



Open access flags in the REF Assessment module in Symplectic Elements

When you start selecting your outputs in the REF Assessment Module in Symplectic Elements, you will see that your publications have been assigned open access flags in Elements. These flags show whether any open access requirements apply, and whether they have been met. This guide explains what they mean.

Not in OA policy

The REF open access policy does not apply to these outputs.

The REF open access policy applies to research articles and conference proceedings accepted for publication after 1st April 2016. Research articles, conference proceedings accepted for publication before that date, and all other outputs do not have to comply with the REF open access policy. They can be selected for the REF even if a file has not been uploaded to Symplectic Elements.

In Open Access policy

The output needs to comply with the REF open access policy to be selected for the REF.

This flag is accompanied by another one that shows whether the paper complies with the policy:

Compliant

The output can be selected for the REF, because it complies with the REF open access policy.

The manuscript was uploaded within three months of date of acceptance OR date of publication [for papers accepted for publication between 1 April 2016-31 March 2018].

Non-compliant

Unless an exception applies, the output may not be selected for the REF.

This is either because the manuscript hasn't been uploaded to Symplectic Elements or because it was uploaded more than three months after first online publication.

If you have uploaded your manuscript to Symplectic Elements very recently, your publication will show as non-compliant until the Open Access team has processed it. This will be done shortly after the file has been uploaded.

If your publication has a 'non-compliant' flag, please note that 5% of in scope publications can be non-compliant in the College's final REF submission. That means your publication could still be selected, even if it does not meet all the OA policy criteria.

Deposit incomplete

Not deposited

Papers with this flag which only have an OA location can be selected for the REF. Other papers will need action to be taken before they can be selected.

This can be for a number of reasons including:

- the manuscript has not been uploaded to Symplectic Elements
- the date of acceptance has not been entered into Symplectic
- the wrong version of your manuscript has been uploaded
- a non-compliant OA location has been entered in the publication record
- the date of acceptance has not be entered in the publication record

When the Open Access team has applied an exception, you will see one of the following exception flags, and the publication can be selected for the REF:

Deposit3 ✕

The Open Access team can apply this exception to papers submitted for publication when the author was employed by a non-UK HEI institution. **They can be selected for the REF** even if a file has not been uploaded.

If you joined Imperial from a non-UK HEI institution, and this exception applies to your papers but they are not flagged as such, please ask your REF lead to contact the Open Access team.

Deposit6 ✕

The Open Access team applies this exception to papers that have been published on immediate (gold) open access. **The publication can be selected for the REF.**

Deposit7 ✕

The Open Access team applies this exception to papers that have been deposited in Spiral within three months of publication. **The publication can be selected for the REF.**

Access2 ✕

The Open Access Team applies this exception to papers that are published in journals with a self-archiving (green) embargo over that required by the REF OA policy. **The publication can be selected for the REF.**

Access3 ✕

The Open Access Team applies this exception to papers that are published in journals that do not allow self-archiving (green) in a repository. **The publication can be selected for the REF.**

If you have any further questions please contact the Open Access team, openaccess@imperial.ac.uk, or your Faculty REF manager/Department REF lead.

Faculty and Department leads: please contact the Open Access team if you need to request an exception to be applied to one or more publications.