REF Open Access Policy

What is REF and why does it matter to you?

REF (Research Excellence Framework) is a research assessment system conducted by Research England. Its results affect a university’s funding and reputation, and consequently, those of its researchers.

REF 2021 will assess the quality of our research outputs published between 2014 and 2020. If you are - or have been – a research-active member of staff affiliated to De Montfort University within this period, your outputs will be submissible for REF 2021, and many of these will have to meet the requirements of the REF Open Access policy.

Policy basics

The purpose of the REF 2021 Open Access policy is to embed a culture of making research openly available on the internet, with the associated benefits to individual researchers, research generally, the economy and society.

The policy applies to:

• journal articles accepted for publication from 1st April 2016 onwards;
• conference proceedings with an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) accepted for publication from 1st April 2016 onwards.

Authors must deposit their Author Accepted Manuscript (AAM) in an Open Access repository within 3 months of acceptance for publication.

Articles and conference proceedings accepted before 1st April 2016 (and all other types of output) do not need to comply with the policy and can be submitted for REF as previously.

How do I comply with the REF Open Access Policy?

When choosing a journal to publish in, check it allows you to deposit the Author Accepted Manuscript in an institutional repository and that the embargo period doesn’t exceed 12 months (for REF Panel A & B subjects) or 24 months (for REF Panel C & D subjects).

As soon as possible after your publication is accepted, create a record for it in DORA and attach your Author Accepted Manuscript.
Meeting Open Access and

Is the item a final research output?  
Yes  No

Is the output from externally funded research?  
Yes  No

Make sure you meet the Open Access requirements of your funder

Is the output a journal article?  
Yes  No

Have you or a co-author paid to make the article/proceeding ‘Gold’ Open Access on the publisher’s website?  
Yes  No

Upload the Author Accepted Manuscript of your article (or conference proceeding) to DORA within 3 months of acceptance
DORA requirements for REF 2021

Is the output published in conference proceedings with an ISSN?

- Yes: Record the output metadata (descriptive information) on DORA as soon as possible (including the DOI link to the Gold Open Access version if relevant).
- No: N/A

If No, proceed to:

- No: N/A

If Yes, proceed to:

- Yes: Record the output metadata (descriptive information) on DORA as soon as possible (including the DOI link to the Gold Open Access version if relevant).

What is the Author Accepted Manuscript?

This is the version which was accepted for publication by the journal. It includes changes based on peer reviewers’ or referees’ suggestions, but not the publisher’s copyediting, typesetting and proof corrections.

Research England’s diagram (right) indicates the Author Accepted Manuscript’s position in the publication process.

Policy exceptions

Research England have identified exceptions that may apply in a small number of cases. If you think an exception may apply to your publication, please contact openaccess@dmu.ac.uk as soon as possible. Details about the policy exceptions, along with other helpful information on Open Access, can be found at: https://libguides.library.dmu.ac.uk/openaccessresearch

Other outputs

Research outputs other than journal articles and conference proceedings must also be recorded on DORA for DMU’s Research administration purposes. However, these do not have to include the full text version. The flow chart overleaf helps to identify how to record different types of output.

REF Open Access Information, Advice and Training

DMU holds regular training sessions on Open Access and DORA. Search for ‘Open Access’ via the ‘My Development’ tile on DMUhub for details.

For further information on REF Open Access and DORA (including FAQs), go to: https://libguides.library.dmu.ac.uk/openaccessresearch

For advice and help with Open Access or DORA, contact openaccess@dmu.ac.uk