

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

SSD/2/2/4

**Social Sciences Board**

**Approved at the meeting of Teaching Audit Committee on 03/06/16**

**Title of Programme**

MPhil Comparative Social Policy

**Brief note about nature of change:** updates to text and change to require electronic submission

**Effective date**

**For students starting from MT 2016**

**For first examination from 2017-18**

**Location of change**

In *Examination Regulations* 2015

**Detail of change**

Master of Philosophy in Comparative Social Policy

(See also the general notice at the commencement of these regulations.)

The regulations made by the Divisional Board of Social Sciences are as follows:

*Qualifying Test*

Every candidate must pass a qualifying test at the end of the third term from the beginning of the course in the *two* compulsory papers, *Methods of Social Research*, and Core Paper: Comparative Social Policy and Social Policy Analysis ~~*AWelfare States*~~ and one *Optional Paper* from the list of optional papers, specified by the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. This will be from a list published annually by Friday of the sixth week of

Michaelmas Full Term in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. Candidates may, after special permission of the Course Director, offer subjects outside this list. This may also include papers offered in any other relevant master's degree in the University subject to the permission of the relevant Course Director as appropriate. The examiners may examine candidates viva voce. Candidates who fail the qualifying test may, in exceptional circumstances, be allowed to retake the test before the beginning of the first week of the next academic year. The examiners can decide that the retake shall consist of the whole test or parts thereof.

#### *Final Examination*

Every candidate must offer:

- 1. One further optional paper. This will be from a list published annually by Friday of the sixth week of Michaelmas Full Term in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention or, in exceptional circumstances and with the special permission of the Course Director, from subjects outside this list. ~~Candidates may, after special permission of the Course Director, offer subjects outside this list. This may also include papers offered in any other relevant master's degree in the University subject to the permission of the relevant Graduate Studies Committee as appropriate.~~
2. A thesis of not more than 30,000 words that employs comparative method in the study of a social policy topic. The word count applies to the text, but does not include graphs, tables and charts in the main text, or bibliography. An additional word limit of 6,000 words in total applies to the abstract, footnotes, endnotes and technical appendices (including graphs, tables and charts). ~~Two type-written copies of the thesis should be delivered to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford, by noon on Friday of the sixth week of Trinity Full Term in which the examination is to be taken. One~~ Candidates are required to upload an electronic copy of the thesis to the WebLearn site must be submitted along with the physical copy to the Examination Schools by noon on Friday of the sixth week of Trinity Full Term in which the examination is to be taken. The electronic copy must be anonymous, ~~submitted in word format, and identical in content and length to the physical copy of the thesis.~~ Successful candidates may be required to deposit a copy of their thesis in the Social Science Library.

The examiners may examine any candidate viva voce.

The examiners may award a Distinction for excellence in the whole examination on the basis of the material submitted to them in both the qualifying and the final examination.

#### ***Compulsory Papers***

### *Methods of Social Research*

(a) A course of practical work in (i) basic principles of statistical inference, and statistical models for the analysis of quantitative social science data, (ii) the rationale and techniques of qualitative research appropriate to social policy and related social enquiry, and (iii) methods of data collection including research ~~and questionnaire~~ design, interviewing and coding. Such practical course work in social research methods shall be assessed by a series of assignments set during the first two terms of the course. These shall be listed in the Course Handbook and submission dates set for each assignment. Each of the two quantitative assignments will be of a maximum length of 2,500 words. The qualitative assignment will be of a maximum length of 3,000 words. These shall be marked during the course. In the event of any candidate not reaching the pass mark set for either the qualitative or quantitative components, one further attempt shall be permitted within the same examination year, though in the event of a successful resubmission only the bare pass mark shall be awarded. The combined set of completed assignments forms the practical research methods workbook. Candidates shall submit this workbook ~~to the Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention~~ via the WebLearn site by noon on Friday of the sixth week of the third term of the course, accompanied by a statement that it is the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated. The practical workbooks shall be available for inspection by the examiners.

(b) Candidates are required to produce two essays of up to 2,500 words evaluating the research design, methods of data collection and analysis, and any ethical or philosophical issues that arise in a specified research paper. The Director of Graduate Studies shall publish two lists of research papers not later than noon on Monday of the first week of the second term; candidates will be required to select one from both of these lists of papers as the subject for each essay. Candidates shall submit ~~their essay to the Examination Schools by 12 noon on Monday of the first week of the third term of the course, accompanied by a statement that they are the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated.~~ An electronic copy of each of the essays must be submitted along with the physical copies to the Examination Schools via the WebLearn site by 12 noon on Monday of the first week of the third term of the course, accompanied by a statement that they are the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated. The electronic copies must be anonymous, ~~submitted in word format, and identical in content and length to the physical copies of the essays.~~

The Core Paper: *Comparative Social Policy*, ~~Welfare States and Social Policy Analysis~~  
~~Concepts and typologies of social policies and welfare states. Approaches to the study of social policy. Theories of the origin and growth of the welfare state. Goals and means in~~

~~social policy. Effectiveness and efficiency in social policy: unintended side effects. Methodological issues in comparative social research.~~ This paper is based on two courses: comparative social policy and social policy analysis.

### ***Optional Papers***

These will be from a list published annually by Friday of the sixth week of Michaelmas Full Term in the Department of Social Policy and Intervention. In exceptional circumstances and with the special permission of the Course Director, the optional paper may be from subjects outside this list. ~~Candidates may, after special permission of the Course Director, offer subjects outside this list. This may also include papers offered in any other relevant master's degree in the University subject to the permission of the relevant Course Director as appropriate.~~

### **Explanatory Notes**

Updates to text and change to require electronic submission of summative assessment.