

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

SSD/2/2/4

Social Sciences Divisional Board

Approved by Chair's Action on behalf of Quality Assurance Committee (04/07/2019)

Master of Philosophy in Comparative Social Policy

Brief note about nature of change:

1. Minor amendment to the submission date for option papers
2. Minor presentational changes, including to remove the reference to an award of distinction as included in *General Regulations*

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2018*, <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/mopicompsocipoli/studentview/>

Effective date

For students starting from MT 2019

For first (qualifying) examination from 2019-20

Detail of change

1. Delete citation 1.9:

~~'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.'~~

2. Amend citation 1.11 as follows:

'(a) A course of practical work in (i) basic principles of statistical inference, and statistical models for the analysis of quantitative social science data, and (ii) the rationale and techniques of qualitative research appropriate to social policy and related social enquiry. 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. Candidates shall submit via the WebLearn site their assignments, ~~accompanied by a statement and confirm~~ that it is the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated, by selecting the 'declaration of authorship' box. In the event of any candidate not reaching the pass mark set for either the qualitative or quantitative assignments, 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.'

3. Amend citation 1.12 as follows:

'(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 write two essays, one about one of the quantitative papers and one about one of the qualitative. The submission dates for the essays shall be listed in the Course Handbook. Candidates shall submit their essays via the WebLearn site, ~~accompanied by a statement and confirm~~ that they are the candidate's own work except where otherwise indicated, by selecting the 'declaration of authorship' box. The electronic copies must be anonymous. In the event of any candidate not reaching the pass mark set for either the qualitative or quantitative essay, 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.'

4. Amend citation 1.16 as follows:

'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 option paper may be from subjects outside this list. The option paper will be assessed by a 4,000-5,000 word essay, to be submitted to the WebLearn site by noon on ~~Monday~~ Friday of Week 10 of Hilary term. In the event of any candidate not reaching the pass mark set for the essay, one further attempt shall be permitted within the same examination year, normally at the end of the following term, though in the event of a successful resubmission only the bare pass mark shall be awarded.'

Explanatory Notes

The amendment to the option paper essay submission date from Monday to Friday of week 10 of Hilary term is proposed to give students slightly longer to work on their essays. The change would also allow the submission of proposed essay topics to be moved from week 5 to week 6. This would help allay concerns from students that they are required to make a decision early in the course about the focus of their assignments. The change to the submission date for the proposed essay topics will also help ease pressures currently felt by staff to turnaround feedback to students during a period busy with thesis panels and graduate admissions.