UC Policy Library

Thesis Availability Policy

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Approval Authority	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Contact Person	Dean of Postgraduate Research – Vice-Chancellor's Office

Introduction

The University requires that the outcomes of its research should generally be publicly available. However it recognises that from time-to-time restrictions on availability may be necessary where intellectual property is at stake, commercial contracts must be honoured, public sensitivity must be protected or cultural or personal privacy must be respected. This document describes the conditions under which theses are made available, and the conditions and procedures by which they may be embargoed.

Definitions

Embargo – a restriction placed on access and availability of a thesis for a defined period of time.

Thesis – for the purposes of this policy, includes dissertations as well as masters and doctoral theses.

Policy Statement

The University endorses the principle that research theses and dissertations are available for public inspection and consultation for research and study purposes, and reasonable quotation may be made from such a thesis or dissertation, provided that proper acknowledgement of its source is made.

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Theses are usually held in electronic (PDF) form[1]. The University Librarian is the University's official custodian of such documents, although academic departments/schools may also hold copies. This policy applies to all copies.

Borrowing and Consultation

A copy or reproduction of the whole or any part of a print or digital copy of a thesis may be made only in accordance with the *Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand Legislation website)* and with the consent in writing of the author (which is normally granted at the time the thesis is submitted).

Access to theses is normally through the electronic copy. However where there is only a print copy available this will be provided for consultation only.

Embargo of Theses

The University recognises that the author of a thesis has a right to request that conditions restricting access to it be imposed in exceptional circumstances. Decisions on embargoes will be made by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (DVC(R and I)).

Exceptional circumstances in which a thesis might be embargoed include:

i. The applicant made a prior agreement with an outside person or body connected with the research that publication should be delayed after completion of the research, and the purpose of the delay is to protect new information of commercial value.

ii. Either the applicant or the University is making, or intends to make, a patent application concerning the subject matter of the research.

iii. The applicant plans to publish all or some of the thesis and believes public access will jeopardise intellectual property rights.

iv. An embargo is necessary to ensure compliance with the law or to protect public safety (e.g. where it refers to issues of national security or contains materials which might be considered offensive).

v. The subject of the thesis is an individual who is still alive or only recently deceased, whose right to privacy or cultural respect is in danger of being infringed.

The maximum period of an embargo shall normally be two years, from the date of receipt of the thesis by the library. An embargoed thesis may not be placed on the web.

Procedures

If a student wishes to embargo a thesis, application must be made to the DVC(R and I) using the appropriate form. The student's primary supervisor or nominee must sign the form before it is submitted. If approved, the form must also be signed by the DVC(R and I).

[1] Prior to 2007 theses were also held in print copy in the library.

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The form must then be enclosed with the copies of the thesis or dissertation deposited in the Library and in any academic department/school.

Related Documents and Information

Legislation

- Copyright Act 1994 (New Zealand Legislation website)

UC Policy Library

- Intellectual Property Policy (PDF, 417KB)

UC Website and Intranet

- Information for Master's Examiners (University Postgraduate Studies website)
- Information for PhD Examiners (University Postgraduate Studies website)
- Information for PhD Oral Examiners (University Postgraduate Studies website)
- Research Work for a Master's or PhD Thesis: Code of Practice for Heads of Department/School, Supervisors and Students (PDF, 279KB)
- Thesis Guide (University Library website)

Document History and Version Control Table			
Version	**Action**	**Approval Authority**	**Action Date**
For document history and versioning prior to 2013 contact ucpolicy@canterbury.ac.nz			
1.00	Converted document onto new template. Pushed document out. Updated hyperlinks	Policy Unit	Sep 2013
2.00	Major review of document – no changes. A/A changed from Chair, Academic Board to DVC(A&I).	Dean of Postgraduate Research	Mar 2014
3.00	Scheduled review by Contact Officer with Postgraduate Committee, minor changes.	Policy Unit	Feb 2015
3.01	A/A updated to reflect appropriate delegations.	Policy Unit	Feb 2015
3.02	Changes made to bring in line with 2016 Delegations Schedule: sign off on embargo changed from Dean of PGR to DVC(R).	Policy Unit	Apr 2016
3.03	Updated A/A title to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)	Policy Unit	Mar 2017

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