

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 on 13 July 2025

Title of Programme

Research Degrees in Politics and International Relations

Brief note about nature of change:

Changes to formatting for clarity

Effective date

For all students on course from Michaelmas term 2025

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations* [Research Degrees in Politics and International Relations](#)

In addition to the Gazette notice published on 10 October 2024, [Politics and International Relations, Research Degrees](#)

Details of Change:

Strike all existing citations:

~~^{1.1}(See also the general notice at the commencement of these regulations. The current edition of the relevant Student Handbook contains an elaborated version of these regulations.)~~

~~^{1.2}1. Governance~~

~~^{1.3}The DPhils in Politics and the DPhil in International Relations shall be under the supervision of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Politics and International Relations.~~

~~^{1.4}2. Attendance requirements~~

~~^{1.5}The DPhil programmes shall be offered on a full-time and part-time basis. Full-time students are required to meet the residence requirements set out in §6 of the General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Part-time research students are~~

~~required to attend for a minimum of thirty days of university-based work each year, to be arranged with the agreement of their supervisor, for the period that their names remain on the Register of Graduate Students unless individually dispensed by the Graduate Studies Committee.~~

~~1.63. Transfer to MLitt or DPhil status~~

~~1.7 Students will normally be admitted as Probationer Research Students. Students will normally be expected to achieve Transfer of Status in their third or fourth term after admission (or in their sixth to eighth term after admission for part time students). Applications should be submitted via Student Self Service and will comprise the following:~~

~~1.8 (i) Politics~~

~~1.9 (a) a completed transfer of status form;~~

~~1.10 Either two copies of:~~

~~1.11 (b) a proposed schedule of work;~~

~~(c) a paragraph statement describing the project;~~

~~(d) a research design of between 4,000 to 6,000 words maximum;~~

~~(e) written work relevant to the thesis of between 5,000 to 7,000 words maximum.~~

~~1.12 Or for students following the three paper route:~~

~~1.13 (b) a submissions of a research design for one paper;~~

~~(c) a document setting out the article isation of the project and previewing the whole thesis;~~

~~(d) an introduction to all of the proposed papers and explanation of their academic relationship;~~

~~(e) a literature review;~~

~~(f) a timetable for completion.~~

~~1.14 (ii) International Relations~~

~~1.15 (a) a completed transfer of status form;~~

~~1.16 Either two copies of:~~

~~1.17 (b) a short outline of the thesis topic including the title and chapter headings;~~

~~(c) a proposed schedule of work;~~

~~(e) a draft introduction of between 4,000 to 6,000 words maximum;~~

~~(d) a draft chapter of the thesis of between 5,000 to 7,000 words maximum.~~

~~1.18 Or for students following the three paper route:~~

~~1.19 (b) a submissions of a research design for one paper;~~

~~(c) a document setting out the article isation of the project and previewing the whole thesis;~~

~~(d) an introduction to all of the proposed papers and explanation of their~~

- ~~academic relationship;~~
- ~~(e) a literature review;~~
- ~~(f) a timetable for completion.~~

~~1.20 All students must also provide evidence of the satisfactory completion of a course of lectures, seminars, and classes, as set out in the International Relations Student Handbook and supplemented by their supervisor, and satisfactorily complete a course of research methods training, as set out in the International Relations Student Handbook and supplemented by their supervisor and/or by the International Relations Director of Research Training.~~

~~1.21 Full details of the timings for submissions and requirements for the Transfer of Status application can be found in the relevant Student Handbook.~~

~~The Graduate Studies Committee will appoint two assessors who will read the work, interview the student and submit a recommendation to the committee in a written report. The Graduate Studies Committee will then decide whether Transfer of Status will be approved.~~

~~1.22 A student whose first application for Transfer of Status is not approved (including where the outcome is a recommendation to transfer to the MLitt) is permitted to make one further application and will be granted an extension of one term (or up to two terms for part-time students) to Probationer Research Student status if necessary. If after a second attempt, the Graduate Studies Committee can neither approve transfer to the DPhil or to the MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.~~

~~1.23 4. Confirmation of Status~~

~~1.24 Students will normally be expected to achieve Confirmation of Status by no later than their ninth term after admission (or in their eighteenth term after admission for part-time students). Students admitted directly to DPhil status having completed the full-time MPhil in Politics or International Relations must achieve Confirmation of Status by the end of their tenth term (fourteenth term for part-time students) as a graduate student, inclusive of the time spent on the full-time MPhil degree.~~

