Identifiers for PhD theses and research students
How can we make it happen?

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BRITISH LIBRARY

Aims

By their very nature PhD theses break new ground and advance research. They are often the first scholarly output produced by early researchers, and it makes sense to embrace new initiatives like identifiers right at the beginning of the research process.

Unlocking Thesis Data[5]

Applying Digital Object Identifiers (DOI) to all theses and encouraging doctoral students to hold an ORCID iD will:

- Provide easily citeable theses and data
- Grow usage, and support metrics & altmetrics
- Embed good data management practice early on
- Help track career paths and impact of funding

In 2015, the Unlocking Thesis Data project took a snapshot of progress in the application of thesis DOIs and student ORCID iDs across the UK, and recommended some actions for institutions, repository systems, and the British Library's EThOS service.
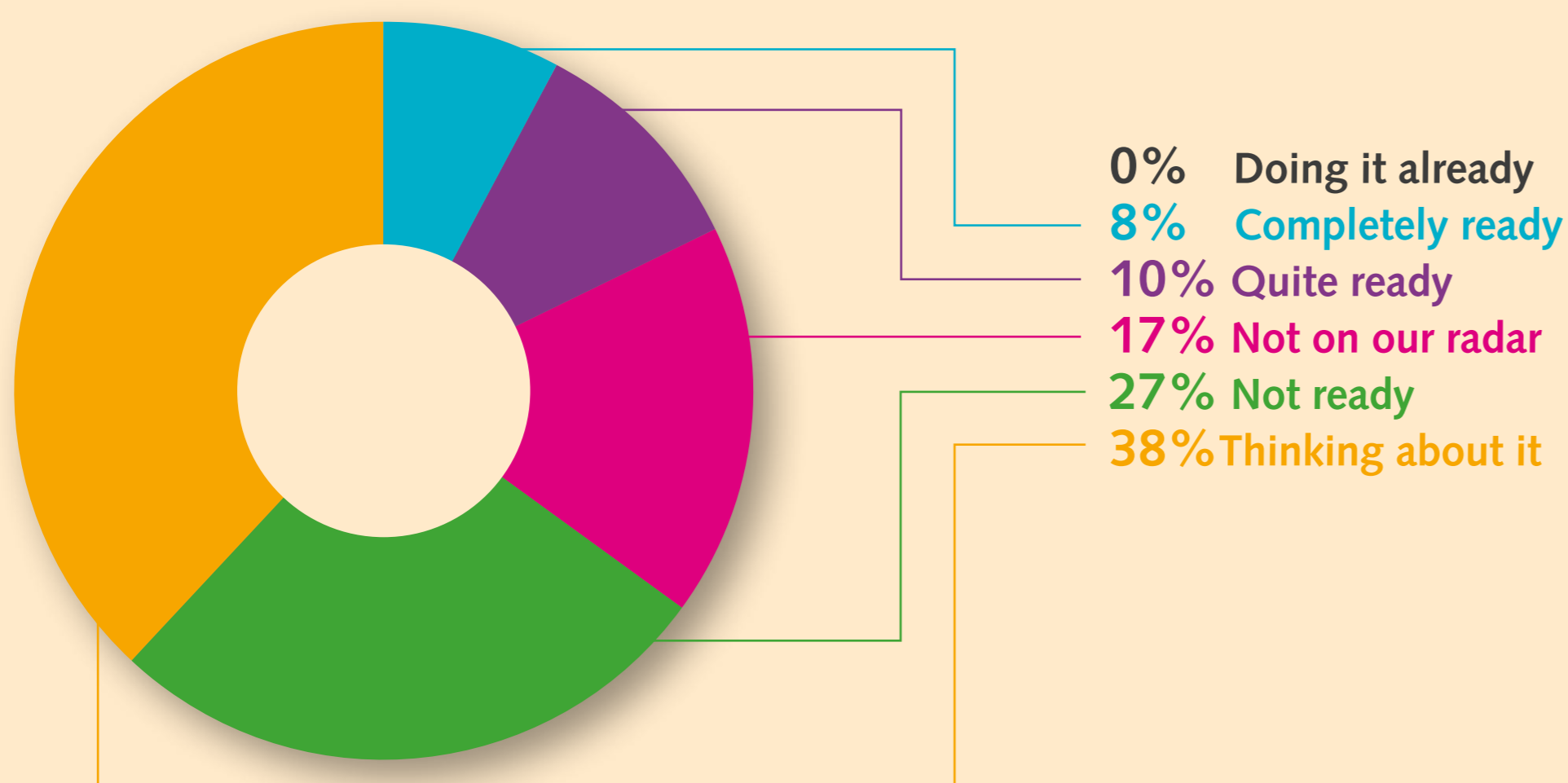
UNIVERSITY OF Southampton

Case Study

In 2015, the University of Southampton was already minting DOIs for its datasets through DataCite, but not for theses, even though all outputs were held in the same repository, ePrints Soton. Now, there is an approved DOI allocation policy, which for theses will be to issue separate DOIs for the main PhD document and substantive underpinning data.

