But Wait! There's more!

Using your eprint repository to advance multiple institutional objectives while protecting (and advancing) your open access objectives

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Abstract

Now that an increasing number of researchers are depositing copies of their publications in their institutional repository, 'function creep' is almost inevitable. In recent years, it has become obvious to researchers, university administrators and even governments that these repositories could be used to fulfil other functions and to advance objectives other than open access. On the whole, this is a good thing as it is much easier to make a business case for a multi-functional institutional repository. A repository that addresses multiple needs and is integrated into the academic workspace at various points is also more likely to achieve a high uptake level – reaching beyond the enthusiastic 'early adopters'. However, if care is not taken, there is a danger that the open access agenda could get swamped or even lost. This poster will examine the various ways in which the eprint repository at Queensland University of Technology is Brisbane (Australia) is being used and the strategies in place to not only protect, but to advance, the open access agenda along the way.

Strategy for embedding the eprint repository into the research culture at QUT

Since the launch of QUT ePrints, Library staff kept a look out for opportunities where the institutional repository (QUT ePrints) offered a potential solution to an *existing problem*.

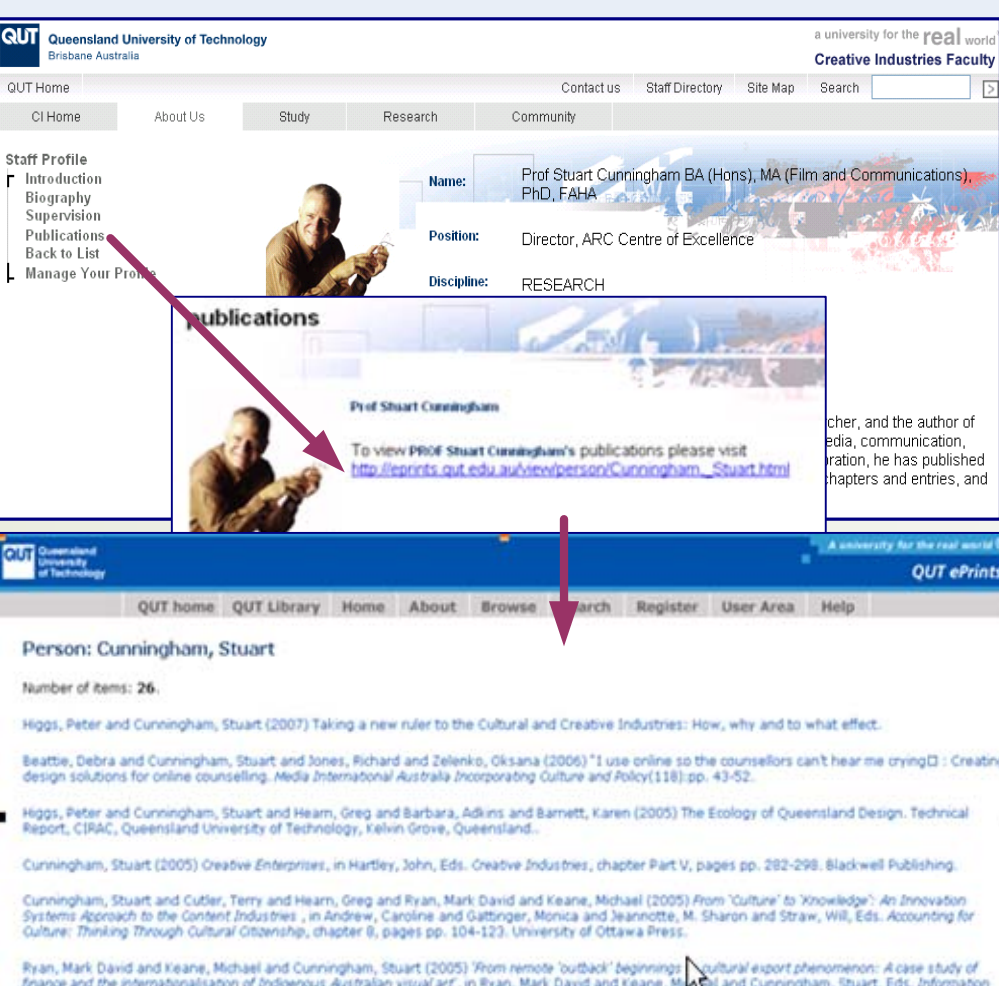## Problem: Out-of-date publication lists on staff profile pages

For many years, all QUT staff members have had web-based staff profile pages which provide contact details, biographical information and lists of publications. Generally, these pages were created by computing systems officers or administrative staff rather than the researchers themselves. The publication lists provided no options for accessing the full-text and were often out of date as the researcher could not add new publications until the next time the pages were updated.

