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| Open Access Guidance |
| **2020 - 2023** |

**Open Access Guidance**

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# Summary

This guidance accompanies the Edge Hill University [Policy on Open Access (RO-GOV-07)](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/research/files/2012/05/Open-Access-Output-Policy-RO-GOV-07.pdf). To help you and your colleagues understand the main issues, Learning Services and the Research Office have produced this document as an introduction to open access (OA): what it is and how it affects researchers.

# Glossary of Terms

**Article processing charge** (APC) is a fee levied by the publisher and paid by the author (or usually institution) for the publication of an accepted article in open access.

**Author accepted manuscript** (or post-print) is the author’s final version of a journal article which has undergone peer review. This may not be exactly the same as the final published version of the article.

**Embargo period** is the length of time a publisher may require an author to wait until they can make their published paper available through green open access. Embargo periods are usually for a minimum of 6 months to a maximum of 24 months.

[**FACT**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/fact/) **i**s a funders’ and authors’ compliance tool to help you check if the journals in which you wish to publish your results comply with the funder's requirements for open access to research.

**Green open access** is when the author publishes an article through any subscription journal, and also makes their author accepted manuscript freely available through a repository. Green open access publishing may be subject to an embargo period.

**Gold open access** is when the publisher gives immediate, free online access to the content of a journal. The publisher may charge authors an article processing charge.

**Hybrid journals** are subscription based but also provide a gold open access option for authors: to access some articles requires a subscription whilst others are open access. Publishers’ revenues for hybrid journals are drawn from both subscriptions and APCs.

[**JULIET**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet/)provides summaries of research funders’ grant conditions on open access self-archiving of research publications and data. You can search by funder’s name and each entry provides a summary of the funder’s publications policy.

**Open access** is the online availability of academic research papers with no access fees and free from most copyright and licensing restrictions

**Repository:** An institutional research repository is managed by a university to house and make accessible its own research outputs. A repository includes open access content. Research staff should self-archive their work into their institutional repository.

[**RoMEO**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/)is to help you find out if your chosen journal’s copyright rules allow you to deposit your research article in your institutional repository. You can search by journal title, and each entry provides a summary of the publisher's policy, including what version of an article can be deposited, and any conditions that are attached to that deposit.

[**Sherpa,**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/) funded by JISC, hosts the RoMEO, JULIET and FACT services to help you check compliance when depositing articles into your institutional repository.

# Purpose

This document complements the Policy on Open Access (RO-GOV-07) and it designed to support you, the researcher, to deposit your research in a way that is compliant with the Policy and ensure that it is eligible to be included in REF2021.

# Guidance

## Open access benefits

The aim of open access is to increase free online access to publicly funded research findings.

As a researcher, making your publications open access can help make sure:

* Your work is read more
* Your work is cited more
* Your work has more impact

The benefits of this prompt and widespread dissemination of research findings will help to:

* Inform researchers of new discoveries in their field
* Stimulate the sharing and discussion of their findings effectively with a wide group of their peers
* Accelerate the impact of their work both within and beyond the academic community
* Support the economic, social and cultural development of the country
* Increase the public understanding of research.

Therefore, Research England and many of the major research funders (e.g. the research councils and charities such as Wellcome) mandate that outputs from all research supported though public funding should be as widely and freely accessible as the available channels for dissemination permit.

## Compliance with funders' requirements

Research funders have taken a range of positions on whether they wish to meet the APCs associated with gold open access. When applying forexternal research funding you should ensure that you understand the extent to which the costs of gold open access can be requested from the funder. Where this is possible you should seek to do so.

Research Councils UK requires all journal articles and published conference proceedings submitted for publication after 1 April 2013 to be made open access. This [RCUK policy](https://www.ukri.org/files/legacy/documents/rcukopenaccesspolicy-pdf/) comprises both the policy statement and supporting guidance for researchers, their host institutions and the publishers of peer reviewed research papers. In this policy, RCUK express their preference for gold open access for immediate, unrestricted, on-line access to peer-reviewed and published research papers, free of any access charge and with maximum opportunities for re‐use. Edge Hill, however, does not receive [RCUK open access block grant](https://www.ukri.org/funding/information-for-award-holders/open-access/open-access-policy/open-access-block-grants/) to support gold open access so we do not automatically provide funds to pay the article processing charges. As such, our researchers should plan to publish outputs arising from RCUK funded projects via green open access, with longer embargo periods. Where a strong case can be made, it may be possible to secure internal funds for gold open access.