~~Applications should be submitted to the via Student Self Service and will comprise the following:~~

~~1.25 (i) Politics~~

~~1.26 (a) a completed confirmation of status form;~~

~~1.27 Two copies of:~~

~~1.28 (b) a statement of the thesis title and chapter headings;~~

~~(c) a draft introduction;~~

~~(d) two additional chapters (or two draft papers for students following the three paper route) intended to form part of the final thesis.~~

~~1.29 The combined introduction and the two chapters should not exceed 30,000 words.~~

~~1.30 (ii) *International Relations*~~

~~1.31 (a) a completed confirmation of status form;~~

~~1.32 Two copies of:~~

~~1.33 (b) a statement of the thesis title and chapter headings;~~

~~(c) a draft introduction;~~

~~(d) two additional chapters (or two draft papers for students following the three paper route) intended to form part of the final thesis;~~

~~1.34 The combined introduction and the two chapters should not exceed 30,000 words.~~

~~1.35 (e) a self-assessment report of progress of no more than 300 words.~~

~~1.36 Full details of the timings for submissions and requirements for Confirmation of Status application can be found in the relevant Student Handbook.~~

~~1.37 The Graduate Studies Committee will appoint two assessors who will read the work, interview the student and submit a recommendation to the committee in a written report. The Graduate Studies Committee will then decide whether Confirmation of Status will be approved.~~

~~1.38 A student whose first application for Confirmation of Status is not approved is permitted to make one further application, normally within one term (two terms for part-time students) of the original application, and will be granted an extension of one term (up to two terms for part-time students) if necessary. If after the second attempt the DPhil Committee can neither approve the application nor approve transfer to the MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.~~

~~1.39 5. Theses~~

~~1.40 Theses for the Degree of DPhil which exceed 100,000 words and theses for the Degree of MLitt which exceed 50,000 words, excluding the bibliography, are liable to be rejected unless students have, with the support of their supervisors, been granted permission to exceed the word limit by the Graduate Studies Committee. These figures are maxima and students are advised that many successful theses have been significantly shorter.~~

~~1.41 *Three paper route*~~

~~1.42 A D.Phil. thesis may be accepted for examination if it consists of a minimum of three academic papers, framed by an introduction, a survey of literature and a conclusion. Such a body of work shall be deemed acceptable provided it represents a coherent and focused body of research, addressing one overarching research question. Current overall word~~

~~limits and conditions are detailed in the D.Phil. Student Handbook. Candidates wishing to proceed in this manner must be approved at the time of Confirmation of Status.~~

~~1.43 If, after a petition is accepted, a candidate wishes to revert to a standard D.Phil. thesis format, the candidate must lodge a petition with their supervisor to be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, showing good cause for the change.~~

Insert citations and number as follows:

(See also the general notice at the commencement of these regulations. The current edition of the relevant Student Handbook contains an elaborated version of these regulations.)

1. Governance

The research degrees in Politics shall be under the supervision of the Politics Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Politics and International Relations.

The research degrees in International Relations shall be under the supervision of the International Relations Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Politics and International Relations.

2. Attendance requirements

The DPhil programmes shall be offered on a full-time and part-time basis. Full-time students are required to meet the residence requirements set out in Part 6 of the General Regulations for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy. Part-time research students are required to attend for a minimum of thirty days of university-based work each year, to be arranged with the agreement of their supervisor, for the period that their names remain on the Register of Graduate Students unless individually dispensed by the relevant Graduate Studies Committee.

3. Transfer to MLitt or DPhil status

Students will normally be admitted as Probationer Research Students (PRS), unless exempted due to (a) having completed an MPhil in the Department of Politics and International Relations and (b) the research topic proposed for the DPhil is a development of the research contained in the thesis.

Students will normally be expected to achieve Transfer of Status in their third or fourth term after admission (or in their sixth to eighth term after admission for part-time students).

