

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 Social Policy and Intervention

Brief note about nature of change:

Changes to the integrated thesis route for DPhil Social Policy students; integration of part-time details

Effective date

For all students on course who have not yet submitted from Michaelmas term 2025

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations* [Research Degrees in Social Policy and Intervention](#)

Details of Change:

Amend citations as follows:

1.1 *(These regulations replace the regulations for Research Degrees in Social Policy and Intervention, Sociology, and International Development from MT 2019 for all students registered for Research Degrees in Social Policy and Intervention.)*

1.2 1. Governance

1.3 The DPhil in Social Policy and the DPhil in Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation (and for those starting before MT2019 the DPhil in Social Intervention) shall be under the supervision of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Social Policy and Intervention.

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 MSc by Research) 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).

1.8 Applications should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee and will comprise the following:

1.9(a) a completed transfer of status form

1.10(b) a provisional thesis title and research proposal;

1.11(c) a literature review of between 5,000 to 8,000 words;

1.12(d) a piece of written work relevant to the thesis of between 5,000 to 8,000 words;

1.13(e) a timetable for completion;

1.14(f) evidence of attendance of subject specific courses;

1.15(g) Research Ethics forms (if applicable);

1.16(h) Health and Safety forms (if applicable);

1.17(i) Skills Review and Training Needs Analysis form.

1.18 Full details of requirements can be found in the Graduate Research Students handbook.

1.19 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.

1.20 A student whose first application for Transfer of Status is not approved (including where the outcome is a recommendation to transfer to the MSc by Research or MLitt) is permitted to make one further application and will be granted an extension of one term 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 MSc by Research or MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.

1.21 4. Confirmation of Status

1.22 Students will normally be expected to achieve Confirmation of Status in their seventh term and by no later than their ninth term after admission (or in their fourteenth term and no later than their eighteenth term after admission for part-time students). Students admitted directly to DPhil status having completed an M.Phil. (with a thesis in the same broad field as the topic for the D.Phil.) must achieve Confirmation of Status by the end of

their third term (sixth term for part-time students) as a graduate student, exclusive of the time spent on the Register of Students while undertaking the full-time MPhil.

1.23 Applications should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee and will comprise the following:

1.24(a) a completed confirmation of status form;

1.25(b) a thesis title and abstract;

1.26(c) a thesis outline;

1.27(d) a research proposal of 4 to 5 pages;

1.28(e) a timetable for completion;

1.29(f) for the monograph thesis route at least two draft chapters, or for the thesis by papers route two draft papers;

1.30(g) evidence of presentation of (part of) the thesis at a seminar/conference/workshop;

1.31(h) Skills Review and Training Needs Analysis form.

1.32 Full details of requirements can be found in the Graduate Research Students handbook.

1.33 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.

1.34 A student whose first application for Confirmation of Status is not approved is permitted to make one further application, normally within one term of the original application **(two terms for part-time students)**, and will be granted an extension of one term **(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 MSc by Research or MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.

1.35 **5. Theses**

1.36 Theses for the Degree of DPhil which exceed 100,000 words, theses for the Degree of MLitt which exceed 50,000 words, and theses for the Degree of MSc by Research which exceed 25,000 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.

1.37 *Articles-based theses*

1.38 A DPhil thesis may be accepted for examination if it consists of ~~either a minimum of four academic papers of publishable quality for the DPhil in Social Policy, or~~ a minimum of three academic papers **(including literature reviews for each paper)**, ~~of publishable quality~~

~~for the DPhil in Social Intervention or DPhil in Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation. In either case the thesis should be~~ 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 and focused body of research, addressing one overarching research question. A thesis submitted under this rubric may include joint publications, but for the DPhil in Social Policy only, at least one paper must be single-authored. Where joint publications are included, all co-authors must certify in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies that at least 70% of that work represents that of the candidate. Current overall word limits and conditions are detailed in the DPhil Notes for Guidance. Candidates wishing to proceed in this manner should with the support of their supervisor obtain approval from the Director of Graduate Studies before applying for Confirmation of DPhil status. If a candidate wishes to revert to a standard DPhil thesis format, with the support of their supervisor, they should obtain approval from the Director of Graduate Studies, showing good cause for the change.

Explanatory Notes

DPhil Social Policy students submitting an integrated thesis will now only be required to submit three papers rather than four. This will align the requirements with the DPhil Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation. Students currently preparing their thesis based on a four-paper submission will still be able to submit four papers.

Changes to the integrated thesis section for DPhil Social Policy and DPhil Social Intervention and Policy Evaluation students to clarify the purpose of the literature review(s).

Integration of part-time pathway details – the DPhils were approved to be delivered on a part-time basis in 2018, with the first part-time cohort from 2020. These details had been missed and are being added now.