

**Changes in Examination Regulations to the University Gazette – Social Sciences Division**

SSD/2/2/4

**Social Sciences Board**

**Title of Programme**

MPhil Politics (Comparative Government, Political Theory, European Politics and Society)

**Brief note about nature of change:** clarification of word count

**Effective date**

**With immediate effect, for students who started in MT 2015**

**Location of change**

In *Examination Regulations* 2015

**Detail of change**

Master of Philosophy in Politics (Comparative Government, Political Theory, European Politics and Society)

*(See also the general notice at the commencement of these regulations. The current edition of the Student Handbook contains an elaborated version of these regulations.)*

The regulations made by the Politics Graduate Studies Committee are as follows:

Each candidate must pass the Qualifying Test at the end of the third term from the beginning of the course. The Qualifying Test consists of two *compulsory* papers (unless a candidate is granted exemption by the Politics Graduate Studies Committee):

(1) A single three hour written examination paper testing knowledge of the candidate's core subject (*Theory of Politics* or *Comparative Government* or *European Governance*).

*Theory of Politics*

Compulsory paper for Political Theory students only. A critical examination of political concepts and theories, including social concepts and theories with political relevance.

*Comparative Government*

Compulsory paper for Comparative Government students only. The theory and practice of government in modern states.

*European Governance*

Compulsory paper for European Politics and Society students only. The theory and practice of government in European states, including the UK, and the theory and practice of integration in Europe.

(2) A research methods paper (*Research Methods in Political Science* or *Research Methods in Political Theory*).

*Research Methods in Political Science*

Compulsory paper for Comparative Government and European Politics and Society students only.

*Research Methods in Political Theory*

Compulsory paper for Political Theory students only.

*Research Methods in Political Science* and *Research Methods in Political Theory* are assessed in the following way. The candidate must submit:

(i) A Research Design Proposal of between 4000 and 6000 words, excluding bibliography and any methodological appendices, on the subject of the student's proposed MPhil thesis. Two copies of the Research Design Proposal, together with a copy on CD or USB flash drive, must be submitted to the Examination Schools by noon on the Friday of sixth week of Trinity Term. It must be accompanied by a separate signed declaration that it is the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment, either at Oxford or at another institution.

(ii) Research methods training coursework. Candidates will satisfactorily complete a programme of core and optional research methods training, as specified in the Student Handbook. Further details regarding these courses are provided in the Student Handbook.

For a candidate for the degree of M.Phil. to pass the Qualifying Test and proceed to the second year of study, the candidate must pass: the research methods paper (all elements of coursework and the Research Design Proposal) and the written examination.

Candidates who fail the written examination (paper (1) above) will normally be able to retake it before the beginning of the next academic year.

The mark for the written examination part of the Qualifying Test (paper (1) above) is carried forward and included in the final classification process for the degree of M.Phil.

### *Final Examination*

No candidate shall enter the Final Examination unless he or she has already passed the Qualifying Test. In the Final Examination every candidate must offer:

(1) A thesis of not more than 30,000 words, excluding bibliography and any methodological appendices. Two hard copies, together with a copy on CD or USB flash drive, must be submitted to the Examination Schools by noon on the Monday of first week of Trinity Term. It must be accompanied by a separate signed declaration that it is the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment, either at Oxford or at another institution. After the examination process is complete, each successful candidate must deposit one hardbound copy of their thesis in the Bodleian Library.

(2) Two papers, taken from the approved list of optional subjects in Politics, as published in the *Student Handbook* by the Politics Graduate Studies Committee on Monday of first week of Michaelmas Term each academic year (to apply to candidates being examined in the Trinity Term of that year). Candidates should note that the Politics subjects available in any particular year will depend on the availability of teaching resources. Not all subjects will be available in every year, and restrictions may be placed on the number of candidates permitted to offer certain subjects in any particular year.

Candidates may, with special permission of the Politics Graduate Studies Committee, offer subjects outside this list. Applications must be made by the last Friday of the Trinity Term preceding that in which the examination is to be taken, and must be supported by the candidate's supervisor. Supervisors should ensure that applications are submitted as early as possible so that if approval is not granted the candidate has sufficient time to choose an alternative.

When candidates sit optional papers offered at departments other than the Department of Politics and International Relations, they are bound by the regulations of the M.Phil in Politics.

The Examiners may award a distinction for excellence in the whole examination, on the

basis of the work submitted to them in both the Qualifying Test and the Final Examination.

**Explanatory Notes**

Change to clarify what is included/excluded in the word count for the thesis and research design proposal.

Vested interests:

The Department has confirmed that this change is to update the regulations with current practice. Students going into their second year in MT 2016 were already aware of the exclusion of methodological appendices from the word count from the start of the programme and before starting work on the research design proposal.