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 the division's Quality Assurance Committee on 27 March 2025.

Title of Programme
Research Degrees in the Blavatnik School of Government

Brief note about nature of change:
Introduction of the ability to submit a second co-authored paper when submitting an article-based thesis.

Effective date
All students on course from 2024/25.

Location of change
In *Examination Regulations* 2024-25, Research Degrees in the Blavatnik School of Government

Details of Change:
Amend citations and re-number as follows:
[1.1]**1. Governance**
[1.2]The DPhil in Public Policy shall be under the supervision of the DPhil Committee of the Blavatnik School of Government.
[1.3]**2. Attendance requirements**
[1.4]The DPhil in Public Policy 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 DPhil Committee.
[1.5]**3. Transfer of Status**

1.6Students will normally be admitted as Probationer Research Students. Applications for Transfer of Status should be submitted to the DPhil Committee not later than the end of week 8 of their third term (or their sixth term in the case of part-time students). An extension of one term (two terms for part-time students) may be granted by the DPhil Committee in exceptional circumstances.

1.7Applications will comprise the following:

1.8(*a*) a completed transfer of status form. If a student intends to submit an article-based thesis, the student's supervisor should indicate support for this on the application form;

1.9(*b*) confirmation from the student's supervisor that such courses as the student has been required to undertake have been satisfactorily completed;

1.10(*c*) two typewritten or word-processed copies of:

1.11i. a brief, single paragraph summary of the project, including information on methodological and theoretical approach;

1.12ii. a research proposal of no more than 4,000 – 6,000 words;

1.13iii. *either* a draft chapter (for example the literature review) of between 5,000 and 7,000 words;

1.14*or*, if submitting an article-based thesis, a draft of the introduction, of between 5,000 and 7,000 words.

1.15Full details of requirements can be found in the course handbook.

1.16The DPhil 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 DPhil Committee will then decide whether Transfer of Status will be approved.

1.17A 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 two terms for part-time students) to Probationer Research Student status if necessary. If after a second attempt, the DPhil Committee can neither approve transfer to the DPhil or to the MLitt, the student will be removed from the Register of Graduate Students.

1.18**4. Confirmation of status**

1.19Applications for Confirmation of DPhil status should normally be submitted to the DPhil Committee no earlier than the sixth term and no later than the ninth term from admission as a Probationer Research Student (or no earlier than the twelfth term and no later than the eighteenth term in the case of part-time students).

1.20Applications will comprise the following:

1.21(*a*) a completed confirmation of status application form. If a student intends to submit an article-based thesis, the student's supervisor should indicate support for this on the application form;

1.22(*b*) two typewritten or word-processed copies of:

1.23i. an abstract of the thesis (one side of A4 paper);

1.24ii. an outline structure of the thesis, consisting of chapter headings, and a brief statement of the intended content;

1.25iii. an outline timetable detailing what work has already been carried out and what activities are planned for the remaining stages;

1.26iv. *either* two completed draft chapters (other than the literature review) intended to form part of the final thesis;

1.27*or*, if submitting an article-based thesis, two of each of the following; a completed article, a second article in draft form, and the outline of a third article.

1.28Full details of requirements can be found in the course handbook.

1.29The DPhil 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 DPhil Committee will then decide whether Confirmation of Status will be approved.

1.30A 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 (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.

1.31**5. Theses**

1.32DPhil theses must not exceed 100,000 words and MLitt theses must not exceed 50,000 words. The word limit must include the abstract, all notes and appendices but not the bibliography.

1.33*Article-based thesis route*

1.34To submit an article-based thesis, the student must submit a case supported by their supervisor, to the DPhil Committee. If approved, the student's supervisor should also indicate support on the Transfer of Status and Confirmation of Status application forms. Should a candidate subsequently wish to revert to the traditional-style thesis, they must submit a written application to the DPhil Committee, with the support of their supervisor, detailing the reasons for the change.

1.35A DPhil thesis submitted under this rubric will consist of three articles of publishable quality, framed by an introduction, a literature review (which may be included as part of the introduction) and a conclusion. Such a body of work must address an overarching research question and represent a coherent and focused body of research. The article

based thesis may have only one co-authored article. In the case of a co-authored article, students must submit to the DPhil Committee a description of their contribution to the article and demonstrate that their work represents the majority contribution.

[new citation] The default position is that an article-based thesis shall have only one co-authored article. A student may request that their article-based thesis has instead only one solo-authored article. The decision whether to grant this request shall be taken by the Director of Graduate Studies at the School, who shall consult with the student's supervisor and consider relevant documents such as Transfer of Status and/or Confirmation of Status reports. All co-authored papers must include a statement indicating the candidate's contribution to the paper.

[new citation] It is anticipated that the Director of Graduate Studies will grant permission in situations where there is sufficient evidence from the solo-authored work produced to date that the student is able to carry out independent research.

1.36The article-based thesis must not exceed 100,000 words, the limit to include the abstract, all notes and appendices but not the bibliographies. Further guidance can be found in the course handbook.

Explanatory Notes

Introducing the ability for students following the article-based thesis route to submit a second co-authored paper, subject to permission from the Director of Graduate Studies.