

The UK Scholarly Communications Licence – a model for (open access) rights retention

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Times Higher Education (25/05/2017)

WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS

PROFESSIONAL JOBS SUMMITS RANKINGS STUDENT ABOUT US

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According to the report, *Untangling Academic Publishing: A History of the Relationship between Commercial Interests, Academic Prestige and the Circulation of Knowledge*, reforms of scholarly publishing have given “undue weight to commercial concerns” in recent years. Additionally, the “prestige economy”, in which academics compete for journal space by publishing in high-impact journals with high impact factors or by high-stakes access and “free sharing of knowledge”, it argues...

Sci-Hub study suggests publishers' embargoes 'not viable'

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This, it adds, will be an “appropriate rebalancing of responsibility in the dissemination of the fruits of research”.

The report – authored by Aileen Fyfe, Noah M. Smith, and Kelly Coate, senior lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of St Andrews; Kelly Coate, senior lecturer in the School of Biological Sciences at the University of St Andrews; and Kelly Curry, professor of structural biology at Imperial College London – notes that the growth of academic publishing has put strain on the academy, with scholars having to undertake more work as peer reviewers and editors, and university library budgets struggling to keep up with rising prices.

Professor in Toxicology
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UK context: strongest OA funder mandates

COAF

- Charities OA fund, incl. Wellcome Trust
- All articles to be deposited in PubMed Central, under CC BY if published as OA

RCUK

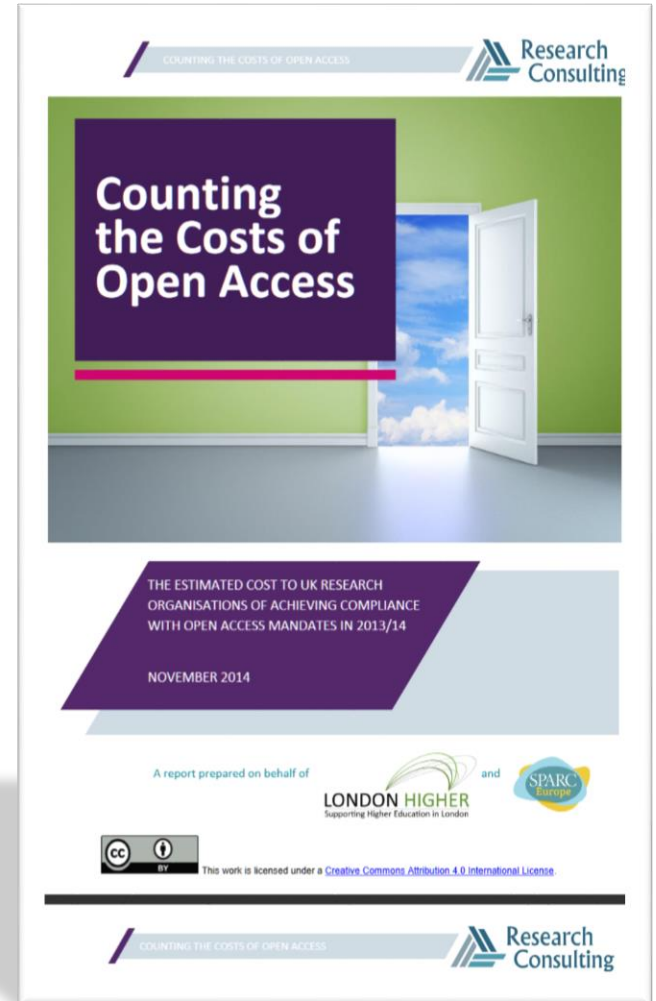
- All papers to be OA by 2018
- Mix of 75% gold and 25% green

