Memorandum of Understanding relating to the EThOS E-Theses Online Service

Between

[*Institution*]

and

The British Library

1. Purpose of the MOU

This Memorandum (MOU) provides a framework for co-operation between the British Library and Higher Education institutions relating to the EThOS service.

The purpose of the MOU is to describe in broad outline the responsibilities of the British Library in delivering the EThOS service and to enable both parties to continue to work together towards the shared common aims described below.

EThOS is delivered by the British Library as defined in the *EThOS Core Service* description first made available to all institutions in May 2013 (updated July 2013 & Jan 2017), and in this document and on the EThOS Toolkit. The MOU serves to record the understandings between the institution and the British Library and is not intended to create any legal obligations.

The MOU is also used to record the preferences of institutions – at the time of signing the MOU - in regard to two elements of the service, as indicated in Section 6. These are the harvest and ingest of full text theses and digitisation on demand options.

A full description of the EThOS service and its approach to issues such as metadata requirements, digitisation options and IPR can be found in the EThOS Toolkit where a copy of this MOU and the *EThOS Core Service* document are also available.

2. Shared aims

The British Library and the institution both seek to maximise the visibility, availability and use of the institution's doctoral theses and in doing so increase awareness of the excellent research taking place in the institution and across UK Higher Education. The British Library wishes to support institutions to demonstrate the quality of UK research and help attract students and research investment into UK HE.

As the UK's national e-theses service and with the co-operation of the participating institutions, EThOS aims to meet these objectives by:

- Providing a national aggregated record of all theses, underpinned by high quality, reusable and often unique metadata; and

- Providing access to the full text by directing users to the theses held in institutional repositories, through digitisation on demand, or directly from the digital thesis content held within the EThOS database.

EThOS:
- Aims to provide a comprehensive national record of all doctoral theses awarded by UK Higher Education regardless of their availability, format or where they are held
- Provides a single point of access to the full text of the theses, and drives traffic to institutions' own repositories
- Provides secure storage for the theses it holds to ensure they remain accessible
- Provides high quality metadata to enable researchers to find the thesis they seek, and makes the data available for re-use by participating institutions
- Increases visibility and use of the theses by supplying metadata to third parties and encouraging its re-use
- Offers a repository function for institutions without an open access thesis repository
- Provides a route to access digitised copies of paper theses on demand.

3. Governance and Participation

EThOS is managed and delivered by the British Library.

Although there is no legal requirement to do so, many research funding organisations expect doctoral degree outputs to be made available in an open access repository and the metadata to be discoverable[1]. Repository metadata is generally available for harvest and re-use between organisations in the spirit of open access and co-operation under the OAI-PMH protocol agreement.

The minimum level of 'participation' for an institution is to allow the British Library to hold as comprehensive a record as possible of all of its doctoral theses and display the information in EThOS. Providing access routes to the openly accessible full text theses, digitisation on demand and other EThOS service elements may also be provided to participating institutions, and these are described in full in the *EThOS Core Service* document.

All UK Higher Education institutions that award doctoral degrees are encouraged to participate in EThOS.

4. Service Scope

The scope of the core EThOS service includes:

- Technical interfaces to allow harvesting of metadata from institutional repositories
- Technical interfaces to allow harvest and ingest of e-theses from institutions that permit it
- Technical interfaces to allow download of the metadata and digitised theses for re-use by the awarding institution
- Alternative processes for supplying metadata and full texts to EThOS for institutions not ready for automated harvesting
- Creation or enhancement of EThOS metadata to agreed standards
- Supply of the data to third parties to increase visibility of the theses and support innovative re-use of the data
- System interfaces to allow search and access of theses by a researcher

---

[1] For example, see RCUK Terms & Conditions of Postgraduate Training Grants www.rcuk.ac.uk/research/Pages/grantstcs.aspx. RCUK recommends that institutions follow EThOS metadata guidelines.

- Smooth interface to the British Library's digitisation service to enable users to gain access to non-digital theses
- Secure storage of EThOS-held theses to ensure they remain accessible
- Support for participating institutions in the form of usage reports, information updates and customer service support.

5. Responsibilities

Depending on repository and harvest status, and the digitisation and full-text ingest options selected, not all responsibilities will be applicable to all institutions.

	HEI	BL
5.1 Thesis records	Maintain and display as comprehensive metadata records as possible in the repository or catalogue, including abstract, supervisor, funder information and name identifiers where possible.	Harvest metadata from the institutional repository and make visible to researchers. Include a link to direct users to the thesis held in the institutional repository.
	Make the repository metadata available for sharing via the data transfer OAI-PMH standard.	
	Make information about theses not held in the repository available to EThOS by making catalogue records available or by supplying digital scans of thesis title pages for cataloguing.	Create EThOS records from the information supplied. Seek to acquire missing data from institutions to maintain a full record of UK theses.
5.2 Full text theses	Indicate via the options provided in this MOU if harvest and ingest of full-text content into EThOS is permitted.	Where permission has been given, ingest theses to EThOS using the link provided in OAI metadata harvested from the institution. Do not harvest and ingest the full text theses of any institution that has not given permission via this MOU.
	Ensure metadata contains information about any embargoes or restrictions on access to the full text for all records held in the institutional repository.	Harvest and display records for embargoed theses where available, and include clear accurate embargo information. Do not allow access to a thesis which is embargoed until after the embargo expires.
5.3 Metadata and IPR	Advise authors of their rights and the rights of those whose work or contribution they may wish to use in their thesis.	Ensure that users downloading theses from EThOS can be tracked if necessary in case of misuse of the thesis. Users must accept terms and conditions of access before being allowed to download each thesis.
	Ensure authors understand their rights and the rights of those whose work or contribution they may wish to use in their thesis on submission of the thesis to the Institutional Repository and/or EThOS.	Copyright of the metadata rests with the supplying institution and the British Library. Metadata will be made available to proprietary search engines and resource

