HUMANITIES DIVISIONAL BOARD

Changes in the regulations governing the Honour School of History and Modern Languages: communication from the Board of the Faculty of History

Ref: EX/16

Honour School of History and Modern Languages

Brief note about nature of the change: Changes to the regulations governing the Bridge Essay.

With effect from October 2014 (for first examination in 2017)

1 In Examination Regulations, 2013, p. 280, l. 5, delete ‘7,500’ and substitute ‘between 8,000 and 10,000’.
2 Ibid., l. 6, delete ‘7,500’ and substitute ‘10,000’.
3 Ibid., l. 20, delete ‘Friday of second week of the Michaelmas Term’ and substitute ‘Friday of fourth week of the Hilary Term’.
4 Ibid., l. 20, delete ‘fourth week of the Michaelmas Term’ and substitute ‘sixth week of the Hilary Term’.
5 Ibid., l. 25, delete ‘Friday of noughth week’ and substitute ‘Tuesday of ninth week’.
6 Ibid., l. 30, delete ‘7,500’ and substitute ‘10,000’.
7 Ibid., l. 33, delete ‘three hours of preparatory or advisory meetings’ and substitute ‘five hours of preparatory or advisory meetings and/or email consultations’.
8 Ibid., ll. 36-37, delete ‘Friday of eighth week of the Hilary Term’ and substitute ‘Friday of noughth week of the Trinity Term’.
9 Ibid., l. 38, delete ‘second’ and substitute ‘fourth’.
10 Ibid., l. 39, delete ‘fourth’ and substitute ‘sixth’.

Explanatory note
These changes address concerns both about the amount of supervision provided for the Bridge Essay, and more importantly, the intellectual quality of work which is achievable, with the current word limit of 7,500. Comments on underperformance in the Bridge Essay have been made by examiners, who have suggested that procedures for the Bridge Essay be brought in line with those for the thesis in the History main school. The Bridge Essay will therefore be supported by 5 hours of supervision, have a minimum word limit of 8,000 words and a maximum of 10,000 words, and be submitted on Tuesday of 9th week of Hilary Term. This brings it into line with the interdisciplinary thesis in the Joint School of History and English. It will retain the distinct interdisciplinary requirements of the current Bridge Essay, and this will be underpinned by joint supervision arrangements, with a supervisor for each candidate from both of the Faculties. There are no vested interests if the new regulations come into effect from October 2014, with the cohort beginning its second year at that time for first examination in 2017 (owing to the year abroad); current second and third years will continue to work under the old regulations; no student will change their essay mid-course. Any potential resource implications of these changes have been checked.