HEFCE

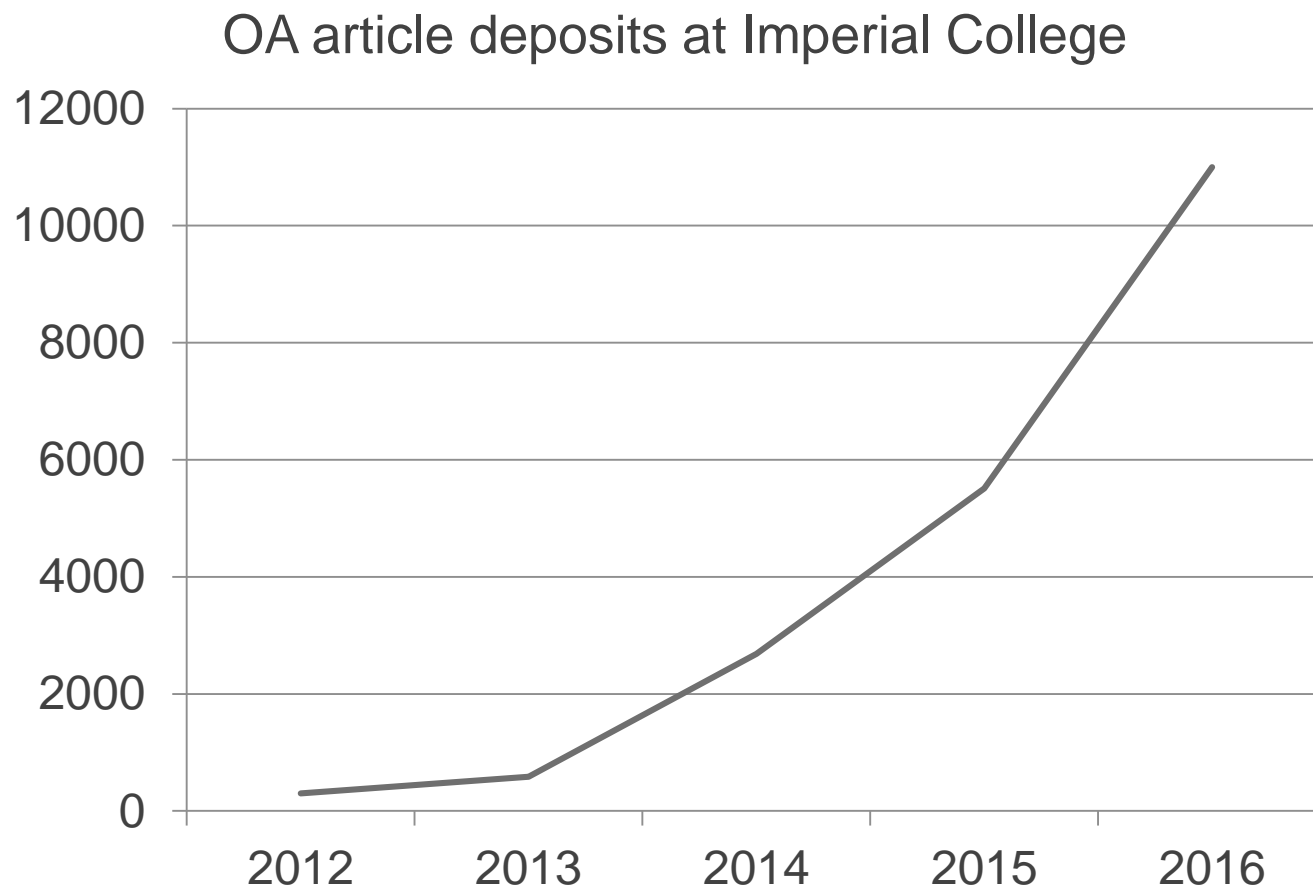
- All papers be deposited in repository, regardless who funded (full OA allowable exception)

Serious investment and effort

- RCUK fund 2015/16: £22.6m
- COAF 2015/16 spend: £6.6m
- ‘Counting the Costs of Open Access’: £9.2m cost to research organisations for compliance with RCUK OA Policy in 2013/14.
- Management effort has since increased across the sector!



