

## Guidance notes on Research Degree Thesis Deposit and Access

### 1 Thesis deposit

After your thesis has been approved by the examiners, you are required to submit one hardbound paper copy and one electronic copy of your thesis. The printed copy of a successful thesis will be deposited with your School or Institute of study.

The electronic copy will be deposited with the University Library and will normally be made publicly available via the UEA Digital Repository <https://ueaeprints.uea.ac.uk/> An electronic copy of your thesis may also be uploaded to the Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS) run by the British Library <http://ethos.bl.uk> This service offers free access to the full text of over 100,000 UK theses, allowing your research to be made available to the wider scholarly community more easily. The thesis will be free to download, although a person requesting the thesis may opt to pay for a printed or CD/DVD copy.

Your School or Institute will normally make the printed copy of the thesis available for consultation in its library or on request from staff or students (unless you have arranged an embargo on access to the text).

Further information on the process for depositing the electronic copy of your thesis can be found here <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/library/e-theses>

The University encourages open access to research wherever possible. However the University recognises that open access may not be suitable for all theses and that there are instances where it is reasonable for an author to seek to embargo access to their thesis for a specified period of time in order that their interests are not prejudiced or where other factors support such a restriction. An author may also need to redact parts of the thesis on a temporary or permanent basis. If you wish to restrict public access to your thesis or redact material you can request this in Part 6 of the Research Degree Entry Form.

In most cases, a thesis embargo cannot be an open-ended commitment by the University, and requires the continued involvement of the author if it is to be maintained. Therefore once the period of embargo for a thesis has elapsed, the thesis will automatically be made available on open access unless the author specifically requests an extension to the embargo period.

### 2 Options regarding access to your work

You have three options regarding the sharing of your work, which you should discuss with your supervisor well in advance of submission. An embargo will normally apply to the electronic copy of your thesis, but may also apply to the printed version.

To choose which option is most appropriate for you, you need to consider:

- the requirements of any funding you have received (see section 3.1)
- copyright issues, e.g. if your thesis contains third party content (see section 3.2)

- sensitivity and commercial considerations (see section 3.3)
- plans for the future publication of your research (see section 3.4)

Please also see the attached checklist for issues to consider in making your decision.

## 2.1 Immediate open access

Your work can be discovered and downloaded immediately after you submit, and the print copy will be available for consultation within your School or Institute.

This option is recommended wherever possible. You must be sure that your thesis is suitable for immediate open access publishing, and that you comply with funders and/or publishers requirements. It may be appropriate to deposit a redacted version of your thesis for open access, plus your complete full text version which will be restricted (see section 8 below).

## 2.2 Temporary embargo

The regulations for research degrees permit your thesis to be embargoed for up to three years, subject to meeting the terms of your funder or publisher's requirements. This temporary embargo can be requested just to access to the electronic copy of the thesis or to both the printed and electronic versions.

If you need to request an embargo of longer than three years in the first instance, this will require the approval of the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.

An extension to an existing embargo period can be requested by contacting the Postgraduate Research Service. This should be done before the embargo is due to expire.

**Please note that even if an embargo is approved, you must still submit an electronic copy of the final version of your thesis - this will then be stored securely until the end of the embargo period.**

## 2.3 Permanent embargo

In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to embargo the thesis permanently, for example, due to the sensitive nature of the content. A permanent embargo will require the approval of the Academic Director of Research Degree Programmes.

In this instance only a bibliographic record for your thesis will be made available. A permanently embargoed full-text copy will be kept by the Library, but this will not be released without your permission unless subject to legal requirement.

# 3 Issues to consider

## 3.1 Funder requirements

If you have been funded by a Research Council you should check if your funder requires a particular deposit option, as some councils require theses to be made openly accessible online, no later than 12 months after the degree is awarded.

If you have been funded by a commercial or other private funder you should make sure that you comply with their requirements regarding access to the completed thesis. In many cases this would have been agreed at the onset of the project or at the submission of the thesis, where an embargo period for review, e.g. for protecting intellectual property rights, has been agreed.