## Internal funding to meet the costs of *gold* open access

The University may support open access publication costs where an appropriate case is made. Such a case will rest on the quality of the publication targeted, the benefits of placing the paper in question in that publication, and cost/value for money. An [application is required *before* an article is submitted](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/research/oa/) for publication. When making an application you should identify:

* The standing of the journal in your discipline using appropriate evidence for a non-specialist audience (n.b. please do not rely on Journal Impact Factors when making the case as it is not designed for these kinds of deliberations)
* If it is a new journal, how a quality judgement is being made (e.g. it might be the quality of the editorial board)
* Other benefits of placing an article in the journal (e.g. accessing a broader, possibly non-academic audience)
* Cost and how this might be shared if it is a joint-authored paper.

Please be aware of ‘predatory journals’ which might contact you offering to publish your research for a cost that is generally lower than the standard journals.

## Compliance requirements for REF2021

For REF2021, Research England requires all journal articles and conference proceedings published in journals with an ISSN to be made open access, if they were accepted for publication on or after 1 April 2016. This applies to all units of assessment (UOAs). A summary of the open access compliance requirements for the post-2014 REF is given below; however staff can consult the [Research England’s](https://re.ukri.org/research/open-access-research/) policy for full details.

The requirement to comply with the Research England open access policy applies only if:

1. The output is a journal article or is a conference proceeding with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN).
2. The output is accepted for publication after 1 April 2016.

Monographs and other long-form publications are excluded, as are non-text, creative and practice-based research outputs. Research data are also excluded; however, extra credit in the environment section of a REF return (REF 5) will be given to those universities that can demonstrate the steps they have taken towards enabling open access for these outputs. We now have Figshare which has many options for sharing data and other creative outputs: contact Learning Services for more information.

## How to comply with open access

Please check the open access policy for the specific journal when you are submitting a paper to ensure you can comply. This can be achieved in three easy steps

1. Go to the [**Sherpa website**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/)
2. Check [**RoMEO**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/romeo/)for publishers’ copyright and archiving policies
3. Check [**Juliet**](http://www.sherpa.ac.uk/juliet/index.php)for research funders’ archiving mandates and guidelines.

**NB: If your journal of choice requires an article processing charge you need to secure funding before submission (see section above): if you have queries, contact the Research Office for further information.**

Compliant outputs must fulfil certain criteria to be treated as open access. The criteria consist of deposit requirements, discovery requirements and access requirements, summarised below.

|  | Essential Open Access criteria |
| --- | --- |
| Deposit requirements | Final peer reviewed text to be deposited in an institutional or subject repository within three months of acceptance by publisher |
| Discovery requirements | All versions\* must be discoverable electronically by anyone  \**Includes replaced/augmented or updated manuscripts* |
| Access requirements | Must be available to anyone to search, read and download without charge, subject to embargo periods which should not exceed   * + 12 months for REF panels A&B   + 24 months for Ref panels C&D |
|  | Desirable criteria |
| Text mining | Making the output available in a format to enable text mining will be credited in the research environment of the next REF |

## Exceptions to the policy

Research England recognises exceptions to the policy requirements:

Deposit exceptions

The following exceptions deal with cases where the output is unable to meet the deposit requirements. In the following cases, the output will not be required to meet any of the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).

* At the point of acceptance, it was not possible to secure the use of a repository.
* There was a delay in securing the final peer-reviewed text (for instance, where a paper has multiple authors).
* The staff member to whom the output is attributed was not employed on a Category A eligible contract by a UK HEI at the time of submission for publication.
* It would be unlawful to deposit, or request the deposit of, the output.
* Depositing the output would present a security risk.

Access exceptions

The following exceptions deal with cases where deposit of the output is possible, but there are issues to do with meeting the access requirements. In the following cases, the output will still be required to meet the deposit and discovery requirements, but not the access requirements. A closed-access deposit, where allowed, will be required.

