

ACADEMIC BOARD

RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE COMMITTEE

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HEFCE policy for OA and the REF: implications for UWE

Joint paper by Research, Business & Innovation and Library Services

Context

On 31 March 2014, HEFCE announced a new policy on open access (OA) with which research outputs will need to comply **in order to be eligible for submission to the next REF.**

This document sets out recommendations for UWE's response, including

- Summary of key points in the policy
- Recommendations for UWE policy and procedures
- Proposed guidance to UWE researchers

HEFCE's policy is available at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2014/201407/#d.en.86771>. The covering letter to institutions is at <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2014/cl072014/#d.en.86764>.

Summary of key points in the policy

1. The policy applies to **journal articles and conference proceedings accepted for publication after 1 April 2016**. They must comply with this policy in order to be eligible for submission to the post-2014 REF. (Books or book series are exempt, as are confidential or non-text outputs.)
2. Authors' "final peer-reviewed manuscripts" (accepted manuscripts, AMs) must be **deposited** in an institutional or subject repository **on acceptance** for publication. (They may be replaced or augmented by the final published version later, but this is not a requirement.)
3. Public release of the full text may **respect publishers' embargoes**, provided they do not exceed the following:
 - 12 months for REF main panels A and B (i.e. STEM subjects)
 - 24 months for REF main panels C and D (i.e. roughly AHSS subjects, but includes e.g. built environment, geography and environment, economics, business, law, politics, education)
 - If there is no publisher embargo, public release should be as soon as possible and no later than one month after deposit.
4. Even before public release, the deposited article metadata (typically the bibliographic record) must be openly discoverable by readers and search engines, and should remain so.
5. Once the article has been released publicly, it should be **freely accessible and searchable** without charge by anyone, and should remain so.

6. HEFCE does not stipulate any specific licensing arrangements, but notes that the minimal CC BY-NC-ND licence would suffice.

Exceptions

7. **Deposit exceptions.** In the following cases, outputs would not need to meet the above requirements, and would still be eligible for submission to the REF:
 - No repository was available to the author, or they experienced a delay in obtaining the AM (e.g. from co-authors), or they were not employed by a UK HEI at the time the paper was submitted for publication, or deposit would be unlawful or a security risk.
8. **Access exceptions.** In the following cases, closed-access deposit will be sufficient, and the OA requirements should be met as soon as possible:
 - The output depends on third-party content for which OA rights could not be granted, *or the most appropriate publication for the output required a longer embargo than the above maxima or disallows OA deposit in a repository.*
9. **Technical exceptions.** In the following cases, the output will not need to meet the OA requirements, but institutions are urged to fulfil them retrospectively no later than the REF submission date:
 - The REF-submitting author was at a different HEI which failed to comply, or the repository experienced a short-term technical failure, or an external provider prevented compliance.
10. **Other exceptions** in extremely rare and exceptional cases will require a short written explanation of why the output could not meet the requirements.

Audit and verification

HEFCE will require institutions to provide assurance about their processes and systems for recording OA information. The required metadata will need to include dates of acceptance, initial deposit, and start and end of any embargo period (UWE ePrints Research Repository is currently being updated to capture this metadata).

Any output submitted to the REF that falls within the scope of this policy but fails to meet its stipulations (or allowed exceptions) will be given an unclassified score and will not be assessed in the REF.

Recommendations for UWE policy and procedures

The policy is less stringent than those of many research funding bodies. It is therefore **recommended that UWE adopt its requirements as the minimum acceptable** for outputs that fall within its scope. It will become imperative for UWE to require compliance by its researchers in order to ensure we remain free to submit their outputs to future REFs.

It is therefore suggested that UWE:

- Issues guidance to its researchers along the lines set out below
- Reinforces the message in all appropriate fora, development activities and events etc
- Ensures that the metadata captured by the Repository includes the items summarized at point 12 above (and revisits and adapts these as HEFCE's requirements develop)
- Explores what feasible steps can be taken to monitor authors' compliance
- Explores how best to simplify or automate the capture of outputs onto the Repository, perhaps in conjunction with the university's wider research information system needs
- Encourages and supports research staff new to UWE to upload copies of their publications to the Repository as a matter of course, subject to publisher conditions and confidentiality issues,

The proposed guidelines below are suggested as minimum requirements. It may also be advisable to supplement them with guidance on how to comply with the requirements of e.g. RCUK, together with how to comply with their preferred 'Gold' route to OA. (The emphasis below is on the minimum 'Green' route.)

The current UWE guidance is at

<http://www1.uwe.ac.uk/library/usingthelibrary/researchers/openaccessandapcs.aspx>.

Proposed guidance to UWE researchers

UWE open access requirements

In order for your research outputs to be eligible for submission to the next REF, HEFCE has indicated that you must comply with the following open access requirements. These are now therefore also UWE's minimum requirements.

Your research funding body may also have further, possibly stricter, requirements. You should therefore also ensure that you comply with those. The following are therefore the minimum steps you should take.

Scope

These requirements apply to;

- Journal articles and conference proceedings accepted for publication in a journal or in another type of publication that has an ISSN (international standard serial number).

They do not apply to;

- Monographs, book chapters, other long-form publications, working papers, creative or practice-based research outputs, or data
- Conference proceedings published in a book or book series (even if the latter also carries an ISSN)
- Outputs that are confidential, whether for commercial or security reasons.

If your output falls outside the scope of the requirements, you are nonetheless strongly encouraged to deposit them on the repository (provided they are not confidential) subject to any conditions stipulated by your publisher.

Choice of publication

It is possible that the conditions set by some journals or publications do not comply with these requirements. Wherever possible, you are advised to choose a journal (etc) that will allow you to comply by checking their policies (Library Services can advise on publishers' policies if required)

The maximum permissible embargo periods, from first online publication, are as follows:

- 12 months for REF main panels A and B (i.e. STEM subjects, UoAs 3-15)
- 24 months for REF main panels C and D (i.e. UoAs 16-36)

Deposit Process

1. When your article is accepted for publication, you should deposit it onto the Repository immediately. Do not wait until it is published.
2. Please deposit, in the first instance, your author's' final peer-reviewed manuscript, after peer review but before copy editing, coding and formatting by the publisher.
3. The repository team will check publisher requirements regarding embargoes, before making any item openly available on the repository
4. If there is no publisher embargo, the repository team will make it freely available as soon as possible and no later than one month after deposit.
5. You are encouraged, but not required, to augment the accepted manuscript with the final published version of record when it is available, provided your publisher allows this.

For enquiries, please email lib.rke@uwe.ac.uk