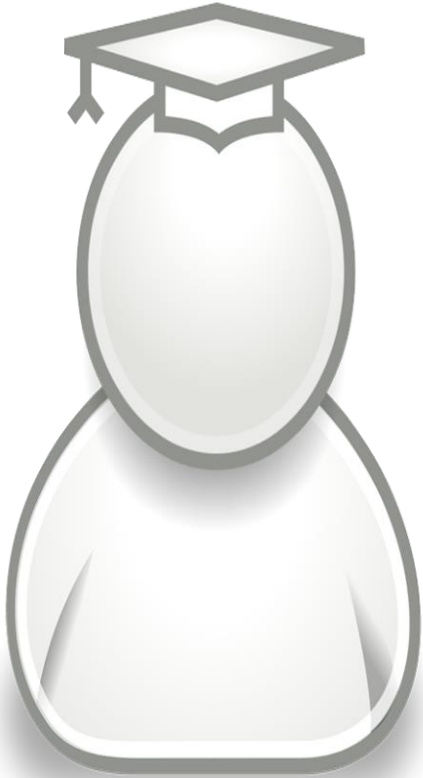
Corresponding increase in OA output



HOWEVER...- strategic perspective

- UK OA funds largely go to hybrid OA, envisaged *transition* to full OA is *not happening* (UK model not widely adopted)
- RCUK OA funds *only* committed to 2018
- *Institutional cost* for managing *hybrid* OA significantly higher than those for managing full open access:
 - Inefficiencies with invoice handling etc.
 - Compliance checking required: not every (paid for!) article actually made open access
 - 75% of staff time supporting green OA at Imperial College required to check and implement publisher deposit conditions

HOWEVER... - academic perspective



- Confusion over funder policies – possible to make output available openly and meet none or only some requirements
- Stuck between a rock and a hard place: myriad of funder, journal and institutional policies
- Publisher policies sometimes even vary based on who funds the researcher, and not all policies are compliant

Problem: copyright transfer & embargos

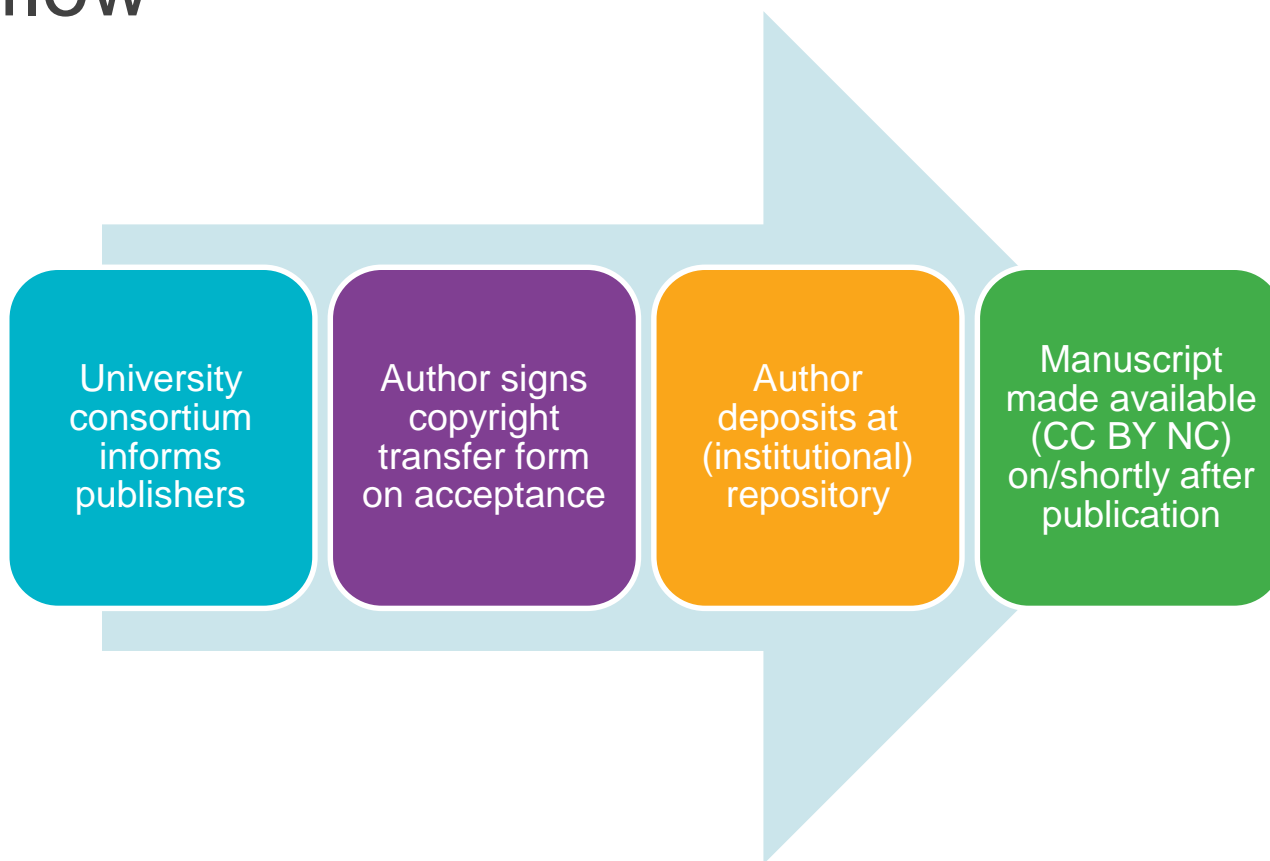


- UK-Scholarly Communications Licence and Model Policy
- Result of intensive discussions with academics
- Model originally (2008) developed at Harvard
 - See details at: bit.ly/goodoa
- Now adopted to UK legal and policy context
- Process originally led by Imperial College London (Chris Banks & Torsten Reimer (now British Library))
- UK-wide initiative, discussions involving ~70 institutions

