Title of Programme
Doctoral training programmes (MPLS)

Brief note about nature of change:
The confirmation milestone for doctoral training programmes is to move from the 9th term after admission to the 10th term to bring it more in line with the later date for transfer which is already in place and to recognise the longer standard term (4 years) of these programmes.

Effective date
1 October 2014

Location of change
Examination Regulations 2013 p.907 lls 20-29

Detail of change
3. Confirmation of Status as a Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy A candidate on a doctoral training programme who has been admitted to the status of Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy must apply to the board for confirmation of his or her status as a D.Phil. Student before the end of the ninth full term no later than the eighth week of the tenth term after admission as a research student; and not normally earlier than the eighth ninth term after that in which he or she was initially admitted to the status of a Probationer Research Student or to the status of a student for another higher degree of the University. Students admitted on the programmes listed in 2 (a) (i) – (iv) must apply to the board for confirmation of his or her status as a D.Phil. Student before the end of the sixth full term no later than the eighth week of the seventh term after admission as a Probationer Research Student, and not normally earlier than the fifth sixth term.

A Student for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy shall cease to hold such status unless it has been confirmed within nine ten terms of his or her admission to Probationer Research Student status, with the exception of Students admitted on the programmes listed in 2 (a) (i) – (iv), who shall cease to hold such status unless it has been confirmed within six seven
terms of his or her admission to that status, in accordance with 16. §4 cl.5.

**Explanatory Notes**

Students on doctoral training programmes are expected to transfer two terms later than standard DPhil students, and submit at the end of four years, rather than after three and a half. However, their confirmation deadline is currently the same as standard DPhil students. Having confirmation too early (more than 6 months ahead of expected completion) makes it more difficult for supervisors to judge how close to submission the student really is, and renders the milestone defunct. Directors of doctoral training programmes have also noted that the current method often leads to confirmation being deferred, generating unnecessary paperwork. This change should further support timely submission for students on doctoral training programmes as it would allow the assessors to clearly judge how near to completion the student was, and whether this was achievable.