

Academic Policy Statement APS 26:

Open Access Publications

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1. Introduction

The Middlesex University Strategy towards 2031¹ sees Research and Knowledge Exchange as a key enabler of its success, and shows the commitment of the University² to strengthening the performance of our academic staff. Investing in a sustainable digital and physical infrastructure and promoting our people and culture as well as our academic excellence will support staff to be academically outstanding. It will promote a strong reputation amongst research peers and will enable staff to focus on producing internationally-renowned research to further Middlesex’s global reputation and growth.

¹ Middlesex University Corporate Strategy Towards 2031: <http://mdxstrategy2031.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Middlesex-Towards-2031.pdf>

² Middlesex University in this context means all Middlesex University campuses including overseas campuses: <https://www.mdx.ac.uk/about-us/what-we-do/our-campuses>

This policy and its supporting guidelines provide clarity regarding what is expected of its researchers in respect of their published outputs.

The changing scholarly communications landscape within which our researchers work is witnessing a steep rise in the significance of Open Access publishing. Increasing access and visibility of published research outputs has a number of benefits for both the individual (as researcher and as consumer) and the institution, as well as for the economy and wider society. It is essential for meeting funder requirements and for submission in the post-2021 Research Excellence Framework (REF).

2. Benefits of Open Access

The 2021 UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Open Access Policy built on work that had been introduced by Finch in 2012.³ It was informed by a comprehensive consultation with diverse stakeholders⁴ and highlights the benefits of Open Access for society,⁵ these include:

- greater sharing of information between researchers and collaborators, strengthening their collective findings;
- ensuring that funded research meets the mandate outlined in the government's research and development roadmap.

Jisc sees Open Access as part of the wider 'open' movement, where all can benefit from access to research – from small businesses to schools.⁶ Benefits for researchers and institutions include:

- improved reach of research;
- help to provide evidence for impact;
- improved reputation for researchers and host institutions through increased citations;
- improved quality of research through open, transparent and reproducible research practices.

3. Funder Expectations

Research funders recognise the advantages of Open Access and introduced changes to their requirements. Open Access expectations are growing. Funders want to ensure that findings from research funded by the public can be freely accessed, used and serve as a basis for building new research.

³ "Accessibility, sustainability, excellence: how to expand access to research publications" (2012) *Finch report*: <https://www.sconul.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/finch-report-final.pdf>

⁴ UKRI Open Access Review (2018-2021): <https://www.ukri.org/our-work/supporting-healthy-research-and-innovation-culture/open-research/open-access-policies-review/>

⁵ UKRI's new open access policy will help unlock the benefits of research for society (2021): <https://www.ukri.org/about-us/policies-standards-and-data/good-research-resource-hub/open-research/ukris-new-open-access-policy-will-help-to-unlock-the-benefits-of-research-for-society/>

⁶ An introduction to open access (2019): <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/guides/an-introduction-to-open-access>

In practice, this means, that

- in-scope research outputs must be uploaded to an institutional or subject repository at the point of acceptance for publication, and
- research data will be made available with as few restrictions as possible, and with a plan for managing and sharing, to meet the commitments set out in the Concordat on Open Research Data.⁷

Funders worked closely to develop the recent Open Access policies, recognising the need of multiple routes to Open Access and that more must be done to deliver on the Open Access' promise.

4. Routes to Open Access

Different flavours of Open Access publishing options for research outputs are available along the two main routes while details often depend on specific funder requirements:

- **Green OA:**⁸ Publish in a journal which allows the final agreed full-text version of the author's manuscript (known as post-print, after peer-review before copy-editing) to be made Open Access through deposit in an appropriate repository with embargoes respected. There is no fee to pay to publish via this route.
- **Gold OA:**⁹ Publish in a journal and, upon publication, the published version must be free and unrestricted to view and download with a licence that permits copying and reuse. This route may involve payment of a fee. Authors should also deposit the final published version in the institutional repository.

For long-form publications, similar rules will apply while there may be instances where meeting the Open Access requirements may need exemptions or may not be possible.