Strategy: Suggest that publication lists on staff profile pages are replaced with a link to QUT ePrints

The Repository Coordinator contacted the Computing Systems Officers from the Creative Industries Faculty and suggested that it would be more effective if the "Publications" link on their staff profile pages linked to the researcher's eprint page (instead of displaying a static list of publications). This would mean that the researchers would be able to keep their publication lists up to date by simply depositing each new publication in the eprint repository. This was less work for the Faculty CSO team. They were persuaded by the arguments and took the proposal to the Faculty Research Committee who subsequently approved *the removal of all publication lists from Faculty staff profile pages*. Staff were given three months notice to give them time to get their publications into the repository before the lists were removed.

There was always the possibility that it could have been framed as moving the workload to the researchers so it was important to frame the move in a positive light. The "spin" used was that it gave the researchers more control over what was listed on their page and the timing of updates.

There was some initial resistance from a couple of researchers who had very few of their publications in the repository but this was addressed by referring them to some of the enthusiastic early adopters from the Faculty who were very happy to provide anecdotes of positive experiences that were the results of having their work open accessible via the repository.
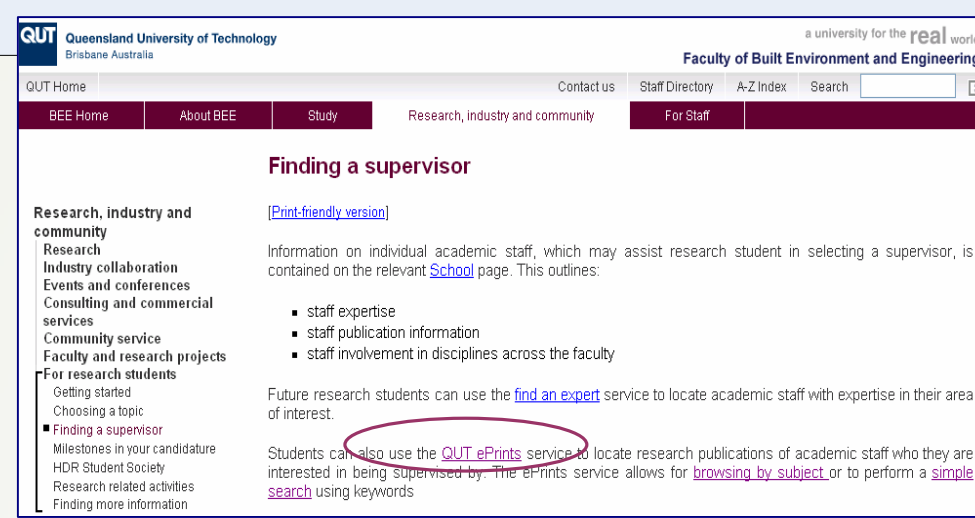

Problem: Prospective research students can often find it difficult to locate academic staff with expertise in their area of interest.

The task of locating a suitable supervisor can be a frustrating process, especially if the research student is new to the University. While many academic staff members provide a summary of their research interests on their web page or staff profile page, access to the full-text of recent relevant publications authored by academics staff from within the University can provide more information about their specific approaches and favoured methodologies.

Strategy: Suggest that the University's research expertise pages be linked to QUT ePrints

A link to QUT ePrints has been included on all QUT web pages designed to help prospective research students identify potential supervisors. Academic staff who are keen to attract new research students now have additional motivation for their depositing papers in QUT ePrints. The Link has also been included on "sources of expertise" pages aimed at the media.

