

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

SSD/2/2/4

Social Sciences Divisional Board

Approved at the meeting of the Teaching Audit Committee on 18/11/16 and by Education Committee on 03/02/17

Title of Programme

Research Degrees in Law

Brief note about nature of change: reverting out previous changes affecting readmission

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2016* <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2016-17/rdegrinlaw/>

Effective date

For students starting from MT 2016

Detail of change

Remove whole current entry and replace with the following:

'1. The First Research Year

(i) All those admitted to a research degree in the Faculty of Law must in the first year follow a course of instruction in Legal Research Method approved by the Law Board (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, a course of instruction in Criminal Research Methods), and must satisfy the examiners that they have completed to the required standard such tests or exercises as may be prescribed by the Law Board as part of such a course of instruction. Where the Law Board judges that it has sufficient evidence of a candidate's proficiency in research methods, it may in exceptional circumstances dispense a candidate from this requirement.

(ii) Candidates admitted in the first instance as Probationer Research Students may, with the consent of the Faculty Board, transfer to the status of a student for the M.St. in Legal

Research.

2. Special provisions for part-time D.Phil. Criminology students [For students starting from MT 2017: and part-time D.Phil. Socio-Legal Studies]

(i) Candidates are required to meet the following attendance requirements for their period of part-time study: attendance for a minimum of 30 days of university-based work each year, normally coinciding with the full terms of the academic year, to be arranged with the agreement of their supervisor, for the period that their names remain on the Register of Graduate Students unless individually dispensed by the Graduate Studies Committee on the Board of the Faculty of Law. During a candidate's probationary period the attendance arrangements must take account of relevant induction and training events scheduled by the Centre for Criminology [For students starting from MT 2017: and the Centre for Socio-Legal Studies].

3. Transfer to the D.Phil. or M.Litt.

(i) Candidates wishing to transfer to the status of student for the degree of D.Phil. or M.Litt. must, subject to sub-paragraphs (ii) and (iii) below, undertake both parts of the Qualifying Test (paragraph 4 below).

(ii) It is not possible to transfer to M.Litt. status, having successfully completed the M.Phil. or M.St. in Legal Research, unless the candidate proposes to write an entirely new thesis. A candidate transferring to D.Phil. status is entitled to incorporate the thesis presented for the M.Phil. or M.St. in Legal Research within the D.Phil. thesis.

(iii) Candidates who at the time of the transfer will have successfully completed the M.Phil. in Law or the M.Phil. in Criminology and Criminal Justice or the M.St. in Legal Research shall submit for Part B of the Qualifying Test their successful M.Phil. or M.St. thesis. In such a case the word limits for Part B in sub-paragraph (ii) of paragraph 4 below do not apply.

(iv) Students who have previously been registered for the M.St. in Legal Research or for the M.Phil. in Law or M.Phil. in Criminology and Criminal Justice, and have been granted leave to supplicate for either of these degrees, but have been referred on their application to transfer to D.Phil. status, may conditionally hold the status of Probationer Research Student, provided that the Faculty Board is satisfied that the student fulfils the conditions set out in the appropriate regulation. Probationer Research Student status in this instance may not be held for more than six terms beyond the date at which they first held the status of a student for the M.St. in Legal Research or for the M.Phil. in Law or M.Phil. in Criminology and Criminal Justice.

4. The Qualifying Test

(i) Part A of the Qualifying Test requires that the candidate shall submit to the Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator within the Centre for Criminology) two typescript or

printed copies of a statement of the subject of the proposed thesis and details of the manner in which the candidate proposes to treat it. This statement shall not exceed 2,000 words.

(ii) Subject to sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph 3 above, Part B of the Qualifying Test requires that the candidate shall submit to the Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator within the Centre for Criminology) two typescript or printed copies of a substantial piece of written work which may or may not be intended to form part of the proposed thesis but must be relevant to its subject. For transfer to the D.Phil., this Part B submission must not exceed 10,000 words, for the M.Litt., 6,000 words. In each case the candidate must state the number of words used. The required format for this submission is the common format prescribed for all law theses which is printed in the Faculty of Law's Graduate Students' Handbook.

(iii) Supervisors of candidates offering Part B are required to discuss with the candidate the names of possible assessors, and to provide the Board (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, the Director of Graduate Studies (Research)) with the names of three suitable persons who have indicated their willingness to act as assessors if called upon to do so. This notification may be made before the submission of the material, but must be made, at the latest, on the day the material is submitted. (For students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, two assessors will be appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies (Research) in consultation with the supervisor).

(iv) Subject to sub-paragraph (v) below, candidates admitted as Probationer Research Students to the doctoral or M.Litt. programmes, must submit all materials for the Qualifying Test by the end of the fourth week of Full Term in the third term after the candidate's admission. Candidates enrolled on the part-time DPhil in Criminology shall submit their materials by the end of the fourth week of Full Term in the sixth term after the candidate's admission.

(v) Subject to the general time-limit in sub-paragraph (vi) below, the Graduate Studies Committee, having consulted with the supervisor, may, for good cause, allow the Qualifying Test to be deferred. Applications for deferral must be made through the Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator within the Centre for Criminology) in time to allow the Graduate Studies Committee to consider the matter in the second week of the candidate's third term. For candidates enrolled on the part-time D.Phil. in Criminology **[For students starting from MT 2017: or the part-time DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies]**, applications for deferral must be made in time to allow the Graduate Studies Committee to consider the matter in the second week of the candidate's sixth term.

