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Open Access and the REF: Issues and Potential Solutions

Workshop

Executive Summary



This report provides a summary of the discussion and findings of the **Open Access and the REF: Issues and Potential Solutions** workshop held as part of the End-to-End Project. The workshop was highly interactive and feedback received indicated it was considered an excellent event, and that it was vital and useful to bring together various key stakeholders to discuss problems and procedures and develop ideas.

The key observations included

- our systems need to change to capture all the information that we need for REF/RCUK, and development of these systems is uneven. Although there are some useful Jisc projects there is uncertainty about when institutional systems will be ready and the community currently has concerns around how institutions can ascertain whether they are ready to support REF
- Metadata for compliance with and reporting on OA is becoming complex, with different requirements from different bodies for different purposes. CASRAI-UK Data Profile for OA has potential to help the community to achieve an overview of requirements.

- It remains difficult to obtain information about publications and relevant versions of articles at a sufficiently early stage to offer support. Authors and administrators may be unaware of requirements.

Key Recommendations

- Core metadata should be added to the list of fields (metadata profile) for open access and should be agreed as a national standard via The Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information (CASRAI-UK)¹ Open Access Working Group.
- Community should continue to raise questions with HEFCE on REF requirements. Ask HEFCE to consider how institutions might 'self-audit' in proposed 'light-touch' environment.
- E2E project could encourage 'show and tell' approach to foster exposure of community driven issues. Different groups and systems are dealing with metadata in different ways.
- Make system amendments to perform basic support such as embargo management and compliance reporting.
- Pathfinder projects and Jisc continue to work together on resources to support engagement with Open Access.
- Advance information direct from publishers on acceptance or submission would help progress to OA. Jisc investigating some options for this. Pathfinders continue to highlight issues.

Key Outcomes

Report, Presentation and workshop slides are available from the [End-to-end blog](#)

Points from the workshop influenced an update to the [FAQ](#) in the HEFCE Policy Guide for open access research produced shortly after the workshop, which included new items on date of acceptance.

1 Outline

The workshop, held on 12th January 2015, brought together a group of over 50 stakeholders in administration of open access funds primarily from research organisations. These included managers of research support and repository services, information technology support services and policy makers.

The workshop built upon outcomes of the first End2End workshop [Open Access: Issues and Potential Solutions](#) held on 4th September 2014. This second workshop extended the reach and significance of the discussion,

¹ CASRAI-UK pilot project see http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/di_researchmanagement/researchinformation/casraipilot.aspx

focussing on Open Access (OA) and the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework ([REF](#)).

The workshop aimed to help promote working together across discipline and organisational divides as an Open Access community to raise and address issues associated with management of Open Access (OA) for the REF. Sector debate at the workshop reflected evolving experience of OA, and momentum building for the next REF, and contributed to the actions identified in the first workshop by continuing the discussion of a standard metadata profile for OA and workflows for supporting OA.

The summary below contains comments as gathered during the day. They are generally verbatim excepting some adjustment to clarify the meaning for readers or generalise some comments to make them anonymous. We felt this approach gives the best flavour of attendee's views rather than us reporting just our interpretation thereof. There is some repetition of topics across sections which we have left in for completeness.

The workshop consisted of presentations and breakout discussions.

The introductory talks included an update from Jisc on initiatives that they were working on to provide support in complying with OA requirements and that addressed some of the issues raised at the workshop.

After the welcome and introduction to [Jisc's OA offer and support](#) by Sarah Fahmy (Jisc OA Good Practice Pathfinder manager), and an [Update on the End-to-End project](#), presented by Simon Kerridge (University of Kent).

Ben Johnson (HEFCE HE Policy Advisor) discussed HEFCE's Open Access requirements for the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework ([REF](#)), in the presentation [OA, metadata, REF](#), and invited comments from the audience. Questions addressed in the presentation were:

- What exactly do we need to keep?
- How will this be audited?
- What metadata are needed?
- How will this link with the RCUK data requirements?

