Changes in special regulations governing the BPhil in Philosophy: communication from the Board of the Faculty of Philosophy

Bachelor of Philosophy (BPhil) in Philosophy

Brief note about the nature of the change: Reduction of the number of assessed essays.

With effect from 1 October 2014 (for first examination in 2015)

In Examination Regulations, 2013, p. 514, ll. 5-6, delete “B.Phil. Pro-seminar in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms of” and substitute “BPhil Pro-seminar in”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 10, delete “seven” and substitute “six”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 12, delete “seven” and substitute “six”.

Ibid, p. 514, ll. 12-13, delete “, with no more than two essays on any one subject”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 17, delete “three essays” and substitute “two essays”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 20, delete “Course Handbook” and substitute “Graduate Student Handbook”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 24, delete “Full”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 32, delete “the Handbook” and substitute “the Graduate Student Handbook, provided that the distribution requirement above is met”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 35, delete “Full”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 41, delete “Full”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 47, delete “, one essay is due in nought week of Hilary Term and”.

Ibid, p. 514, l. 51, delete “Course Handbook” and substitute “Graduate Student Handbook”.

Ibid, p. 515, l. 29, delete “Student Handbook” and substitute “Graduate Student Handbook”.

Ibid, p. 515, ll. 34-35, delete “BPhil in the first year of studies on the BPhil in Philosophy. Such candidates will be required to submit three 5,000 word essays and a 30,000 word thesis”. And substitute “BPhil. In the second year of study, such candidates will be required to submit two 5,000-word essays by 10 a.m. on Wednesday of nought week of Hilary Term and a 30,000-word thesis by 10 a.m. on Wednesday of eight week of Trinity Term,”
Explanatory Note

(i) This is a change to reduce the number of BPhil essays from seven to six essays. The BPhil dissertation will remain unchanged. It is difficult for students who are new to Oxford, and new to the Oxford Philosophy BPhil degree, to have to write an assessed essay immediately after their first term, especially since they are often not familiar with the standards and style of work that the Oxford Philosophy BPhil degree requires. The Philosophy Faculty is satisfied that the total volume and breadth of exam requirements still ensures an exacting test of students’ abilities, as evidenced by the fact that the ‘Old BPhil’ regulations, which were replaced by the ‘New BPhil’ regulations two years ago, also required only 6 assessed essays.

(ii) The change will be applicable from the academic year 2014-2015 onwards for new students enrolling in October 2014. Current BPhil students’ assessment structure will not be affected.

(iii) Resource implications: As there is a reduction in the number of assessments (from seven to six essays) and a reduction in the number of assessment registration and submission points (from five to four), there is a slight reduction in workload for staff in the Faculty of Philosophy, the students’ colleges and the Examination Schools.