

## DataTrain Archaeology Module 5

### E-Theses and Supplementary Digital Data Presentation Notes

Written by Lindsay Lloyd-Smith  
(July 2011)

#### Slide 1 E-Theses and Supplementary Digital Data

##### *Presentation suggestion*

Different universities have different policies on E-Theses. At some universities deposition of a digital copy of the thesis is a mandatory requirement, at others it is voluntary, while at others this is not yet an option.

These slides have been written to be as useful and applicable to as many departments as possible. Please amend the slides and notes to suit the situation in your department.

Even if there is currently no provision for submitting a digital copy of PhD Theses with your university, it is possible for students to deposit their thesis and supplementary data with the Archaeology Data Service.

---

#### Slide 2 Session outline

This session will cover some **really useful stuff to know** as it deals with the final product of your research, namely your thesis.

Doctoral theses are increasingly being made available online. This has important implications in terms of Copyright.

Not only is the possibility to put a digital PDF version of the paper manuscript online – a so-called E-Thesis – but it is possible to disseminate the digital appendices to your thesis online too.

These slides present a general overview of the situation across the UK with regards to these issues and finishes with a short discussion exercise.

---



### Slide 3      **Doctoral E-Theses in the UK**

So that you appreciate the situation across the UK it is important to realise that different universities have different policies regarding e-theses, even, different departments with the same university can have different policies.

Broadly, there are three situations:

- Paper manuscript with no opportunity for submitting e-thesis.
- Paper manuscript with voluntary deposition of e-thesis with university library.
- Mandatory submission of digital e-thesis.

However, even if there is no requirement or possibility to deposit an e-thesis at a particular university, there are national bodies that collect, archive, and make available e-theses:

#### **The British Library *ETHOS*** (Electronic Thesis Online Service)

- Provides searchable gateway to new non-embargoed e-theses from contributing universities, a list of which is available on their website.
- Scans existing paper theses manuscripts on request.

It is highly recommended that you to spend half an hour later today familiarising yourself with the web-site: <http://ethos.bl.uk/>

#### **Archaeology Data Service E-Thesis Project:**

- Accepts text and supplementary digital data for online dissemination.

Website: <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/?category=theses>

---

## **Slide 4          Doctoral Theses and Copyright**

Although a hardcopy paper PhD thesis is an unpublished manuscript and you are not required to obtain permission to use copyright material, for example illustrations, figures, and photographs in the thesis, if a digital version of a PhD thesis is available online, then it is legally regarded as published.

This means that permission to use all third party copyright material in the thesis has to be obtained.

And, it is the author's responsibility to make sure this is done.

For example, even if you are using your own photographs of pieces in a museum collection, permission still has to be obtained from the museum to use the photographs in a publication.

The copyright issue is often mentioned as a reason why students should not be encouraged to deposit a digital thesis - that this task will distract the student from making sure that the research is finished, and it is better to have one less thing to worry about.

The other side of the argument is that writing a PhD thesis is an exercise in producing a piece of academic research to publication standard, and obtaining permission to used copyright material is part of this process.

The bottom line is that putting your e-thesis online should not inhibit the intellectual exercise of a PhD. If you will have a significant amount of copyright material in your thesis there are a number of possibilities:

- Copyright material can be placed in a restricted appendix.
- Copyright material in the paper manuscript can be withdrawn from the online e-thesis version.
- An embargo can be placed on the dissemination of the thesis.

The best advice is to talk about this early on with your supervisor, consult e-theses and copyright guidelines of university libraries and digital repositories.

---

## Slide 5      E-Theses: Why? Why Not?

If the submission of an e-thesis is optional there are a number of reasons for and against putting your PhD online. Obvious reasons why you might want deposit an e-thesis are:

- Make the findings of your research available to all.
- Raise you profile amongst your research community.
- Long-term archiving of your PhD with a persistent internet address (URL).

At the same time, there are valid reasons for not putting your thesis online:

- Publication plans for the thesis.
- The thesis contains sensitive data.
- The thesis contains a significant quantity of copyrighted material.

You need to consider what **publication plans** you have for you thesis and whether these will be hindered by making the thesis available on-line before hand. Some publishers allow on-line release of theses, others not.

Many people publish their PhD either as a series of articles or as a complete monograph or book. Many archaeology theses are published by Archaeopress in the British Archaeological Reports (BAR) series (<http://www.archaeopress.com/>).

However, it is often remarked about UK PhDs that although they are a piece of work of publishable standard, which has been examined and passed by two established academics, this is not the same as actually being published. Often examiners are happy enough to pass a thesis, but provide recommendations for amendments to be made prior to submitting the whole or parts of it for publication.

Another scenario might be where a thesis contains a significant amount of sensitive data. This is not so common in archaeology, as it is say in anthropology, but instances can occur, for example PhD theses on cultural heritage may contain sensitive data.

In all instances where you are dealing with releasing data, permission has to be granted by the relevant authorities, including copyright.

There are several options for theses which include third party copyright material and it often depends on the quantity of material which solution is best:

- Obtain permission to use copyright material. Permission letter templates are available online, for example from the [jisclegal.ac.uk](http://jisclegal.ac.uk) website.
- If only a few items in the thesis are concerned, either leave them out of the thesis or withdraw copyright materials from the digital version. A note is inserted to explain why it was removed.
- If the thesis includes a substantial amount of copyright material and/or permission is difficult to obtain then it may be best not to make the thesis available online.