ORCID promotion is now embedded in research student training. ORCID management is moving from an in-house system to Pure, and registration will be embedded in Doctoral College practice.

The Pure system will be used to handle theses once it is live. And all new theses will be given a DOI, once this functionality has been developed and implemented in the ePrints Soton-Pure connector.

In 2015, we asked:
"How ready are you to assign DOIs for your theses?"

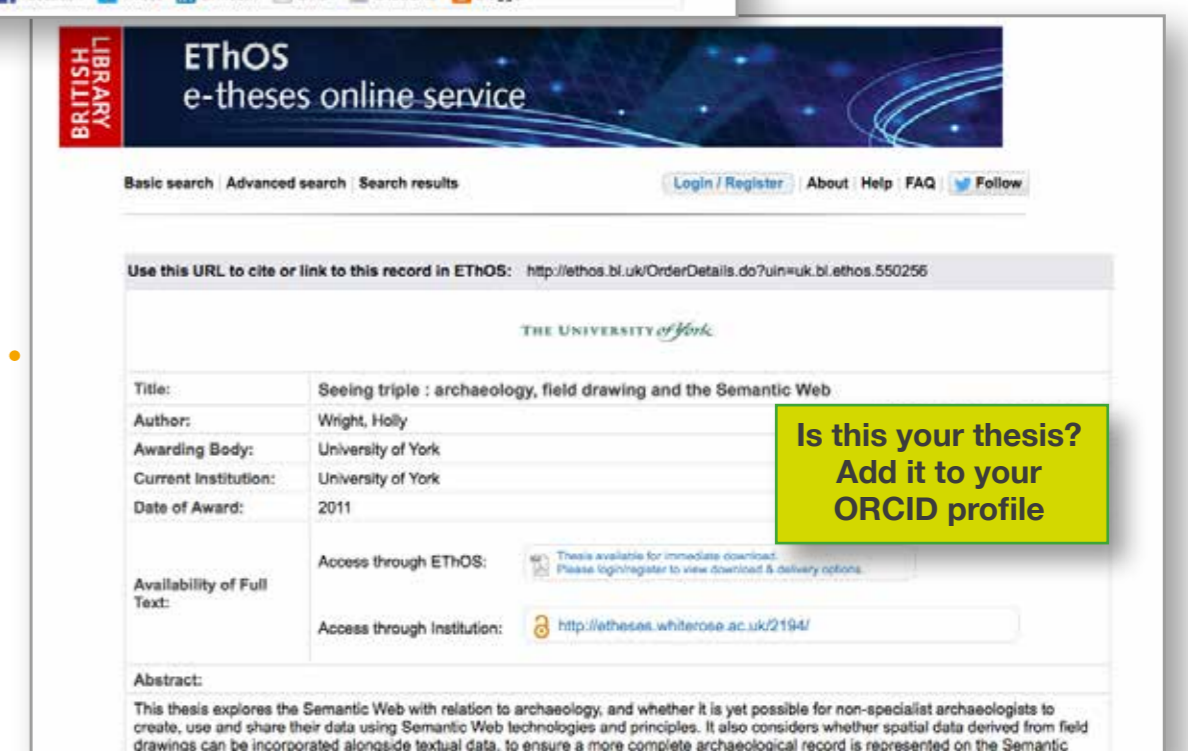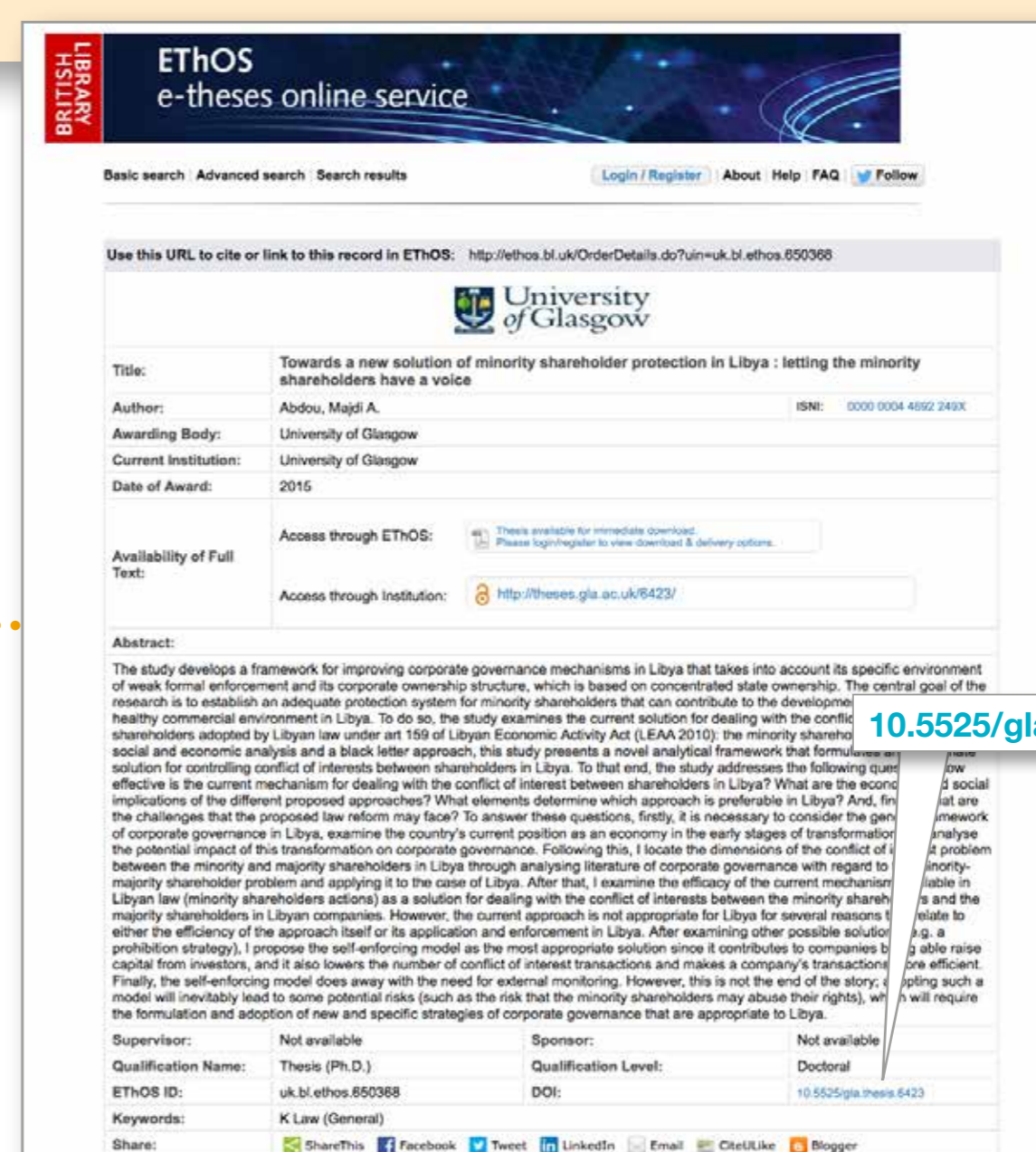| %	
0%	Doing it already
8%	Completely ready
10%	Quite ready
17%	Not on our radar
27%	Not ready
38%	Thinking about it