Information and continuous updates about Open Access, policy changes and ways to achieve compliance with specific funder requirements are available in the Middlesex University Guide to Open Access.¹⁰ In addition, researchers are advised to consult the terms of their funding agreements.

5. Middlesex University Research Repository

This policy builds on the [Middlesex University Policy on Open Access Publishing](#) (2015),

⁷ Concordat on Open Research Data (2016):

<https://www.ukri.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/UKRI-020920-ConcordatonOpenResearchData.pdf>

⁸ Recent funder policies require a Rights Retention statement with a CC-BY licence to be added to the manuscript for self-archiving.

⁹ Middlesex University signed Transformative Agreements with some publishers to cover the article processing charges (APCs).

¹⁰ Middlesex University Guide to Open Access: <http://libguides.mdx.ac.uk/openaccess>

and **requires that research outputs will be deposited in the institutional repository at the point of acceptance.**

It applies to all academic staff, all research staff and all students whose research outputs derive from their employment by the University, from research grants or otherwise from the use of University resources and facilities.

The institutional repository supports researchers by:

- Enabling the above routes to Open Access and, in doing so, ensuring staff meet funders' Open Access requirements;
- Providing back-up copies of uploaded work, thus profiling the research outputs of Middlesex University via Google Scholar and other internet search systems;
- Facilitating the management of Middlesex University's statutory returns such as the Research Excellence Framework (REF) and the Researchfish system;
- Recording research work which can be used in University processes and for reporting.

6. Researcher Responsibilities

This policy requires researchers at Middlesex University to:

- a) Create a basic record in the Middlesex University Research Repository for every research output – **at the date of acceptance**, and upload the final agreed full-text version of the author's manuscript;^{11, 12}
- b) Create at least a metadata record in the Middlesex University Research Repository, in case that the work is comprised of multiple components or practice-based;
- c) Provide links to related components or data, either in the Middlesex University Research Repository, or a system that meets the technical standards;
- d) Provide a link to where the full output may be accessed, in cases where it is not permitted to be included in the repository;
- e) Use the phrase "Middlesex University" within the research output when stating the address of the originating institution.¹³

7. Support for Researchers

It is recognised that some researchers may need support with various elements during the research lifecycle, including Open Access compliance, funder requirements and how to

¹¹ The final accepted full-text version is preferred if permitted by publishers. Such Open Access deposit will be governed by copyright law and by agreed publisher, government or funder expectations: embargo periods may apply.

¹² The use of preprints to facilitate open research practices across disciplines is encouraged.

¹³ It is important that researchers use the same originating institution phrase as it will simplify bibliometric searches which may be carried out for assessment of research at the institution, such as that for the government of university league tables. It will make it possible to identify and retrieve all the University's research publications in research aggregation services such as Web of Science, Scopus and PubMed. See Middlesex University Guide to Open Access section: [Addresses and affiliations](#).

make use of the institutional repository to follow the Green (self-archiving) or Gold routes to Open Access.

Online and face-to-face resources and support are available from the Library, the Research Support Team (RST), the Research and Knowledge Transfer Office (RKTO) and Staff Development.

For further information and contact details consult the Middlesex University Guide to Open Access.¹⁴

8. Beyond this Policy

An increasing number of funders require that researchers include a statement on how underlying research materials, such as data, samples or models, can be accessed with respect to a research output. Library and Student Support and the Research & Knowledge Transfer Office are able to provide support to researchers with their needs relating to research data management.

9. Policy Implementation & Review

This policy builds on the Open Access Publications policy published in March 2015. To be reviewed within one year from the date of Academic Board approval, in light of the REF2029 and Rights Retention policies.

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Suggested review by	One year after effective date

10. Version history

#	Date effective	Author(s)	Approved by	Change details	Suggested Review Date
2	2024-11-06	B. Joerg, R. Comley	Academic Board	Reflects changes of funder OA policies, refers to our OA LibGuide with publishing agreements, highlights the Green route to OA, and access to practice-based or multi-components work.	November 2025
1	2015-03-15	R. Comley	Academic Board		April 2020

¹⁴ Middlesex University Guide to Open Access: <http://libguides.mdx.ac.uk/openaccess>

