

ETHESIS POLICY

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| Policy | eThesis Policy |
| Organisation | Leeds Beckett University |
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| Developed in consultation with | Library Academic Support Technologies for Learning, including Senior Digital Library Advisor (Copyright) Library Senior Management Group Research and Knowledge Exchange Services Graduate School Manager Head of Legal Services Head of Information Governance Records and Information Governance Manager |
| Owner | Library and Student Services (LSS) |
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| Sensitivity | Public |
| Approved by | Research Degrees Sub-Committee |
| Approved by | Research and Enterprise Committee |
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| External references | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKRI Open Access Policy • Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS) |
| Links to other internal policies / procedures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intellectual Property Policy • Copyright guidance • eThesis guidance • Open Research Policy |
| Version reference | Version 1.05 |
| Version History – summary of changes | <p>V1.00 31/08/2020 Draft version for colleague feedback</p> <p>V1.01 23/10/2020 Draft for wider feedback</p> <p>V1.02 02/03/2021 Draft for RDSC approval</p> <p>V1.03 02/06/2021 Final draft for REC approval</p> <p>V1.04 07/07/2022 Link to library theses pages updated.</p> <p>V1.05 07/11/2023 Revisions and updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Addition of Graduate School under responsibilities (s3) ○ Removal of start date and mention of print thesis within policy (s5.1) ○ Updates to types of Creative Commons licences to be used for deposits and metadata (s5.2) ○ Addition of link to Uni copyright guidance (s5.2 and s5.4) ○ Additional sentence on Freedom of Information Act 2000 (s5.5) ○ Minor amendments to section on Monitoring and Compliance (s6) ○ Deletion of sections on References and Policy Dissemination ○ Addition of section on Further Information and Advice (s7) |

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1. Introduction/Background

This policy outlines the way in which the metadata and full text of a postgraduate research student's thesis will be made publicly available on an open access basis. Further guidance is available on our [support pages](#).

2. Purpose and Scope

The University Academic Regulations and Intellectual Property (IPR) Policy state the requirement for postgraduate research students to submit an electronic copy of their thesis to the University's open access repository. A formal policy and process supports compliance with third party Copyright and Data Protection laws.

The advantages of depositing an electronic thesis (eThesis) in the publicly available University Repository include raising the visibility and reusability of the research and creating a permanent digital archive of the thesis. This aligns with the principles of the University's Open Research Policy. An eThesis is more available, searchable and visible worldwide, including via the British Library's publicly available Electronic Theses Online Service (ETHOS) which harvests eTheses from university repositories.

This policy is limited to Leeds Beckett University postgraduate research theses.

3. Responsibilities and/or Duties

- Library and Student Services Leadership will regularly review the currency of the policy and amend as necessary, subject to University committee approval.
- Graduate School will ensure students are aware of the policy and its applications.
- Students depositing a thesis are required to read this policy and the accompanying guidance before depositing their thesis.
- Students depositing a thesis are required to confirm that they have read and understood University IP and copyright policies.
- Students are required to submit a digital version of their thesis as per University [guidance](#).
- The Library will, upon receipt of a student's thesis, perform readiness checks before making it available and discoverable as soon as possible.

4. Definitions

- **Copyright:** Legal protection to original works once recorded or fixed in some form. In law it is one of a bundle of Intellectual Property Rights and the copyright owner has exclusive rights for the use and distribution of the protected work.
- **Completion:** The final end point of the research degree. It follows the Viva Voce(s) and any subsequent amendments, with no further changes required by the examiners. Following this point, the student is considered 'completed' by the University and can use the title of 'Dr.'
- **Creative / Practice-based outputs:** A collective term for arts-based research outputs that may include, but are not limited to, the following output types: artefact, creative writing, live performance, installation, exhibition, composition, design, digital or visual media.
- **Deposit Agreement:** The set of terms and conditions which a student is required to read and agree to when uploading an eThesis into the University Repository. These address issues around copyright and IP and relating to the distribution and ongoing preservation of their work.

- **Electronic Theses Online Service (EThOS):** The British Library publicly available national database of doctoral theses.
- **eThesis:** An electronic version of a thesis.
- **Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):** The rights protecting the products, results and rewards of the exercise of human intellectual and commercial endeavour, including, but not limited to copyright, database rights, design rights, patents, trademarks, duties of confidentiality.
- **Metadata:** Data about the data; in this case, the data which describes the eThesis. This includes information such as, but not limited to, author, title, keywords, format.
- **Open Access (OA):** OA research outputs are made available online, in a digital format, at no charge to the reader and with limited restrictions on re-use.
- **Postgraduate Research Degree:** A course of study at either research master's or doctoral level, which results in a higher award, such as MRes, MPhil or PhD.
- **Submission:** The point at which the thesis is submitted to the Research and Enterprise office for the first time, before the Viva Voce occurs.
- **University Repository:** The publicly available online collection of Leeds Beckett research outputs.