Students should submit the Transfer of Status application via student self-service. The application shall comprise the following:

3.1. Politics PRS students submitting a monograph thesis:

- a) Proposed schedule of work
- b) One paragraph abstract describing the project
- c) Research design of 4,000-6,000 words
- d) One draft chapter of the thesis of 5,000-7,000 words

3.2. Politics PRS students submitting a three-article thesis:

- a) Proposed schedule of work
- b) One paragraph abstract or a short outline of the thesis, describing the whole project
- c) Draft introduction of 4000-6,000 words setting out the structure and coherence of the three articles and explaining their academic relationship
- d) 5,000-7,000 word document setting out the research design and a preliminary analysis for one paper

3.3. International Relations PRS students submitting a monograph thesis:

- a) Short outline of the thesis topic including the title and chapter headings
- b) Proposed schedule of work
- c) Draft introduction of 4,000-6,000 words
- d) Draft chapter of the thesis of 5,000-7,000 words

3.4. International Relations PRS students submitting a three-article thesis:

- a) 5000-7000 word document setting out the research design for one paper
- b) Draft introduction of 4000-6000 words setting out the structure and coherence of the three articles and explaining their academic relationship including reviewing the relevant literature
- c) Timetable for completion

All Politics and International Relations students must also provide evidence of the satisfactory completion of a course of lectures, seminars, and classes, and (where

relevant) a course of research methods training, as set out in the DPhil Handbook and supplemented by their supervisor.

Full details of the requirements for the Transfer of Status application can be found in the DPhil Handbook for Politics and International Relations.

The relevant Graduate Studies Committee will appoint two assessors who will read the work, interview the student and submit a recommendation to the Committee in a written report. The relevant Graduate Studies Committee will then decide whether Transfer of Status will be approved.

A student whose first application for Transfer of Status is not approved (including where the outcome is a recommendation to transfer to the MLitt) is permitted to make one further application and will be granted an extension of one term (or up to two terms for part-time students) to Probationer Research Student status if necessary. If after a second attempt, the relevant Graduate Studies Committee can neither approve transfer to the DPhil or to the MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.

4. Confirmation of Status

Students will normally be expected to achieve Confirmation of Status by no later than their ninth term after admission (or in their eighteenth term after admission for part-time students). Students admitted directly to DPhil status having completed the full-time MPhil in Politics or International Relations must achieve Confirmation of Status by the end of their tenth term (fourteenth term for part-time students) as a graduate student, inclusive of the time spent on the full-time MPhil degree.

Students should submit a Confirmation of Status application via student self-service. The application will comprise the following:

4.1. DPhil Politics students:

a) Statement of the thesis title and chapter headings

b) Draft introduction

c) For monograph theses, two draft substantive chapters addressing the core research questions. (For empirical theses, this will be two draft empirical chapters.) For three-article theses, two draft articles intended to form part of the final thesis.

The combined introduction and the two chapters should not exceed 30,000 words.

4.2. DPhil International Relations students:

a) Statement of the thesis title and chapter headings

b) Draft introduction

c) Two additional chapters (or two draft articles for students following the three-article route) intended to form part of the final thesis.

The combined introduction and the two chapters should not exceed 30,000 words.

Full details of the requirements for Confirmation of Status application can be found in the DPhil Handbook for Politics and International Relations.

The relevant Graduate Studies Committee will appoint two assessors who will read the work, interview the student and submit a recommendation to the committee in a written report. The relevant Graduate Studies Committee will then decide whether Confirmation of Status will be approved.

A student whose first application for Confirmation of Status is not approved is permitted to make one further application, normally within one term (two terms for part-time students) of the original application, and will be granted an extension of one term (up to two terms for part-time students) if necessary. If after the second attempt the DPhil Committee can neither approve the application nor approve transfer to the MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.

5. Theses

5.1. Monograph

Theses for the Degree of DPhil which exceed 100,000 words and theses for the Degree of MLitt which exceed 50,000 words, are liable to be rejected unless students have, with the support of their supervisor(s), been granted permission to exceed the word limit by the relevant Graduate Studies Committee. The aforementioned limits include abstract, footnotes and endnotes but not the bibliography. These figures are maxima and students are advised that many successful theses have been significantly shorter.

5.2. Three article route

A DPhil thesis may be accepted for examination if it consists of a minimum of three academic papers (including literature reviews for each paper), framed by an extended introduction (which includes a literature review setting the three articles in the wider context) and a conclusion. Such a body of work shall be deemed acceptable provided it represents a coherent body of research, addressing one overarching research question or a set of connected research questions. The same word limits as for the DPhil monograph thesis apply as to the three-article thesis.

Candidates wishing to submit a three-article thesis must be approved at the time of Transfer of Status (or within the first three terms if Transfer of Status has been

waived). If a candidate subsequently wishes to revert to their original thesis format, the candidate must obtain the approval of their supervisor to be approved by the relevant Director of Graduate Studies, showing good cause for the change.

Explanatory Notes

1. Changes to improve clarity.
2. Removal of the separate requirement for a self-assessment report for Confirmation of Status, as this is requested as part of the Confirmation application form.
3. Three paper route literature review clarifications.