### 3.2 Third party Copyright

Your thesis may contain material that you do not hold the copyright for, for example, photographs, images, graphs, tables, maps and lengthy quotations from other works. If you have included such material from either a published or unpublished work you will need to have obtained the rights holders' permission to include their content in your thesis.

Third party copyright material can be included for examination purposes (for which the audience is limited to your examiners and supervisory team), but not for open access without permission from the rights holders. Under copyright law, making a thesis available online is considered a form of 'publishing' as it makes the work available to the public. Every attempt should be made, at the earliest opportunity when preparing your thesis, to gain permission in writing from the rights holder to include such material.

Further information and guidance on third party copyright permissions, including what to do if permission is not granted, is available from the Information Services [Copyright web page](#) or by emailing [copyright@uea.ac.uk](mailto:copyright@uea.ac.uk).

### 3.3 Sensitivity and commercial considerations

Your thesis may contain content which makes it advisable to redact sections of your thesis, or which means that open access publication is not appropriate. For example if your thesis contains confidential government information, potentially sensitive commercial material or information that could lead to the identification of individuals or groups.

Careful consideration may also be necessary if your research has resulted in a commercially applicable product, application or service, or in patentable ideas or products.

### 3.4 Possible future publication of your research

There are varying opinions on whether making a thesis open access negatively impacts the ability to publish books or journal articles based on the research. However you can request that access to the full text of a thesis is temporarily restricted if you are concerned that including the text may prevent you from finding a publisher for all or part of your thesis.

## 4 Length of embargo

The embargo period is not normally more than three years, but in exceptional cases, a longer period may be considered. Embargoes may be subject to annual or regular review and in exceptional circumstances may be terminated ahead of time.

## 5 How do I apply for Restricted Access?

You **must** first discuss this with your supervisor.

Your request should be made as part of the Research Degree Entry form which should be submitted alongside the first submission of your thesis.

You must specify the time period for which the restricted access should apply (not normally more than three years from the date of successful completion of your degree) and state the precise reasons for requesting the embargo.

You should mention any relevant supporting documentation e.g. confidentiality agreements between yourself and any third parties whose confidential information you have included in the thesis. It will also assist in assessing the request if you can (if possible) indicate precisely which sections, chapters and/or appendices contain such information.

You should pass the completed Research Degree Entry Form and any supporting documentation to your supervisor for completion of Part 6, who will in turn arrange for this section to be considered by the Head of School (or nominee). The completed Research Degree Entry Form should then be forwarded to the PGR Service who will review it and confirm arrangements with the Library, School and other parties.

## 6 What happens next?

Your request for restricted access will be considered by the Head of School (or nominee). If there are any queries about your request, the Head of School (or nominee) will contact you and your primary supervisor. In some cases, the Head of School may need to seek further advice from the Library.

You will be notified of the outcome of your application for restricted access to your thesis, by e-mail by the PGR Service.

Even if an embargo is applied to your thesis, the details and abstract will still be submitted to the Library's online catalogue, the eTheses Repository, the British Library/ETHOS and other appropriate bibliographies and indexing services. However, the actual text of the thesis will not be made available from any source until the embargo has expired.

If you would like to make any changes after thesis deposit please contact the relevant Postgraduate Research Service team.

## 7 Redaction

You will need to redact (blank out) content from the electronic copy of your thesis if you want to publish it open access and it contains third party content that has not been **copyright cleared** or cannot be defended as **fair dealing**, or **commercially valuable**, **sensitive** or **inflammatory material**.

Please discuss with your supervisor what material may need to be redacted and contact [copyright@uea.ac.uk](mailto:copyright@uea.ac.uk) if you require further guidance about copyright issues.

You still need to deposit the full text version of your thesis as a record. The edited version, with material redacted, will be made publicly available; the full text version will be temporarily or permanently embargoed as appropriate.

