A VISION FOR OPEN RESEARCH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF READING
Draft text for consultation

What is Open Research?
Open Research is a term used to describe a set of practices which make the different stages in the research workflow as available as possible, as early as possible, for consultation and re-use by others. It is based on the principle that knowledge produces the greatest benefits if it is shared as widely as possible.

Our Vision for Open Research
The University champions Open Research, because research conducted on open principles best serves the public good, and adoption of open practices by our researchers and research students will increase the integrity, quality, and competitive strength of our research. We believe that making our research as open as possible for scrutiny and re-use is the most effective way to serve our public mission in the sharing of knowledge, and creates more opportunities for collaboration and the generation of impact.

The Vision for Open Research sets out the University's commitment to the aims and principles of Open Research, explains the benefits it can bring, and provides examples of open practices that can be adopted by researchers. We describe the expectations that we have of our researchers, the services we provide to support researchers using open practices, and our long-term ambition to place the ideals and practice of Open Research at the heart of our research identity.

Benefits of Open Research
Research conducted on open principles can bring substantial benefits for researchers, the University, and society as whole:

- The quality of research is improved when its hypotheses, methods and results are open to assessment and reproduction: transparency leads to more reliable and trustworthy research.
- Research that is more open is more visible, generating more citations and creating more opportunities for further research and collaboration.
- The easier it is for others to discover and re-use the outputs of research, the greater the value that can be realised and the return on investment to research funders.
- The availability of research data, materials and instruments for re-use promotes further development and discovery, including in areas beyond the original research field.
- Allowing public access to, and application of, knowledge best serves the public good, and enables realisation of social and economic benefit.
Open Research in practice

The Open Research approach can apply to all stages of the research lifetime, and should be considered in the design, conduct, formal communication and validation of research. Researchers are required by policy to make their publications Open Access and to share their research data, but there are in addition a number of practices that can be adopted to make the process and outputs of research more accessible to others. Not all of these will be appropriate to all disciplines and research contexts, but all of them represent possibilities that are available to researchers. These open research practices include:

- Transparent documentation of research methods – including public registration of data management plans and study protocols
- Early communication of results using open access preprints and rapid communications
- Use of open peer review to enhance formal critical scrutiny of research methods and results
- Making outputs available through open access publication or archiving in open access repositories
- Sharing data, models and software code by means of trustworthy data repositories and other services that support long-term preservation, discovery and access
- Applying open licensing and open standards to data and other materials to create the widest possible scope for their re-use.

Our expectations

In the context of your discipline, research field and stakeholders, we expect the outputs of research to be made as open as early as possible, and that researchers will use constructive dialogue with their participants, collaborators and partners to maximise the open potential of their research. We also recognise that researchers have the right to the first fruits of their efforts before making them available to others for exploitation; and that in order to protect the rights and interests of those who contribute to or participate in our research, not all information can be made openly available.

Our policies, services and aspirations

Open Research at the University of Reading is underpinned by policies for Open Access, depositing in CentAUR (the University’s institutional repository), and Research Data Management. Services to support these include funds for gold Open Access publishing, CentAUR for green Open Access and the Research Data Archive. We are now working to develop support for the full spectrum of open practices throughout the research lifecycle and to promote their wider adoption by our researchers.

Talk to us about Open Research

Please contact us if you would like talk to us about what Open Research means to you, and how the University can support you, or if you wish to find out more about the University’s Open Research Vision.