (10%). We may run a similar survey again in future and would be keen to hear views from disciplines not as well represented this time round.

Attitudes to open access

4. Open Access publishing allows access to scholarly publications via the Internet in such a way that the material is free for all to read, and to use (or reuse) to various extents.			
4.a. How do you feel about the principles of Open Access?			
Strongly in favour:		72.2%	57
Mildly in favour:		12.7%	10
Neutral:		8.9%	7
Mildly against:		3.8%	3
Strongly against:		2.5%	2
Don't know:		0.0%	0
4.b. How do you feel about using Open Access repositories?			
Strongly in favour:		57.7%	45
Mildly in favour:		14.1%	11
Neutral:		16.7%	13
Mildly against:		6.4%	5
Strongly against:		2.6%	2
Don't know:		2.6%	2
4.c. How do you feel about publishing in Open Access journals?			
Strongly in favour:		46.8%	36
Mildly in favour:		22.1%	17
Neutral:		11.7%	9
Mildly against:		11.7%	9
Strongly against:		6.5%	5
Don't know:		1.3%	1

The overwhelming majority (84.9%) of researchers indicated a positive attitude to the principles of open access. Most respondents were also in favour of using open access repositories (71.8%) with slightly fewer (68.9%) in favour of publishing in open access journals. A significant number (18.2%) were against publishing in an open access journal. Some concerns were expressed about funding and business models for open access journals, as well as issues of quality.

Funding for open access

We discovered that 62.9% of respondents (split evenly between students and staff) did not know if funding was available for open access publication charges from research grants. We are addressing this lack of awareness by increasing our support in this area. We have launched new [library web pages with information about research funders](#), including details of funding for open access.

Repositories

7. Do you know about the University repository Research@StAndrews:FullText? [if no/unsure please go directly to question 10]			
Yes:		48.1%	38
No:		36.7%	29
Unsure:		15.2%	12
7.a. If so, do you currently make any of your publications available in the repository by depositing full text in PURE? [If yes please go directly to question 8]			
Yes:		38.6%	17
No:		61.4%	27
7.a.i.			
7.b. If you are not currently making material available in it, why not?			

Awareness of the University's research repository is encouraging, though the numbers suggest we still need to do more to publicise the opportunities for depositing research outputs in [Research@StAndrews:FullText](#).

Of those who already make use of the repository (via PURE), the majority add journal articles. We recognise that other formats including non-textual material may become a growth area and we would be happy to discuss the types of research material that could be made open access in this way.

'Electronic theses' was not listed as a type of research output as the survey concentrates on 'publications', but e-theses still make up the majority of content in Research@StAndrews:FullText due to University policy which requires electronic submission. In addition the University is an "Open Access" sponsor of the national ETHOS service which enables worldwide researcher demand driven digitisation of earlier theses and is creating a core digital resource of St Andrews research theses.

Copyright

12. Who do you think "should" own the copyright of research publications?			
Author/s:		n/a	64
Employing institution:		n/a	17
Primary Funder (e.g. Research Council):		n/a	12
Publisher:		n/a	21
I don't know:		n/a	4
Other (please specify):		n/a	5

It is interesting to see that most researchers think authors "should" retain copyright in their publications, though often in conjunction with institution, funder or publisher. In practice, most publishing agreements require that copyright is transferred to publishers, resulting in limitations on what the author can do with their work. We have [posted on this topic](#) previously in our open access blog. If authors want to investigate how to retain certain rights, the [JISC/SURF Copyright toolbox](#) provides practical suggestions. We can also provide individual support to our academic authors.

If you have queries about your copyright agreements or publishers' policies - contact [open-access-support](#).

(Open access terminology)

Some questions in the survey were probably difficult to answer due to some confusion between open access generally and the different 'routes' to achieve open access. In particular, the questions about 'self-archiving' and 'versions' led to different interpretations and several comments.

We recognise that much of the terminology needs further explanation and we have started this process with our new web pages, including a page of [open access definitions](#), e.g.

"Deposition/'Self-archiving'/Posting: These terms refer to the open access route where the author makes a version of his/her publication available in a repository or other online open access service. This is usually an author-created version and is allowed by many publishers even when copyright is transferred to them."

