Preparing Your Thesis for submission to SOAS Library and SOAS Research Online: Requirements and Options

Requirements	- SOAS doctoral researchers are required by the School's regulations to submit both a bound printed and digital copy of their thesis for deposit in SOAS Library - The Library will create a searchable record of ALL PhD theses awarded by the School in the SOAS Library Catalogue - Printed copies of PhD theses are available for consultation by the public in the Special Collections Reading Room - Doctoral researchers select options for making their thesis available Open Access in SOAS Research Online - Candidates starting **before** 2016 can select immediate Open Access, Open Access after 3 years or a permanent restriction of the digital version via their Electronic Thesis Agreement Form - Candidates starting **after** 2016 are required to make their PhD thesis Open Access either immediately or after 3 years. This is selected via their Electronic Thesis Agreement Form - Candidates funded by the RCUK must make their thesis Open Access no later than 12 months after award. This can be selected via a dedicated RCUK Thesis Electronic Agreement Form. See our full guidance of the RCUK requirements for Open Access - Doctoral researchers must provide one digital copy of their thesis which is exactly the same as their awarded thesis. - In addition doctoral researchers can provide a second digital copy with some elements removed for deposit in SOAS Research Online (see further guidance below) - There may be exceptional circumstances when it is necessary that your thesis cannot be made available either in SOAS Library or online via SOAS Research Online (see below on Requesting a Full Embargo)
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Handling Personal Data in Your Thesis	● All personal data must be handled in line with data protection legislation for final submission to both SOAS Library and SOAS Research Online
	● The SOAS Code of Practice for Use of Personal Data is an essential document for anybody working with personal data in their research
	● Our Research Data Management webpages give practical advice about collecting and storing personal data you use in your research
	● You should consider issues around personal data as early as possible in your project with advice from your supervisor
	● Personal data which identifies living individual can only be used in your PhD thesis only when you have documented informed consent from your research participants to do so.
	● Wherever possible you should:
	  ○ avoid including personal data in your thesis
	  ○ consider whether you can make your arguments using anonymised data
	  ○ obtain and document informed consent from your research participants if you do need to include personal data in your thesis
	● Unless you have specific consent from your research participants, and you are confident that disclosing their identity won't cause them any harm, you will need to anonymize your data before submitting your thesis to the Library, SOAS Research Online and when publishing.
	● You will need to select an appropriate method of anonymization for your project and your research participants in consultation with your supervisor and in accordance with disciplinary norms
	● Anonymization involves removing, replacing or reducing the precision of information which might lead to a person being identified e.g. names, age, addresses, pictures, occupation
	● Pseudonymization can be used to replace information which could disclose somebody's identity e.g. Shanghai could become 'Major Chinese metropolitan' area or Helen could become 'Elizabeth'. You could replace a name with a code.
	● You may reduce the specificity of information e.g. giving year of birth and not date or birth or changing age 34 to 'under 50'
	● Techniques include the use of pseudonyms, replacement terms, codes, vaguer descriptions e.g. year of birth not date of birth
	● When you have changed original information you should include the replacement term in [square brackets]
	● Keep an anonymization log to record what you have anonymized
	● Be aware that if your research is undertaken in a small community it may

	still be possible to identify an individual after anonymisation. Or simply using pseudonyms could also lead to identification and therefore the data must still be considered personal data ● Refer to the [The UK Data Archive's advice on Anonymization](#) and the [UK Anonymization Network Decision Making Framework](#) is also a good document to read. ● Keep an anonymization log to record what you have anonymized ● If you are asked by your supervisor or examiners to provide additional raw data for the purposes of your examination or viva you should keep this in a separate document to your final submitted thesis if it is not necessary to include it in your PhD thesis ● if you cannot fully anonymise the personal data and do not have permission from research participants to include their personal data you will need to seek advice about placing a full embargo on your thesis
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	time e.g. 10 or 30 years ○ disallow the request and refer doctoral researchers to the usual thesis submission process ○ recommend that parts of the thesis e.g. the chapter which contains sensitive material is redacted but the rest of the thesis is made available in the Library and SOAS Research Online ● Decisions on your embargo request will be recorded on your Embargo request form and passed back to the Doctoral School and yourself ● You should retain the copy of the form so you can quote the Embargo Reference number when you make the final submission of your PhD thesis ● Please note that even if an embargo has been approved, you must still submit a printed and digital copy of the final version of your thesis, both of which will be stored securely until the restriction period ends
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