

The Establishment of an ETD at Azerbaijan @Khazar University



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Introduction

Institutional repositories provide universities in developing countries with a good avenue to disseminate their intellectual output to the outside world. The OA movement has not yet permeated the academic research environment. Azerbaijani University libraries have not begun to practice or promote institutional repository or are at a very early stage of it. There is yet one open access institutional repository in Azerbaijan.

We present a case study of repository development at the Khazar University (one of the leading academic universities in Azerbaijan) order to discuss key issues faced. One of the main goals of this repository is to harvest theses on all levels - bachelors' and masters' papers, PhD dissertations.

First ETD Initiative in Azerbaijan - Khazar University Institutional Repository:

Khazar University institutional repository (KUIR) is the first electronic archive in Azerbaijan was implemented at the end of 2008. KUIR is suite of services offered by the Khazar University Library information Center (KULIC), in support of the university's researchers.

Strategic Direction

One motive of building the IR is to support the strategic goal of enhancing knowledge management in the campus. As proposed in the Khazar University Strategic Plan (2009-2010), in these years the University will strive to accelerate access to digital resources by streamlining internal processes and improve the gateways to scholarly resources.

One way to realize the goal is to effectively capture, preserve and disseminate the scholarly outputs of the Khazar University.

Building an institutional repository brings other benefits, such as institutional repositories enable campuses to create an always-available, shared space to support learning and collaboration intra- and inter-institutionally.

Current Collections in IR

- Outstanding Academic Papers
- Periodicals (Journal of Azerbaijani Studies, Khazar Journal of Mathematics, Khazar View, Journal of Archaeology)
- Theses on all levels – bachelors' and masters' papers, PhD dissertations.

E-Thesis in KUIR

Concrete needs to look for a modern platform

The ETD movement has not yet taken root in the Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, activity in the field has been growing steadily over the last year.

One reason why the Azerbaijan has perhaps not moved faster into the world of ETDs is because of this centralised model. Many universities have become used to a procedure involving the despatch of their theses to the National Library, and have considered the management of their theses an issue for the National Library rather than for themselves, shelving their own local copies of theses in closed access stack, and fetching copies out when requested for use on-campus.

The existing theses collection is built around the traditional print collection. There are some concrete needs to look for a modern platform for submitting the E-theses. A good E-theses collection is part of the research strength of the institution. It should be made more accessible to the users. Its design and interface should be in line with other digital collections.