* The output depends on the reproduction of third-party content for which open access rights could not be granted (either within the specified timescales, or at all).
* The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima, and was the most appropriate publication for the output.
* The publication concerned actively disallows open-access deposit in a repository, and was the most appropriate publication for the output.

Technical exceptions

The following exceptions deal with cases where an output is unable to meet the criteria due to a technical issue. In the following cases, the output will not be required to meet the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).

* At the point of acceptance, the staff member to whom the output is attributed was employed at a different UK HEI, and it has not been possible to determine compliance with the criteria.
* The repository experienced a short-term or transient technical failure that prevented compliance with the criteria (this should not apply to systemic issues).
* An external service provider failure prevented compliance (for instance, a subject repository did not enable open access at the end of the embargo period, or a subject repository ceased to operate).

Further exceptions

Two further exceptions to the policy are outlined below:

* Other exception. Other exception should be used where an output is unable to meet the criteria due to circumstances beyond the control of the HEI, including extenuating personal circumstances of the author (such as periods of extended leave), industrial action, closure days, and software problems beyond those listed in the technical exceptions. If ‘other’ exception is selected, the output will not need to meet the open access criteria (deposit, discovery or access requirements).
* The output was not deposited within three months of acceptance date, but was deposited within three months of the earliest date of publication. In this instance, the output will need to meet all other policy requirements. This exception does not need to be applied retrospectively to outputs compliant with the policy from 1 April 2016 to 1 April 2018 which fulfilled the policy requirements within three months of publication.

Outputs submitted to the next REF will be deemed non-compliant with this policy and rated as unclassified where they:

* Fall within the scope of the policy
* Are not compliant with **all** of the criteria above
* No valid exception was recorded.

The table below identifies common issues that can cause an article not to be compliant.

It is possible for non-compliant outputs to be eligible through the lodging of exceptions to the policy based on the criteria identified above. Such exceptions must be justified and suitably evidenced, and the decision as to whether they are acceptable for the REF submission will be made by the REF Decisions Panel. The annex provides a useful table to help you to identify the most common reasons for non-compliance.

### Recording an exception

Where the reason for the exception is easily identifiable, e.g.:

* You were not a member of the University at the time of acceptance
* No embargo period has been set
* The item is gold open access

Learning Services will record the exception for you; however, it still assists the process if you alert us to the need for an exception. For other exceptions, you need to contact us at [REFcompliance@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:REFcompliance@edgehill.ac.uk) to explain why an exception may be required and provide as much information/evidence as possible to aid the decision-making process. Staff from Learning Services and the Research Office will review the evidence and make a decision on whether it is likely to be an acceptable exception. It is for the REF Decisions Panel, however, to make the final determination regarding whether it may be included in the REF submission. It should be noted that ‘other’ exceptions are subject to particular scrutiny by the REF audit team, so we need to be particularly sure that the reasons for the exception are sound: please respond to any queries for further information and evidence.

## Choosing Journals

Academic staff should seek guidance from colleagues and peers regarding the best place to publish in a given discipline. With the rise of open access, there has been an expansion of predatory publishers who seek merely to profit from author processing charges. There are resources which might aid you in choosing the right journal, such as ‘[Think, Check, Submit](https://thinkchecksubmit.org/)’, and the [Scholarly Open Access blog](http://scholarlyoa.com/) frequently has features on predatory publishers[[1]](#footnote-1). See also the University’s open access [website](https://www.edgehill.ac.uk/research/oa/?tab=open-access).

Where a journal has been chosen which does not support open access at all, the academic must explain this decision (journal impact factors will not be a good enough reason for the purposes of the REF and are not in the spirit of responsible metrics[[2]](#footnote-2)) and deposit the article under permanent embargo. It is important that the exception is based on sound academic reasons and we strongly suggest that you speak with the Research Office before choosing one of these journals.

