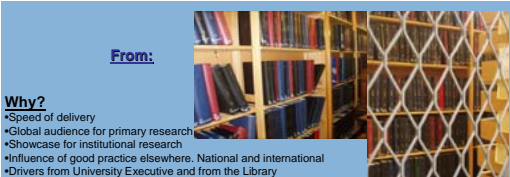


Electronic Theses at the University of St Andrews: Institutional Infrastructure, Policy and Support to Establish an Electronic Theses Service



From:

Why?

- Speed of delivery
- Global audience for primary research
- Showcase for institutional research
- Influence of good practice elsewhere. National and international
- Drivers from University Executive and from the Library

Policy change and timeline

- 2005/6 12 months to go through relevant committees and be approved
- Rewriting of Postgraduate code of practice and regulations
- New thesis declaration (to include new electronic format and latest restrictions)
- 2006/6 Academic session. Deposit began.
- March 2008 Policy revisions, revised deposit procedures and restriction policies and at the same time University policy is expressed: "to support the proper dissemination of publicly funded research and publish online as much as possible"
- June 2008 Number of theses is over 200

Digital Research Repository (DRR)

- DSpace software
- Member of Scottish Digital Library Consortium
- Structure mirrors institutional structure to reflect Schools and Research Centres and Institutes

Process

- Student and Supervisor agree thesis declaration which accompanies submission of thesis for examination
- Requests for restriction are considered by relevant Faculty Business Committees
- On completion of thesis examination process one bound copy of the thesis and one electronic copy on CD is delivered to the Academic Management and Support Office where both copies are received.
- Only after receipt of both versions are copies passed to the Library along with accompanying declaration and FBC documentation with regard to restrictions.
- Library invites postgraduate to register on DRR to upload abstract, provide metadata including keywords and to grant licences
- Library DRR administrators move the deposit through secure workflows in the DRR, do quality control and release full text as appropriate
- Permanent URLS for citation are returned to postgraduates

Contexts

- Parallel process to store published research outputs using a deposit route through the Research Expertise Database (University publications database). Services complement each other and researchers who have deposited theses are now depositing publications.
- Research Assessment
- Access/external access, OAI and search engines
- Ethos. New service which exposes thesis content to users. ETHOS toolkit
- Index to Theses. Transfer of data and links to full text as part of new project and updated interface. Exposes electronic thesis content to another set of users
- Many institutions are following similar policies

Developments/future

- Raise profile on University web pages
- Links from School pages. Lists and current awareness
- More interpretation of usage statistics. Reports to institution. Show impact/citation.
- More retro digitization
- Constant re silencing
- Restrictions handled by DSpace software automatically and less manual administration
- Reconsider file formats, for preservation and for data reuse and manipulation.

Feedback from postgraduates

"I have made expensive trips abroad to view theses and they have not always been useful, so access via the desktop is very good and saves time and money"

"I didn't envisage publishing from my thesis but still wanted to make it available and not hide it away. Electronic submission is an ideal solution for me to make my research available to a wider audience"

Student requests for more support on copyright. Now have plans for set of short courses to be held in individual schools.

Student requests for more branding and more identification of their work with the institution. Made decision to implement standard cover sheets for each thesis, giving copyright statements and quoting the permanent URL and home repository



To:

Contact: Janet Aucok University of St Andrews Library ja@st-andrews.ac.uk

URL: St Andrews Digital Research Repository

Postgraduate students

- Raising their awareness
- Induction, publicly
- Training eg Gradskills
- Need for support/guidelines and strategies to meet their needs

Supervisors

- Raising their awareness
- Increasing their knowledge eg for restrictions/publicity/copyright issues
- Crucial advisory role
- Training of supervisors and current awareness eg supervisor update sessions
- How formal and structured should the advisory role be? Should we timetable and keep a record of supervisor discussions with postgrads in relation to theses issues?

Schools and Research Institutes

- Service provides a centralized source of data re. theses which can be used on School and Research Institute web sites
- Thesis output for a School or RI can be profiled and showcased.
- Training can be provided at School/discipline level and focus

Research Office

- Develop this link to explore reuse of data
- Develop this to explore links between Repository and Research Office and Research Assessment

AMSO (Academic Management and Support Office)

- Receipt print and electronic copy of thesis and sign off paperwork for final submission
- Close communication with library and with postgraduates
- Smooth and seamless transfer of role of main contact with postgraduate student, passed across from AMSO to the Library for next stage of the process
- New procedures and documentation eg letter which details method of submission and is sent to postgraduates after the thesis is examined.