## 8 PhD by publication

If your thesis is based on a collection of published works you should check with your publishers whether open access is permissible. You may find it difficult to obtain the necessary permissions, in which case it is recommended that you do not make your thesis open access.

## Checklist when considering an embargo or redaction of thesis material

Note that a thesis may be embargoed (access to the entire thesis restricted for a set period) or redacted, where the bulk of the thesis is made public but certain parts are not made publicly accessible. Embargoes on UEA theses are generally for a maximum of 3 years.

Questions to consider	Yes	No
Have you discussed any need to embargo with your supervisor?		
Did your doctoral research receive any external funding?		
Was your PhD funded/part funded by a commercial company? <i>There may be commercial sensitivity/IP issues around making your thesis public immediately; you should seek further advice. In such cases, an embargo of longer than 3 years may be required.</i>		
Does your funder make any requirements on when your thesis should be publicly accessible? <i>For example, your thesis may need to be publicly accessible within a set period following completion of your degree, or your funder may have stipulated access to the thesis should be restricted as a condition of funding.</i>		
Does your thesis contain any third party material (material which was created by others)?		
Is this material covered by a Creative Commons or other licence that would permit its being re-used in your thesis, subject to conditions (e.g. correct attribution)? <i>In this case an embargo is not required</i>		
Have you requested and received permission from the copyright holder to use the material in a thesis that is made publicly accessible online? <i>In this case an embargo is not required, unless that was a condition of permission being granted.</i>		
Have you requested and received permission from the copyright holder to use the material in a thesis that is made publicly accessible online?  <i>In this case an embargo is not required, unless that was a condition of permission being granted.</i>  <i>If you have not requested permission to use 3<sup>rd</sup> party material in a thesis that is made available online, you should do so, and embargo/redact the thesis until such time as permission is granted.</i>  <i>If you have requested permission to use the material in your thesis but not yet received a response, an embargo may be appropriate as an interim measure. The embargo should be lifted if permission is granted.</i>		

Questions to consider	Yes	No
<p><i>(continued)</i>  <i>If permission is not granted, some sort of embargo or redaction will be required. Note that it may not be necessary to embargo the entire thesis. It may be more appropriate to provide a redacted copy of the thesis, that is a copy where the third party material is removed, with a notice describing what the material was, and if possible, where/how it can be accessed. Note that if permission is not granted, any embargo/redaction would have to cover the full term of the copyright period, which may be longer than 3 years. (A) redacted version(s) should be produced if at all possible.</i></p>		
<p>Does your thesis contain any material that you have included in any research papers that you have written /co-written?</p> <p><i>You will need to check your publishing agreement to make sure you can use the material in your thesis. Most publishers will allow this without you needing to take any further action but some require you to seek permission to do so.</i></p>		
<p>Does your thesis contain any personal data about other people?</p> <p><i>Making this data publicly accessible in a thesis published on-line may be a breach of data protection legislation. You should consider whether it is necessary for such information to be included in the thesis. Access may need to be restricted for more than 3 years.</i></p>		
<p>Are there any known commercialisation opportunities around the work in the thesis, e.g. patents?</p> <p><i>The thesis should be embargoed until these have been explored and (if relevant) the patent awarded. In these circumstances you must speak to your supervisor and the IP team in REN. An embargo of more than 3 years may be required.</i></p>		
<p>Do you have any immediate plans to publish your thesis /part of your thesis in another venue (e.g. book, book chapter)?</p> <p><i>Discuss with your publisher if there are any issues around making your thesis publicly accessible. Please note that different publishers have differing views on whether they will consider publishing a monograph that is based on a thesis that is publicly accessible. Access may need to be restricted until an agreement has been reached with the publisher.</i></p>		
<p>Is there any other sensitive information in the thesis that may require access to be restricted?</p> <p><i>Discuss with your supervisor if there are any issues around making your thesis publicly accessible. An embargo / redaction may be required.</i></p>		