

## Cornée, Nathalie and Madjarevic, Natalia London School of Economics 2013/2014 RCUK open access compliance report

### Report

**Original citation:**

Cornée, Nathalie and Madjarevic, Natalia (2014) London School of Economics 2013/2014 RCUK open access compliance report. The London School of Economics and Political Science, Library, London, UK.

Originally available from [LSE Library](#)

This version available at: <http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/59521/>

Available in LSE Research Online: September 2014

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## Independent review of the implementation of RCUK Policy on Open Access LSE response to Call for Evidence

This response draws on evidence gathered during the implementation of the RCUK Policy on Open Access (OA) at LSE from 1 April 2013-31 July 2014. Please see our separate response for a report of compliance rates and use of the block grant.

We welcome RCUK's commitment to improving open access to publicly funded research. LSE has established a robust process to administer the policy and support compliance, adopting the green OA route where possible. The main concerns for LSE are the challenges in implementing the RCUK OA policy and the associated costs. We have also encountered publisher behaviour which we believe is unhelpful in supporting the aims of the RCUK policy.

### Compliance overview

Route to Open Access	Number of papers	%
RCUK funded papers compliant via the green route	50	35%
RCUK funded papers compliant via the gold route	73	51%
<b>Total compliant</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>87%</b>
Total number of non-compliant papers	18	13%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>100%</b>

See LSE response to RCUK compliance monitoring for a detailed breakdown of compliance and block grant expenditure.

### 1. Review areas of focus

#### 1.1 Compliance with the 'green' Open Access embargo periods mandated by the policy

- (i) Green OA policy: LSE adopted a green approach to implementing the policy, encouraging authors to comply by depositing final versions in [LSE Research Online](#) wherever possible. The LSE Institutional Publication Fund holds the RCUK block grant and enables LSE RCUK-funded researchers to apply for funds to pay APCs where this is identified as the most effective dissemination route and/or where a green option is not available or compliant with the policy. We found 36% of 2013/14 papers are compliant via green OA.
- (ii) Support services: Compliance with OA embargo periods was supported by our established green open access advice service. We saw an increase in deposit of green open access papers during the implementation of the policy, with green full-text deposits up by 54% during the reporting period when compared with the same period the previous year.

- (iii) Publisher behaviour: It remains a concern that there is dissonance between the interests and aims of RCUK, HE institutions and the publishers in relation to OA. There is some evidence of publishers behaving in ways which frustrate compliance with the RCUK policy, e.g. by extending green embargo periods beyond the RCUK maximum. LSE also remains concerned about the cost of journal subscriptions and the risk of 'double dipping' by publishers in relation to APC payments.

## **1.2 The impact on particular discipline areas of the RCUK requirement for Creative Commons licensing, in particular CC-BY licences for 'gold' OA**

- (i) CC-BY options: All gold open access papers for which we paid an APC met the CC-BY license requirement. We came across only one example of a paper for which we could not pay an APC due to the publisher not offering a CC-BY option. This was a Social Sciences journal published by a US university publishing house.
- (ii) Lack of license information: We encountered difficulties when identifying CC-BY licenses offered by journals on several occasions as information about available licenses is often difficult to find on journal websites. It was often necessary to contact publishers to clarify options.

## **1.3 Any difficulties in understanding which journals offer publication options compliant with the policy**

- (i) Development of shared services to support implementation: We recognise the value of Jisc-supported tools such as SHERPA/FACT, which enable authors and researchers to check RCUK OA journal compliance. However, we have experienced inconsistencies when using this tool, resulting in the need to check open access options with individual publishers and journals to ensure compliance. We recommend SHERPA/FACT receives continued support from funders in order for the tool to be seen as a reliable source of information on journal compliance.

## **1.4 Any difficulties in reaching agreement regarding multi-funded and/or multi-authored manuscripts**

- (i) APC administration for multi-authored papers: One of the challenges we have faced is splitting APC costs between multiple institutions' representatives. This is also partnered with the need to ensure payment is made by the publication date in order for the paper to be released via OA immediately.

## **1.5 Any difficulties in the processes and workflows relating to APC payments to publishers**

- (i) Difficulties with Jisc APC: LSE participated in the Jisc APC pilot project. In the early stages, we expected the system to allow us to process all APC payments with relevant metadata in a single system but we found it significantly slowed down payments. Processing individual APCs is a time consuming administrative process when compared to self-archiving green open access papers in LSE Research Online for which we have

established processes, infrastructure and resources in place. The Jisc APC pilot came to an end in July 2014, resulting in the need to develop APC processes for a second time.

- (ii) Administrative overhead: Significant additional staff resource has been devoted to tracking publications from LSE researchers in receipt of RCUK grants; advising researchers on the most appropriate route to compliant publication and managing the LSE Institutional Publication Fund.

### **1.6 Any difficulties in obtaining the data required to demonstrate compliance**

- (i) Gathering data to ensure compliance: Ensuring that all papers resulting from RCUK funding are identified is a major challenge as there is not a single point of reference for locating this information. Considerable time is required to manually cross-check the Research Outputs System (ROS), external databases and internal publication lists to identify all the papers to which the policy applied. Linking data from these various sources is largely manual and there is a risk that some papers which are subject to the RCUK policy will not be identified.
- (ii) Identifying all RCUK-funded papers: We therefore cannot guarantee that we have identified all papers but it is clear by considering the methods outlined above that obtaining such information is currently a time-consuming manual process.

## **2. Policy communication**

- (i) Clarity of policy communication: This was unclear in several areas:
  - Acceptable embargo periods across disciplines and where APC funding available.
  - Inconsistency regarding approved block grant expenditure.
  - Reporting requirements need to be clearly stated at the policy launch to ensure institutions are able to collect appropriate data throughout the census period.
- (ii) Policy enquiries: In order to improve future implementation of the policy, there is a need for a single email address through which to direct questions about the policy.
- (iii) Communicating with researchers: The level of engagement with the researcher community needs to be addressed. Institutions are able to undertake internal communications regarding the policy but it is essential that RCUK communicates directly with grant holders and award recipients in order to clarify requirements and expectations at a broader level.

## **3. LSE key compliance statistics**

Please refer to our response to the compliance monitoring for a detailed report of LSE block grant expenditure.

- (i) Number of compliant publications: 123/141 (87%)
- (ii) Number of non-compliant publications: 18/141
- (iii) Percentage green open access: 35.5%
- (iv) Percentage gold open access: 51%
- (v) Number of papers with a CC-BY license: 68