A NEW OPEN ACCESS POLICY FOR MALMÖ UNIVERSITY

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Introduction

In November 2010 Malmö University decided on a new open access policy. This paper describes the implications of the mandate, the process prior to the decision and some of the challenges of the implementation process.

Publishing at Malmö University

Malmö University has been working on creating open access to publications produced by its researchers for several years. [1] As early as 2003 a recommendation was made by the vice-chancellor to support open access publishing of articles, dissertations and local publication series. Research at the university aims to be user-driven and fundamental values for research activities are cross-disciplinary competences, internationalisation and partnership.

The work with the open access policy should be considered in the light of the objectives set for the organisation. The university has far reaching ambitions regarding increased external partnerships, entrepreneurship and research collaboration with industry and public bodies, and participation and visibility in the community. To provide open access to research publications can be regarded as an important tool in meeting all of these objectives.

The university´s open archive, Malmö University Electronic Publishing (MUEP), was established in 2003 and has been using DSpace as platform since 2005. [2] MUEP is maintained and administered by staff at the Library and IT Services department. MUEP is used both for self-archiving and registration and assessment of research publications, as well as automatically building the researchers' publication lists on their individual web pages. [3]

Open access content

The total open access content in the repository was 21% (850/4,000) before the mandate, and 12% if counting only books and book chapters. 95% of the 700 researchers are users in the system since they have an individual responsibility to add content. Each metadata record is validated by staff at the faculty after the submission and in a last step, a librarian makes the final metadata additions and corrections. The publishing agreement between the university and the author, signed when depositing the work in MUEP, stipulates a non-exclusive right for the university to electronically distribute the author´s work.

The policy

The new open access policy strengthens the previous recommendation and took effect on March 1st 2011. The policy is based on the recommendations from the Association of the Swedish Higher Education (SUHF) and the Berlin Declaration.

1. *Research staff and postgraduate students at Malmö University must deposit a copy of their research publications in the university's open archive Malmö University Electronic Publishing (MUEP), unless copyright prevents this.*

2. *Malmö University staff and graduate students are encouraged to publish their results in open access journals.*

3. *All content in the university's publication series must, unless there are special circumstances, also be deposited in MUEP.* [4]

As related to the *green road* to open access, the first item in the policy is directed to authors of all kinds of academic publications: articles, dissertations, conference papers, book chapters, books and reports. The policy does not cover unpublished research (e.g. preprints or unpublished patents) and conference abstracts, nor does it cover publications where staff are editors.

The policy means that every researcher needs to identify his/her rights in relation to depositing a copy in MUEP in every new publisher contact taken after

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[1] Malmö University (http://www.mah.se) was established in 1998 and is the largest university college in Sweden with 13,000 FTE students. The yearly amount of research publications is appr. 650-700 based on research assessments 2007-2010.
[2] MUEP http://www.mah.se/muep, DSpace http://www.dspace.org
[3] Find researchers and research, http://forskning.mah.se/en

[4] Policy, http://www.mah.se/english/Library/Electronic-Publishing/Research-publications/Open-access-policy-at-Malmo-University/ and http://www.mah.se/upload/GF/dokument_mah/OA_policy_2010_11_11.pdf

March 1st 2011. The policy does not apply retroactively, hence already published material and publisher contacts taken before that date are excluded. In cases when the publisher says yes to deposit, the researcher must deposit a copy in MUEP directly after the publication has been published, but possibly with a delayed open access due to the publisher's stipulated embargoes. If the publisher says no, we do not disagree to the researcher's choice of publication channel. However, if a researcher is allowed to deposit a copy in MUEP and decides not to do so, he/she needs to receive an opt-out from the prefect. This makes the policy into a loop-hole mandate, as it acts on the publishers' discretion and does not intervene when the researcher chooses a non-OA publisher. We will discuss the concept of having a loop-hole mandate later in this paper.

The third item of the policy means that all publications published by Malmö University, such as dissertations, journals and other publication series, are also to be deposited in full text in MUEP. This includes external author publications when the publication is issued at Malmö University.

The road to a new policy

The open access policy was prepared during 2009-2010 by the Committee for Publishing, a group with representatives from the faculties, research coordinators and the library. In June 2009, the proposal for the new policy was presented to the Forum on Research, which is the highest body of research at the university. The Forum meeting was preceded by discussions with some of the major representatives of the faculties. The main objection from the researchers at Forum was the proposed recommendation on open access journal publishing, especially the question of financing of the author fees. In order to limit this expected criticism, the Committee for Publishing had introduced a proposal on funding, as partial support for fees. The proposal was raised again to the Forum on Research in June 2010. The time was now more mature and the proposal, including extended explanatory attachments, was then sent for circulation for comments to the faculties and research committees. The new policy was then decided, finally, at a vice-chancellor meeting in November 2010. Regarding the financing of the author fees, no central funding was possible and the vice-chancellor decided, until further notice, that costs in relation to the author fees or redemption of articles are to be referred to the faculties through their ordinary faculty funds or from other funding agencies. From our perspective as repository providers, we believe that some criticism about the open access publishing would be relieved if central funding was provided, at least as a symbolic gesture supporting the process towards open access.

A crucial factor for the decision on the policy was undoubtedly the decision of the Swedish Research Council to include an open access mandate for all its research grants from 2010.[5] As leverage this proved successful, as the Swedish Research Council covers about 15% of the university´s external research funding and the policy was to be followed by other major research councils important to the university. Another contextual factor, probably important for the decision, may have been the launch of the national search service for research publications, SwePub.

