

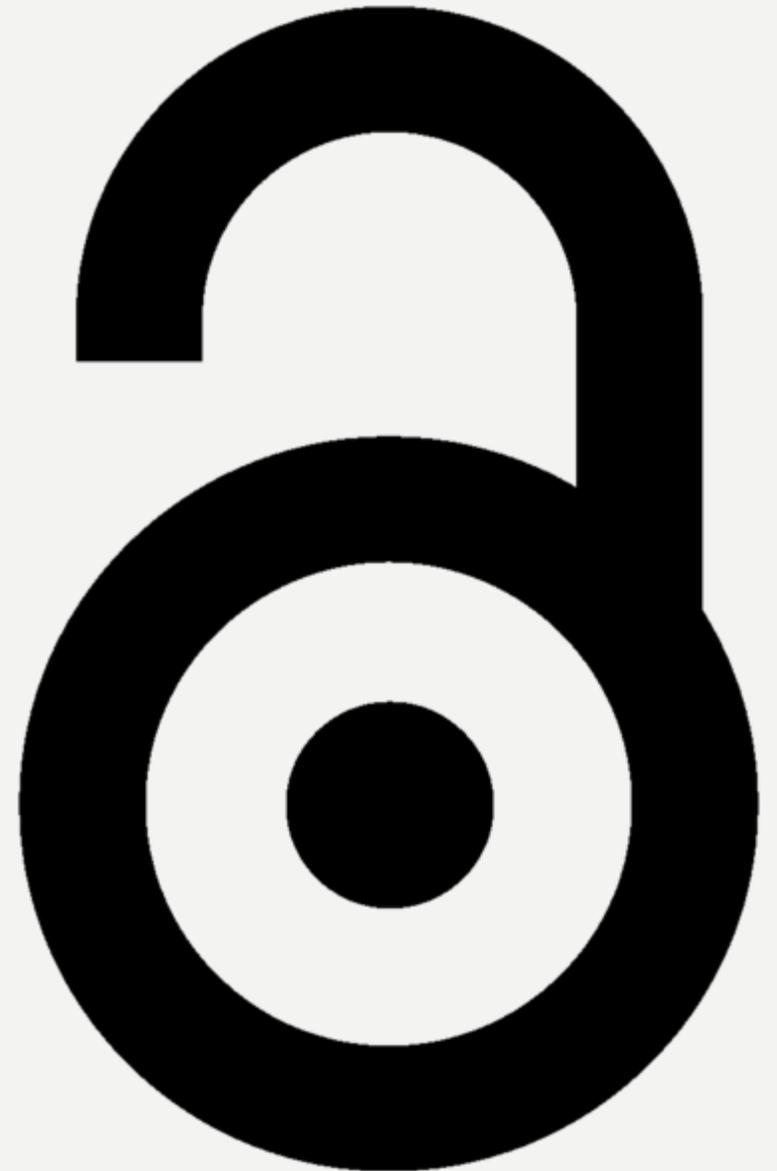
# THE IMPORTANCE OF OPEN ACCESS AND OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES

# WHAT IS OPEN ACCESS?

Open Access (also known as OA) is defined by the Australian Open Access Strategy Group ([AOASG](#)) as the process of:

***“...making peer reviewed scholarly manuscripts freely available via the Internet, permitting any user to read, download, copy distribute, print search or link to the full text of these articles, crawl them for indexes, pass them as data to software or use them for any lawful purpose, without financial, legal or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself..”***

This definition was first proposed more than 15 years ago by the [Budapest Open Access Initiative](#) and is the definition adopted by the AOASG.





# WHY DOES OPEN ACCESS MATTER?

There are **many** reasons why OA is important.

One of the main arguments is that in many cases, research outputs are the result of publicly funded grants or institutions, such as research organisations like the CSIRO and universities. If the public is paying for researchers to conduct their work already, it is not reasonable to expect that they should have to pay again to access the resulting research outputs.

Another argument is that knowledge benefits no one if it is not shared. Making research available only to those who can pay for it via subscriptions limits access to information for many people. It also limits the potential of those who cannot pay for access or publication costs to make meaningful contributions to the literature themselves.

In short, OA benefits everyone; from researchers who want to ensure their work is read as widely as possible to increase their research profile, to communities who would benefit from implementing the findings of applicable research, to students who need access to research as part of their learning and development as future professionals in their chosen field.