Problem: Web-based Research Centre / Departmental Publication lists did not facilitate access to the text

Strategy: Suggest that the references are linked to the relevant postprint file in QUT ePrints

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Problem: Preparing for the RQF - the Australian Government's Research Assessment Exercise

The RQF will change the way research funding is awarded by the Australian Government, from a quantity-based system, to a system which is set to run every six years and is based on a research group's evidence portfolio, where the rating of each group for <u>research quality</u> and <u>research impact</u> will determine the amount of Government funding received.

The RQF will be an expert review process involving the examination of the evidence of quality and impact provided by groups of researchers within each institution sharing a common focus. The basis of the quality assessment will be the <u>four best research outputs</u> for each researcher in the group and the full list of research outputs for the group produced in the six year assessment period The evidence of research quality must be provided as part of a context statement for each research group.

Universities have been directed, by the Government, to collect their evidence for the RQF in an "on-site" repository that allows assessor access via the Government's own information management system. The evidence must include the full-text of the four best research outputs for each researcher. The obvious place to store the full-text is in an institutional repository like QUT ePrints. In fact, the Government is very keen that this should be the case as it would advance the objectives of their Research Accessibility Framework which aims to *improve access to research information, outputs and infrastructure. It will be an agreed system-wide approach for managing research outputs and infrastructure so that they are discoverable, accessible and shareable, in order to improve the quality of research outcomes, reduce duplication and better manage research activities and reporting.* http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/accessibility_framework/

A number of repository-related projects have been funded by the Government to facilitate the establishment of repositories at each university in preparation for the RQF. So now, most Australian universities either have an institutional repository or they are in the process of establishing one. However, the role that the repository will play in the forthcoming RQF varies between institutions. Some universities are ingesting the bibliographic details of all their publications from existing research management systems (such as ResearchMaster). At these institutions, the repository staff will later identify the records for items nominated for assessment (from lists submitted by research groups) and attach a copy of the published version to those records (assuming that copyright clearance has been negotiated). Access to this file would, of course, be limited to the assessors. This strategy would meet the needs of the institution in terms of responding to the requirements of the RQF but it would not advance open access objectives as the academic staff would have no engagement with the repository so there is no chance of persuading them to provide a postprint version for open access.

Strategy: Design a process that involves the researchers depositing their own "top 4" items in the repository

QUT's Office of Research has created an information management system that will collate information from a variety of sources including the finance system (for grant data), the Student Information System (for HDR completions), Research Master (for the full list of each QUT researcher's publications), ISI datasets (for citation data). It will also allow researchers to input information about their research impact (eg evidence of social, economic & environmental benefits that have resulted from their research). Researchers will be able to view their full list of publications and "mark" their top four. In each publication record, a field has been created for a URL that will deliver up the full-text to the assessor.

Researchers have been advised (via information sessions and email notices) that, to prepare for the RQF, they will need to log in to the Office of Research's RQF information management system, check that all their details are complete and correct and then "mark" their top four publications. If the publications they have nominated have not already been deposited in QUT ePrints, they are advised to deposit them ASAP, as an eprint record will be required for the RQF. For all journal articles and commercially published conference papers, they are advised to deposit their final draft manuscript (postprint) plus a copy of the publisher's PDF version if they have a copy. For books and book chapters, they should just deposit the bibliographic details (until we have more information about whether or not the assessors will require access to the fulltext of books and book portions). For non-text research outputs, researchers are advised to deposit a description plus, if applicable, image or multimedia files.

