HUMANITIES DIVISIONAL BOARD

Academic Committee

Change(s) in the regulations governing the MPhil in Oriental Studies (viii) Islamic Art and Archaeology qualifying examination and final examination: communication from the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies

Ref: II/21

Subject to approval on behalf of the divisional board, which is now sought, and by Education Committee, the following changes in regulations have been made:

Humanities Divisional Board

(1) MPhil in Oriental Studies (viii) Islamic Art and Archaeology

Brief note about nature of the change(s)
Qualifying examination, rubric.

With effect from October 2011 (for first examination in 2012)

1 In Examination Regulations, 2010, p. 563, l. 28, delete ‘1.’ and substitute ‘A.’.

2 Ibid., ll. 29-31, delete ‘an examination, to be known as...Art and Archaeology’ and substitute ‘a qualifying examination’.

3 Ibid., ll. 32-3, delete ‘unless exempted by the Board of the Faculty of Oriental Studies’.

4 Ibid., after line 33, insert new lines:

‘(a) Two extended essays of between 4,000 and 5,000 words each, one on a subject related to Landmarks of the Islamic World, and a second on a subject related to Arts of the Court in the Islamic World.’

5 Ibid., l. 34, delete ‘(i)’ and substitute ‘(b)’.

6 Ibid., ll. 35-6, delete ‘and signed by their supervisor’.

7 Ibid., delete ll. 37-40.

8 Ibid., l. 41, delete ‘(iii)’ and substitute ‘(c)’.

9 Ibid., delete ‘and’.

10 Ibid., ll. 41-44, delete ‘, the content of which shall be...Islamic art and archaeology’.

11 Ibid., p. 564, delete ll. 1-9 and substitute:

‘Candidates must submit two printed copies of the extended essays in (a) above and the portfolio in (b) above in a parcel addressed to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford at least fourteen days before the language examination in (c) above. The essays and portfolio must bear the candidate’s examination number but not the candidate’s name. The parcel must bear the words ‘QUALIFYING EXAMINATION FOR THE M.PHIL. IN ISLAMIC ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY’ in block capitals in the bottom left-hand corner and contain a signed declaration that the work is the candidate’s own.’
MPhil in Oriental Studies (viii) Islamic Art and Archaeology

Brief note about nature of the change(s)
Final examination, rubric.

With effect from October 2012 (for first examination in 2013)

1. In Examination Regulations, 2010, p. 564, l. 10, delete ‘2’ and substitute ‘B’.

2. Ibid., ll. 12-13, delete ‘, or, with the approval of the faculty board, in a subsequent year’.

3. Ibid., delete ll. 14-18 and substitute:

   ‘1. Every candidate must follow for at least six terms a course of instruction in Islamic Art and Archaeology.’.

4. Ibid., l. 19, delete ‘All other candidates must offer’ and substitute ‘The examination will include:

5. Ibid., after line 19, insert new lines:

   ‘(a) A paper on a topic of Islamic art and archaeology or related fields (e.g. non-Islamic art, architecture and archaeology; Islamic studies; history; museology) to be selected by the candidate in consultation with the candidate’s supervisor. This paper will be examined by two extended essays of between 4,000 and 5,000 words each.’.

6. Ibid., l. 20, delete ‘(a)’ and substitute ‘(b)’.

7. Ibid., l. 21, delete ‘(b)’ and substitute ‘(c)’.

8. Ibid., delete ll. 22-3.

9. Ibid., l. 24, delete ‘(c) Papers I-III for the M.St. in Islamic Art and Archaeology’ and substitute ‘(d) A written examination on Islamic Art and Archaeology’.

10. Ibid., l. 25, delete ‘(d)’ and substitute ‘(e)’.

11. Ibid., delete ‘thesis’ and substitute ‘dissertation’.

12. Ibid., delete ll. 26-33 and substitute:

   ‘3. Candidates must submit two printed copies each of the extended essays in (a) above in a parcel to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford not later than noon on the Monday of first week of Trinity Term of the year in which they sit the examination. The essays must bear the candidate’s examination number but not the candidate’s name. The parcel must bear the words ‘FINAL EXAMINATION FOR THE M.PHIL. IN ISLAMIC ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY’ in block capitals in the bottom left-hand corner and contain a signed declaration that the work is the candidate’s own.’.

13. Ibid., delete ll. 34-36 and substitute:

   ‘4. Candidates must submit two printed and bound copies of the dissertation in (e) above in a parcel to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford at least fourteen days before the first day of the examinations in (b)-(d) above. The dissertation must bear the candidate’s examination number but not the candidate’s name. The parcel must bear the words ‘DISSERTATION FOR THE M.PHIL. IN ISLAMIC ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY’ in block capitals
in the bottom left-hand corner and contain a signed declaration that the work is the candidate’s own.’.

Explanatory note

The proposed changes seek to restructure the course so that the students complete their work on the core component of the course in their first year and acquire a specialization in their second year while working on their dissertation. In the current examination regulations, students are not examined for the core subject of their course in the qualifying examination, but are required to submit an essay on their thesis topic as part of the qualifying examination, which in most cases proves to be too early in the course. The proposed changes are aimed at correcting this imbalance.

The changes also seek to provide students with more flexibility in their second year, enabling them to choose a subject of specialization in consultation with their supervisors.

The proposed changes will also bring the MPhil program more in line with the other MPhil programs in Oriental Studies.

There is currently one MPhil student who has suspended her status in the program and might return to the program in September 2011. Special arrangements for the teaching of that student have been made by the academic staff at the Khalili Research Centre. The student will be taught with a specific combination of tutorials and lectures and examined according to the old regulations in 2012. There are no other students who will be affected by the proposed changes.