



OPEN ACCESS

FAQS

**A GUIDE FOR
RADAR USERS**

Open Access FAQs for GSA depositors

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What is Open Access?

'Open Access' (OA) refers to unrestricted, online access to the published findings of research. There are two models of open access: green OA involves authors depositing a version of their paper in a repository; and gold OA usually involves paying an Article Processing Charge (APC) to make the paper fully accessible through the publisher's website.

Please refer to the [GSA Open Access Policy](#) and to the briefing paper [Open Access to Research](#) for further information.

What is an APC?

An article processing charge (APC), also known as a publication fee, is sometimes charged in order to publish an article in an academic journal as 'gold' open access.

The GSA preference is for 'Green' OA through the RADAR repository; whilst the GSA receives no funding from RCUK to support Gold OA through APCs, some external grant funding may permit use for APCs.

Please contact the RADAR team (via radar@gsa.ac.uk) for further information and support.

How do I check if I can make my paper open access?

If you are unsure about whether you can make a document that you are uploading openly available and "Visible to: Anyone" in RADAR, you can check the Open Access (OA) policies of journals and publishers by using the [SHERPA RoMEO](#) tool. You can also access this tool whilst you are depositing an output in RADAR.

You can also contact the RADAR team (radar@gsa.ac.uk) for further information and support.

What are embargoes?

Embargoes are restrictions that a publisher may place on certain versions of a document (such as a journal article) before it can be made openly available. Embargo periods can range from anything between 3 months to 3 years, and you should check this with your publisher before publishing.

The potential length of your output's embargo period is particularly important if it is a journal article, or a conference proceeding with an ISSN; if these outputs are to be submitted to the next REF, HEFCE require that embargo periods for Art and Design outputs "should not exceed 24 months" (see the [HEFCE policy](#), p.12).

What does the REF Open Access Policy mean for me?

HEFCE / SFC have a new policy for Open Access in the next Research Excellence Framework (REF). The policy states that to be eligible for the next REF, authors' final peer reviewed manuscripts or accepted author manuscripts must be deposited in an institutional or subject repository within 3 months of the date of acceptance. Deposited material should be discoverable, and free to read and download, for anyone with an internet connection.

The policy applies only to **journal articles** and **conference proceedings** with an **ISSN** which have been accepted for publication after 1 April 2016. There is no requirement to make other forms of research output such as exhibitions, books and creative work openly accessible in the same way as journal articles, although it is encouraged as a way to increase the impact of these works.

The HEFCE policy for open access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework can be found here: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy/>

What is meant by the date of acceptance?

The date of acceptance is the point at which the author is notified that:

- Their output has been reviewed by the journal or conference (normally via peer review)
- All necessary changes have been made in response to that review
- The paper is ready to be taken through the final steps toward publication (normally copy-editing and typesetting).

At this stage the journal editor or conference organiser normally notifies the author (e.g. by email) that their paper has been 'firmly' accepted (as opposed to any earlier point of provisional acceptance) and is ready for copy-editing or typesetting; the date of this notification should be taken to mean the acceptance date.

What is the "author accepted manuscript"?

The author's final, accepted manuscript is the one that has been updated to include all changes resulting from peer review, as well as any changes of an academic nature requested by the journal editor or conference organiser.

The accepted manuscript is not the same as the copy-edited, typeset or published paper – these versions are known as 'proofs' or 'versions of record', and publishers do not normally allow authors to make these openly accessible.

The diagram below shows which version of a paper is needed to comply with the HEFCE OA policy for the next REF.



What if my publisher has specified an embargo?

The HEFCE OA policy respects publisher embargoes (the period when you can only access an article with paid access). However, manuscripts must be free to read and download after a maximum of **24 months** from the date of first publication (online or print, whichever comes first) for REF Main Panel D outputs.

What do I need to do to be eligible for submission to the next REF?

To make sure you comply with HEFCE's Open Access policy for the next REF, upload your author accepted manuscript to RADAR as soon as your research output has been accepted for publication, as indicated in the acceptance letter or e-mail from the publication's editor to you as the author.

For further information and support please contact the RADAR team (radar@gsa.ac.uk).