For some researchers, this process will mean that they must invest about one hour of their time to create the eprint records for their top four research outputs. It is possible that there could be some resistance to this so it is important to have sound arguments (and support from the executive levels).
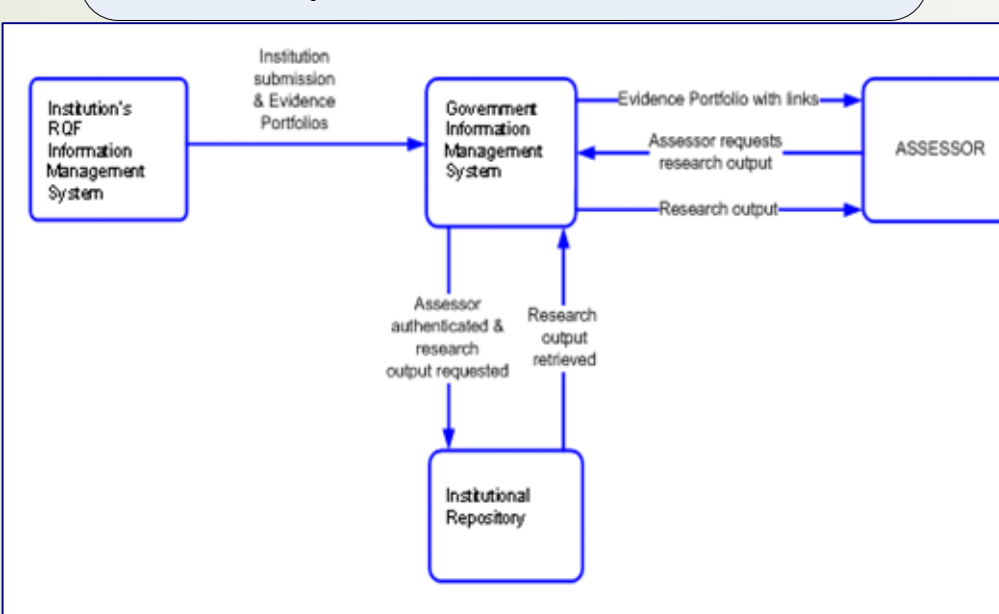
Fortunately for QUT, there is plenty of support for the institutional repository, and open access, at the highest levels. Professor Tom Cochrane, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Technology, Information & Learning Support) is vocal advocate for open access and copyright reform. Professor Arun Sharma, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Commercialisation), is leading the University's push to become one of the top 10 research universities in Australia. Regular RQF information sessions are being run by Professor Sharma to explain the RQF to the researchers. These sessions include presentations by the Library and the Office of Research to outline the proposed process but the presence of Professor Sharma shows that the process has support from the top.

