



Open Access & Research Outputs Policy

Effective Date	1 st September 2026
Policy Owner	Vice President for Research & Innovation
Approved by	ULT-RISI (Tabled for noting: 20 th April 2026) Academic Council for Research & Innovation (Approved: 5 th June 2026) Academic Council (Approved: 5 th June 2026)
Next Review Date	5 th June 2031
Contact for Enquiries	Director of Research Support & Policy, UCC Research/OVPRI Head of Research Services, UCC Library

1. Purpose

UCC is committed to ensuring equitable access to scholarly information for all, irrespective of location or technological or financial means, and preserving the intellectual output of the institution.

UCC recognises that research outputs are a vital institutional asset generated via the expertise of our research community. As a key component of UCC's commitment to research excellence and delivering impact, this policy seeks to enable open access to all UCC research outputs, including traditional scholarly publications and Non-Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs) – including artistic works, digital artefacts, and practice-based research – so that the University's research is findable, accessible, reusable, and impactful.

The policy implements the University's strategic commitment to impactful, responsible research by supporting high-quality peer review, rigorous editorial standards, equitable access to knowledge, and robust research assessment. The policy sets out routes to open access publishing and the use of repositories and licences. It upholds authors' freedom to publish in the most appropriate channels and respects institutional intellectual property rights, consistent with the [UCC Intellectual Property Policy](#) and supporting processes.

2. Rationale

This policy supports the public benefit of open dissemination of all research outputs produced by UCC, in particular publicly funded research publications, and aims to maximise the reach of the work of our staff and students.

This policy is aligned with the UCC Strategy 2024-2028, which states that the institution will: *“Develop policies and mechanisms to support the effective dissemination of research expertise and maximise impact by taking a coordinated, holistic approach to embedding principles and practices of open research.”*¹ This policy is consistent with related UCC policies including the Code of Research Conduct and the Research Publications, Dissemination and Authorship Policy (*Under Development*).

The policy also aligns with the [UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science](#), [Plan S](#), [EU's Open Science Policy](#), [the CoARA Principles](#), [Horizon Europe's Open Science](#) requirements, [Research Ireland's Interim Open Research Policy](#) and other funder mandates.

UCC endorses the [National Action Plan for Open Research](#) and supports the objective of achieving 100% open availability of research publications by 2030.

3. Scope & Application

- a. This policy applies to all staff and students at UCC. This policy is in alignment with UCC's [Intellectual Property Policy](#), which states that research active staff own copyright in all "scholarly works".
- b. The policy covers all research outputs including, but not limited to, peer-reviewed journal articles, preprints, conference papers, book chapters, monographs, artistic or literary works, and reports (for exceptions, please refer to Section 4).

¹ Securing Our Future, 1.4.ii., p. 17.

- c. Authors **must** make their research outputs openly available **immediately at publication** via one of the following routes: Green Open Access, Diamond Open Access, or Gold Open Access, unless an approved exception applies (see Section 4).
- UCC is committed to ensuring that no researcher is financially disadvantaged by this policy. The University prioritises the Green repository route (via [CORA](#)) and provides central support to ensure compliance without cost to the author.
- d. For publications, the Author Accepted Manuscript or Version of Record **must** be deposited at the **date of publication** in the Cork Open Research Archive ([CORA](#)) **without an embargo**, unless an approved exception applies under Section 4 of this policy.
- e. To enable immediate open publishing, UCC requires authors to **assert their copyright** for all their research outputs. This can be achieved by authors applying a **Rights-Retention Statement** at submission to ensure that they do not sign away their rights to the copyright of their own work – please refer to section 5 for a sample Rights Retention Statement. In addition to authors applying a rights-retention statement, the Library notifies publishers of UCC's rights-retention policy, ensuring that publishers receive prior notice that UCC authors wish to retain their rights. This allows the Author Accepted Manuscript to be made openly available under a permissive licence immediately upon acceptance.
- f. As stipulated in the institutional Intellectual Property Policy, UCC waives its right of ownership of copyright in all scholarly works [except where such rights have been created pursuant to a research contract with a funder or where there is written agreement to the contrary].
- g. UCC shall retain a non-exclusive, perpetual, irrevocable, fully paid-up license to make a version of their research output publicly available under an **open licence**, such as a Creative Commons licence. This maximises access and collaboration by allowing free reuse and adaptation with attribution.
- h. Publications should also include a statement detailing how others can access underlying data, original software, or materials.
- i. In line with the institutional Code of Research Conduct, authors are expected to exercise due diligence when choosing where to publish and to prefer publishers and outlets with recognised editorial and research integrity standards. Outputs in predatory outlets will be ineligible for internal support and excellence-focused initiatives.

4. Exceptions for Postponement

Exceptions to immediate open publishing may be approved where there are ethical concerns, issues of national security, and commercial sensitivity including:

- Management of intellectual property rights
- Long-form works (including monographs)
- Creative works (novels, poetry collections etc.)
- Other NTROs where an Open Access option is not practical
- Major digital resources

- Publishing with small, not-for-profit, or minority-language publishers

Any postponement of open availability must be requested at the time of submission.

The exceptions process will be managed by the institutional *Open Research Coordination Group* (ORCG), the membership of which shall be publicly listed and include disciplinary experts from across all Colleges.

The Group aims to process exception requests within 10 working days to prevent delays in the publishing cycle.

5. Procedures & Support

Submission: Rights Retention Statement

Prior to submission, UCC will have notified all key publishers of the institution's rights-retention policy – details of relevant publishers will be made available. At submission, all UCC authors are asked to include the following **Rights Retention Statement** in the submission cover letter and, ideally, in the **Acknowledgements**:

“For the purpose of open availability, the author has applied a public copyright licence to the Author Accepted Manuscript arising from this submission to enable immediate repository dissemination.”

