

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

SSD/2/2/4

Social Sciences Divisional Board

Approved by Teaching Audit Committee on 18.11.16 and by Education Committee on 09.01.17

Title of Programme

Research Degrees in Geography

Brief note about nature of change: introduction of part-time variant of programme

Location of change

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

Effective date

For students starting from MT 2017

Detail of change

Amend entry as follows (new text underlined, deleted text struck through):

1. Special provisions for part-time D.Phil. students

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. During a candidate's probationary period the attendance arrangements must take account of relevant induction and training events scheduled by the department.

2. Transfer from Probationer Research Student status to M.Litt., M.Sc., or D.Phil. status

The transfer of status normally takes place not later than the third term (sixth term for part-time students) after admission as a research student. Students are required to

demonstrate that the research already accomplished shows promise of the ability to produce a satisfactory M.Litt., M.Sc., or D.Phil. thesis on the intended topic. Students are required to submit to the director of Graduate Studies a report title and abstract (of no more than 300 words/one side of A4) by Friday of eighth week Michaelmas Term (Hilary Term for part-time students). Each student will also give a Transfer of Status Presentation of fifteen minutes (plus ten minutes of questions) during noughth week of Hilary Term of the first year (noughth week of Hilary Term of the second year for part-time students). Students should submit two copies (and one electronic copy) of a research proposal of no more than 7,500 words, including an outline of research plans, a preliminary review of the literature, methodology progress to date, bibliography and a timetable for completion to the Director of Graduate studies by Friday of eighth week Hilary Term of the first year (Friday of eighth week of Hilary Term of the second year for part-time students). On receiving the application, the Director of Graduate studies will, on behalf of the Graduate studies Committee, appoint two assessors (normally two members of the academic staff) neither of whom will normally be the student's supervisor. The interviewers will read the script before submitting to the board their reports and a joint summary statement supporting their recommendation. Students will be required to attend a Transfer of Status Assessment Meeting with ~~their supervisor(s) and transfer of status~~ assessors to discuss their report. These meetings will be held early in Trinity Term of the first year (Trinity Term of the second year for part-time students). A student whose first application is unsuccessful may be given one further opportunity to apply for transfer, following the procedures laid down, and may apply for an extension of time for one term (two terms for part-time students) if this is necessary for the purpose of making the application.

23. Confirmation of D.Phil. status

Application for Confirmation of D.Phil. status should normally be made not earlier than the sixth term (twelfth term for part-time students) from admission as a research student and not later than the ninth term (eighteenth term for part-time students). The department expects that, in most cases, the conformation will be made immediately after return from field-work and no later than eighth week Trinity Term of the student's third year (eighth week Trinity Term of the student's sixth year for part-time students). No candidate may submit a thesis for the doctoral degree without having first obtained confirmed doctoral status. Any student who does not confirm by the end of their ninth term (eighteenth term for part-time students), will be required to apply for a deferral of confirmation of status and may be allowed up to three terms (six terms for part-time students) for this purpose. Any student who fails to confirm status within nine terms (or eighteen terms for part-time

students) of registering as a PRS (or within a maximum of twelve terms (twenty-four terms for part-time students) where deferral has been approved) will have their student status lapsed. Students who have taken an M.Phil first and were admitted directly to D.Phil. status, should confirm status within three terms (six terms for part-time students) of starting the D.Phil. Any student who fails to confirm within nine terms (twelve terms for part-time students) of starting the M.Phil (or within a maximum of twelve terms (eighteen terms for part-time students) where deferral has been approved) will have their status lapsed. The purpose of the submission for confirmed status is to ensure that the candidate is working to a doctoral standard.

The confirmation report should show evidence that the research already accomplished gives promise of the ability to produce a satisfactory D.Phil thesis on the intended topic. For this purpose the candidate must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies two copies (together with an electronic version) of a report describing in approximately 3,000 words the aims and methods of the projected thesis. The student will also be required to include with the written work an outline of the proposed thesis, including the topics to be covered in individual chapters, and a timetable for completion. In addition, two substantive chapters of no more than 10,000 words each must also be submitted. Candidates wishing to undertake the D.Phil via scientific papers should substitute the chapters of the thesis with two papers.

On receiving the application the Director of Graduate studies will appoint two assessors (normally two academic members of staff) neither of whom will normally be the student's supervisor. The assessors will read the script before submitting to the board their written reports and a joint summary statement supporting their recommendation. Students will be required to meet with their assessors ~~and supervisor~~ at an assessment interview to discuss their report. A student whose first application is unsuccessful may be given one further opportunity to apply for confirmation, following the procedures laid down, normally within one term (two terms for part-time students) if necessary for the purpose of making the application. Students will be notified of the outcome and they should receive advice from their supervisor(s) on their confirmation assessment.

34. Submission of theses

Candidates for the Degrees of M.Sc., M.Litt., and D.Phil. are required to include a complete sets of all maps, diagrams, and other illustrations, bound into the copy of the thesis deposited in the Bodleian.

M.Sc. by Research theses should not exceed 40,000 words, M.Litt. theses should not

exceed 50,000 words, and D.Phil. theses should not exceed 100,000 words. In all case word counts are inclusive of notes, glossary, appendices etc. but exclusive of tables, figures, and bibliography, unless for exceptional reasons and on the recommendation of the candidate's supervisor the board otherwise determines.

A D.Phil. thesis may be accepted for examination if comprised of a minimum of four academic papers submitted for publication in peer review journals. The papers do not have to be accepted or published. The papers must be accompanied by a framing document that will normally be between 15,000 and 20,000 words and which comprises an Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, and Conclusion. Current word limits and conditions remain in place.

A D.Phil. thesis submitted under this rubric may include joint publications. In that case, the student should normally be the first author for papers submitted as part of their D.Phil. thesis. Where this is not the case, a clear justification should be given and all co-authors must certify in writing that the majority of the work represents that of the candidate-and a letter to this effect must be submitted with the application for appointment of examiners to the Director of Graduate Studies. There are no restrictions on the number, or order, of other co-authors, reflecting the variation in established academic practice. Papers should be either incorporated as typescript pages or as offprints bound into the body of the thesis.

Candidates wishing to proceed in this manner must obtain permission from his/her supervisor and the School and must be approved at the time of confirmation for D.Phil. status. Evidence must also be submitted at this time that at least one academic paper has been submitted to an identified journals, if not yet accepted or published.

If, after an application is accepted, a candidate wishes to revert to a standard D.Phil. thesis format, the candidate must submit an application to his/her supervisor, and the School showing good cause for the change.

Explanatory Notes

Introduction of the part-time variant of the programme, and some small housekeeping changes for current students.

The part-time variant of the programme has been approved for first entry in MT 2017. As there are some housekeeping changes for current students included in the regulation changes, we would like to make the changes with immediate effect. We are content that there are no issues of vested interests.