

# Institutional Repository Copyright Tips

## Managing Copyright on Journal Articles

The following steps are useful to determine Publisher permissions granted to authors to make their work available in an Institutional Repository. These steps relate to a Journal Article deposit. There are separate instructions for checking copyright permissions on Book Chapters and Conference Papers.

### Step 1: Check Sherpa / ROMEO

Check the database of journal titles and publishers at [SHERPA/RoMEO](#)<sup>1</sup>. It lists most English-language commercial publishers and a growing number of others. However, the SHERPA/RoMEO database is not comprehensive or completely accurate. It has only patchy coverage of publishers outside the U.S. and Europe so you may need to proceed to the next steps to get a definitive answer.

The ROMEO site assigns a colour category to each publisher's entry to indicate their level of agreement with open access deposit. The categorization system is explained on the site. "Green" publishers are the most compliant with repository deposit.

Each publisher entry lists any conditions or restrictions imposed by the publisher which govern archiving rights or activities. Conditions rarely affect deposit but may require notes such as acknowledgment the publisher's copyright in the work. Restrictions are usually more prohibitive such as an embargo on its public release, or requiring password-controlled access.

### Step 2: Check Publisher links

The SHERPA summary could be out-of-date because publishers change both their journal suites and their policies quite frequently. It is a good idea to check the publisher link via the SHERPA metadata information as well. SHERPA claims that 78% of publishers and 93% of journals are "Green" but that 'hit rate' is not as high for papers in Australian repositories.

### Step 3: Check the Journal Web site

If the journal or the publisher is not listed in SHERPA/ RoMEO then look up the journal web site where possible. This will usually tell you if there are publisher copyright restrictions or if the author retains copyright for that journal title. If this information is not clear from the website you can usually find an address to write to for copyright clearance.

## General principles

In most cases it is acceptable to deposit the Author's copy of a Journal article. It must be the author's manuscript (preferably the final draft, as accepted for publication following peer review and corrections) that is deposited rather than the publisher-formatted (published) version (one exception is that IEEE requires authors to use the published version).

Exercise caution when using the author's copy because publishers sometimes change an

article title just before publication. A detailed copy-edit of the paper is not necessary but a quick eye-check will pick up modifications such as the format of bibliographies or tables or missing appendices. While not the responsibility of the Repository Manager to re-format the work of authors, this check can protect the reputation of both the author and the repository.

It is common to encounter some problems, such as:

- Authors may not have kept their manuscript copy
- Authors are sometimes unwilling to make an earlier version available for reasons such as: it doesn't present as well, isn't paginated and formatted, or may be less authoritative
- Authors may not take the trouble to look for older papers to submit. Try to get papers as soon as possible after final acceptance and/or publication
- Authors will not always know what they've signed or understand their legal rights. They usually have to sign a form at the time of article acceptance. This is legal contract that repository managers have to be aware of. It is sometimes available on the Publisher's website and occasionally Authors have kept a copy
- Some publishers impose embargoes anywhere from 1 month to 3 years. There is no single listing of embargo policies but most will become evident through checking the publisher or journal websites

## Obtaining permission

If you cannot find a clear indication of the Publisher's permissions from the steps outlined above, you will need to approach the Publisher directly. This process is documented separately.

A template for seeking Publisher permission is available for use.

If the response from the Publisher is negative, there is a template for contacting the author to request the Author's final version instead of the publisher's version for deposit purposes.

## Keeping records

It is advisable to keep records regarding permissions obtained to save time repeating this process for future deposits. This can be associated with the metadata. Further guidelines on keeping records are available in the RUBRIC Toolkit chapter on Access Management.

1 <http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo.php>