Self-archiving

While not everyone answered the questions about self-archiving, we can see that people make their full text publications available in different ways. This would reflect common practice in different disciplines, and we recognise that depositing in a repository does not work for all researchers. We can still help with advising on copyright and publisher policies while continuing to demonstrate the benefits of research outputs being available in [Research@StAndrews:FullText](#)

Versions

One of the main barriers to self-archiving is the availability of the correct version of a publication – most publishers will allow an author-created version to be deposited in a repository, but not the published version. It is encouraging that most respondents seem to be keeping their own versions, and the majority see it as acceptable that these versions are held in [Research@StAndrews:FullText](#)

14. Would it be acceptable to you that an "author final version" is held in Research@StAndrews:FullText? The "author final version" is the author-created version that incorporates referee comments and is the accepted version for publication, but does not contain publisher typesetting.

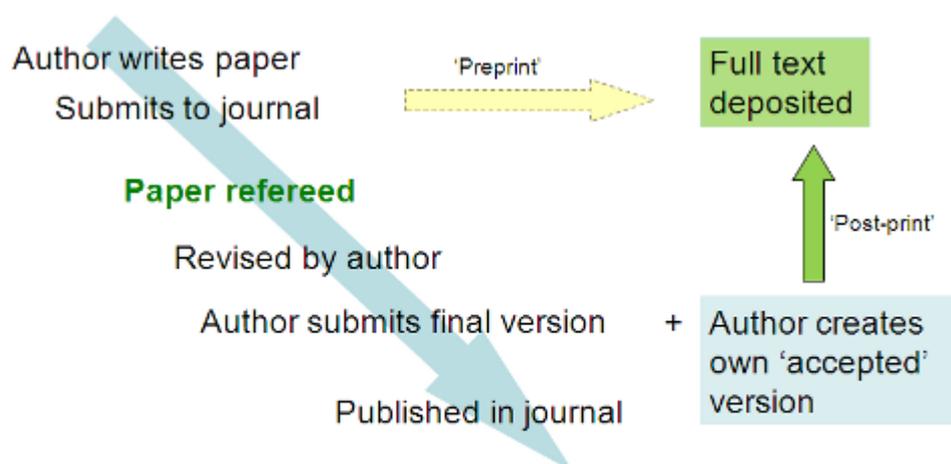
Yes:		80.9%	55
No:		19.1%	13

The [Versions Toolkit](#) provides useful explanations of the various versions of journal articles produced during the research process.

Quality, peer review and open access business models

We received a number of comments referring to concerns about the quality of research outputs that are open access. Open access is entirely compatible with peer review, [as noted by OA expert Peter Suber](#). All the major open access initiatives insist on its importance. This compatibility exists whether the route to open access is self-archiving in a repository or publishing in an open access journal.

The slide below helps illustrate the way that deposit in a repository complements traditional publishing, where the peer review process happens as normal.



Publication & full text deposit

Adapted from Hubbard, B. 2004. Publication and Deposition in an Eprint Repository [presentation]. Sherpa. Available from <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/uknowledge/epublish/FullTextResources>



To be included in the [Directory of Open Access Journals](#), “the journal must exercise peer-review or editorial quality”. This demonstrates the continued and essential importance of peer review in open access journals. DOAJ currently lists over 7000 journals.

There are [many business models](#) for open access journals, including sponsorship and subsidies as well as submission or publication fees. PLoS is one example that has shown that open access publishing can be “both high quality and economically sustainable” (<http://www.plos.org/plos-expands-mission/#more-568>). Not all open access journal publishers charge fees, for example [Open Humanities Press](#) or [Philosophers’ Imprint](#)

In our blog, we highlight [reports about developing business models](#).

Pure

All research staff in the University should be using Pure to record their research outputs. Pure will be the main tool for REF submissions, and has many other benefits including the ability to populate School web pages with publication lists and create individual CVs. Some respondents made specific comments about the usability of Pure, and these have been passed on to the system administrators. Some issues have already been addressed, such as improvements to BibTex import.

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previously available at
<http://www.st-andrews.ac.uk/library/services/researchsupport/openaccess/openaccess/survey/>

Depositing full text publications into our repository is done directly from Pure, so there is no need to log in to a separate system. All you need to do is add a document while creating or editing a research output. We have added a [Quick guide to deposit full text in PURE](#) (PDF, 219 KB) to our web pages.

We were very pleased to receive so many survey responses and to be able to give feedback on our local survey. Any further comments gratefully received – email open-access-support@st-andrews.ac.uk