There are many arguments for requiring the engagement of the researchers in the creation of the repository records. For a start, the University has a policy in place that requires that…. *"Material which represents the total publicly available research and scholarly output of the University is to be located in the University's digital or " E print " repository"* (material intended for commercialisation is excluded) *"Uploading of material to the E-print repository 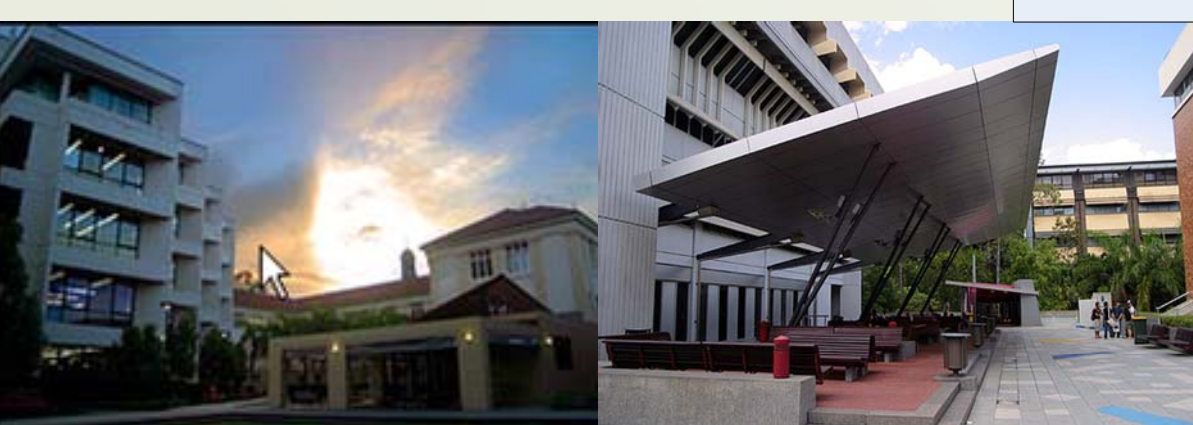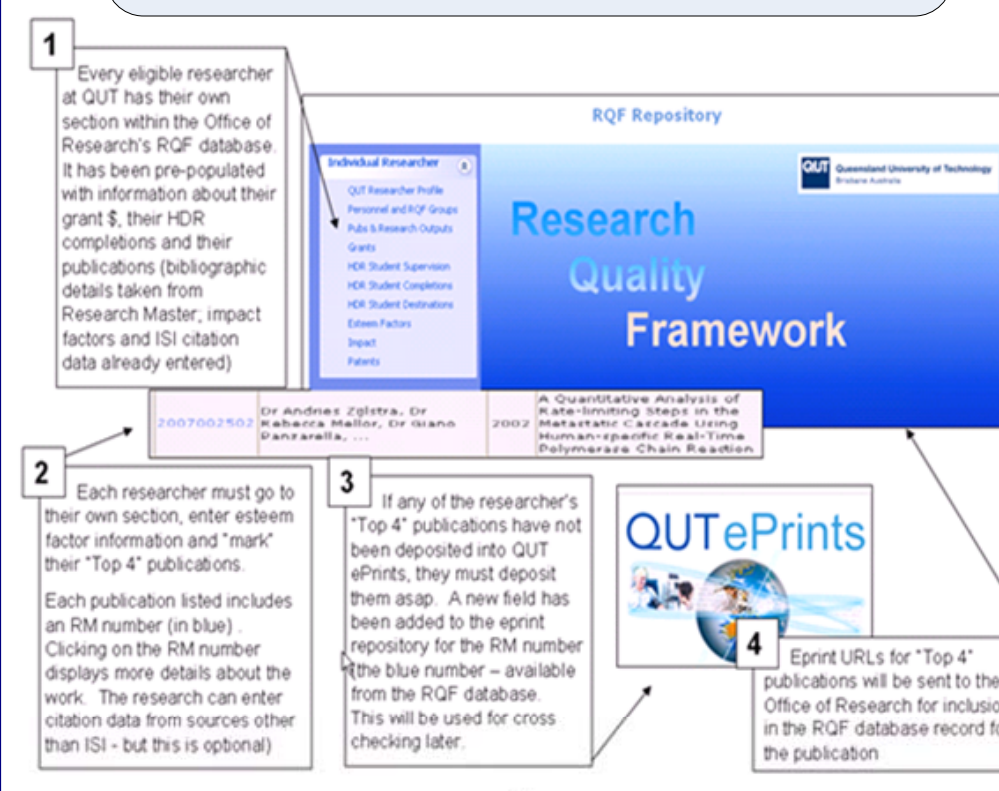is the responsibility of authors and researchers"* http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_01_03.jsp. Therefore, we should be able to assume that QUT researchers will comply with this policy. However, this is not the best argument to use first with the researchers. It is much more palatable to extol the benefits (enhanced research impact) that will be the return on their investment if they upload a postprint version for open access when creating the eprint record for the RQF. Also, when the author deposits a paper, they can choose to insert salient additional information into the record.

Unless one of the paper's authors is directly engaged with the deposit process, it is highly unlikely that a postprint version will be obtained. Therefore, if administrative help is to be provided, the authors should at least be asked to provide the manuscript files as well as the bibliographic details to the person doing the depositing for them. At QUT, it is our experience that if an author has no engagement with the process whereby their papers appear in the repository, they do not value the system and it is difficult to foster any enthusiasm for open access.

Proposed RQF Information Flow

RQF Processes and Information Flow within QUT

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http://eprints.qut.edu.au

Queensland University of Technology - at a glance

Location: Brisbane, Australia

30,000 EFT students   577 higher degree completions in 2005

1,100 research-active staff

Research income approx A$36 million p.a. (ranked 11th in the country)

Publication output approx 1500 peer reviewed journal articles and conference papers p.a. (ranked 9th in the country).

University-wide eprint policy requiring final draft copies of all journal articles and conference contributions in effect since January 2004

http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/F/F_01_03.jsp

It is the responsibility of the author to deposit the paper in the repository.

QUT ePrints

Launched in December 2003

Total number of deposits = 5040 items (end of March 2007)

Monthly deposit rate = 200 items (average)

Approx 4000 (80%) include an open access full-text copy of the paper.

100 (2%) include an embargoed full-text copy of the paper. (restriction will be lifted after the embargo period).

168 (3%) are bibliographic details of books or book chapters (no fulltext)

325 (6%) have no full-text file. (no postprint version deposited)

420 (9%) have no open access full-text (publisher does not support self-archiving)

Capture rate. approximately 48% - as measured by the proportion of 2005 publication output deposited (725 out of 1498).