HEFCE’s Open Access policy for the next REF

What does the new policy require?

- The new policy requires the same initial steps as the College’s existing OA mandate, but goes further in specifying discoverability and accessibility criteria.
- To comply, an Author’s Accepted Draft (peer-reviewed but pre-publication) of an output must be:
  - Deposited in an institutional or subject repository within three months of acceptance by a publication.
  - Discoverable (available to freely read/download) upon official publication, or as soon as possible thereafter.
  - Accessible at all times thereafter.

When does the policy come into effect?

- The start date is April 1st 2016. However, the college’s existing OA policy already mandates deposit upon acceptance, and we expect staff to begin complying with this ASAP, in line with HEFCE recommendations.

Which kinds of output are covered by the policy?

- Journal articles.
- Papers published in conference proceedings with an ISSN (not book series with both an ISBN and ISSN such as LNCS).

Which kinds of output are not covered?

- Monographs, chapters and other long-form publications.
- Working papers.
- Creative outputs (Novels, poetry etc.)
- Practical outputs.
- Data.

How does the policy account for embargoes?

- Publisher embargoes can be respected by locking the full-text. Authors must still deposit a metadata record with a full-text file.
- The embargo start date is from first publication (including online).
- The full-text must be made Open Access no more than one month after the embargo ends.
- If there is no embargo, full-text must be made Open Access no more than one month after live deposit.
• Embargoes apply up to a maximum of:
  o **24 months** for Social Sciences, Arts & Humanities (REF main panels C & D)
  o **12 months** for STEM (panels A & B).
  o **24 months** for outputs submitted across the four main panels.

**Are there any exceptions?**

• In some instances an output will be considered beyond the scope of the policy. There are three types of exception:
  o **Deposit** exceptions, where deposit is not necessary.
  o **Access** exceptions, where deposit is necessary but open access to the full-text is not.
  o **Technical** exceptions caused by problems with a repository.
• For a full breakdown please see our [policy summary](#).

**What if my output type is not covered, or my output is exempt?**

• You will still need to comply with the [College's OA Mandate](#) and potentially your [funder's OA policy](#).

**I'm going Gold: do I still need to deposit in a repository?**

• Yes. HEFCE still require deposit of the Author's Accepted Draft on an institutional or subject repository, but are happy for the full-text to be superseded by the publisher's version of record once available. We routinely harvest versions of record for BIROn where Gold OA has been paid and reuse rights established.

**I've just joined Birkbeck; how do I get started?**

• Staff arriving from another HEI can move publication records over from their old IR. Contact us to discuss the best way to do this. If you have no experience with repositories, we can walk you through the basics.

**What happens if I don't comply?**

• Any outputs falling inside the scope of the policy but not complying with it will score “unclassified” in the next REF. This will cause enormous ramifications for both individuals and the college.