

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

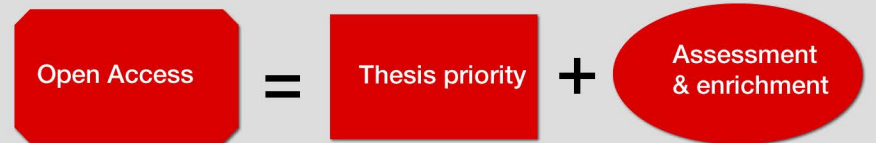
Oldest digitised thesis is from 1923



Downloads of project thesis collection since digitisation September 2014 – present

	Number of downloads	% of downloads
1920s – 1970s	12,337	12%
1980s	16,071	15%
1990s	38,001	35%
2000s	41,024	38%
Total	107,433	

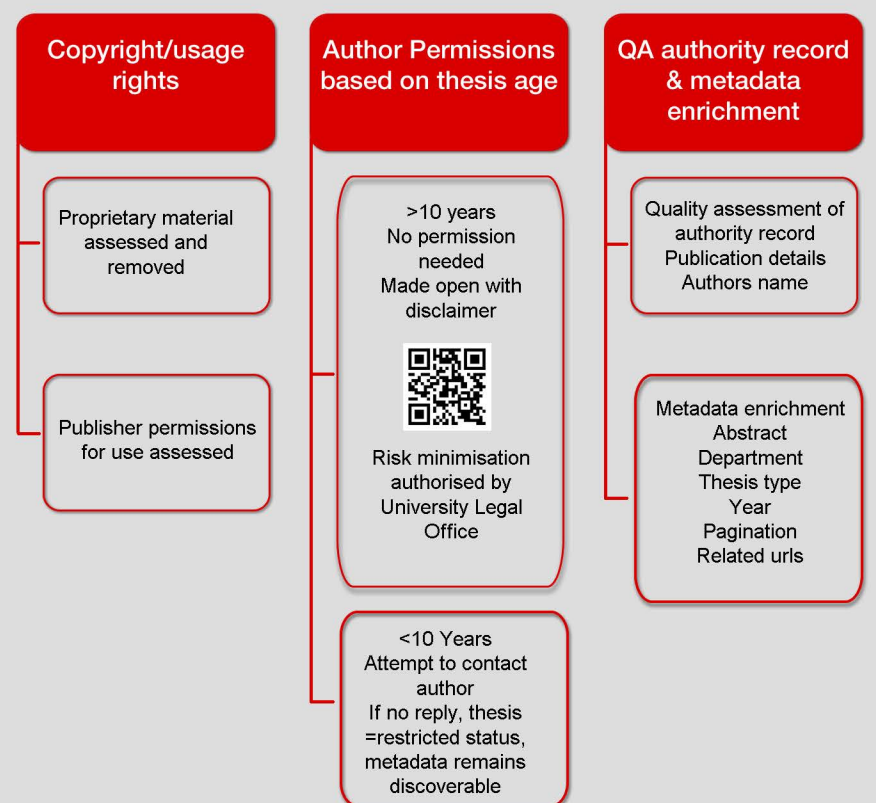
Pathway to Open Access



Thesis titles to be assessed for open access are prioritised in two concurrent streams

1. Client requests, received via Repository
2. List of digitised theses, currently restricted in Repository
 - a. older than 10 years
 - b. newer than 10 years

Elements assessed for Open Access



Who is accessing the collection?

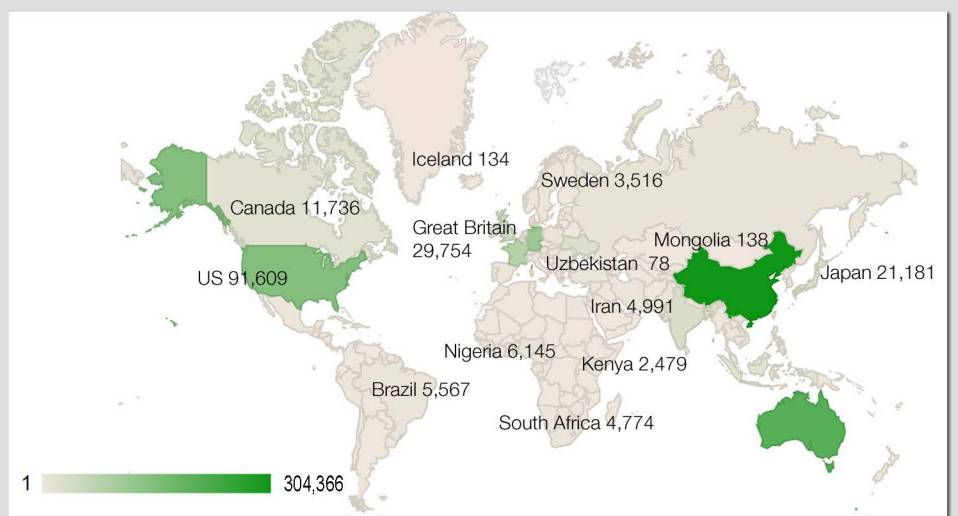


Figure 1: Downloads of complete thesis collection September 2014 – present

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