Implementation and challenges of the policy

The decision of the policy was probably the easier part of the process. The importance of a solid implementation plan cannot be overestimated, as pointed out e.g. in Leif Hansen's paper about the policy at Copenhagen Business School (CBS).[6] We are also at a very early stage of the implementation process, which makes it difficult to generalise about adherence to the policy.

What do we say to the researchers regarding author rights, financing and responsibility?
A major challenge in the policy work is, of course, the fact that the policy prescribes that all types of published research, not only articles, must be open access; that is, also monographs and chapters, etc. Malmö University has a relatively high proportion of publishing in publications which are not covered by SHERPA/RoMEO. The publishers not found in Sherpa/RoMEO are for instance Swedish publishers of reports, books and journals. The lack of a tool for author rights for this material makes it important to stress the benefits of e.g. SPARC's Author Addendum, which also is approved by our university lawyer.[7] We plan to support researchers with general letters of intent to publishers and cover letters in relation to publishing of books and chapters.[8]

We also anticipate work by openaccess.se on a national standard agreement for other publication types than

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[5] Decision on open access, Swedish Research Council, http://www.vr.se/inenglish/aboutus/policies/openaccess.4.44482f6 612355bb5ee780003075.html
[6] ScieCom Info, Vol 5, No 4 (2009) http://www.sciecom.org/ojs/index.php/sciecominfo/article/view/18 12
[7] SPARC Author Addendum http://www.arl.org/sparc/author/addendum.shtml
[8] Intents such as "In connection with the publishing, I intend to deposit a freely available copy of my chapter/book in the university's public archive…"). We have positive experience of working with cover letters to Swedish book publishers in the humanities and social sciences. Cf. results in openaccess.se project *Retrodigitalisering av nutida svårtillgänglig svenskpublicerad HumSam-forskning,* http://www.kb.se/openaccess/om/projekt/avslutade/#Retrodigi (in Swedish)

journals and the analysis performed by the Swedish Research Council on monograph publication. Questions about monographic publications cover the whole spectrum from the issue of which version of the book that should be deposited to the potential embargo periods.

The responsibility for meeting the policy rests with the individual researcher as part of the research process, since they already register bibliographical data in MUEP. The mandatory part in the policy is in fact that the researcher must investigate and be assured of the possibilities of self-archiving. The prefect is responsible for compliance with the policy at the faculty level. The Library and IT Services department is responsible for support and development of MUEP, including tools that support the authors in copyright issues. The Committee for Publishing will manage the evaluation and analysis of experiences of the policy in 2012.

Loop-hole mandates

The policy is mandatory in terms of the demand on the author to check the rights with the publisher, but there is a loop-hole since it not only accepts the publisher's embargo periods, but also accepts a publisher's no to open access. This was pointed out to us in an email conversation with Stevan Harnad, Alma Swan and Peter Suber when we issued a press release about the new policy in February this year. However, at this point our goal is not to provide 100% open access to all publications, rather our ambition is that 100% of our researchers will relate to their rights for open access for every single publication. The policy is also intended to provide an opportunity to highlight the benefits of open access, in terms of greater impact, more citations and greater visibility, by "forcing" the researcher to think about his or her rights.

Next steps

If we are able to revise the policy, there is another aspect we would like to add: the so called "Fair Dealing"-button. In Sales et al. "Open Access Mandates and the "Fair Dealing" Button", the button functionality is explained in relation to the immediate-deposit/optional access mandate. The button allows users to request individual access to closed access papers and fulfil the usage needs during an embargo period. This is an interesting automation feature of the common procedure of sending an email directly to the author and asking for a copy, which could be easily implemented in e.g. DSpace. As it is pointed out in the paper we may need the publisher's permission to make the paper open access, but we do not need the publisher's permission to deposit it. [9]

In general, the objective with the policy is not to obstruct publishing, but to support access to research from Malmö University. As Leif Hansen at CBS explains it regarding their policy: "We did not adopt an open-access policy in order to prevent publishing in high quality journals that do not allow open-access, but to enhance dissemination by providing greater access to the scholarly publications…". [10]

In the upcoming months we will be offering researchers' hands-on instructions regarding self-archiving, working on simplifying and integrating access to publication rights and agreements in the system. We also need to involve more staff with a focus on scientific communication and reinforce work with hard facts and studies about the open access citation advantages.

What are the realistic goals for this open access policy? Here we face some issues in finding reliable data for the statistics. If the total open access content in the repository now is 21%, would it be realistic to aim for 50% in 2011 and 65% in 2012? These percentages represent the number of publications in MUEP, but not 100% of what is published. We know that some research is never submitted to MUEP, but there is simply no way to find out the exact number of unknown cases. A related difficulty is in calculating 100% of our researchers relating to their rights for open access. Perhaps the only valid conclusion is to measure increasing numbers of open access publications and a general acceptance in the academia of actually following the policy?

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http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/18511/. Mail correspondence Stevan Harnad, Alma Swan, Peter Suber, Febr. 2011.
[10] ScieCom Info, Vol 5, No 4 (2009)
http://www.sciecom.org/ojs/index.php/sciecominfo/article/view/1812

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[9] See Sale, A., Couture, M., Rodrigues, E., Carr, L. and Harnad, S. (2010) Open Access Mandates and the "Fair Dealing" Button.