(vi) In no case may the materials for the Qualifying Test be submitted or resubmitted after the end of the fourth term from the admission of the student to the doctoral or M.Litt. programmes. A student will in any case cease to hold PRS status if he or she does not gain admission to another status within four terms of admission as a full-time student. In the case of candidates enrolled on the part-time D.Phil. in Criminology [**For students starting from MT 2017:** or the part-time DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies], materials for the Qualifying Test may not be submitted or resubmitted after the end of the eighth term from the admission of the student to the doctoral programme.

5. Assessing the Qualifying Test

(i) The Director of Graduate Studies shall appoint two assessors and shall report their appointments to the Board.

(ii) The assessors shall interview the candidate.

(iii) The assessors shall report in writing as to (a) the suitability of the candidate's subject for the kind of thesis in question and (b) the competence of the candidate to handle it at the required level; and, in accordance with their report, the assessors shall make a recommendation.

(iv) On the original submission for the Qualifying Test, the assessors may recommend (a) that the candidate be granted the transfer which has been applied for, or (b) that the candidate be permitted to resubmit Part A or, in the case in which the candidate is a Probationary Research Student, Part B or both Part A and Part B; in the case in which the candidate offers a successful M.Phil. or M.St. thesis for Part B within sub-paragraph (iii) of paragraph 3 above, there can be no reference back except in relation to Part A. Hence in a case in which, despite having earned the degree for which it was submitted, the thesis fails to satisfy the assessors of Part B of the Qualifying Test, the permission to transfer must be refused.

(v) Unless, for good cause shown, the Director of Graduate Studies, after consultation with the supervisor, agrees to an extension of time, the assessors must lodge their report and recommendation with the Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator, the Centre for Criminology) within one calendar month of the date on which the materials are sent out to them.

(vi) The Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator, the Centre for Criminology) shall pass the report and recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, the Director of Graduate Studies (Research)), who has the authority of the Board to inform the candidate without further delay of the nature of the recommendation and to inform the supervisor of the contents of the report.

(vii) Where the assessors have recommended resubmission, the candidate should normally resubmit at any time before the end of the subsequent term following the original submission. On resubmission the assessors may recommend (a) that the candidate be granted the transfer requested or (b) that the candidate be refused permission to transfer. In the case of a Probationary Research Student the effect of the latter recommendation is to entitle the candidate to apply for transfer to the M.St. in Legal Research under the appropriate regulation, with effect retrospective to the original registration as a Probationary Research Student. Such applications will be considered by the Graduate Studies Committee. For candidates enrolled on the part-time D.Phil. in Criminology **[For students starting from MT 2017: or the part-time DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies]**, the candidate should normally resubmit at any time before the end of the second term following the original submission.

(viii) The Director of Graduate Studies shall place the report of the assessors before the meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee next following its receipt by The Faculty of Law Graduate Studies Office (or, for students registered for the D.Phil. in Criminology, to the Graduate Studies Administrator at the Centre for Criminology).

6. Confirmation of D.Phil. status

(i) Applications for confirmation of status shall normally be made not earlier than the sixth term, and confirmation of status must normally be completed no later than three terms after the Qualifying Test. Candidates enrolled on the part-time D.Phil. in Criminology **[For students starting from MT 2017: or the part-time DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies]** shall normally apply for confirmation of status not earlier than the twelfth term following their admission, and confirmation of status must normally be completed not later than six terms after the Qualifying Test.

(ii) Application for confirmation of D.Phil. status shall be accompanied by (a) a statement giving the title of the thesis, and summarising each component chapter in approximately 100 words per chapter, (b) an overview of the intended thesis, of approximately 1,000 words, stating how much of the thesis is complete and how much remains to be done (with an estimate of the probable date of completion), and (c) a piece of written work, which shall normally be of 20,000–30,000 words in length and intended to form part of the thesis.

(iii) The candidate's supervisor shall provide a report on the candidate's application upon the form provided for this purpose or in a separate communication sent directly to the Graduate Studies Administrator. The report shall comment upon the accuracy of the account and feasibility of the timetable, and upon the candidate's progress, together with an estimate of the probable date of completion.

(iv) The documents described above under (ii) and (iii) shall be considered by two assessors, appointed by the Graduate Studies Committee, one of whom shall, wherever practicable, be one of those who acted at the time of the candidate's transfer to D.Phil.

status. The assessors shall interview the candidate and submit a joint written report to the Graduate Studies Committee, normally within one month of receiving the application. The report shall include a recommendation as to whether the application should be approved. The faculty may grant the application or refer it back for resubmission. Only one resubmission for confirmation may be submitted, and no such resubmission will normally be permitted after the end of the candidate's ninth term. For candidates enrolled in the part-time D.Phil. in Criminology [**For students starting from MT 2017: or the part-time DPhil in Socio-Legal Studies**], resubmission will not normally be permitted after the end of the candidate's eighteenth term.

7. All theses and dissertations in law must conform to the statement which appears in the Law Faculty's Graduate Students' Handbook under the title 'Format of Theses in the Faculty of Law'.

Explanatory Notes

Reverting out the previous changes affecting readmission to the DPhil (published in the Gazette of 23/06/16), so that students commencing their studies in 2016-17 follow the same regulations as for the previous year.