5. Policy Statements

5.1 Who does this policy apply to?

Candidates currently registered for all postgraduate research degrees are required to make their written thesis electronically available. In addition, creative / practice-based outputs, or appropriate records of those outputs, must be made available.

Students are required to deposit their thesis in electronic form in the University Repository. The Repository will make their thesis electronically available on open access.

5.2 Deposit Agreement

All authors will be required to give permission for the distribution of their work under a [CC BY-NC licence](#), and the ongoing preservation of their work and/or related metadata.

This agreement allows the work of authors to be included in Leeds Beckett University repositories, EThOS, and other services with which the University Repository may establish agreements, but it precludes commercial use of the work. Metadata associated with the record will be shared under a CC BY licence. Students should refer to Leeds Beckett University's [copyright guidance](#), for more information about depositing their work.

5.3 Intellectual Property Rights

The University's Intellectual Property Rights policy provides guidance relating to the IP aspects of this eThesis policy.

In most cases, the author of a thesis owns any copyright in it and has given Leeds Beckett University the right to use such copyright for any administrative, promotional, educational and/or teaching purposes.

The University's IPR policy provides specific information on ownership of Intellectual Property.

5.4 Copyright Clearance and Fair Use

A thesis may contain material for which the copyright is owned by another person (a third-party). The digitisation of a thesis and making it available online involves publication of the work, therefore authors must consult the [University's copyright guidance](#), ensure they comply with UK legislation,

and obtain permission to use the material from rights holders where appropriate. It is the student's responsibility to obtain permission to use material from the rights holder/s and provide evidence of this. Please note that not all third-party material requires permission.

If a thesis contains material where the copyright is held by a third-party, but the author has been unable to obtain permission to make it available online, a copy will still be deposited in the University Repository on restricted access, or with sections redacted where necessary.

Depositing parties should bear in mind that breaches of copyright, data protection and / or IPR constitute legal offences.

5.5 Embargoes and Access Restrictions

In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary for authors to embargo / restrict access to their thesis for a limited period. As per University [Academic Regulations](#), on request, a thesis may be embargoed / restricted if:

- The material is due for publication, or the author is actively seeking to publish this material, or an agreement with a publisher that restricts immediate availability.
- Release of the material would prejudice substantially the commercial interests of any person.
- The material includes information that was obtained under a promise of confidentiality.

Unless access embargoes have been applied, Leeds Beckett eTheses will be made available to institutions and individuals via the web including the University's open access repository and the British Library's EThOS service. Metadata will also be shared with other third-party external systems and their associated automated agents, regardless of whether an embargo has been applied or not.

When an embargo period expires, Library Research Services will make the thesis available on open access.

Notwithstanding the above, anyone can exercise their rights under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the University will follow due process in compliance with the request.

5.6 Notice and Take down policy

If Library Research Services are notified of a potential breach of copyright, or receive a complaint indicating a violation of publishers' rules or other relevant concern, the eThesis involved will be placed under embargo in the Repository as soon as is practical, pending further investigation. This investigation may take some time if it is necessary for the University to seek legal advice to resolve the complaint. If the complaint is upheld, the affected material will remain permanently unavailable.

Once the work is deposited, metadata will be publicly available to any interested parties including automated agents e.g. EThOS. This metadata will always remain visible, although the author retains the right to update the work. Removal of the work, but not the metadata, can be made after discussion with Library Research Services.

5.7 Disclaimer

The University makes no undertakings as to the accuracy of any metadata record, thesis full text, or their conformity with any relevant laws, and accepts no liability for mistakes, omissions, or legal infringements within any thesis record. Use of any information supplied by the thesis archive is at the user's own risk.

6. Monitoring and Compliance

The Graduate School in conjunction with Library Research Services will monitor compliance with the policy by checking that graduated students have submitted their eThesis to the repository.

The University will retain eTheses in the Repository in perpetuity unless takedown is requested.

7. Further Information and Advice

For further information about any aspects of this policy, particularly relating to copyright clearance or eTheses, please contact: theses@leedsbeckett.ac.uk

For information about embargoes for eTheses, please contact the Graduate School: researchstudentadmin@leedsbeckett.ac.uk