David Baker (CASRAI Executive Director) talked about [CASRAI & Open Access: sustainable interoperability](#) and the work of the CASRAI-UK OA Working Group. This presentation introduced the CASRAI framework for Open Access², and placed it in the context of current initiatives to provide for metadata to support REF and Open Access such as [RIOXX](#).

² A CASRAI open information standard, see <http://casrai.org/standards#.VQqOX-H3RAM>

- A Jisc/CASRAI-UK pilot (that runs until June 15) is currently underway to utilise the Consortia Advancing Standards in Research Administration Information ([CASRAI](#)) framework for Open Access reporting. CASRAI publishes an online dictionary of 'data profiles' that form the basis of an interoperability 'drawbridge' between collaborating organizations and individuals. So far, entities that cover compliance with the Research Councils UK requirements for open access via an application profile, [RIOXX](#)³, have been added to the draft UK Open Access profile, and REF, European, and additional open access requirements will be added soon. The CASRAI framework includes a process to facilitate discussion and agreement around the entities and their descriptions.
- Jisc is facilitating some work to expedite the collation of these additional entities into the CASRAI profile and drive the profile forward to the next stage.
- A version of the draft profile will be made publicly available soon.
- Jisc will be reviewing all of the CASRAI-UK pilot projects and how we as a community should best engage with the CASRAI process after the pilot phase completes in June 2015. Plans will be announced.



The morning programme continued with a breakout discussion on **Metadata for the REF**.

In the afternoon, Sarah Fahmy (Jisc), gave a presentation highlighting [Jisc initiatives to support REF](#), and Steve Byford (Jisc) introduced a particularly useful one of these [Helping to populate repositories – Jisc Publications Router](#).

The afternoon breakout discussion was on **Institutional policies and processes**, using workflow diagrams developed and the E2E workshop on 4th September, groups identified common issues, good practice, and potential actions, tracking the evolving experience of the community and continuing to expose issues.

There were many excellent ideas and lessons learnt from local experiences were shared.

³ The RIOXX Guidelines and Application Profile provide a mechanism to help institutional repositories comply with the [RCUK policy on open access](#), see <http://rioxx.net/>

Actions:

E2E to continue to attempt to address issues raised during the course of the Pathfinder project. As expected a list of questions and actions arose for funders, solutions providers, and Research Organisations.

E2E to liaise with a number of related initiatives already taking forward some of the issues identified (CASRAI-UK OA Working Group, RIOXX, UCL Pathfinder 'Pathways to increased open access: advocacy, processes and data interrogation', Jisc Monitor) where appropriate, and to blog updates on working together on the [End-to-end blog](#).

2 Breakout sessions

Breakout 1: Metadata for the REF

We asked three table groups to consider **A: Metadata for compliance** and the other three table groups to consider **B: Metadata for exceptions**, referring to Ben Johnson's presentation on HEFCE REF audit requirements and David Baker's presentation on the work of the CASRAI-UK Open Access Working Group looking at the Data Profile for OA.

The groups were asked to discuss the items in a specially released draft CASRAI Data Profile for OA provided, to read the definition draft CASRAI Terms list (Core Terms or Extended Terms sections) and to comment on the following questions:

- Is the field clear – do we have questions to pass back to REF/HEFCE?
- Is the relevant detailed requirement about the field on the CASRAI spec and if not what do we need to add to CASRAI?

Reference materials provided on tables included:

- [HEFCE Open access in the post-2014 REF information and audit requirements](#)
- Extract from draft [CASRAI Data Profile for OA](#), consisting of 'Core terms' section and 'Extended elements: REF' section⁴.

General issues and comments:

- The HEFCE "light touch" approach presented by Ben Johnson was appreciated, but discussion drew out inherent tension between this approach and the more process-driven experience of the community who wanted clarity. Discussion around fall back on the idea of

⁴ . The CASRAI documents are not yet in the public domain and are being amended for publication, see the [End-to-end blog](#) for news.

