Social Sciences Divisional Board

Approved at the meeting of 25 February 2011

Title of Programme

MSc in Criminology and Criminal Justice

Brief note about nature of change: Amendment to assessment for the Research Design and Data Analysis course

Effective date

With effect from 1 October 2011

Location of change

In Examination Regulations 2010 as amended by Gazette of 23 September 2010

Detail of change

The regulations for this programme were extensively revised as set out in 23 September 2010 Gazette. In light of this, and for the purposes of clarity, the agreed changes are set out below as tracked changes to the updated on-line version, as follows:

Criminology and Criminal Justice

1. Every candidate must follow, for at least three terms, a course of instruction in Criminology and Criminal Justice.
2. There shall be a Board of Studies for the course, to be chaired by the Director of Graduate Studies for Criminology and also comprising all the members of the Board of Examiners for the Master of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice for the current year, the Director or Assistant Director of the Centre for Criminology and a student representative (the latter for open business only).
3. The course will consist of four elements: core course in Explanation and Understanding in Criminology (Michaelmas Term) and Understanding Criminal Justice (Hilary Term); the course Research Design and Data Collection (Michaelmas Term); options; and dissertation. The core course will run for six weeks throughout
the first two terms (Michaelmas and Hilary). The Research Design and Data Collection course runs for six weeks in the first term (Michaelmas). Options will run for six weeks in each term (Michaelmas, Hilary and Trinity). Candidates will be required to choose two options in each of the first two terms and one for the final term. The dissertation will be 8,000-10,000 words long on a topic to be agreed by the Board of Studies. The required format for this dissertation is the common format prescribed for all law theses, which is printed in the Faculty of Law's Graduate Students' Handbook.

4. The options are listed in the Schedule below.
5. Not all options will necessarily be taught or examined in any one year. Details of those which are available will be published in the Graduate Student Handbook produced by the Centre for Criminology for the year of the examination, subject to any amendment posted on the designated notice board in the Centre for Criminology by Monday of Week Minus One of the Michaelmas Term before the examination is held.

6. In addition to the options set out in the Schedule, candidates may offer any other option that may be approved from time to time by regulation published in the Gazette by the end of Monday of Week Minus One of the Michaelmas Term before the examination is held.

7. The course shall be assessed as follows:
   (i) **Core Course**: There shall be a three-hour examination for the core course to be taken in Week Nought of Trinity Term.
   (ii) **Options and Research Design and Data Collection**: Courses other than Research Design and Data Collection, Social Explanation and Data Analysis, Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and Qualitative Methods shall be examined by means of an assessed essay of no less than 3,500 and no more than 5,000 words (inclusive of footnotes, but excluding bibliography and appendices), for which time will be set aside during the last three weeks of each term. A selection of three titles (as determined by the Board of Examiners), shall be posted on the designated noticeboard at the Centre for Criminology by noon on Friday of Week Six of the relevant term. Candidates shall be required to submit two typewritten copies of each essay to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford, not later than three weeks after this date, by noon. Research Design and Data collection, Social Explanation and Data Analysis, Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and Qualitative Methods shall be examined by an assessed essay of 2,500 to 3,000 words (inclusive of footnotes, but excluding bibliography and appendices), to be written between Friday of Week Six and Friday of Week Nine of the term in which the course runs. A choice from three titles (as determined by the Board of Examiners) will be posted on the designated noticeboard at the Centre for Criminology by noon on Friday of Week Six of the relevant term. Candidates shall be required to submit two copies of the essay to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford, not later than three weeks after this date, by noon. In addition, candidates taking Research Design and Data Collection, and where relevant, Social Explanation and Data Analysis and/or Statistical Analysis for Social Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods shall be required to complete to the satisfaction of the Course Tutor for the option a form of continuous assessment, which will be approved by the Board of Studies and the details of which will be published in the Graduate Student Handbook for the relevant year.
(iii) **Dissertation:** Two typewritten copies of the dissertation shall be submitted to the Examination Schools by noon on Friday of Week Nine of Trinity Term. One bound copy of the dissertation of each candidate who passes the examination shall be deposited in the Social Science Library, Manor Road.