# THE MANY ROADS TO OPEN ACCESS

There are many ways to make research open. The two most common methods are known as Green OA and Gold OA:



## GOLD OPEN ACCESS

Gold OA means that manuscripts are made freely available immediately upon publication by the publisher under an open licence. Often, Open Access journals charge an Article Processing Charge (APC) are imposed to make this possible.

Use [The Directory of Open Access Journals](#) to find an Open Access journal for your next submission and use [HowOpenIsIt?](#) to evaluate the 'openness' of prospective journals and their publishers before you submit.



## GREEN OPEN ACCESS

Green OA involves making publication manuscripts available in a repository. This road to OA is also known as self-archiving.

QUT researchers and staff are required to submit their author's manuscripts to [QUT ePrints](#).



**GOOD TO KNOW:** Publishing open also means authors retain part or all of the copyright on their work. Many open journals and repositories assign Creative Commons Licences to submitted works.



# WHAT ARE OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES?



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Open Education Resources (OER) are high-quality teaching, learning and research materials in any medium that resides in the Public Domain or under an open licence that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others.

OER materials can take a number of forms including textbooks, tutorials, videos, instructional documents, courses, tests and quizzes, case studies and more.

Many OER materials are born-digital, making them easy to share, adapt and remix.

Sources:

Indiana University of Pennsylvania LibGuide: [‘Open Educational Resources: Examples of OERs’](#)

UNESCO: [‘Open Education Resource \(OER\)’](#)

# WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES?

The 5R definition of OER illustrates what you can do with Open Educations Resources you find and create:

**Retain:** Make, own, and control your own copy of the content

**Reuse:** Use the content as-is

**Revise:** Adapt, adjust, modify, improve or alter the content

**Remix:** Combine the original or revised content with other OER to create something new

**Redistribute:** Share your copies of the original content, revisions or remixes with others

... and as always **remember** to attribute!



# WHY MAKE OPEN EDUCATION RESOURCES?



There are a number of reasons why making and sharing Open Education Resources is an excellent idea:

- OERs can be **bespoke** and designed to suit the **specific needs** of the students and course they are created for
- Publishing OERs promotes **academic freedom** and can **raise the research profile** of researchers
- They are **current** and **relevant!** As new information emerges OERs can be updated easily and faculty can curate OERs to suit their needs and those of their students
- They promote **equity**. OERs are **free** and can be **used by anyone**. This means no one has to miss out on learning because they can't afford the course text book or access to subscription based resources!

# OA & OERS: TWO PEAS IN A POD

OA and OERs are like two peas in a pod: they are similar in that they both ensure that everyone has equitable access to knowledge, free of cost and restrictions.

While OA is generally spoken about in terms of research outputs like journal articles and OERs are spoken about in terms of education materials like textbooks, tutorials and online courses; both OA and OERs are concerned with ensuring that information and knowledge is shared widely and not locked behind paywalls.

Finally, both OA and Open OERs utilise Creative Commons Licences to make works easy to attribute and share.



**GOOD TO KNOW: IT IS LIKELY THAT YOUR INSTITUTION HAS OA AND OER POLICIES– CHECK THEM OUT AND DO YOUR BIT TO PROMOTE OPENNESS!**

# REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Australasian Open Access Strategy Group (AOSAG). What is Open Access? <https://aoasg.org.au/what-is-open-access/>

Australasian Open Access Strategy Group (AOSAG). 'Why Open Access?' <https://aoasg.org.au/why-open-access/>

Australasian Open Access Strategy Group (AOSAG). 'Open Access & Copyright' <https://aoasg.org.au/open-access-copyright/>

Budapest Open Access Initiative. <https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/boai15-1>

Community College Consortium for Open Education Resources (CCCOER) : 'Why Open Education?' <https://www.cccoer.org/learn/>

The Directory of Open Access Journals. <https://doaj.org/>

Howopenisit? <https://sparcopen.org/our-work/howopenisit/>

Indiana University of Pennsylvania LibGuide 'Open Educational Resources: Examples of OERs' <https://libraryguides.lib.iup.edu/c.php?g=660341&p=4636709>

Open Content: 'Defining the 'open' in Open Content and Open Education Resources' <http://www.opencontent.org/definition/>

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). 'Open Education Resource (OER)' <https://en.unesco.org/themes/building-knowledge-societies/oer>