

HDB(23)35

**Humanities Divisional Board**

**Approved by the Faculty's Graduate Studies Committee and seen by JCC in Trinity term 2023**

**Title of Programme/ Name of Regulation**

Research Degrees in Music

**Brief note about nature of change:**

Change to the details of the Submission for the DPhil in Composition.

**Location of change**

In *Examination Regulations 2019-20*

<https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=rdegrinmusi&srchYear=2022&srchTerm=1&year=2019&term=1>

**Effective date**

**For students starting from MT 2023**

## Detail of change

1.33 5. Final submission for the Degree of D.Phil.

1.34 EITHER (A) or (B)

1.35 (A) For those offering compositions as part of the final submission, either:

1.36 (1) a portfolio of between three and six musical compositions, totalling between 45 and 90- 50 and 80 minutes' duration, with at least one composition being of large scale (defined as for large-scale forces, such as orchestra, and/or of more than 30 minutes' duration). The portfolio will be prefaced by a critical writing submission of up to 5,000 words situating the candidate's portfolio submissions with respect to the field of contemporary music, and where appropriate to musicological studies or other academic fields/domains of the candidate's choosing; and (2) ~~(b) a dissertation of between 20,000 and 25,000 words either on the candidate's own music or on some aspect of music related to the candidate's compositional concerns.~~ a separate dissertation of up to 20,000 words.

OR

(1) a portfolio of between three and six musical compositions, totaling between 60 and 100 minutes' duration, with at least one composition being of large scale (defined as for large-scale forces, such as orchestra, and/or of more than 30 minutes' duration);

and (2) a dissertation of up to 20,000 words situating the candidate's portfolio submissions with respect to the field of contemporary music, and where appropriate to musicological studies or other academic fields/domains of the candidate's choosing.

## Explanatory Notes

The lower duration limit of 45 minutes has repeatedly been deemed to be too short by external examiners and the changes aim to address this. Please note that the range of possibilities must always be wide; duration is an aesthetically loaded category, and can vary greatly from composer to composer.

Current regulations allow the dissertation to be either a piece of critical writing on their own compositions or a work on a related area of research. Students opting for the latter have adopted the informal practice of writing a preface to the score element of the examination, situating their work in the context of contemporary music. It was agreed to formalize such practice and bring clarity on the word count required for both the preface and the dissertation.. The changes create two pieces of written work for the first route and one for the second; the two routes are being equalised by requiring that students writing only a dissertation submit a longer composition. A further advantage is the introduction of the possibility for students to submit a 100 minutes composition.