By July 2016, there is progress:

- London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine has an EPrints repository, and now assigns DOIs to all theses

- University of Cambridge upgraded to DSpace V5, and has started to mint DOIs for its theses

- University of Southampton has a policy for DOI allocation, and will launch thesis DOIs when they move to Pure

- University of Bath adds DOIs to their datasets – and can link those outputs to their theses

- Many HEIs have joined DataCite to begin creating thesis DOIs

- University of the Arts London, LSE and many more are planning to do so soon!

What about EThOS?

- The uketd_dc metadata schema has been extended to include author and thesis identifiers
- There are now 63 thesis authors in EThOS with an ORCID iD
- We ran 'live' experimental minting of 3 DOIs and added them to EThOS
- We need to update our plug-ins to be able to harvest the new data from repositories
- And we're planning an ORCID claim button with the help of the EU-funded THOR project[6]

10.5525/gla.thesis.6423

Recommendations for institutions

- Mint DOIs for your theses!
- Share your experiences
- Encourage your PhD students to register for an ORCID iD
- Check your OAI-PMH export and map your identifier data to the export fields
- Let EThOS know when you start adding thesis DOIs and student ORCID iDs to your data
- Agitate for enhancements to your repository systems

Is this your thesis? Add it to your ORCID profile

In collaboration with

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