Social Networks and Copyright Quick Guide

Overview

Online repositories for academic research have grown in popularity in recent years. One common example is ‘ResearchGate’ which can assist academics to develop their online profile. Developing a global research profile is an important part of working and studying in the University community. Platforms such as ResearchGate can be useful in achieving this goal.

It is important to remember that all the normal rules of copyright still apply in relation to dealing with ResearchGate. How a researcher may use ResearchGate will depend on what agreement or licence the researcher has with their publisher. If you need specific help, give us a call.

We're ready to help

Contact us for a consultation.

Uploading and sharing your articles: General rule

- Find the terms of agreement on the publishers website (even if you have published under an ‘open access' licence). The relevant part would be 'reserved rights' or may be labelled 'what you can do'. Basically you’re looking for instructions on what you are allowed to do with your article.
- Generally, academics can at the time of publication or within a specified period of time:
  - Make copies of the refereed/corrected authored version, but not the published version; and
  - Archive refereed/corrected authored version, but not the published version in an institutional repository.

Note: Some publishers will not allow even this level of copying.

Uploading and sharing your articles: ResearchGate

The general allowances above still do not include uploading copies to an online repository like ResearchGate. Information on sharing, published by Elsevier. Key points are:

- There is a difference between sharing an 'accepted manuscript' and a published journal article (you will not likely be able to share the published article, but may be able to share the accepted manuscript);
- There may be an embargo period where you will not be able to share your paper in some ways (or at all);
• You may be required to link to the published journal article when sharing your accepted manuscript; and
• Unless certain exceptions apply, a published journal article may only be shared by agreement.

Basically, there is no single answer to this. Please contact us to discuss your question further.