'reasonable process' and potential to develop self-audit tool to assess institutional 'core process' that could be approved by HEFCE.
Desirability of more use of case studies agreed.

- Metadata for compliance with and reporting on OA is becoming complex, with different requirements from different bodies for different purposes.
- Clarification of the scope of the CASRAI-UK OA Data Profile was requested at the start of the session. It was emphasised that this is a generic profile, intended to provide a common ground rather than produce an additional set of metadata and that it included the findings from consultation with the community previously recorded by the E2E project.

The issues identified have been grouped as relevant to CASRAI-UK Working Group on OA, HEFCE, E2E and Jisc:

Most important issues identified for CASRAI:

- **Core Terms** list should include definitions for the following mandatory elements:
 - Output / Article Title
 - Output / Article Author(s)
 - Publishing / Publication Venue
 - Publishing / Publication Date
 - Publishing / In-text Search
 - Output / Output Type
- Of these elements, the two that required definition were:
 - **Publishing/Publication venue** – this term needs re-wording, as meaning is unclear (also Q. for HEFCE)
 - **Publishing/ In-text Search** – a definition of what this means in this context would be helpful.
- **Technical exception 1:** it was suggested that an amendment to this exception for the notes on ISBN/ISSN would be helpful – however this would need guidance on which takes precedent from HEFCE. The example given was, Lecture Notes in Computer Science which has both. (Also recorded as a question for HEFCE)

Most important issues identified for HEFCE:

- **Self-audit** - could HEFCE produce a standard/core process that universities could use to self-audit their processes? Felt that this would be compatible with "light touch" approach described by Ben Johnson
- **Embargo dates** – Currently there are 3 required (start date, end date and embargo length). Could this be reduced so that only start date is required and one of the end date / length, with the other being generated automatically?

- **Date of acceptance** – concern over how easy this is to determine, especially with the more independent journals – can be unclear and ambiguous! Can HEFCE clarify what they mean by this? There could be an informal acceptance email, or an officially recorded date, or none at all.

Other questions raised on specific fields, for HEFCE:

- **Publication date** – Which one? Online first? Print copy date? Required in addition to acceptance date?
- **Date formats** – Is there a preferable format? YYYY/MM/DD etc. Does it need to be down to DD level, or is YYYY and MM sufficient?
- **In text search** – How do we determine that we are compliant with this? It was thought that repository managers would not necessarily have the resources or technical expertise to identify whether files were compliant.
- **Full text document formats** – Do HEFCE have any guidance on which formats are preferable or acceptable? PDF/Word docs?
- **Multi-authored papers** - Is it a requirement to have all authors included at point of deposit, or can they be added later? Must they be in the published order?
- **Title** – This can change from acceptance to publication. Will we be penalised if the title is different to that recorded?
- **Deposit requirements** – How do we record version number if changes apply?
- **Publication venue** – this term needs re-wording, as meaning is unclear.
- **ISBN/ISSN** – Require clarity on which takes precedent. For example, Lecture Notes in Computer Science has both – can HEFCE provide guidance on how to deal with such publications? Also applies to technical exception 1 of CASRAI.
- **Metadata for Exceptions:**
 - Will there be feedback as to whether the exception recorded is acceptable?
 - Would exception metadata be available from publishers?
 - What is a reasonable description?
 - Can more than one exception be applied to a publication? There may be more than one valid – how do we decide which takes precedence?
 - Will evidence be required for exceptions?

- How do series such as Lecture Notes in Computer Science fit in with exceptions policy?
- Technical exceptions – clarity required regarding what qualifies as a “systemic issue”.
- Could HEFCE provide some case studies of exceptions?
- What is HEFCE tolerance of error? For example errors which occur early on due to new process?
- Access exception 2 – Researchers could just publish in those journals where the embargo period exceeds the stated maxima, therefore not having to adhere to OA policy?
- Is evidence required regarding “most appropriate publication for the output”?
- Should there be exceptions regarding discoverability? For instance an author may not wish for the work to become discoverable until publication, or there may be a press embargo. What would be required in this situation?
- Would discoverable metadata qualify as a security risk?
- Technical Exceptions – 3 and 4 are very similar, could they be amalgamated?
- Technical exception 4 – will reporting be required on external failure? Is there a maximum time period for such exceptions?