At Publication

When your output is published (or earlier, after acceptance for publication if possible), it should be uploaded to [Pure](#) - UCC's Research Information System. This will be the Author Accepted Manuscript or the Version of Record depending on your Open Access path.

If you need support with your Pure submission, please use the [Pure Support](#) pages or email the [Pure Support Team](#).

For students who do not have a Pure profile, please email your output to cora@ucc.ie. Upon receipt of your output, the Library will verify that the appropriate version has been deposited and will make the appropriate version available Open Access at the earliest possible date, taking into account any approved exceptions and embargoes.

Implementation of Exceptions

Any potential postponement must be applied for at the time of submission and be approved by the ORCG and should last only as long as strictly necessary.

Information on the ORCG membership and the process for seeking an exception including decision timelines will be available on <https://www.ucc.ie/en/research/culture/openresearch/>.

Further Support

The University will provide ongoing support to staff and students including:

- [Pure - UCC's Research Information System](#) and [Pure Support](#).
- UCC [Library Open Access support pages](#) on [CORA](#), IReL Read-and-publish agreements, Creative Commons licences, and questionable outlets – contact the Library: openaccess@ucc.ie

- Support on Rights Retention – contact the Library: openaccess@ucc.ie
- [Read-and-publish agreements](#), negotiated nationally through [IReL](#) and supported by the Library, which enable immediate Open Read on publisher platforms without additional cost to authors.
- To contact the ORCG with regard to Exceptions for Postponement (section 4) – contact openresearchgroup@ucc.ie
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Related UCC Policies & Documentation

- [UCC Intellectual Property Policy](#)
- [UCC Code of Research Conduct](#)
- [UCC Research Data Management Policy](#)
- [UCC Research Ethics](#)
- Other relevant [UCC Research Policies](#)
- [UCC Research Culture](#)
- [Research Roots Initiative](#)

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every five years, or sooner if required due to changes in the national or international research environment or funder policies.

Glossary

Author Accepted Manuscript

The version of the manuscript that contains the academically final accepted text, but not yet the typesetting and formatting from the publisher. For scholarly articles in journals, this is the text after changes in response to peer-review but before the publisher's typesetting and formatting has been applied. It may otherwise be known as the 'author manuscript', 'final author version' or 'post-print'. For chapters, this is the version of the manuscript that has been agreed for publication.

Copyright

A rights regime that grants exclusive rights to creators of original works, including literary, artistic, musical, and other creative expressions, allowing them to control how their works are used and distributed.

CORA

Cork Open Research Archive ([CORA](#)), UCC's institutional Open Access repository.

Creative Commons (CC) Licences

A set of open licensing that grant rights under certain conditions and requirements, depending on the elements of each licence.

Diamond Open Access

The publisher provides immediate Open Access to the final published version on the publisher's website, but there is no fee for publishing. Diamond open access publications are often funded by organisations, institutions, or other initiatives.

Gold Open Access

Gold open access means the version of record of a publication is made freely available on the journal or publisher's website. Most Open Access journals do not charge for publication, but some OA journals require authors to pay an Article Processing Charge or similar fee. The article is usually made available under a Creative Commons licence which facilitates reuse.

Green Open Access

Green open access is also known as 'self-archiving'. Authors deposit the author accepted manuscript of their article in an institutional or subject repository in parallel with conventional publication. Publishers sometimes require an embargo period before the file can be made accessible to the public.

Institutional Repository

An institutional open repository collects, preserves and disseminates the research outputs of an institution. All Irish Higher Education Institutions have their own institutional repository or access to an institutional repository. UCC's repository is [CORA](#).

Non-Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs)

Non-Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs) are works that do not fall under the usual output categories of journal articles, books, book chapters, etc. These works may include:

- Original creative works
- Live performances or creative works
- Recorded or rendered creative works
- Curated or produced substantial public exhibitions and events
- Research reports for an external body or Government
- Portfolio of work

Predatory Outlets

Predatory publishers or journals are those which charge authors a fee for publication with no intention of providing the expected services – such as editorial or peer review – in return. Charging a fee is a legitimate business model, but the publisher should be providing a good publishing service in return. Authors, realising that they have submitted their paper to a questionable publisher, can find they are charged a large fee if they want to withdraw their article. Additional information available here: <https://thinkchecksubmit.org/resources/about-predatory-publishing/>

Read-and-Publish Agreement

This is an agreement between the University and a publisher, where the University pays an annual fee that covers both the cost of subscription to the publisher's journals ('read') and the cost of publishing Gold Open Access in these journals ('publish'). This means that publishing Open Access in journals covered by such an agreement does not incur extra cost because these costs have already been paid for as part of the annual fee your library pays under the agreement. Read-and-publish agreements are negotiated by [IReL](#) on behalf of a consortium of Irish higher education institutions.

Research Outputs

A research output is any publicly available or documented product generated during a research project. It serves as the tangible evidence of research activity, communicating new findings, methodologies, or creative concepts to other. Research outputs include research

publications and other outputs such as NTRs. While research data can be considered a research output, this form of output is outside the scope of this Policy – the management of research data is covered by the UCC Research Data Management Policy.

Research Publications

A research publication is a specialised output that has been formally documented, peer-reviewed or edited, and made publicly available in a structured format (usually in print or online) to share knowledge with the academic community or the public.

Version of Record

The published 'Version of Record' is usually a PDF that has undergone typesetting and has the publisher's branding on it.

Acknowledgments

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