

ARMA REF Open Access Compliance Meeting 19th April 2018

Key Points

This meeting was organised in response to demand from the ARMA Open Access Special Interest Group members to meet up and discuss practical solutions to REF open access requirements. Members of the REF Open Access Special Interest Group joined us in organising the event.

Policy Update (from REF OA policy representative)

- Publication of Open Access Survey results is imminent
- REF Panel criteria expected to be drafted by the summer with consultation in the summer and finalised in winter 2018/19
- Open Access policy not expected to change. Guidance may be enhanced.
- Audit Process for REF2021 (including Open Access) can be developed after panel criteria established
- Reassurance that REF is not intended to catch institutions out but to assess research excellence. Existing literature states that there will be tolerance of occasional failures.
- Aware of concerns around what institutions should seek and retain as evidence of OA when researchers move institutions.

Key Discussion Points

Confirmed that items accepted before 01/04/18 do not need the 'deposited within 3 months of publication exception' applied retrospectively.

Points that were raised by the group for consideration by Research England and REF Team:

- 1) Can a percentage non-compliance allowance be indicated?
- 2) Gold open access to be clarified. It was suggested that some level of tolerance on the definition might be allowed for REF2021.
- 3) Research England are interested in receiving specific examples where institutions are concerned to use the gold exception. Exception and FAQ state that if fulfilling the requirements of other funder's policies then gold exception can be used. **Action: SIG Champion**
- 4) Will REF panel members or assessors be furnished with the open access status of a publication?
- 5) Can we consider deposit in PMC/Europe PMC as compliant even though we cannot necessarily verify the date of deposit was within 3 months of acceptance?
- 6) Will OA be part of the standard audit, the panel audit, or both?
- 7) Some interpretation of 'first publicly available' in initial decisions documentation as including author accepted manuscript or pre-print version. Clarified that this means the first publisher version.
- 8) Policy, guidance (FAQs/Circular letters), and audit criteria could be clarified and summaries provided.

Action: Discuss with colleagues at Research England and REF REF Rep

Practical identification of what is eligible for REF

Considerable concern that despite several tools and communication channels Research Organisations are not aware of all relevant publication in time to address REF OA requirements.

Action: Speak to Jisc re updating the list of tools and outreach ideas **SIG Champion**

A short demo of one institutions method of recording exceptions was given based on this case study <https://insights.uksg.org/articles/10.1629/uksg.277/>

Practical management of exceptions

There is varied interpretation of exceptions. There was consensus in the group that exception was perhaps not the right word for some of the items such as gold. This might be considered a category of compliance rather than an exception.

There is concern about storing and sharing explanations given tightening of data protection rules.

Action: Consider a further meet up to discuss exceptions in more detail. **SIG Champion**

Other Requirements Prioritised by Group

Unknown acceptance date – How can we manage outputs where the acceptance date is unknown? Suggestions that a proxy could be used. Alternatively the exception for deposit within three months of publication could be used.

Ensuring records are in our repositories

Action: Consider a workshop to look at efficient management of open access and include discussion around sharing of information about the status of outputs where staff have transferred or where there are multiple authors at different organisations. **SIG Champion**

Audit Requirements

Action once updated guidance on the REF2021 OA audit is available a workshop to share best practice would be useful. **SIG Champion.**