Comments for E2E:

- Date of acceptance – HEFCE guidance says they will not require university to store of acceptance email, currently in note on E2E spreadsheet. Action to amend note.

Suggestions for Jisc, Pathfinders and Publishers:

- Journal policy clarification - could there be a process map produced for choosing appropriate journals? Jisc?
- Communication with publishers - opportunities should be sought to communicate with publishers, to facilitate exchange of information about publications.

Actions:

E2E To feedback comments to CASRAI UK OA Working Group, to HEFCE and to other relevant bodies.

E2E, OA Pathfinders and Jisc to seek opportunities to raise relevant issues with publishers. These issues were identified as: embargo dates, date of acceptance, full text document formats and compatibility with in text search,

title and deposit requirements, early identification of DOI, clarity about OA policies and development of automated exchange of publication information.

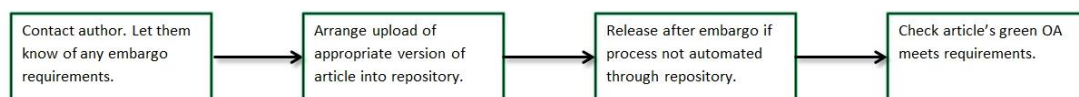
Breakout 2: Process Review

The session involved looking at the workflows for the green and gold open access routes, and other open access activities. Workflow diagrams produced at the E2E workshop in Glasgow on 4th September were provided to prompt discussion.

Groups discussed whether:

- the workflows reflected what was happening at their own institutions
- anything had changed and new issues had arisen
- there were solutions to previous problems
- Jisc projects will help

Green (free) Open Access Route



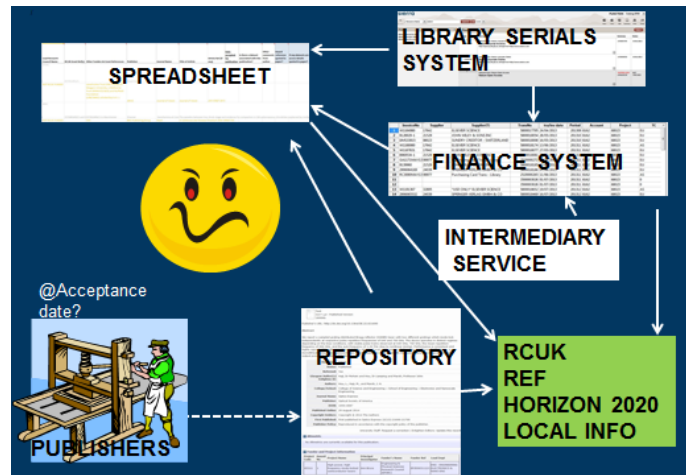
The most important issues identified were:

- Many institutions are now implementing OA policies based on REF requirements
- Obtaining acceptance dates is a problem – it has only just been introduced as a field in eprints
- The group made a specific recommendation about the DOI being made at available at acceptance stage.
- Difficulty in linking outputs with project/funding codes so therefore it is difficult to provide compliance data
- Interpreting and setting embargos remained an issue, together with ensuring that academics were aware of embargos
- Advocacy and raising awareness generally identified as a significant issue
- Publications Router was welcomed

Other items discussed:

- Who should be responsible for deposit? It was recognised that it was important to empower researchers by them taking responsibility but this is not necessarily efficient and could affect their impact if they are

