



# ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global™: University Rights Policies

Protect and Amplify Author Work

## Author Permissions and Community Best Practices

Inclusion of dissertations and theses in the largest editorially-curated body of graduate work in the world offers a multitude of benefits for universities, researchers, and libraries. As some universities face the question of how to handle author permissions when making works available online, some have looked to ProQuest to help them find answers.

### What does it mean to disseminate dissertations and theses digitally?

Dissemination through ProQuest Dissertations & Theses (PQDT) Global is completely compatible with the expectation of sharing within academic culture. In the pre-internet days, dissemination meant making dissertations available on library shelves for anyone to read. Institutional repositories and databases like PQDT Global are doing this same dissemination using 21st Century technology.

### What if authors do not want to be included?

We understand that occasionally there are reasons that authors would not want their full-text made available in PQDT Global. ProQuest adheres to all embargo requests from authors no matter the length of time. If the author requests deletion at any time, ProQuest removes the record from PQDT Global quickly, within 1–2 business days. We suggest that institutions include information on their website about adding dissertations and theses to ProQuest and how emailing ProQuest at [disspub@proquest.com](mailto:disspub@proquest.com) can withdraw the work quickly.

### What if an author raises litigation concerns with the institution regarding the dissemination of their work?

ProQuest stands behind the withdrawal commitment of 1–2 days and guarantees that all intellectual property is handled with respect and responsibility. ProQuest takes full responsibility and formally absolves the institute of any liability associated with our policy and commitment to withdraw work.

### What if authors want to publish their work, will dissemination through ProQuest prohibit them from pursuing future publication opportunities?

ProQuest believes strongly that the author, in conjunction with his/her university advisors, should direct decisions about dissertation dissemination. The reality is that publishers and their editorial boards vary in their views on whether the submission of a dissertation or thesis to ProQuest or an institutional repository constitutes a prior publication that may disqualify the author from submitting a journal article. While the majority of publishers do not find the dissemination of a dissertation or thesis problematic, potential conflicts should be carefully considered and explored. For authors concerned with the prior publication issue, ProQuest offers several embargo options to meet their needs.



To talk to the sales department, contact us at  
**1-800-779-0137** or [sales@proquest.com](mailto:sales@proquest.com).




## Does inclusion in PQDT Global conflict with copyright ownership and university policies?

Authors always retain the copyright to their work, as ProQuest is a non-exclusive publisher. PQDT is frequently used for prior art and patent application research, strengthening your IP protection.

## When making work widely accessible, should authors be concerned that their ideas could be plagiarized or misappropriated?

Making dissertations and theses available in institutional repositories and through databases like PQDT Global discourage acts of plagiarism, since their work is widely available. Dissertations that are available only on a single platform or in paper format are more likely to be plagiarized because the plagiarizer believes that they will not be caught. ProQuest also partners with Turnitin.com, offering authors, institutions, publishers, and other non-academic research entities a means of ensuring the originality of new work and ensuring creators of previously produced work are appropriately acknowledged.

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Over  
**200,000**  
works added  
each year 

 Across  
**100**  
countries

## How does digitization of archived works impact author rights?

ProQuest spoke with several universities who have included their full-text dissertations and theses in PQDT Global to understand how they addressed their internal policies when it came to author rights. Although each project had a unique scope, all the universities successfully enacted similar policies.

*"We had an internal debate about this; our conclusion was simple. The 'contract' of study signed by the student states that a copy of the thesis will be deposited in the library for public consultation. We have never sought the author's permission for people to access a hard-copy thesis; nor did we seek permissions when the British Library requested a thesis to be turned into a microfilm version. Our view is that policy concerns content and not the delivery mechanism. What we're talking about is simply a format shift."*

— Fiona Grieg, Head of Strategy and E-Resources  
University of Surrey, United Kingdom

*"At USC, we did not contact authors. This decision was driven by feasibility. It would not have been possible to determine which authors were still living and, if so, what their addresses or e-mails were. We did not post a general notice. We did add a note to each metadata record. When authors contact us now, we notify them of the University policy which essentially says that in exchange for awarding a degree, the University reserves the limited right to make their work available publicly in whatever manner the University chooses."*

— Wayne Shoaf, Metadata/Digital Librarian, Digital Library  
University of Southern California

*"The library determined it was covered under the initial deposit agreements, which covered UMI or its successor (ProQuest) to have the distribution rights. We include them in the IR because it is viewed as being within the campus environment. If we get a request to remove it, we will take it down. We haven't gotten any requests from authors to take down their work."*

— Paul Royster, Coordinator of the Institutional Repository  
University of Nebraska Lincoln

To find out how to include your dissertations and theses in  
ProQuest Dissertations & Theses contact [disspub@proquest.com](mailto:disspub@proquest.com)



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