

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

SSD/2/2/4

Social Sciences Divisional Board

Approved on behalf of Education Committee 23 January 2024

Title of Programme

Master of Science by Coursework in Nature, Society, and Environmental Governance

Brief note about nature of change:

Major changes to assessment.

Effective date

For students starting from Michaelmas 2024.

For first examination from 2024/25

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2023-24, Master of Science by Coursework in Nature, Society, and Environmental Governance* (ox.ac.uk)

Details of Change:

Strike all citations:

~~1.1. The Social Sciences Divisional Board shall elect for the supervision of the course a Standing Committee. The Academic Director(s) and Course Director will be responsible to the Standing Committee.~~

~~1.2. Candidates must follow a course of instruction in Human Geography for at least three terms, and will, when entering for the examination, be required to produce a certificate from the Course Director to this effect.~~

~~1.3. The examination will consist of:~~

~~1.4(i) a written examination of one paper in *Research Skills* and two papers in *Theory and Analysis* and *Policy and Governance*;~~

~~1.5(ii) two assessed essays based upon elective courses. These must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform 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;~~

~~^{1.6}(iii) a policy brief based upon the fieldtrip undertaken in Hilary Term. The policy brief must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform by the time and date specified at the start of the course. The submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work;~~

~~^{1.7}(iv) a dissertation on a subject selected in consultation with the supervisor and the Course Director and approved by the Course and Academic Directors.~~

~~^{1.8}4. Candidates must submit to the Course Director by the end of Hilary Term in the year in which they enter the examination, the title and a brief statement of the form and scope of their dissertation, together with the name of a person who has agreed to act as their supervisor during preparation of the dissertation.~~

~~^{1.9}It may be (a) a theoretical argument related to themes in contemporary human geography and/or environmental governance, or (b) a piece of empirically based research, or (c) an extended treatment of an issue which is intended to be the basis for future research for the degree of M.Litt. or D.Phil. In that case (c), it may be part of a proposal and/or application for further degree study.~~

~~^{1.10}5. The dissertation shall be of a maximum length of 15,000 words and accompanied by an abstract not exceeding 150 words. The maximum word count shall include footnotes, but exclude appendices, references and the abstract. The detailed format and specification of the dissertation shall be approved by the Standing Committee, and published in the course handbook.~~

~~^{1.11}6. The dissertation must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform no later than noon on the first weekday of September in the year in which the written examination is taken. The submission must be accompanied by a declaration indicating that it is the candidate's own work.~~

~~^{1.12}7. In the written examination the examiners will permit the use of hand-held pocket calculators subject to the conditions set out under the heading 'Use of calculators in examinations' in the *Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations*.~~

~~^{1.13}8. The examiners may also examine any candidate viva voce on the candidate's written papers, dissertation, or both.~~

~~^{1.14}9. Arrangements for reassessment shall be agreed by the Standing Committee and published in the course handbook.~~

Schedule

~~^{1.15}(a) Core courses~~

~~^{1.16}The core courses will be examined under the following heads:~~

~~^{1.17}1. *Research Skills*~~

~~1.18 Candidates will be expected to have a knowledge of research methods in social, environmental, and geographical research. These will include qualitative and quantitative methods relevant to contemporary research themes.~~

~~1.19 *2. Theory and Analysis*~~

~~1.20 Candidates will be expected to have knowledge of relevant debates in human geography and related disciplines concerning the relations between nature and society, science and environmental politics, and global and local political and economic processes.~~

~~1.21 *3. Policy and Governance*~~

~~1.22 Candidates will be expected to have knowledge of relevant debates and issues concerning environmental policy and governance, and corporate environmental management.~~

~~1.23 *(b) Elective courses*~~

~~1.24 Candidates will be expected to show advanced knowledge of two of the elective courses on offer in any one year.~~

Insert citations and number as follows:

1. The programme shall be under the supervision of the Graduate Teaching and Examinations Committee of the School of Geography and the Environment.

2. Each candidate will be required to follow a course of instruction in Nature, Society, and Environmental Governance for three terms full-time.

3. Candidates must submit three portfolios of work and a dissertation as detailed below, and also attend two elective courses.

Portfolio 1 - Foundations

4. Candidates must submit a 2,000 word annotated bibliography by noon on Thursday of week 8 of Michaelmas term and a 3,000 word written assignment by noon on Thursday of week 0 of Hilary term.

Portfolio 2 – Theory and Analysis

5. Candidates must submit a 10 minute recorded presentation by noon on Thursday of week 8 of Hilary term and a 3,000 word written assignment by noon on Thursday week -1 of Trinity term.

Portfolio 3 – Research Skills

6. Candidates must submit a 1,500 word dissertation proposal by noon on Thursday of week -1 of Trinity term, a 1,500 word fieldtrip report by noon on Thursday of week 2 of Trinity term, and will make a 10 minute presentation on their dissertation topic during Trinity term.

Dissertation

7. Candidates must submit a dissertation of no more than 15,000 words by noon on the first Tuesday in September.

8. Candidates should refer to the Course Handbook for full details of the requirements for each assessment.

9. All assessments must be submitted using the University approved online submission system. Technical information on the requirements for online submissions is provided in the Course Handbook.

10. Candidates who fail either assessment for Portfolio 1 will have the opportunity to resubmit in week 5 of Trinity term, candidates who fail any of the assessments for Portfolios 2 and 3 will have the opportunity to resubmit and/or make a further presentation in the first week in September. Candidates will be informed of the exact dates for re-submissions/further presentations after the exam board has confirmed that reassessment is required. In the case of failure of the dissertation, this may be resubmitted either by noon on Tuesday of week 1 of Hilary term the following year, or by the deadline in clause 7 in the following year.

11. Candidates must present themselves for an oral examination if required by the examiners.

Explanatory Notes

Major changes to assessment in line with the full programme and assessment re-design approved by Education Committee.

The core modules are assessed in synoptic blocks, with at least two modules contributing to each assessment task. Written examinations are replaced with an annotated bibliography, two synoptic assignments, and an individual oral presentation. Students will also complete an individual fieldwork report and the assessment for the dissertation is diversified to include a proposal, presentation and final submission.