UK-SCL model

- Under UK law employers retain copyright in works created by staff in the course of their employment.
- UK-SCL: research organisation retains non-exclusive licence to all scholarly articles, allowing it to:
 - make the peer-reviewed manuscript publicly available
 - assign it a non-commercial Creative Commons licence
 - sub-license all authors and their host institutions
- No action from author required (unless co-authored paper)
- Binding on the publisher, regardless of contract with author

Workflow



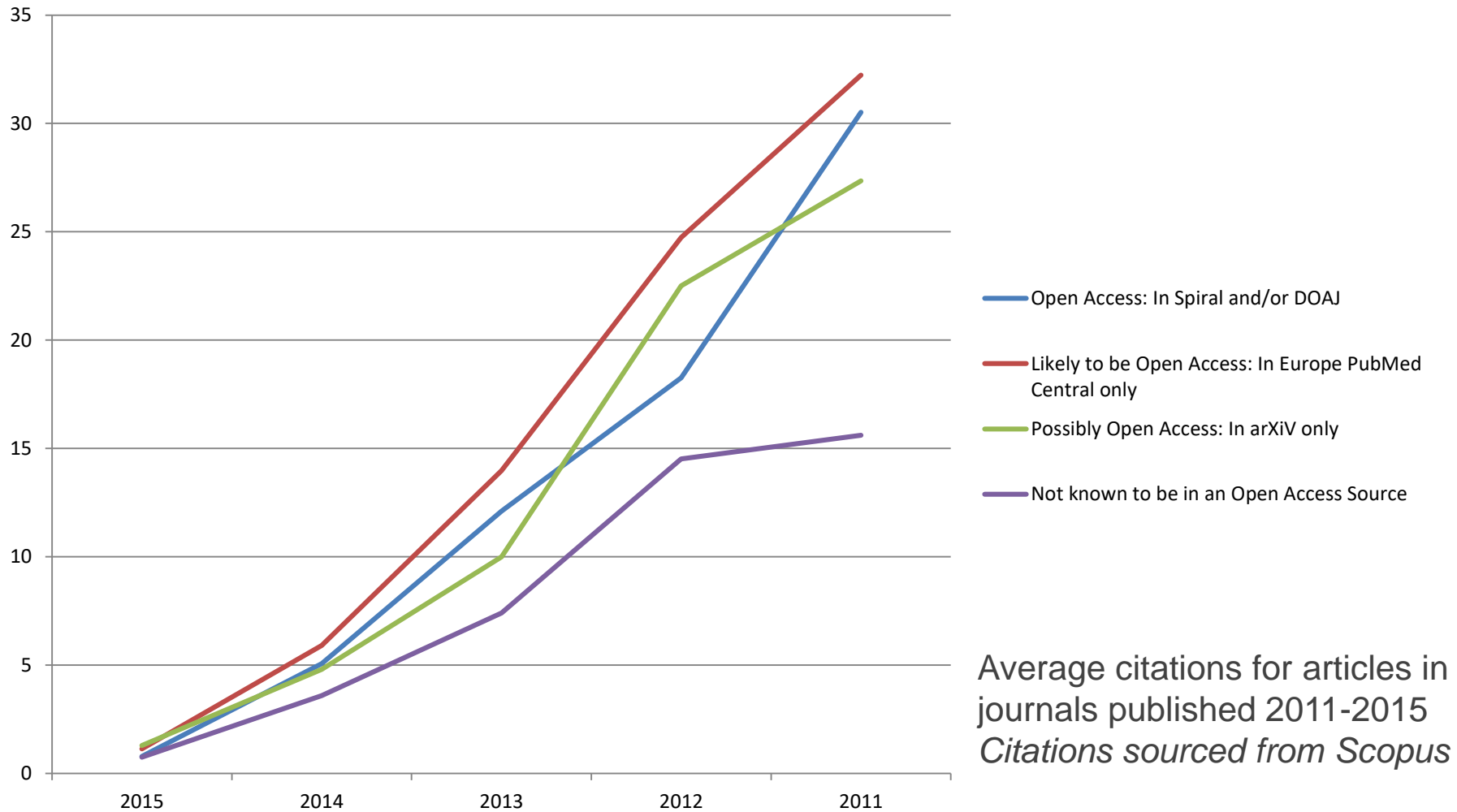
Steps 2-4 happen already (but with embargo restrictions / different licensing)

