

Open Access requirements for the REF

Summary guide

This guide outlines what you need to do to make sure that your research publications comply with the Open Access policy for the next Research Excellence Framework (REF).

If you're not sure what any of the terms mean, have a look at the [Open Access glossary](#).

If you are publishing your work in journals or conference proceedings you need to:

- keep a copy of your Author Accepted Manuscript
- note the date your publication was accepted
- record and upload a copy to the Kent Academic Repository (KAR)
- consider publisher embargo periods
- consider using a Creative Commons licence

Publications affected

The REF open access policy applies to journal articles and conference proceedings. Its intention is to encourage open access for all research works, and the [University of Kent's open access policy](#) supports this by asking that all research works be recorded on KAR.

What do I need to do?

As soon as you know the publication details, record them on KAR with a copy of the work.

When do I need to do this?

As soon as possible after the publisher tells you that your work will be published without major amendments, and definitely within three months of this date.

Which version of my article do I upload?

Your final, peer-reviewed version. This is called the Author's Accepted Manuscript or post-print. It is the version that no longer requires any major amendments but has not yet been copy-edited, it should not include publisher branding.

Unless you have clear permission from your publisher or Open Access has been paid for, do not deposit the publisher's PDF, also known as 'the version of record'. Use the [SHERPA/ROMEO](#) service to find out your publishers permissions and requirements. For more information, see the [Journal compliance](#) guide.

Restrictions and embargos

Publications are not made available on KAR until after the publication date. Some publishers may only allow Author's Accepted Manuscripts to be available open access after a further set period. This is called an embargo.

Maximum permitted embargo periods for the REF are:

- 12 months for Panels A and B
- 24 months for Panels C and D

The embargo period starts from the date of publication. You must still upload your manuscript as soon as possible after acceptance and select the "Restrict to repository staff only" option. On publication you can set the embargo period or ask library staff to do so. The output will automatically become publicly available at the end of the embargo period.

What if I publish in a Gold open access journal?

The University still requires you to deposit a copy of the Author Accepted Manuscript in KAR as this is the source for the REF submission. You can also upload a copy of the Version of record, once it is published.

Help and guidance

If you have any questions, please email researchsupport@kent.ac.uk.

See the [Open Access pages](#) for more information: search the Kent website for **open access at Kent**.