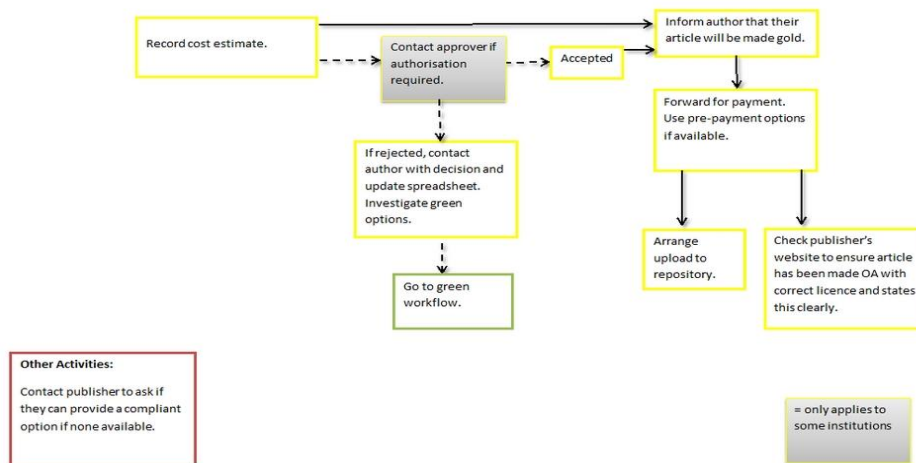
spending time doing administration rather than research. Many would like to take the author out of equation and get information direct from the publisher but this will not be possible immediately, so ideally it would be a good idea to offer a carrot by minimising the input needed by authors. One institution is simplifying its workflow so that a minimal amount of information is required from academics ('fuzzy' data) which is then enhanced by repository staff – carrot approach.



- Scale - solutions will be different depending on scale e.g. at Glasgow academics email in and everything is done for them. This wouldn't be feasible at other institutions.
- There is still uncertainty regarding OA policies – there seem to be more and more policies and they are not always coordinated. Ben Johnson mentioned that RCUK and HEFCE intend to coordinate more in the future. Several commented that policies should be mindful of the systems that are in place and available.
- Engagement – there was the feeling that getting researchers to engage without them feeling as though they're being bombarded was a challenge. Suggested solutions included: educating the educators – OA is essential for your career and is needed to compete; using OA champions; developing flowcharts to help communicate effectively.
- All institutions (in the table group) are letting their authors know that there are embargo requirements and would only contact the author if they needed to follow up queries
- Version identification is still an issue. Many contributors struggle with identifying the different versions, especially the author accepted manuscript. A common mistake is that publishers' pdfs are labelled as author accepted manuscripts. This needs further advocacy but may not be achievable quickly.

- Obtaining green versions from authors is still an issue. Some contributors do not always receive their accepted version. Someone suggested that the use of acceptance date in the HEFCE policy might be a useful trigger for publishers to supply the accepted version to authors.
- Obtaining acceptance dates is a problem – it has only just been introduced as a field in eprints
- Difficulty in linking outputs with project/funding codes so therefore it is difficult to provide compliance data

Gold (paid for) Open Access Route



The most important issue identified was:

- Close cooperation between departments in HEI is key e.g. finance, research support offices, departments, library

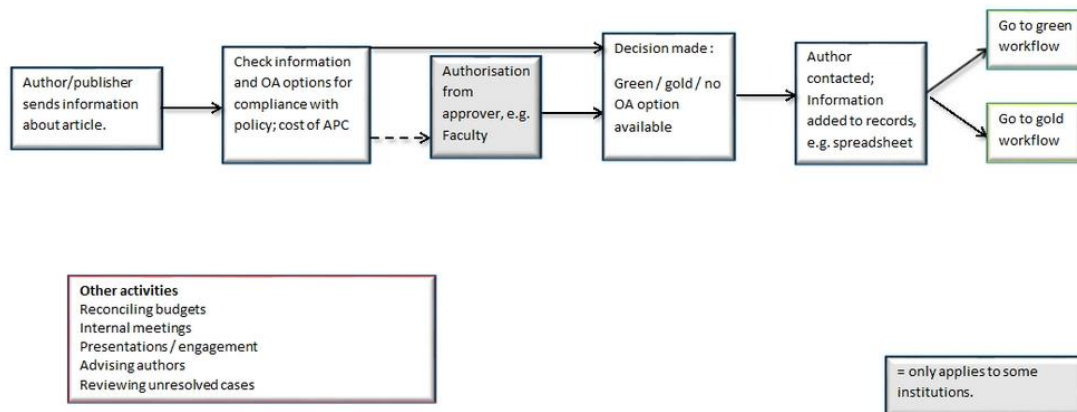
Other items discussed:

- Some commented that the workflow doesn't map to real life scenarios – there's always a different starting point and approval is needed swiftly
- Funding allocation varies from one institution to another so there is inconsistency and no single method is used: some institutions are giving authors a choice; some favour green if this is possible; some have set up additional funds for non-RCUK OA charges; some have devolved responsibility to faculties.
- Payment of APCs: the library is not always involved and there is often an independent communication between the publisher and author
- Staffing can be an issue - chasing academics/finance/publishers and carrying out monitoring procedures are very time consuming. Staff are burdened with manual checks.

- Publishers are not used to dealing with third parties such as library staff so this can result in communication difficulties e.g. if incorrect licences are applied or publications are not made OA.

Other Open Access Activities

This part of the workshop looked at policies, resources and culture change associated with Open Access:



The most important issues identified:

- **Culture (academic and administrative)**
 - Strategies are being developed within institutions
 - Some HEIs are waiting for an institutional open access policy to be created or revised.
 - Some are getting research managers involved.
 - A suggestion was made that Jisc could produce a training tool for researchers to refer to.
 - OA is small fry in terms of the research landscape. Some don't want to talk about it or see it as a priority. There has to be balance, and it's best to "go in carefully" when talking to researchers.
- **Resource**
 - institutions are adapting to a changing policy landscape, while tools are not fully developed
 - Finances vary. Some HEIs have a separate internal fund as well as block grants, but most don't have extra resources specifically to support the HEFCE policy. Some HEIs don't even have a block grant.
 - There are problems with adapting to changes quickly. A concern was that if additional requirements from HEFCE are released after April 2016 then institutions may struggle to achieve them.
 - There may be technical tools available but not everyone has the in-house expertise to make use of them.

- Mediated deposit vs researchers' responsibility. It may be better to have a mixed approach. Often the role is seen as administrative.
- Funder policies - a lot of time is spent explaining them
- **Obtaining Information early in process (as early as possible)**
 - Getting authors to tell us when they are published is a problem – currently it's a known unknown. Currently often dealt with as advocacy issue
 - Strong interest in getting information from publishers and development of automated systems.
 - Being copied in to acceptance emails by the author or publisher would be helpful.
 - We have a duty of care towards the researchers. We need to ensure researchers know the consequences of non-compliance on an institutional level and personal level and that they are making informed choices.
- **Publisher Policies**
 - These are often unclear - Jisc [Total Cost of Ownership](#) project might help
 - The most difficult challenge is knowing what's been published and now have small window of 3 months.

3 Jisc or other systems identified as helpful:

- [Sherpa Romeo](#) was felt to be useful by many for both Green and Gold OA. The community would like to see further developments incorporating the REF requirements, along with automation opportunities and an API so that metadata can be used to automatically display the journal policies (later in the discussions it was discovered that an API for Romeo already exists).
- [Jisc Publications Router](#) would help long-term: automated deposit processes would alleviate manual input and workflow would change when this is implemented. It would be helpful if the service could also provide funder information. The group supported the idea of Jisc consulting with publishers to add the DOI at acceptance stage. Obtaining the DOI information is crucial and would certainly help the process. Could this date of DOI then be used as a date of acceptance? In the short-term (until implementation of Router) we will have minimal data



- [Jisc-ARMA ORCID pilot project](#) to streamline implementation of ORCID by universities will help – many recommended using [ORCID](#) (persistent digital identifiers for researchers) wherever possible.
- [Jisc Total Cost of Ownership](#) project might help provide clarity on publisher policies, it was thought.
- Information on progress on the Eprints plugin for REF was requested. The [e2eoa.org blog](#) was highlighted as a good source of updates on progress.