It is a decision you will come to with your supervisor. There are three usual options:

- Deposit E-Thesis with immediate open-access.
- Deposit E-Thesis with three year embargo on open-access.
- Do not deposit E-Thesis.

The earlier you think about what you will do with your thesis the better. Once you've come to a decision you can work towards that goal and you will not have to work out things retrospectively which can be a lot more time-consuming.

## Slide 6      **Supplementary Digital Data**

The other thing to consider is supplementary data to theses which are often included as appendices. With traditional paper manuscript theses, digital appendices are included on compact discs. We'll consider the pros and cons of this format next.

First, some general comments on why people include digital appendices:

- Usually all the data necessary to support the interpretation is presented with the text of the main thesis. Beyond this, appendices provide a complete and comprehensive data set that supports the interpretation.
- Appendices also provide a space to present supporting and background data to the research as well as related data generated during the research but not included in the analysis.
- Occasionally it is necessary to present material that is an integral part of the thesis but because of its nature can only be viewed in a digital format. This is often the case for 3-D CAD and computer-aided virtual reconstructions.
- For traditional paper manuscripts, a common reason to include appendices in digital format is to save money in printing and binding a second or third volume.

People include supporting, background, and extra data in the appendices because they want to disseminate these data. A lot of time and effort is put into compiling data for a PhD and they want others to make use of it in the future.

A range of archaeological data is often found in digital appendices, including: field and survey notes, written descriptions of sites, artefacts, and soils all often presented as standardized forms, as well as digital images, tabular data including either numerical or coded data.

The formats used in appendices should conform to those suitable for long-term preservation discussed earlier in the File Formats session. The data must be accompanied by necessary technical and contextual documentation and metadata.

---

## **Slide 7      Digital Appendices: Are compact discs a good idea?**

If you are submitting a paper manuscript thesis, is it good practice to include a CD with your thesis?

While the desire to share hard-gained data at the end of project is to be applauded, putting this material on CD with the paper thesis is NOT going to achieve this objective.

CDs are NOT a form of permanent archiving:

- All storage media physically degrade over time and the information becomes unreadable. An age-limit of ten years is often mentioned for CDs.
- Digital storage media change rapidly. Over the last decade we've moved from floppy discs, to CDs, to Flash Drive, to.... It is very likely, in ten years time CD drives will not be standard on laptop computers.

An appendix is data supporting the interpretation. In this sense, although people may think of it as an archive of digital data for access and use by other researchers in the future, the fact that it is a physical entity, kept with the paper thesis, that has to be physically consulted, with a computer, defeats the objective of disseminating the data.

Even if the data placed on the CD are in the recommended archival formats, because of the nature of the CDs themselves it will not survive in the long term.

If you are including digital appendices on CD with the paper manuscript, the key the point to remember is that they are for the benefit of the examiners – not the wider research community now or in the future.

---

## **Slide 8          Supplementary Data: Online options**

If you will have a significant amount of supplementary digital data that are too large to be included in your thesis there are a number of possibilities for disseminating these data online.

### **Research Laboratory / Research Community Websites**

If you have carried out your research as a member of a laboratory or under the auspices of an organisation or institution, for example a museum, it may be possible to host the data on their website.

This has the benefit that the data will be hosted by the appropriate research community and thus is likely to be found by those interested in it. It is unlikely, though, that such organisations can guarantee the long-term preservation of the data.

### **Digital Repositories**

Another option is to archive the data alongside your e-thesis, possibly in the University Digital Repository, if one exists, or with the Archaeology Data Service. You can view and download these from the ADS Archives at:

<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives>

The benefits of depositing your thesis and supplementary alongside each other with a digital repository are that people can check the raw data while reading the thesis, and that the long-term preservation of these data are as secure as possible.

---

## **Slide 9          Exercise 5: E-Theses**

Before we move on to find out the practicalities of how to deposit data in a digital repository, spend five minutes discussing with your neighbour how the issues of putting e-theses online may affect your research project.

---

## Slide 10      Acknowledgements

Module 5      E-Theses and Supplementary Digital Data

Written by Lindsay Lloyd-Smith (2011)

### *Acknowledgments*

This material was created by the JISC-funded DataTrain Project at Cambridge University Library.

Project Manager: Elin Stangeland (Cambridge University Library)

Project advisors: Stuart Jeffrey (Archaeology Data Service), Sian Lazar (Department of Anthropology, Cambridge University), Irene Peano (DataTrain Project Officer: Social Anthropology), Cameron Petrie (Department of Archaeology, Cambridge University), Grant Young (Cambridge University Library), and Anna Collins (DSpace@Cambridge Research Data and Digital Curation Officer).

### *Creative Commons Licence*

The teaching materials are released under Creative Commons licence UK CC BY-NC-SA 2.0: By Attribution, Non-Commercial, Share-Alike. You are free to re-use, adapt, and build-upon the work for educational purposes. The material may not be used for commercial purposes outside of education. If the material is modified and further distributed it must be released under a similar Creative Commons licence

