

Open Access policy typology: A briefing paper for research institutions

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There are now over 700 Open Access policies around the world, two thirds of them in universities and research institutes, and the rest adopted by research funders. This briefing paper will illustrate the main types of policy currently in use across the globe, as well as indicate which factors combine together to make a particularly 'strong' or 'weak' policy. It will provide examples of these policies and recommendations based on these to gain optimum effectiveness when formulating or updating a policy.

Types of policy

The database of Open Access policies, ROARMAP¹, records each policy's various conditions under a set of categories. More information about these categories can be found in the PASTEUR4OA project briefing papers on policy effectiveness - <http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/resources>. As part of the project these policies have been analysed and graded according to the conditions stipulated within them and the following information can be used to briefly examine these commonalities in order to shed light on the factors necessary to form a strong and effective policy. This briefing will specifically look at examples of policies established by research institutions.

Since Open Access policies tend to be nuanced in terms of specific requirements, this typology looks initially at the conditions that the PASTEUR4OA project's work on policy effectiveness found to be statistically significant in terms of deposit rate and latency². Those were that:

- The policy states that research articles must be deposited in a repository (that is, the policy is mandatory);
- The policy states that this action cannot be waived: that is, whatever the conditions of embargo, the article must be deposited at the point specified by the policy;
- The policy links the deposit of articles with research assessment/performance evaluation procedures within the institution: that is, the policy states that articles that are not deposited in line with policy requirements will not count towards performance reviews or research assessment exercises.

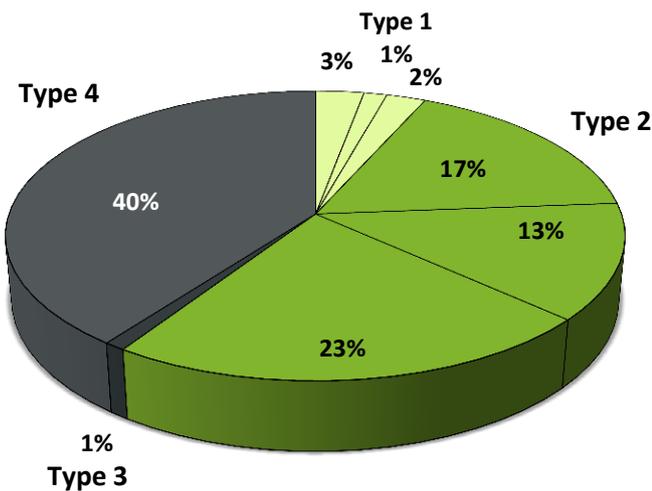
1. Registry of Open Access Repository Mandates and Policies: <http://roarmap.eprints.org/>

2. <http://www.pasteur4oa.eu/sites/pasteur4oa/files/deliverables/PASTEUR4OA%20Work%20Package%203%20Report%20final%2010%20March%202015.pdf>

There are broadly two classes of Open Access policy – those that are mandatory and those which are voluntary. These can be further divided into those which link to research assessment and those which do not.

	Mandatory Policies		Voluntary Policies	
	Type 1	Type 2	Type 3	Type 4
	Research Assessment			
	Linked	Not linked	Linked	Not linked
	← Strongest		Weakest →	
% of policies	6%	53%	1%	40%

Total policies worldwide



This chart illustrates the percentage of total policies worldwide which fall under each of these four main types, and is further divided to show the additional subtypes explained below. In addition to making a distinction about whether or not a policy links to research assessment, one can also judge policies on their strength in terms of provision of deposit waiver. Policies containing elements such as a link to research assessment *as well as* having a strict no deposit waiver have been shown to be the strongest and most effective policies. **Type 1A** in the table below is an example of a very robust policy incorporating these elements.

Hierarchy of factors which increase policy strength

	Mandatory Policies						Voluntary Policies	
	Type 1			Type 2			Type 3	Type 4
	A	B	C	A	B	C		
Compulsory Deposit	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗
Linked to Research Assessment	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✓	✗
Deposit Waiver	✗	✓	?	✗	✓	?	n/a	n/a
	← Strongest						Weakest →	

Around 80% of all policies currently recorded in ROARMAP belong to universities and around one-fifth are from research funders. At July 2015, they account for nearly 600 policies - only 6% of which belong to **Type 1** – the strongest kind of policy. The majority of institutional policies (approximately 300) fall under **Type 2** – that is stipulating compulsory deposit but without a link to research assessment. It is clear that, in order to strengthen the existing policies within the institutional sector, a link to assessment and a strong position against allowing a deposit waiver are recommended.

Using these classifications we are able to look further at the state of Open Access policies worldwide as a whole and see trends in the factors which comprise each document. We are then able to draw some conclusions about where policy wording and strength can be improved, and make recommendations where there are opportunities to enhance existing policies and bring them into alignment with other policymakers globally, to develop a best practice approach.

The three factors listed above comprise what can be classed as a **Type 1A** policy:

- Compulsory deposit
- Link to research assessment
- No deposit waiver

Notable Type 1A Research Institution policies:
– The University of Liege (Belgium)
– The University of Luxembourg
– University of Minho (Portugal)
– Ghent University (Belgium)

Notable Type 1A Funder policies:
– European Commission - Horizon 2020
– Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE)
– National Institutes of Health (NIH)

However, policies can be strengthened **even further** with the addition of a fourth variable:

- The date at which a deposit should be made.

The chart overleaf illustrates four choices relating to the time at which deposit of an item should be made in a repository which regularly occur in policy documentation. PASTEUR4OA work in this area has established that there is a positive correlation between **an early time of deposit** and the effectiveness of a policy in encouraging deposit.