8. The degree of M.Sc. shall be awarded to any candidate who achieves a mark of at least 50 per cent for (a) the five options and the Research Design and Data Collection course, (b) the core course paper, and (c) the dissertation, as well as satisfactory completion of the continuous assessment element of the Research Design and Data Collection, and, where relevant, those of Social Explanation and Data Analysis, and/or Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods. The examiners may award a distinction for excellence in the whole examination (and, in the case of candidates who have taken Research Design and Data Collection and, where relevant, Social Explanation and Data Analysis and/or Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and Qualitative Methods, have also satisfactorily completed the form of continuous assessment required for the relevant course): in this calculation, both the core course and the dissertation shall count as two papers and each assessed essay shall count as one.

9. Arrangements for reassessment shall be as follows:

   (i) **Core Course:** Candidates who fail, or withdraw from, the core course examination may resit the examination in the Trinity Term of the following academic year. Such candidates who have completed successfully either or both of (a) the options and Research Design and Data Collection (i.e. have obtained an aggregate mark of 50 per cent or more) and (b) the dissertation, may carry forward the marks gained for the successfully completed components. Candidates may also carry forward their certificate of satisfactory completion of the continuous assessment element of Research Design and Data Collection, and, where relevant, those of Social Explanation and Data Analysis, and/or Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods.

   (ii) **Options and Research Design and Data Collection:** Candidates who have failed to obtain an aggregate mark of 50 per cent for all assignments for the options and Research Design and Data Collection together, or who have withdrawn from any assessment, may resubmit assessments for which they obtained a mark of 49 per cent or less. Candidates may resubmit assessed essays in which they have obtained a mark of 49 per cent or less to the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford, according to the standard timetable for submitting essays in the following academic year. Such candidates who have completed successfully (a) the core course examination, (b) the dissertation, and (c) any assessment for which they have received a mark of 50 per cent or more, may carry forward the marks gained for the successfully completed components. Candidates may also carry forward their certificate of satisfactory completion of the continuous assessment element of Research Design and Data Collection, and, where relevant, that of Social Explanation and Data Analysis, and/or Statistical Methods for Social
Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods.

(iii) Continuous assessment element of Research Design and Data Collection, Social Explanation and Data Analysis, Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and Qualitative Methods: Candidates who fail to complete an assignment which forms part of the continuous assessment element of Research Design and Data Collection, Social Explanation and Data Analysis and/or Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods to the satisfaction of the respective Course Tutor may be required to resubmit that assignment once by noon on Friday of Week Nine of the relevant term.

(iv) Dissertation: Candidates who fail, or withdraw from, the dissertation may resubmit the dissertation by the required date in Trinity Term of the following academic year. Such candidates who have completed successfully (a) the core course and/or (b) the options and/or (c) Research Design and Data Collection, may carry forward the marks gained for the successfully completed components. Candidates may also carry forward their certificate of satisfactory completion of the continuous assessment element of Research Design and Data Collection, and, where relevant, that of Social Explanation and Data Analysis, and/or Statistical Methods for Social Scientists and/or Qualitative Methods.

Explanatory Notes

A. Change in assessment structure for the course Research Design and Data Collection

In September 2010 the Centre for Criminology made the course Research Design and Data Collection compulsory for MSc students (not just the students on the Research Methods version of the MSc as it had been previously) in response to the November 2008 Divisional Review of the Centre's Masters courses. At the same time the RM students were required to take one option in Michaelmas term. In the original format, the Research Design and Data Collection course was assessed via two pieces of course work during term time. It became clear to the Board of Studies however, that students were struggling to complete these two essays and maintain their participation in their other options. As a result, it was decided to amend the assessment structure for this course to reduce the assessed coursework during term-time and to introduce an end-of-term assessment. In this structure Research Design and Data Collection will be closer to the demands of the other two methods options offered by the centre (Qualitative Methods and Social Explanation and Data Analysis), both of which use a combination of continuous formative assessment and a final paper.

B. Change in assessment structure for the course Statistical Analysis for Social Scientists

The course Statistical Methods for Social Scientists is currently offered by the Department of Politics and International Relations. The Centre for Criminology has decided to offer the course in-house from the academic year 2011-2012 onwards. Criminology students will now get statistical methods tailored towards the study of criminology (not politics as has been the case until now) and the Centre can decide
its own assessment structure. It has now been decided by the Centre’s Board of Studies that this course will have a similar assessment structure as the other research methods courses (one 2,500-3,000-word end-of-term essay and continuous assessment throughout the term).