

Shortform Hosting at Oxford (SHOx): Service Agreement

Updated: 30th October 2025

The Bodleian Libraries supports the promotion and dissemination of open access scholarly works at the University of Oxford by making an open-source publishing platform, Open Journal Systems (OJS), available to shortform publications affiliated with the University, on the principle that making research freely available to the public supports a greater global exchange of knowledge.

This Service Agreement is between the Shortform Hosting at Oxford (SHOx) service (the Service), provided by the Bodleian Libraries, and the hosted publication (the Title), and is underpinned by the Shortform Hosting at Oxford: Service Policy.

1. The Service will be responsible for:

- Installing, maintaining, and providing access to the OJS software.
- Setting up a shell for the Title and a set of credentials for the editorial team to submit, edit, and publish content online.
- Making the contents of the Title available online.
- Striving to always provide access to the Title content, with advance notice for maintenance and upgrades.
- Maintaining the OJS software by updating to new versions as appropriate, while limiting changes that may interfere with compatibility.
- Where appropriate, archiving the Title content in the PKP Preservation Network and the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA).
- Creating a connection to our ORCID key in order that authors, reviewers and editors can log on using ORCID
- Providing the Title with the DOI prefix and access to the DataCite DOI service, and assisting with DOI setup.
- Providing the Title's editorial team with access to an administrative interface and technical support.
- Assisting the Title's editorial team with operational queries (e.g. training and troubleshooting), escalating to the platform provider as appropriate.
- Sending occasional emails to the Title's editorial team regarding system maintenance, service updates, and best practice.
- Providing the Title's editorial team with notice in writing of any intention to discontinue hosting services.

2. The Title will be responsible for:

- Providing the name and contact information of one person ('Publication Owner') who will be the manager and liaison between the Service and the Title's editorial team. The Publication Owner is responsible for ensuring the below obligations are met in the use of the Service. The Publication Owner confirms that they hold the rights and authority to maintain and provide reasonable access to the research content and its metadata.
- Notifying the Service in writing if this main contact changes.
- Securing agreement from the Head of Department, or sufficient other Divisional representative (the Sponsor), in order to host a new publication.
- Student-run journals should ideally have two academic sponsors.
- Creation, transfer, and updating of the Title's content on the OJS platform, as well as customisation of the Title's website within the system limits.
- Making the Title's content openly accessible, immediately upon publication, at no charge to the author(s).
- Distributing Title's content under an open licence.
- Allowing the Service to transfer content, without changing it, to any medium, format, or platform for the purpose of access and preservation.
- Agreeing that the Service is not responsible for damages, costs, or losses of data including, but not limited to, hardware breakdown, software upgrades, or network outages.
- Accepting full responsibility for the Title's content and indemnifying the University of Oxford against any legal action regarding content.
- Agreeing to receive occasional emails from the Service regarding system maintenance, service updates, and best practices.
- Completing an annual survey on the Service for the purposes of feedback, benchmarking and activity audit.
- Launching and maintaining the Title within the following timelines:
 - Launch the Title and/or publish the first issue within 1 (one) year of the title website set-up.
 - A reminder will be sent after the first year, and if there is no continued interest in publishing, the website will be retired with 6 (six) months' prior written notice.
 - In cases when the Title has ceased publication for over 3 (three) years and has indicated no intention of resuming publication, the content will be archived and remain accessible to readers outside of the OJS publishing platform. The Title's website will be retired. The Title's editorial team will be provided with a 6 (six) month prior written notice and support to retrieve content.
- Ensuring that all users of the Service who are at Oxford have an affiliated ORCID registered, in order that ORCID logon is used.
- Adhering to suggested best practices in journal publishing, outlined in Appendix A.

3. Agreement declaration

I have read the Shortform Hosting at Oxford Service Policy and Service Agreement and the criteria for using the Service as detailed in these documents.

I confirm that the research content is owned, managed, and maintained by a unit of the University (such as an academic department or similar).

A named individual (Publication Owner) has been assigned as responsible for ensuring these obligations are met, and these details have been provided to the Service.

I confirm that the Title has been agreed by the Division/Department for hosting with the Service and I have obtained a written agreement or statement of support from the appropriate person of responsibility (the Sponsor) and provided this to the Shortform Hosting Service.

Signed:	Date:
Role:	
Contact:	

Appendix A: Best practice

1. Journal Information

Include aim and scope, author guidelines, and ISSN on the website.

2. Editorial Team

Display the full names and affiliations of editorial team members on the website.

Maintain current contact information for the designated contact person.

3. Identifiers

Obtain an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and display it on published content.

Assign Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) to published content and list DOIs for all the references cited by the author where available.

Use ORCID (affiliated with Oxford where relevant) to sign into the system.

4. Web and Content Accessibility

Maintain the journal website in compliance with accessibility standards.

Publish content using accessible formatting practices.

(See <https://docs.pkp.sfu.ca/accessible-content/en> for guidance)

5. Submission Review Process

Define the type of review the title provides.

Provide the details of the submission review process on the website.

(Recommended) Outline the policies on publishing ethics, as relevant, such as authorship and contributorship, plagiarism, data sharing, etc.

6. Copyright and Licensing

Create a consistent copyright statement that defines who holds copyright and the open licence used and display these on the title's website.

Ensure that authors accept the terms of copyright agreement and/or the licensing policy as part of the publication process.

Display the copyright holder name(s) and licensing information on all published content.

(Recommended) Allow the author to retain copyright of their published work.

7. Self-archiving and reuse

Clearly state the policy that allows authors to post copies of their papers on their personal websites, in institutional repositories and other venues. Specify the version of the paper that can be re-posted.

8. Author Fees

Clearly state that no fees are charged to authors in return for publishing services.

9. Revenue Sources

Display funding and revenue sources on the title's website (e.g. advertising, institutional support, and organizational support).