4 Issues identified to discuss with publishers

Most important issues identified:

- Need increased clarity about publisher's OA policies and deposit requirements
- Meet challenge of early information about what is being published by authors, either using communication channels (e.g. copied in to emails between author and publisher) or by developing of automated systems
- Development of systems for exchange of specific publication information, e.g. title and embargo dates, date of acceptance,
- Early identification of DOI and potential to use DOI as evidence of acceptance
- Information about full text document formats and compatibility with in text search
- Communication channels. Publishers are not used to dealing with third parties such as library staff so this can result in communication difficulties e.g. if incorrect licences are applied or publications are not made OA.

Information it would be useful for publishers to provide, at the point of acceptance:

- Date of acceptance
- The AM (via Jisc Publications Router?) (this would resolve the issue of identifying the correct version of the AM, and ensuring compliance with REF policy by automating the upload to the IR or CRIS). It would be useful for publishers to follow the NISO standard (Journal Article Versions (JAV), NISO-RP-8-2008) for versions and added this to templates etc. so the PDF for the AM would have the words 'Accepted Manuscript' on it somewhere
- Expected online first publication date
- Expected final publication date
- Corresponding author
- Lead author
- Embargo policy and date in a machine readable format (including determining compliance with RCUK, COAF and REF mandates)
- Licence for the VoR (and AM if appropriate), with all publishers using clear and consistent terminology
- DOI
- Orcid iD of all authors where available
- Funder(s)
- APC cost (including details of any institutional memberships or discounts)
- Whether it is a gold or hybrid journal
- It would be useful if all this metadata is included in Crossref (where possible), so we have some chance of updating it more automatically

Additional information required from publishers at a later date (if an APC is paid):

- Invoice for the correct amount, clearly stating which article the APC relates to and the licence to be applied
- Date of APC payment
- Online first publication date
- Expected final publication date
- A commitment to maintain an archive of changes to embargo policies, including the details and dates of any changes
- Clearly and consistently expressed differences in embargo policy, for example a specific policy that applies to RCUK authors only.

5 Feedback

The feedback from the workshop showed was generally positive with 75% rating the event overall Excellent or Very Good.

Comments included:

- Good event – excellent/vital/useful to bring together various key stakeholders to discuss and develop ideas, procedures and problems.
- Very clear and useful presentations
- Difficult to comment on CASRAI spec and REF compliance documents as not familiar with either – hard to say what was missing
- Aims of metadata activity a little unclear – lots of aspects of this could be discussed and so focus could have been more clearly stated.
- Second activity – good discussion.
- There are some very nice projects
- Many thanks for organising – I learnt a lot in the discussions, other people’s experience of lessons learnt.
- Confidence levels about participants awareness of OA was high, and institutional support for OA reasonably supported and implemented.
- Confidence levels about institutional readiness for HEFCE’s OA requirements for REF currently lower, with majority at ‘mildly confident’.

Jisc is committed to assessing the value/ impact of OA Good Practice, as well as all of its OA-focused activities, as the sector shifts towards full OA implementation as result of research funders’ policy changes. The attitude-based questions on the feedback form were developed to monitor institutions’ perceived confidence in terms of the manageability and the support received in OA implementation; the aim being to monitor whether these attitudes/ perceptions would change over time as policies and support initiatives are embedded with institutional workflows and processes.

These questions will support a more specific impact/ value methodology by which the outputs of OA Good Practices are more directly attributable to the programme rather than the sea-change happening across the sector as a result of the policy changes.

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