Metadata

Metadata describes and documents research, data, and publications. More simply, it is information that is created and stored alongside content (such as a thesis or dissertation) in order to help users find and understand that content. The quality of the metadata you provide is key to ensuring the future accessibility and usability of your work.

For every research file you create, you should also produce metadata describing:

-**Who** created the content?
-**What** is it?
-**When and Where** was it created?
-**How and Why** was it developed?

Why might you need metadata?

if your research produces images, audio, video, software, datasets, or other non-text components, these may not be encompassed within the metadata collected during the submission process. In order to make sure these files are discoverable and usable in the future, you will need to actively create metadata and store it with the files.

ETD metadata tips:

1. Your abstract needs a clear description and keywords relevant to your work.
2. Be careful with over-reliance on spell-check functions. For example, Microsoft Office does not spell-check capital letters, which can impact titles.
3. Create keywords that are not in your title. This will increase the discoverability of your work.
4. Define any acronyms you use (repeat them in both letters and in natural language).
5. Proofread all of your metadata, including department name and advisor name, prior to submission.

A file without metadata is like a can with no label - impossible to understand without opening it (and perhaps even then!)

Typical metadata requested about a pdf during the ETD submission process:

- Title
- Author/Creator
- Advisor
- Resource Type
- Date
- Language
- Description/Abstract
- Subject
- Identifier
- Degree Information
- Rights management information

Most ETD submission processes **do not** collect metadata about the additional files you may submit (e.g., datasets, audio or video files, image files, GIS files, CAD files, software code, etc.). To help make sure that you and your readers will be able to understand what these additional files are and how they may be referenced, used, or built upon, you can develop a simple spreadsheet-based inventory of these items. This inventory should clearly identify how many additional files you are including, what they are, who created them, and what rights and licensing information they are governed by. Submit this inventory spreadsheet as part of your ETD package.

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Source - Guidance Briefs: Managing Your ETD Research Files

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