Stakeholders

Pro deans for Postgraduate study

- Close interaction with AMSO
- Current awareness role for supervisors and students
- Coordination of Faculty Business Committees and issuing of restriction letters to postgraduates

Library

- Administer the electronic submission process and the DRR
- Advisory service, central point of support
- A lot of communication with postgraduates and with the other stakeholders
- Quality control
- Do a lot of the technical support for pdf conversion
- Developed workflows
- Developed new library web pages for theses as aid to communication of process and policy
- Coordinate training programmes eg offer 3 Gradskills courses per year. Powerpoint and pdf of training course covers whole procedure and is updated for each delivery of the course
- Developed own skills through training, contact with wider community. Constant learning process
- Problem solving

University Managers

- Benefits of effective service delivery
- Showcase for institutional research
- Prestige

Copyright Officer and FOI Officer

- Strong link between Library and Copyright Officer
- Copyright officer has developed skills and expertise
- Collaboration on training (eg. Gradskills) and new short courses on Electronic theses and copyright
- Collaboration on web pages, proforma request letters
- Crucial communication
- Important for FOI officer to understand exemptions which enable thesis restrictions under FOI legislation and to be prepared for requests



ITS

- Background support for document creation
- Background support for technical advice re. document formats, file conversions and conversion software
- Advice re. secure storage of restricted theses
- Training of postgraduates (though not yet formally linked with thesis training)

IPR and Research and Enterprise Services

- Make contacts here to be informed re. knowledge transfer
- Make contacts here to be informed re. commercial interests

External agencies

- ETHOS
- Index to Theses
- Remote users who are seeking full text theses
- Future postgraduate students
- Researchers (customers from across the world)

Restrictions/embargoes

- New policy for this in 2006 and revised again in March 2008 to clarify and simplify. Reasons are "publication would be commercially damaging to the researcher, or to the supervisor or to the University, or professionally by virtue of precluding future publication, or in breach of law or ethics"
- Restriction is up to 5 years on either print or electronic or both, and can be on part of a thesis. Exceptionally there can be indefinite embargo
- Restrictions have to be applied for in advance. Needs good communication between student and supervisor and training of student/supervisor re. valid reasons for restrictions.
- Have to get this right. Key change was to get procedures revised to enable the sign off for restrictions in AMSO, prior to Library receiving copies of theses.
- Paperwork from AMSO and FBC is passed to the Library
- Workflow management. Red and green coded forms give Stop/Go system. Forms offer detailed steps and check boxes. Second senior member of Library staff signs off all forms for the final archiving step into the DRR as absolute security measure.
- Secure storage
- Permission letters to release full text upon expiry sent to student, supervisor. Ultimate decision is by the Head of School.
- Electronic diary system to manage release

Retro digitization and ETHOS

- Local top ten, heavily used, authors still staff members
- Digitized copies readily available
- External and internal requests
- Permission letters developed and now sent to authors for digitization or supply of electronic copy
- Administration by spreadsheet ie. recording permissions requested from author, notifications to requestors.
- Coordinate with current theses service
- ETHOS. Sent theses for digitization

File formats/Document structure

- Prefer one file
- Prefer PDF (but will accept native file formats too)
- PDF convertor software (handles WORD, LATEX)
- Well formed WORD document to begin with
- Image resolution and file sizes
- Organization of content eg. may be useful to use appendices for illustrations especially if have to exclude some illustrations for copyright reasons
- Check for published articles. Exclude these but encourage separate deposit into research publications collections
- Parity checks by Library staff. Correct file? Electronic same as print? eg. TOC, page numbers, check declaration in electronic copy not showing a signature
- Deal with appendices and data sets, sometimes in different file formats

Metadata

- Fine tuning of metadata (comply with Ethos toolkit)
- Do you have all the fields you need?
- Retain record for print in the Webpac and make links to electronic full text
- Subject classification and indexing, plus added value keywords from postgraduate
- Try to repurpose metadata for dual use in Webpac and Repository

Resourcing/Staffing

c.5ft and c. 20-30% of managers time

Plagiarism

- Reassurance to students. Awareness of tools such as Turnitin

Quality control

Issues

Licences

- Deposit licence. Content, wording ETHOS example licence
- End user licence and use of Creative Commons. Version we recommend is Attribution-Non Commercial-No derivative works 3.0 Unported
- Use of cover sheets to anchor the full text and brand it. Gives reassurance to postgraduates

Preservation/security

- Still to address preservation in detail. Consider PDF(A). Consider retaining native format.
- Security for restricted full text. Store on locked down pc, cd and external hard disk drive (for up to 5yrs)

Copyright

- Asserting students own copyright. Statements in DRR, deposit licence, cover sheets
- Observing other people's rights ie. 3rd party copyright.
- Student's responsibility but offer strong network of support for the postgraduate
- Captioning
- Proforma letters to request permissions from copyright holders
- Training for Copyright officer
- Training from Copyright officer
- New copyright web pages
- New courses for postgraduates specifically on electronic theses and copyright.
- Life skills for postgraduate students/training for supervisors
- Departmental experts eg. Art History teaching staff
- Partnership between Library and Copyright Officer
- Reconstruct the electronic version if necessary to make it legal
- Take down policy



FOI

- Acquire knowledge re. exemptions which allow some theses to be restricted
- Know resources eg. JISC legal
- Contact with local FOI officer

Documentation and administration

- Don't underestimate the amount of this
- Workflow steps in repository
- Email accounts eg for dialogue with students
- Spreadsheets eg for permissions

Publicity/current awareness

- Must constantly provide this.
- Induction and updates
- Factsheets and newsletters. Embed so not to seem "unusual" but "normal"

Training/skills

- Within the institution and for all the stakeholders
- Part of existing postgraduate programmes
- Induction
- Within schools eg Short courses, refreshers, research days
- By external groups eg UKCORR, ETHOS, SHERPA, RSP
- Best practice and colleagues in other institutions

