

## NEWS RELEASE



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## Publishers' agreements are more liberal than journal authors think, but do not allow self-archiving of the published PDF

**London, United Kingdom – March 16, 2009** – The Publishing Research Consortium has published another in its series of reports: *Journal Authors' Rights: perception and reality* (Summary Paper 5).

Using re-analysis of the recently published ALPSP report *Scholarly Publishing Practice 3* (which looks at the practice of 181 publishers, representing 75% of all articles), and a new survey of 1163 authors, the report compares what publishers actually allow authors to do with the different versions of their manuscript, and what they want to do and believe they are permitted to do.

For both the submitted and the accepted version of their manuscript, the majority of publishers' agreements (as calculated by the number of articles they publish) allow authors to provide copies to colleagues, to incorporate into their own works, to post to a personal or departmental website or to an institutional repository, and to use in course packs; just under 50% also permit posting to a subject repository. However, far fewer authors think they can do any of these than are in fact allowed to do so.

The published PDF version is the version that authors would prefer to use for all the above purposes; again, publishers' agreements exceed authors' expectations for providing copies to colleagues, incorporating in subsequent work, and use in course packs. However, the picture is turned on its head when it comes to self-archiving; more than half of authors think that publishers allow them to deposit the final PDF, whereas under 10% of publishers actually permit this – probably because of serious concerns about the long-term impact on subscriptions.

Why do authors have such a poor understanding of publishers' agreements? The PRC concludes that publishers need to do much more to make sure that their terms are crystal clear, but also suggests that the ambiguous term 'preprint' may mislead authors, and should be dropped in favour of the recommended NISO terminology.

- Full report: Sally Morris, *Journal Authors' Rights: perception and reality* (PRC Summary Paper 5), PRC 2009 (PDF) <http://www.publishingresearch.net/documents/JournalAuthorsRights.pdf>
- Summary of findings: *Journal Authors' Rights: perception and reality – a preliminary report*, PRC 2009 (PPT) <http://www.publishingresearch.net/documents/SummaryforAPE-final.ppt>
- Author survey summary: *Author Rights Copyright Project*, GfK Business 2008 (PPT) <http://www.publishingresearch.net/documents/PRC2008v2.ppt>
- John & Laura Cox, *Publishing Practice 3*, ALPSP 2008 (PDF) [http://www.alp.org/ngen\\_public/article.asp?id=200&did=47&aid=24781&st=&oaid=-1](http://www.alp.org/ngen_public/article.asp?id=200&did=47&aid=24781&st=&oaid=-1)
- *Journal Article Versions (JAV): Recommendations of the NISO/ALPSP JAV Technical Working Group*, NISO 1 2008 (PDF) <http://www.niso.org/publications/rp/RP-8-2008.pdf>

### **About the Publishing Research Consortium**

*The Publishing Research Consortium is a group representing publishers and societies supporting global research into scholarly communication, with the aim to provide unbiased data and objective analysis. Our objective is to support work that is scientific and pro-scholarship. Overall, we aim to promote an understanding of the role of publishing and its impact on research and teaching. For more information, visit [www.publishingresearch.org.uk](http://www.publishingresearch.org.uk).*