

If you digitise them they will come:

creating a discoverable and accessible thesis collection

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Project aim

To increase the discoverability and accessibility of our unique print only thesis collection

What we did

- Digitised our print only thesis collection (over 3,000 + titles)
- Uploaded collection into University Open Access Repository
- Received project funding from the Division of Research to mark the University's 125th anniversary

Technical specifications

- Digitisation of theses outsourced
- OCR PDFs @ 300dpi + metadata
 - 1 thesis = 1 file
 - XML files (+ metadata from LMS)
 - batch upload to Repository

Project outcome

- All theses
- Are discoverable in Repository
 - Restricted status until assessed for open access
 - Available via mediated request

Previously undiscoverable relevant research is accessible

Benefits of a digitised collection

- Preservation of scholarly record
- Thesis content accessible to a wider audience
- Streamlined service for client with increased access eg. 24/7 global access
- Greater discoverability contributes to the University's reputation and ranking

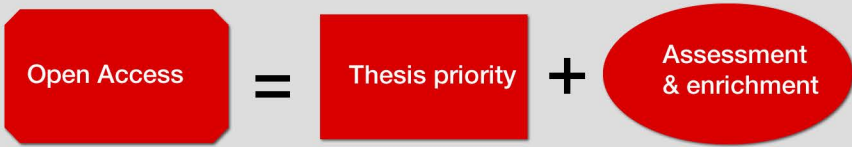
Evidence of use digitised print thesis collection

- Top 10 most downloaded theses
- date from 1978 – 2006
 - contain PhDs and Masters by Research
 - represent disciplines including Education, Law, History, Geography & Engineering

Oldest digitised thesis is from 1923

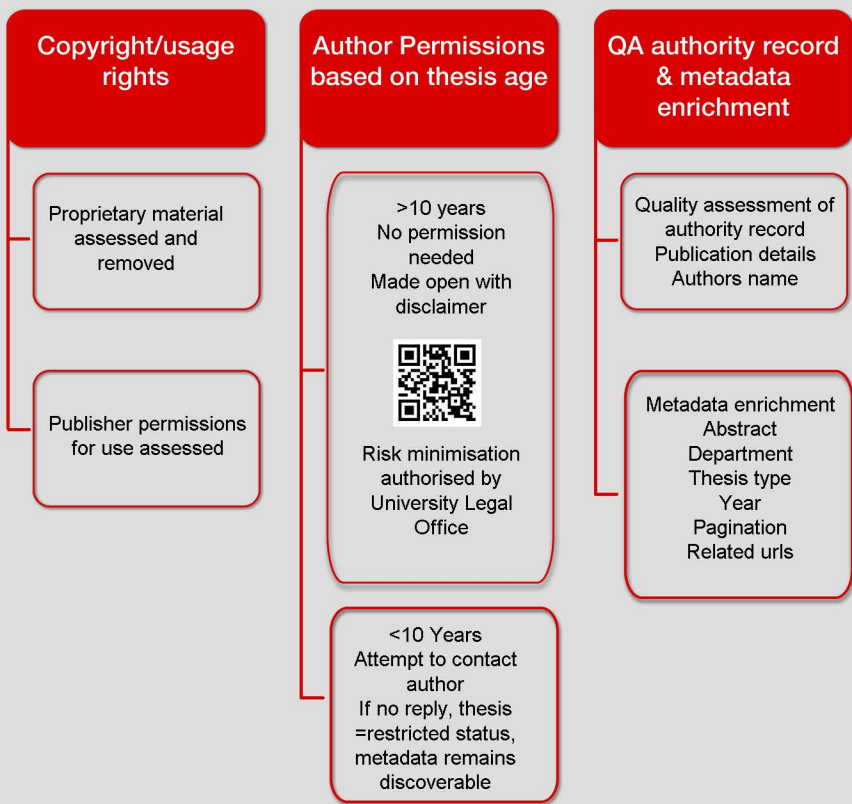


Pathway to Open Access



- Thesis titles to be assessed for open access are prioritised in two concurrent streams
- Client requests, received via Repository
 - List of digitised theses, currently restricted in Repository
 - older than 10 years
 - newer than 10 years

Elements assessed for Open Access



Who is accessing the collection?

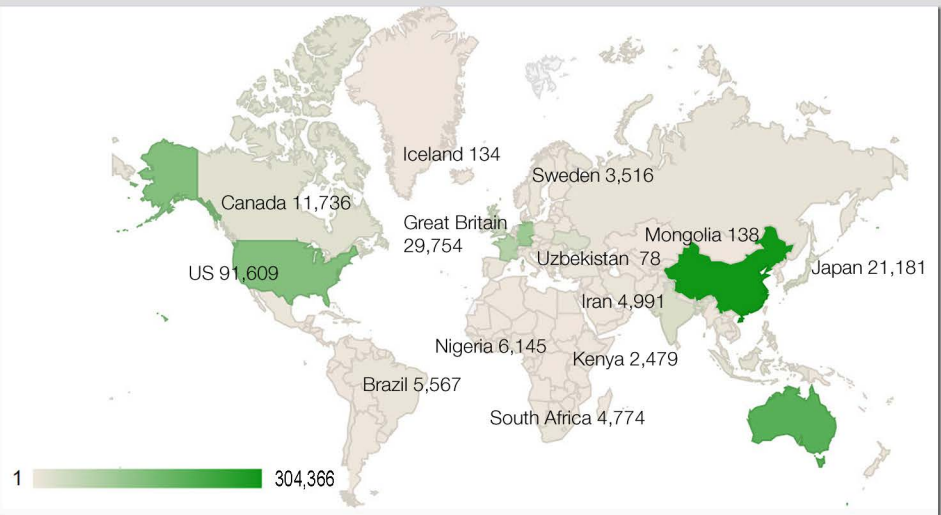


Figure 1: Downloads of complete thesis collection September 2014 – present

International repository rankings

5 of 48 institutional repositories in Australia
124 of 2197 institutional repositories worldwide



What have we learned?

- Older research remains relevant and valuable
- Providing discoverability and access to older research through an institutional repository is a crucial library service