

## Annex A – Open access proposed policy differences between REF 2021 and REF 2029

	Journal articles 2021	Journal articles 2029
<b>In scope</b>	Journal articles and conference proceedings (REF output types D and E)	Journal articles and conference proceedings (REF output types D and E)
<b>Publication</b>	Publish immediate open access Or Deposit, (repository or pre-print) either Author accepted manuscript or Version of record (or near final)	Publish immediate open access Or Make available through appropriate platform either Author accepted manuscript or version of record.  The REF open access policy recognises that not all research outputs will have been produced with resources to support open access publication. Any outputs meeting UKRI open access policy will be considered to have fully met REF policy however it is not a requirement that all in-scope outputs should meet this standard.
<b>Access</b>	Fully discoverable, downloadable and searchable	Fully discoverable, downloadable and searchable.
<b>Deposit</b>	Deposit within three months of acceptance for publication. Available on publication or subject to embargo period	No deposit requirement on acceptance, however if available through repository, should be available within max 1 month post publication in line with UKRI policy.
<b>Platform</b>	Repository or pre-print	Repository, pre-print or other appropriate alternative platform
<b>Exemptions</b>	<u>Deposit exceptions</u>  a. At the point of acceptance, it was not possible to secure the use of a repository.  b. There was a delay in securing the final peer-reviewed text (for instance, where a paper has multiple authors).	Allowable exemptions proposed:  i. third-party content was included for which licenses could not be obtained.  ii. Outputs were authored in whole by one or more non-volume

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. 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.</li> <li>d. It would be unlawful to deposit, or request the deposit of, the output.</li> <li>e. Depositing the output would present a security risk</li> </ul> <p><u>Access exceptions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 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).</li> <li>b. The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima and was the most appropriate publication for the output.</li> <li>c. The publication concerned actively disallows open-access deposit in a repository and was the most appropriate publication for the output.</li> </ul> <p><u>Technical exceptions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. 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.</li> <li>b. The repository experienced a short-term or transient technical failure that prevented compliance with the criteria (this should not apply to systemic issues).</li> <li>c. 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</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contributing staff prior to implementation of the open access policy for REF 2029.</li> <li>iii. criteria beyond the control of the HEI (such as personal circumstances of the author, industrial action, closure days and software issues).</li> <li>iv. Output has a demonstrable and substantive connection to the submitting institution but was published following the end of the author's period of employment, and it has not been possible to determine compliance with the criteria.</li> <li>v. It would be unlawful to deposit, or request the deposit of, the output or to otherwise make this available.</li> <li>vi. The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima and was the most appropriate publication for the output.</li> </ul>
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	operate).  <u>Further exceptions</u>  a. '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).  b. 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.	
<b>Embargo period</b>	12 months MP A and B, 24 Months C and D	6 months MP A and B, 12 Months C and D Reflect broader progress towards OA across sector, including increased focus in institutions and funders toward rights retention
<b>Tolerance limit</b>	5% of submission (i.e., per UOA)	5% of submission (i.e., per UOA)
<b>Licensing</b>	Encourage maximum openness (CC-BY) however accept CC-BY-ND-NC or equivalent	Encourage maximum openness (CC-BY) accept CC-BY-ND

	Longform outputs 2021	Longform outputs 2029
<b>In scope</b>	Not in scope	Monographs, Book chapters, Edited books, Scholarly editions. (REF output types A, B, C and R)
<b>Publication</b>	N/A	Publish immediate open access Or Make available through appropriate platform either Author accepted manuscript or Version of record

		All outputs meeting UKRI OA policy considered to have met REF policy
<b>Access</b>	N/A	Fully discoverable, downloadable and searchable
<b>Deposit</b>	N/A	No deposit requirement on acceptance, however if available through repository, should be available within max 1 month post publication in line with UKRI policy
<b>Platform</b>	N/A	Repository, pre-print or other appropriate alternative platform
<b>Exemptions</b>	N/A	<p>Allowable exemptions proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. where the only appropriate publisher, after liaison and consideration, is unable to offer an open access option that complies with the REF policy.</li> <li>ii. reuse permissions for third-party materials cannot be obtained and there is no suitable alternative option available to enable open access publication.</li> <li>iii. Outputs published before 01 January 2026.</li> <li>iv. Outputs for which publication agreements were put in place before 01 January 2026</li> <li>v. Output has a demonstrable and substantive connection to the submitting institution but was published following the end of the author's period of employment, and it has not been possible to determine compliance with the criteria.</li> <li>vi. It would be unlawful to deposit, or request the deposit of, the output or to otherwise make this available.</li> <li>vii. The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima and was the most appropriate publication for the output</li> </ul>
<b>Embargo period</b>	N/A	24 months
<b>Tolerance limit</b>	N/A	10% of submission (i.e., per UOA)
<b>Licensing</b>	N/A	Encourage maximum openness (CC-BY) however accept CC-BY-ND-NC or equivalents