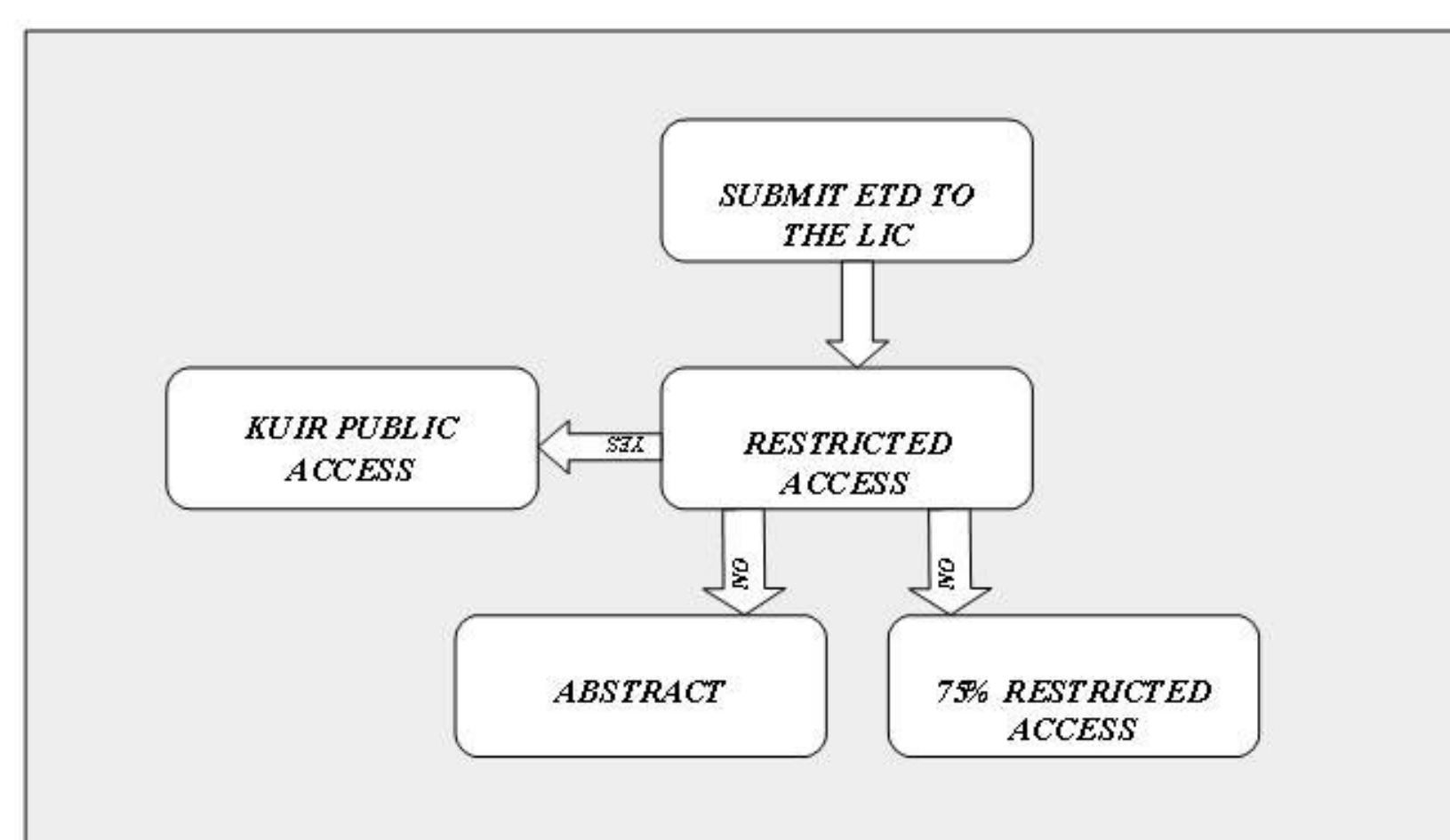
ETD Policy

KULIC has created ETD archiving policies. Our goal was to align the commitment and the resources to maintain these online information resources over time. KULIC stores and preserves Khazar University's theses and dissertations in all formats. The University Archives, a unit within the department, has traditionally archived these works received in paper and bound. It is now appropriate to document our parallel standards, policies and procedures for electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs).

Each academic department determines the quality of the work of its students, while the individual thesis/dissertation committees approve the student's work on its own merits. Khazar University Schools primarily oversees mechanical considerations, the purpose of which is to provide a degree of uniformity, to assure that each thesis or dissertation is in a form suitable for reading and/or viewing online and that it can be preserved.

With digital materials we can give access and simultaneously prolong the life of the work. This is not possible with other, non-digital media. We can ensure the durability of the present through stability of the means of mediation.

Access Policy Workflow



E-theses collection into KUIR

KU LIC chose to create E-theses collection into KUIR for the following reasons.

- DSpace IR is OAI-PMH compliant.
- By publicizing the theses in the Internet, more authors of the past, present and future would be likely to grant the access rights to digitize and distribute their theses.
- Long term preservation.
- Grouping theses together with other student works under IR enables a one-stop search for all quality student and staff works. This provides a unified platform to showcase the academic achievements of KU communities.

Hierarchy Of E-theses Collections In KUIR

The E-theses in DSpace are organized in a hierarchy of community, sub-communities and collections. The top community is Electronic Theses and Dissertations. Under the top community, there are sub-communities created for departments. Under each sub-community, there are collections created for degrees (Ph.D., M.Phil., M.A., M.Sc. etc)

ETD e-submission

- Innovative process for Khazar University
 - We plan to establish new procedure for the academic-scientific community regarding ETDs, e-submission and self-archiving
- we are still waiting for the community's reaction...

Future steps for e-submission

–Web-based e-submission form will be including online help in Azeri and English

Access Rights

As most existing theses were submitted before the electronic submission requirements issued in 2008, due to unclear access right policies in the past, a number of theses can not be opened for academic exchange or for the public. To obtain permission from authors, in 2009 the LIC will send letters to alumni to ask for approval. By providing a publishing platform in IR, it is likely that more authors will agree to grant rights to digitize and distribute their theses.

Conclusion

The Library is in the process of migrating the E-theses collection from the old print version and new electronic interface to the KUIR developed in DSpace. There are many advantages of relocating E-theses from traditional collection to the new home. Records can be harvested by Internet engines easily via OAI. Research outputs of students and staff will be more visible. Searching and display of records are enhanced. Authors of the old theses will be likely to grant access rights to the Library once their theses are published in a more visible platform. All quality student works can be searched in a single platform. Lastly, by adding E-theses into IR, it provides a boost to the content of IR. The increased usage and collections will help to promote IR to other academic communities of the Khazar University.