	Permit EThOS to share metadata harvested from the institutional repository with other services that will increase visibility of the theses, within the terms of the Repository's own access permissions.	discovery services. Supply of metadata for commercial purposes will be adjudged on a case by case basis. Metadata from EThOS may be included in some British Library and other products which generate revenue with the aim of making theses more visible.
	On receipt of information of a notice to take down a thesis from EThOS, take appropriate action to verify the identity of the claimant as author of the thesis or as owning rights to the thesis.	Operation of a standard British Library notice and take-down policy[2]. Take down the thesis on validation of requester by the institution within 1 working day.
5.4 Re-use of EThOS content by institutions	The institution may download metadata and e-born or digitised theses originating from their own institution from EThOS and load them to their own institutional repository.	Provide a harvesting client or other mechanism whereby institutions can re-use metadata from EThOS and add digitised theses awarded by the institution to their own repository.
5.5 Storage and Access		Maintain and store e-theses so that they are available for immediate download; ensure sufficient size of storage to satisfy the expected volume of supply. Hold the e-theses on secure servers and back up systems regularly to maintain their availability. Develop a strategy for the long-term preservation of the theses held in EThOS, and work with HE stakeholders to develop a preservation solution beyond EThOS for all UK theses where required.
5.6 Thesis digitisation	Select a digitisation option by indicating a choice in the MOU, or by contacting the British Library at any time.	Digitise the thesis as quickly as possible and to a high standard. Ensure that only authorised staff can load a thesis by means of secure ID and password.
	On receipt of a digitisation order: Ensure the thesis is not under embargo and take responsibility that all necessary permissions have been granted and copyright cleared. If an e-copy is already available, inform the British Library as soon as possible, and supply the thesis via FTP, email or CD-ROM. If it is available for retrieval from the repository, inform the British Library. Send the paper thesis as quickly as possible, or in case it is unavailable reply to the order email as soon as possible.	Respect the condition of the thesis throughout the process, and ensure safe return to the institution on completion of digitisation. If notified by the institution that a digital copy is available from the repository, update the EThOS record with a link and inform the user. When a thesis is unavailable for digitisation, update the EThOS record to reflect this.
5.7 Customer and Institution Support		Provide Customer Service support for institutions and users of EThOS.

---

[2] http://www.bl.uk/aboutus/terms/notice/index.html

		Communicate any changes to the EThOS service to all institutions.

6. Participation options

All elements of the EThOS service are consistently offered and delivered to all institutions, apart from the two service elements described below for which institutions should indicate their preferred option.

6.1. Harvest and ingest of full-text theses

EThOS harvests all thesis metadata from all institutions wherever this is made available via the OAI-PMH data sharing standard. Institutions should indicate here whether EThOS should also harvest and ingest the full text theses. An explanation of the options and benefits of having full text theses held in EThOS is provided in the *EThOS Core Service* document, as well as in the accompanying FAQ to this MOU.

On behalf of *INSTITUTION*, I wish to select the following full text harvest and ingest option:

Option	Summary	Please tick one
Harvest & ingest full text theses and metadata (FT1)	The preferred EThOS policy. Theses are accessible via links to your repository and via download from EThOS. Theses will be stored on secure servers and backed up regularly to ensure they remain accessible. Theses added to EThOS via other means e.g. digitisation on demand, will also be stored and backed up securely, and made available for download from EThOS.	☐
Harvest & ingest metadata only (FT2)	Theses are accessible only via links to your repository. Theses are not ingested into EThOS from the university and no backup copies are held. Theses added to EThOS via other means e.g. digitisation on demand, will be added to EThOS, stored securely and made available for download from EThOS.	☐

6.2. Digitisation on demand

Institutions are required to select a digitisation option so that your records display the correct digitisation information for users. Current settings will remain in place with no interruption to the service unless this MOU indicates otherwise. The institution may also contact the British Library to change its digitisation option at any time.

On behalf of *INSTITUTION*, I wish to select the following digitisation option:

Option	Summary	Please tick one
Digitisation option 1 ("Institution pays")	Users may order a digital copy of a paper thesis. Institution funds the cost of the digitisation, and holds a deposit or billing account with the BL for the purpose. Accounts are arranged separately outside of this MOU.	☐
Digitisation option 2 ("User pays")	Users may order a digital copy of a paper thesis. Institution passes the cost on to the user – the user ordering the copy must pay the digitisation fee.	☐

Digitisation option 3 ("No digitisation orders")	Institution does not support digitisation of its theses via EThOS. Users cannot order digital copies of the theses and are simply advised to approach the institution itself to find out how to view the item.	☐

7. Status of the MOU

This MOU supersedes any MOU or Membership Agreement signed between the Higher Education institution and the British Library relating to earlier EThOS participation arrangements.

The MOU remains valid until or unless the British Library updates the MOU for all institutions or an institution informs the British Library that they wish to terminate it. In any case, the British Library will review the MOU in co-operation with participating institutions after a three year period to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

The MOU was established in August 2013 and reviewed after three years in January 2017. Changes made, and the continuing purpose and function of the MOU, were approved by the EThOS Advisory Board at that time.

_____

Accepted by the British Library   Accepted by the Higher Education institution

Signature: _____   Signature: _____

Name: _____   Name: _____

Position: _____   Position: _____

Date: _____   Date: _____