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Objet: [sparc-oaforum] PURE Nonsense (and Mischief)

PURE is a Trojan Horse from Elsevier [www.elsevier.com] that (some) UK institutions have allowed to enter their portals. It is a trick, by Elsevier, to insinuate themselves into and retain control of everything they can: access, timing of access, fulfillment of mandates, research assessment, everything. The ploy was to sneak in via CRIS's, which are systems for institutions wishing to manage and monitor their metadata on all their functions.

Notice that the following passage from KCL's OA Policy [www.kcl.ac.uk] makes no mention of timing:
In internal evaluation procedures it will be expected that all publications considered as part of appraisal or promotional assessments, will have a metadata record in the Research Information System, Pure, with either the full text article attached and downloadable from the Research Portal, or a link to the Open Access article on the journal's web site.

What Pure is in reality designed to do is to make sure that the full text is not openly accessible until after the publisher embargo on Open Access.

In point of fact, the battle for OA has long shifted to the arena of timing: The 1-year (or longer) embargo is the one to beat. Access after the embargo elapses is a foregone conclusion (publishers have already implicitly conceded on it, without overtly saying so). But access embargoed for 12 months is not OA. Publishers want to make sure (1) there is no OA before the embargo elapses, (2) the embargo is as long as possible, and even after the embargo, (3) access should be via the publisher website, or at least controlled in some way by the publisher.

That's exactly what PURE + CRIS does.

And (some) UK institutions (under pressure from Finch's fatal foolishness — likewise originating from the publisher lobby) have been persuaded that PURE will not only provide all the OA they want, but will take a lot of other asset-management tasks off their shoulders.

It's a huge scam, masquerading as OA, and its only real function is to strengthen the perverse status quo — of ceding the control of university research access to publishers — even more than they had before.

It won't succeed, of course, because HEFCE/REF2020 has nailed down the timing of full-text deposit as having to be made within 3 months of acceptance (not

publication) for eligibility for REF2020, which a metadata promissory note from Elsevier will not fulfill. My hope is that universities will be as anxious as they have been for 30 years now not to risk REF ineligibility by failing to comply with this very specific requirement.

(And the institution's copy-request Button [openaccess.eprints.org] will take care of the rest, as long as all full-texts are deposited within Acceptance + 3.)

(I think it was a mistake on HEFCE/REF's part to state formally that there is no need to archive the dated acceptance letter that defines the acceptance date, but again I trust in the anxiety of universities to comply with REF2020 eligibility requirements to draw the rational conclusion that is indeed within 3 months of acceptance that deposit must be done for eligibility, and not 12 months after publication.)

As you will see from the ROARMAP data below, KCL's OA policy [roarmap.eprints.org] alone is not compliant with the requirement for REF2020 eligibility, and the above extract does not change that one bit!

Best wishes,

Stevan