Step 1 only required once

Benefits

- Authors
 - can comply with green OA policies through single means
 - can continue to publish in journal of choice
 - can decide whether to rely on hybrid open access
 - retain rights to use content in own research and teaching
- Institutions
 - reduce costs for compliance (no checking of publisher policies)
 - reduce reliance on expensive to administer hybrid OA
 - Institutions converge on a single policy
- Funders confident of compliance beyond full OA journals
- Publishers will see higher article citation rates

Imperial College London citation data



A few points

- A transitional solution until a sustainable OA model emerges
- Universities will wave rights where output published CC BY
- Does not restrict academics: they can still publish in journal of choice, regardless of whether it supports compliant OA
- Academics can request a waiver for specific outputs
- Aim is to help academics, not to fight publishers
 - Open Access is increasing citations
 - Universities don't have to blacklist non-compliant journals
 - Publishers can develop new business models

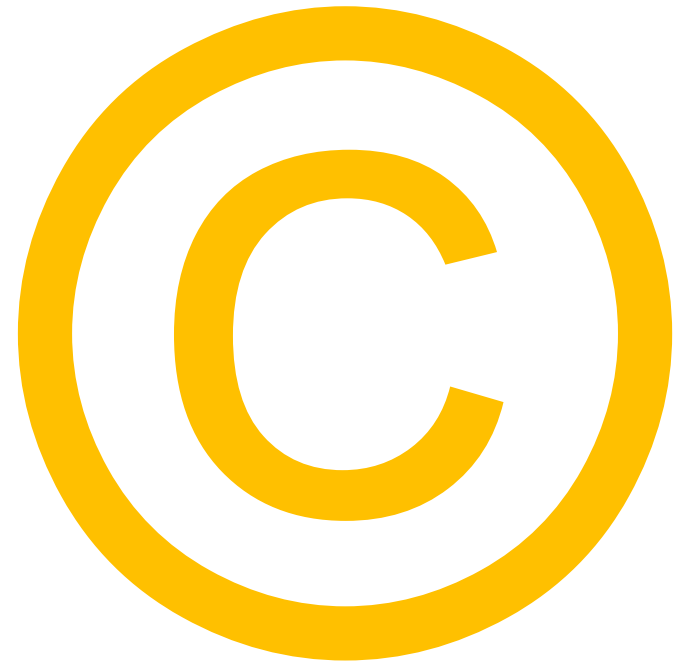
UK implementation

- UK-SCL steering group with representatives from Bristol, British Library, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Imperial, Jisc, Kent, Manchester, Nottingham, Sussex, UCL
- Currently consulting with publisher representatives
- UK-SCL website under construction
- First movers preparing for autumn 2017



How to implement in other countries

- Follow Harvard advice, check own legal context
- Different routes to rights retention:
 - Binding vote by staff (US)
 - Update local policies following consultation (UK)
 - Update employment contracts
 - Lobby to get enshrined into law
 - Write into research funders' terms and conditions



Further reading

- Banks, Chris. (2016). Focusing upstream: supporting scholarly communication by academics. *Insights*. 29(1), pp.37–44. <http://doi.org/10.1629/uksg.292>
- Reimer, Torsten. (2016). UK Scholarly Communications, Licence and Model Policy. Zenodo. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.153928>
- Reimer, Torsten. (2017). The UK Scholarly Communications Licence – supporting academics with open access. *ALISS Quarterly*, 12(2), 3–5. <http://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.375830>

Credits

- Chris Banks (Imperial College London)
- Simon Bains (Manchester University)
- Many RLUK and LERU librarians
- Peter Suber, Stuart Shieber and others at Harvard
- RLUK for funding support towards legal costs
- HEFCE (Ben Johnson and Stephen Hill)
- RCUK (Mark Thorley)
- Wellcome Trust (Robert Kiley)