

THE INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORY ROUTE TO OPEN ACCESS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ITS EVOLUTION

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Open access to peer reviewed journal articles is one of the key messages of the current global movement that is changing the paradigm of scholarly communication. Creating open access journals is one such route and creating institutional repositories containing author generated electronic text is another complementary alternative. In the UK, the FAIR (Focus on Access to Institutional Resources) programme of research is based on the vision of open access. Experiments in setting up an institutional repository for academic research output at the University of Southampton have emphasized that the institutional repository agenda is broader and that academic needs may dictate a more expanded database model than the pioneering discipline based e-Prints archive known as 'arXiv'. The institution is represented by a broad range of publication types including, but not exclusively, peer reviewed journal articles and the different disciplines have evolved different recording practices. Full text deposits may provide the opportunity for added value elements – e.g. enhanced diagrams, additional data or presentations – if the database provides the capability. The repository may provide the building blocks for effective management of collaborative e-research.

Academic institutions that impose research reporting in an institutional repository require full recording of publications including those where obtaining full text is difficult or inappropriate. A practical route is, therefore, to develop an institutional repository which is 'hybrid' – containing both records and full text where achievable. In this scenario, the technical and management issues eg authentication and quality assurance of the metadata generation may become more complex. However, the full text element can grow as the practice becomes more natural within the recording process and as copyright restrictions ease. In the UK, several factors including the House of Commons Committee Report 'Scientific Publications: Free for all?' in July, the Research Assessment Exercise and citation impact measures based on increasing open access could also help encourage this change. The goal of providing open access to peer reviewed research items may, therefore, come about by a more circuitous but, in the end, more effective route. The 'hybrid' library will have evolved to the digital library of the ideal.

Poster: <http://eprints.soton.ac.uk/archive/00009055/>

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