

Introduction to the Draft Release 4 of the COUNTER Code of Practice for e-Resources

October 2011

This Draft Release 4 of the COUNTER Code of Practice for e-Resources has been developed with input from vendors, librarians and intermediaries. This Release is a single, integrated Code of Practice covering journals, databases and books, as well as multimedia content. As such it will supersede both Release 3 of the Code of Practice for Journals and Databases and Release 1 of the Code of Practice for Books and Reference Works. **The Draft Release 4 will be available on the COUNTER website until Friday 20 January 2012 for public comment.** Feedback received will be taken into account by the COUNTER Executive Committee in the preparation of the final, definitive version of Release 4.

Features of Release 4

The main new features in Release 4 are listed below, by Section and **are highlighted in red text** in the Code of Practice document itself:

- An expanded list of Definitions in the Glossary of Terms (**Appendix A**), including terms such as 'gold open access', 'multimedia full content unit', 'record view', 'result click', as well as different categories of 'access denied', etc. that are used for the first time in Release 4
- Enhancements of the SUSHI (**Standardised Usage Statistics Harvesting Initiative**) protocol designed to facilitate its implementation by vendors and its use by librarians (**Section 3**)
- A requirement that Institutional Identifiers, Journal DOI and Book DOI be included in the usage reports, to facilitate not only the management of usage data, but also the linking of usage data to other data relevant to collections of online content. (**Section 4.1**)
- A requirement, in Journal Report 1 and Journal Report 1a, that usage of Gold Open Access articles within journals be reported separately (**Section 4.1.1**)
- An expanded Journal Report 2, which covers more categories of 'access denied', in addition to the 'turnaways' (unsuccessful log-in to an electronic service due to exceeding the simultaneous/concurrent user limit allowed by the licence) covered in earlier Releases. (**Section 4.1.1**)
- Modified Database Reports 1 and 3, in which the previous requirement to report Session counts has been dropped, and a new requirement to report Record Views and Result Clicks has been added (**Section 4.1.2**)
- A requirement, in Book Report 2, that the type of Section covered in the report by a particular vendor be defined (**Section 4.1.3**)
- A new report, Multimedia Report 1, which covers the usage of non-textual multimedia resources, such as audio, video and images, by reporting the number of successful requests for multimedia full content units (**Section 4.1.4**)
- Flexibility in the reporting period that allows customers to specify a date range for their usage reports (**Section 4.3**)

- A description of the relative advantages of logfiles and page tags as the basis for counting online usage (**Section 5**)
- A new protocol to ensure that usage of full-text items that is initiated by automatic or semi-automatic bulk download tools, such as Quosa or Pubget) does not inflate the usage reported in the COUNTER reports (**Section 5**).

Timetable

The Draft Release 4 of the Code of Practice for e-Resources will be available for comment on the COUNTER website (www.projectCounter.org) until Friday 20 January 2012. Comments should be sent by email to the Project Director, Dr Peter T Shepherd, at pshepherd@projectCounter.org

Comments received will be taken into account by the COUNTER Executive Committee in compiling the final version of Release 4, which should be published on the COUNTER website before the end of March 2012, with a view to becoming the definitive version of the Code of Practice, with which vendors must comply, by 31 December 2013.