

# Before you submit your thesis

You have worked hard on your research project and are ready to submit your thesis. This is an exciting time and a milestone in your research career. As part of the submission process, please give thought to the level of access that should be granted once the thesis is passed by the examiners.

The University seeks to make research freely available. Once your thesis is accepted, it is deposited in the Minerva Access repository, where it will be made open access, in accordance with University policy.

Open access ensures that your research is freely available to researchers around the world, as well as to practitioners, policy makers, and the broader public. It also helps build your academic reputation, profile, and impact.

Access to your thesis will be unrestricted soon after final submission, unless you have opted for a two-year embargo (with justification) or received permission to permanently restrict access.

Open access to your final thesis may not always be the appropriate. Please consider whether open access to your thesis could:

- Impact an application for a patent or intellectual property protection
- Contravene restrictions placed on access, under a research contract or third-party arrangement, or by a prospective publisher of articles from the research
- Result in release of material that must remain confidential due to legal, cultural, ethical or national security concerns.

## WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

After consultation with your advisory panel (who may recommend speaking with the Knowledge and Technology Transfer Team), and with sufficient justification, you may request an embargo or ongoing access restrictions to your final thesis. Your options include:

- External Embargo which limits thesis access to only University staff or students with their login credentials and is suitable for publication embargoes
- Full Embargo which provides additional access restrictions by making the thesis unavailable by any means. This is a suitable option where patenting is being considered, however note that the metadata (author, thesis title, keywords, abstract) will still be displayed publicly unless you also ask for that to be embargoed.
- Partial Redaction: You may simply redact sensitive information
- Exceptional Circumstances: Restricted Access can be applied to sensitive topics and metadata indefinitely, with the approval of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Graduate & International Research).
- Compile sensitive material in an Appendix to which access is restricted

## NEED HELP?

For further information, please see the following resources:

- [When submitting your thesis](#)
- [My thesis in the library](#)



## Case Study

Francois and Sunita are PhD students in the Faculty of Science. Both are preparing to submit their thesis for examination. Francois is interested in exploring the commercial potential of his work and protecting the IP created, but decides to focus on his thesis beforehand. Keen to have it submitted quickly, Francois rushes the process and simply accepts the default option that defines who can access the thesis on the University's Minerva access repository.

Like Francois, Sunita has also prioritized getting her thesis submitted. However, she has already begun to consider commercial applications of her work. While reviewing the thesis submission process directions, she learns that, once published on Minerva, her thesis is publicly accessible. She understands this will compromise future patent protection of the IP and so chooses the option to embargo her thesis for 2 years. The embargo provides ample time to file a patent application which is successful. A license for use of this material is later issued by the University. Sunita shares in the substantial royalties that are received.

Francois is subsequently approached by a multinational company for an exclusive license to use his technology. Unfortunately, he cannot meet the company's conditional requirement for strong patent protection due to premature