Change in special regulations governing the DPhil in Philosophy: communication from the Board of the Faculty of Philosophy

Subject to the approval of the Humanities Divisional Board, which is now sought the following changes in regulations have been made:

Humanities Divisional Board

Doctor of Philosophy (DPhil) in Philosophy (starting October 2013):

Brief note on the nature of the change:
Change in Transfer of Status requirements for PRS students having completed the MSt in Ancient Philosophy or the MSt in Philosophy of Physics

With effect from 1 October 2013

1 In *Examination Regulations*, 2012, p. 880, after l. 33, insert:

‘Candidates admitted as Probationer Research Students after completing the Master of Studies degree in Ancient Philosophy at the University of Oxford must complete all of the following requirements by the end of week 8 of their third term as a Probationer Research Student:

(a) Attend two graduate classes with at least one from the following subject areas: moral philosophy; metaphysics; theory of knowledge; philosophical logic and philosophy of language; philosophy of mind and action.
(b) Submit one 5,000-word essay on a topic of the student’s choice for one of the above listed classes, the pass mark for which is 68
(c) Submit a thesis outline of about two pages.
(d) Submit a piece of written work of approximately 5,000 words in the area and philosophical style of the proposed thesis.

The board will appoint two assessors, who will read the submissions and conduct an interview with the candidate. If the mark for the essay mentioned in (b) above is between 60 and 67 (inclusive) then the assessors may, depending on the quality of the candidate’s other submitted work, recommend approval or refusal of the Transfer of Status application.

The Philosophy Graduate Studies Committee may, depending on the student’s prior experience and education, waive requirements (a) and/or (b). If it waives both requirements then the student must complete the requirements by the end of week 2 of their third term as a Probationer Research Student.'
Candidates admitted as Probationer Research Students after completing the Master of Studies degree in Philosophy of Physics at the University of Oxford must complete the following requirements by the end of the week 0 before the start of their fourth term as a Probationer Research Student:

(a) Attend two graduate classes (which cannot be in the subject area of their MSt in Philosophy of Physics elective option, Philosophy of Physics or Philosophy of Science) with at least one from the following subject areas: moral philosophy; metaphysics; theory of knowledge; philosophical logic and philosophy of language; philosophy of mind and action.
(b) Submit one 5,000-word essay on a topic of the student’s choice for one of the above listed classes, the pass mark for which is 68.
(c) Submit a thesis outline of about two pages.
(d) Submit a 20,000-word dissertation on a topic of their choice, preferably in the area and philosophical style of their thesis.

The board will appoint two assessors, who will read the submissions and conduct an interview with the candidate. If the mark for the essay mentioned in (b) above is between 60 and 67 (inclusive) then the assessors may, depending on the quality of the candidate’s other submitted work, recommend approval or refusal of the Transfer of Status application.

The Philosophy Graduate Studies Committee may, depending on the student’s prior experience and education, waive requirements (a) and/or (b), and it has the power to replace requirement (d) by requirement
(e) Submit a piece of written work of approximately 5,000 words in the area and philosophical style of the proposed thesis.

If it waives (a) and (b) and replaces (d) by (e) then the student must complete the requirements by the end of week 2 of their third term as a Probationer Research Student.

Explanatory Note.

(i) These changes are required to clarify the steps each former MSt in Ancient Philosophy and MSt in Philosophy of Physics student must take in order to successfully transfer to DPhil Status. Both MSt degrees are designed in such a way that they are accessible to students with little background in philosophy. In light of this, the Faculty of Philosophy wishes to ensure that those who are progressing to the DPhil have gained further grounding in contemporary philosophy and its research methods and, in the case of the MSt in Philosophy of Physics, have demonstrated the capacity to produce thesis-style work (given that there is no thesis requirement for this degree), so that they are suitably prepared for doctoral research. The later date of completion of the requirements for PRS students who previously completed an MSt in Ancient Philosophy, and the even later date for PRS students who previously completed an MSt in Philosophy of Physics are intended to give them time to complete the additional work that they are required to do.

(ii) Students will receive no additional supervision beyond that given to all PRS students and examiners will use questions drawn from past BPhil examinations, so there are no staffing resource implications.