### Open access deposit requirements at Edge Hill University

Pure is the University’s repository for research outputs, allowing content deposited to be viewed worldwide via research portal. It enables the University’s research to be viewed, shared, managed and preserved, and facilitates open access. As a current member of academic staff, you should ensure that your accepted publications are deposited into Pure as **soon as possible after acceptance**. This will ensure that your publications are available in open access, and thus comply with requirements for submission to post-2014 REF. When you deposit your research on Pure, Learning Services validates it to ensure that:

* The bibliographic metadata for items is correct
* The correct author accepted manuscript is deposited to ensure compliance with open access – if this is not correct, Learning Services will contact you and it is important that you respond to any queries: while we try our best to support you to be compliant with open access requirements, it is your responsibility as the researcher to ensure that your outputs comply

Once this process is complete, there are other key issues to remember:

* On publication, **provide confirmation of the status of the article and publication date**. Confirm the online publication date and any bibliographic details not previously available. Without the correct publication date, embargoes cannot be set properly and your output may fall foul to the embargo maxima periods.
* **Attach the published version** of your work when available depending on your funder's requirements and chosen publisher's copyright agreement and embargo period
* Make your publication available using **a licence that aligns with your funders’ requirements** and ideally uses the most liberal re-use licence allowed by your chosen publisher.

It is your responsibility, however, to ensure that all your material is deposited. Any item which does not meet Research England’s open access requirements will be excluded from the REF.

## Monitoring open access compliance

We understand that complying with the policy may seem complex. To assist you to not miss any of the criteria required, both Learning Services and Research Office carry out regular audits based on the following:

* Reports on open access compliance using Pure reports
* Reports to review items deposited in Pure in the last 90 days
* Reports on exception types, including gold OA

These reports are made available to the UOA coordinators and the University Research Committee. They are also available to managers via Pure. In addition, Learning Services uses unpaywall.org to identify items which may not be OA compliant.[[3]](#footnote-3) While these reports assist us in identifying any ‘at risk’ items, it remains the researcher’s responsibility to ensure that the articles comply with the OA policy.

For further information, please contact [REFcompliance@edgehill.ac.uk](mailto:REFcompliance@edgehill.ac.uk).

# Key to Relevant Documents

# Annex

|  | **Is your output compliant with Open Access requirements?[[4]](#footnote-4)** | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Issue** | **Deposit** | **Discovery** | **Access** |
| The **correct** version of the full text was deposited within the 90-day window[[5]](#footnote-5) and was made accessible in the live archive within one month of deposit/end of embargo | **** | **** | **** |
| The **incorrect version** of the full text has been deposited | **** | **** | **** |
| The output was deposited **outside the 90-day window** | **** | **** | **** |
| **No full text** has been deposited | **** | **** | **** |
| Output submitted for validation via Pure but is **not yet in the live archive** – Learning Services validate the item but this is not always done immediately. Please ensure that you deposit your article ASAP to allow for any time lags or you risk missing the 90-day window | **** | **** | **** |
| The output had **no embargo** and was **not made accessible** within one month of deposit | **** | **** | **** |
| The output is under **embargo for a period up to the maxima** stated by Research England[[6]](#footnote-6) | **** | **** | **** |
| The output is under **embargo for a period longer than the maxima** stated by Research England (inc. permanently) | **** | **** | **** |
| The output was **not made accessible within one month of the end of the embargo** period | **** | **** | **** |

# Endmatter

| Title | Open Access Guidance |
| --- | --- |
| Policy Owner | Director, Research Office |
| Approved by | n/a – reviewed by University Research Committee |
| Date of Approval | April 2020 |
| Date for Review | January 2023 |

1. See also a guide on potential predatory journals at [Stop Predatory Journals](https://predatoryjournals.com/journals/) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Edge Hill is a signatory of the [San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA](https://sfdora.org/)). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Research England will use unpaywall.org to help it to determine which outputs to audit, it is acknowledged that it is a fairly blunt tool but it will help us to monitor items being flagged as non-compliant. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Deposit, discovery and access requirements taken from the [HEFCE Policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy/). See also Research England’s statement on open access [here](https://re.ukri.org/research/open-access-research/) [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Outputs accepted for publication **before 01 April 2018**: 90 days **from publication** (online or hardcopy, whichever is earlier); outputs accepted for publication **on or** **after 01 April 2018**: 90 days **from acceptance** by the publisher. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. While under an appropriate embargo period, the output cannot fulfil the accessibility criteria but will be compliant if it a) fulfils all other criteria, and b) is accessible within one month of the embargo end date. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)