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

Title of programme
MSc in Education (all strands)

Brief note about nature of change:
Corrigendum to course guidelines published in the Gazette on 4 October 2012. Removal of listing of option papers and change to electronic submission policy.

Effective date
With immediate effect.

Location of change
In Examination Regulations 2012, and Gazette of 4th October 2012.

Detail of change

1. Delete from P.702, l.44 to P.705, l.11 and substitute:

1. Candidates must follow for three terms a course of instruction in Education, specialising in one of the following pathways: Comparative and International Education, Higher Education, Learning and Technology, Child Development and Education, or Research Design and Methodology. The examination shall consist of six one-term papers and a dissertation.

2. Part 1 of the course consists of six papers. Candidates take a combination of required pathway-specific core papers and option papers, as determined in advance by each pathway convenor. Candidates will be informed of the available options, along with the assessment requirement, by Friday of 0th week of Michaelmas Term in the year in which the examination is taken. On some pathways, students are also required to successfully complete a research internship.

3. Exceptionally, candidates may offer one paper from a relevant masters degree in another department in the University, in place of one option paper, subject to permission from the relevant pathway convenor and the Education Graduate Studies
Committee. Applications to take such a paper must normally be made by Friday of the first week of Michaelmas Term.

4. Papers are normally assessed by one or more coursework assignments totalling no more than 3,000 words (inclusive of footnotes but excluding bibliography and appendices). All such assignments must be uploaded to the Assignments section of the Higher Degrees Weblearn site by the times and dates specified at the start of the course. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate’s own work. Exceptionally, candidates are assessed by unseen examination.

5. For Part 2 of the course, candidates will be required to submit a dissertation of 15,000–20,000 words (including footnotes/endnotes but excluding appendices and references or bibliography), the title to be selected in consultation with the supervisor, on a topic relevant to the pathway being followed. The subject and title selected by the candidate must be approved by the Departmental Board not later than the first day of the fifth week in Hilary Term in the year in which the written examination is taken.

6. Three word-processed or printed copies of the dissertation must be delivered to the Chairman of Examiners, M.Sc. Education, c/o Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford, not later than noon on the second Friday in August in the year in which the written examination is taken. One copy should be hard bound and two soft bound. The two soft bound copies should be anonymous except for the candidate number. The hard bound copy of the dissertation of each candidate who passes the examination shall be retained by the department for deposit in the departmental library. Each submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate’s own work. Candidates are also required to upload an electronic copy.

7. Every candidate will be required to satisfy the examiners in the following: (i) Satisfactory attendance at the appropriate classroom-based courses; (ii) Satisfactory performance in both Part 1 and Part 2.

8. Candidates may also be required to attend an oral examination. The oral examination may be on the candidate’s written papers, dissertation, or both. Candidates shall be deemed to have passed the examination if they have satisfied the examiners in both Part 1 and Part 2. If Part 1 is failed, the candidate may retake the whole examination of Part 1 one further time on the next occasion when this is examined. If Part 2 is failed the candidate may resubmit the dissertation one further time on the next occasion when this is examined.

9. The examiners may award a distinction for excellence in the whole examination.

Explanatory Notes

The revised 2012-2013 Exam Regulations for this MSc require students to take six separately assessed one-term papers (following a model already pioneered by the Child Development pathway). In each of the four existing pathways, at least two (and sometimes four) of the six papers are required ‘core’ papers. Two of the six papers are research methods. Final decisions about the content of the pathways and options open to students will be left to convenors.

These changes also enable the MSc ERM degree to become a fifth pathway within the MSc Education, retitled as MSc Education (Research Methods). These ‘RM’ students could
combine the methodological requirements of the ESRC-recognised pathway with one or more assessed (or unassessed) option papers. The ‘core’ pathway papers for MSc Education (RM) would become Quantitative and Qualitative Research. As the examinations for the MSc ERM course were already supervised by the MSc Education Exam Board, there will be no visible change to examination procedures or the amounts of examining involved.

This reform consolidates the role of the MSc Education degree as a strong foundation for research, opens up some of the research methods teaching, and provides ‘RM’ students with the chance to take substantive options. The change allows greater specialisation and flexibility with timetabling, whilst minimising disruption to existing schedules. There are no significant teaching resource implications because these new Option courses replace some of the existing core courses delivered on the pathways. Instead, the new proposals allow for more flexibility with staffing allocations and allow for sabbatical leave etc.

Each paper in Part 1 would be independently assessed by one piece of course work (with the exception of one paper in the Higher Education pathway, to be assessed by unseen exam). Part 2 of the degree would continue to be an independent dissertation, to be submitted by mid-August.

**Additional changes, November 2012:** Available option papers are no longer specified so that regulations do not need to altered and updated as regularly. Electronic submission of dissertation introduced, replacing previous system where a copy was emailed to the department.