Royal Holloway policy on the HEFCE REF policy for Open Access access exceptions

HEFCE have included a number of exceptions within their Policy for Open Access in the post-2014 Research Excellence Framework: Updated July 2015:

http://www.hefce.ac.uk/rsrch/oa/Policy/

This policy provides guidance and processes for the Access exceptions rather than the Deposit or Technical exceptions. The word “exception” is HEFCE’s terminology and relates to the fact that the article is an exception to the OA policy rather than any comment on the article or journal title’s merit.

Background context from HEFCE Policy:

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 will be required, and the open access requirements should be met as soon as possible.

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).

b. The publication concerned requires an embargo period that exceeds the stated maxima, (12 months for Panels A and B and 24 months for Panels C&D) and was the most appropriate publication for the output.

c. The publication concerned actively disallows open-access deposit in a repository, and was the most appropriate publication for the output

College policy:

1. Authors are responsible for adding the metadata of publications to Pure

2. Authors must add the author’s accepted manuscript (also known as the postprint) within 3 months of the date of acceptance. This is essential to meet the Deposit requirements and REF OA eligibility. The AMM “contains all academically necessary changes arising from peer review and the academic editorial process. Accepted manuscripts do not typically contain the subsequent non-academic alterations arising from copyediting and typesetting,” Authors should use Sherpa Romeo to be aware of the publisher’s policy on OA. Authors should not delay deposit over concerns around embargo lengths or publisher OA policies. Authors should add the full text and make it “Closed” on Pure. The OA Team in the Library will then check the publisher’s policy and the documents and will set the visibility according to the publisher’s policy.

3. The Open Access Team in Library Services will check items and documents on Pure and will contact the publisher to confirm their OA policy. If the publisher is not providing REF compliant OA, the OA Team will communicate this to DoRs and UoA leads.

4. DoRs and UoAs will make the decision as to whether outputs (journal articles and conference papers published with an ISSN) can meet the above access exception criteria, by providing evidence that the publication was the most appropriate for the output and
therefore an exception can be applied to the output. This will be communicated to the OA Team.

5. Evidence will be kept at journal title level and will be maintained by the OA Team.

6. The OA Team will record exceptions on Pure. These exceptions will be visible to other Pure users but not to anyone outside of this group.

7. The OA Team will proactively work with DoRs and UoA leads to check publisher’s policies and to highlight publishers and journal titles that will need to have an exception applied to them. DoR’s and UoA leads are asked to provide titles to check so checking is focussed.

8. Articles that are published as Open Access articles are outside of the scope of the HEFCE REF OA policy and therefore do not need to meet the OA requirements. Articles published as OA articles may incur APCs which are on average about £1700 per article. The OA Team will continue to manage Article Processing Charges (APCs) on behalf of the College. RCUK funded authors can already apply for APC costs via the College’s RCUK APC fund.

DoRs and UoA leads must authorise any non RCUK funded APCs. This should ideally be done before publication as retrospective OA publishing can be difficult and some publishers have a time limit after which changes can not be made. Contact should always be made with openaccess@royalholloway.ac.uk as the OA Team manages the publisher schemes that provide discounts on APCs and collates expenditure figures. The Library has no funding for non RCUK funded APCs so a process will be set up by which the Department or School internally transfers the funds to the Library.

9. Authors should not delay deposit on the basis that they are considering making a request for an APC. For non RCUK funded authors, the decision is with the DORs and UoA leads. Some publishers do not offer OA publishing, or in the case of RCUK funded articles, some publishers do not provide an RCUK compliant OA route. Authors should deposit the article on to Pure even if they are considering requesting an APC to ensure eligibility in the event that the request for the APC is rejected or that the journal title does not provide OA publication options. If the article is ultimately not published OA, and deposit has also not been made within 3 months of acceptance, the article will be classed as not eligible for the REF due to not meeting the Deposit requirements.

10. The OA Team will continue to maintain expenditure records on APCs and to provide information to the College.

11. The OA Team will maintain ongoing records on the publishers and journal titles that are classed as exceptions and will provide regular updates to DoRs and UoA leads so they are able to monitor the number and proportion of exceptions in an UoA.

12. The OA Team will continue to provide information to Sherpa Romeo (a JISC service that collates publishers policies on OA) if information is incorrect or out of date. HEFCE states that institutions should be able to rely on the information provided on Romeo so this helps keep Romeo current and correct for the mutual benefit of the HEI community.

13. The OA Team will also make representations to HEFCE and the publisher if a publisher is not providing REF compliant OA and will continue to horizon scan to monitor other university’s strategies and policies in this area and feed in information to the College.

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