

FACULTY OF
**MEDIEVAL
AND
MODERN
LANGUAGES**



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

**HANDBOOK
FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS (RESEARCH)
IN MEDIEVAL & MODERN LANGUAGES
2018-19**

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INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed as a guide for postgraduate research students in the Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages undertaking either the **Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval and Modern Languages** or the **Master of Letters in Medieval and Modern Languages**, commencing in Michaelmas 2018. Please note that this handbook may differ for students starting in other years. Don't try to read it at one sitting, but do familiarise yourself with the content, so that you know what is covered in these notes for future reference.

The Examination Regulations relating to this course are online: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs. If there is a conflict between information in this handbook and the Examination Regulations, then you should follow the Examination Regulations.

The information in this handbook is accurate as of October 2018, however it may be necessary for changes to be made in certain circumstances (www.graduate.ox.ac.uk/coursechanges). If such changes are made the department will publish a new version of this handbook, together with a list of the changes, and students will be informed.

If you have any questions or concerns, you should contact the following people:

- Your General Supervisor
- The Director of Graduate Studies
 - Michaelmas, 2018: Professor Timothy Farrant, Pembroke College:
dgs@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
 - Hilary & Trinity, 2019: Professor Guido Bonsaver, Pembroke College:
dgs@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
- Graduate Studies Administrators:
 - Ms Abigail Appleby, Graduate Studies Officer
Ms Sandra Beaumont, Graduate Studies Assistant:
graduate.studies@mod-langs.ox.ac.uk
- The Tutor for Graduates or Dean of Graduates at your College
- The Graduate Student Representatives
 - Following elections in Michaelmas, the representatives for the new academic year will be detailed on the website: www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/graduate/graduate-network.

Overall responsibility for graduate studies in Modern Languages lies with the Modern Languages Faculty Board. A committee of the Board, the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), meets at least once a term on Wednesday of 3rd week, and reports to the Faculty Board, which meets on Monday afternoons in the 2nd and 8th weeks. The Board appoints the Director of Graduate Studies. Day-to-day administration is done by the Graduate Studies Office, based at 41 Wellington Square.

FURTHER COURSE-RELATED INFORMATION

You may also need to consult the following sources:

- The Medieval & Modern Languages WebLearn site, which has links to a range of relevant information and guidance: weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:humdiv:modlang:graduates.
- Termly lecture lists, detailed on the above mentioned WebLearn site, and from your college the week before each full term (0th week). The lists for other faculties, such as English or Modern History, are available online and from the University Offices. A complete set is available for consultation on the Lecture List notice board at 41 Wellington Square.
- Oxford University Gazette (The University 'newspaper'), which contains details of special lectures, scholarships, dates of examinations, academic jobs and junior research fellowships at Oxford and Cambridge. A version is available at www.ox.ac.uk/gazette.
- The Education Committee's Guidance for Taught Courses and Research Degrees, available online at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/edc/policiesandguidance.

OXFORD ACADEMIC YEAR

The academic year at Oxford is divided into three 8-week terms, during which residence in Oxford is obligatory. Since the graduate programme is intensive, students should also expect to be engaged in academic work for a significant part of the vacation periods.

Oxford Terminology

| | |
|------------|--------|
| Michaelmas | Autumn |
| Hilary | Spring |
| Trinity | Summer |

REGISTRATION AND STUDENT SELF SERVICE

All new students are sent a college fresher's pack containing details of how to activate their Oxford Single Sign-on account. The Oxford Single Sign-on (SSO) is used to access Student Self Service to register online, as well as to access other central IT services such as University email, WebLearn and the Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR) System.

In order to complete your registration as an Oxford University student, you will be sent an email with instructions on how to register. New students must complete their registration by the end of the first week of term in order to confirm their status as members of the University. Ideally students should complete registration before they arrive. Continuing students must register at the anniversary of the term in which they first started their programme of study.

Once students have completed their University registration, an enrolment certificate is available from Student Self Service to download and print. This certificate may be used to obtain council tax exemption. In addition to enabling students to register online, Student Self Service provides web access to important course and other information needed by students throughout their academic career. Students can amend their address and contact details via Student Self Service, and they can use the Service to access detailed exam results, see their full academic record and print transcripts.

UNIVERSITY CARD

The University Card provides students with access to facilities and services such as libraries, computing services and the Language Teaching Centre. In some colleges and faculties, students also need the card as a payment card or to enter buildings which have swipe-card access control. The University Card also acts as a form of identity when students are on college or University premises. Cards are issued to students by their college on arrival in Oxford, once registration has been completed.

EMAIL

Once a student's registration details have been processed, the student will be able to find out their email address from OUCS Self Service and have access to email either by the Webmail service (webmail.ox.ac.uk) or via an email client such as Thunderbird, Outlook Express, Netscape Mail or Eudora. The email system is controlled by the Oxford University Computing Services (OUCS) and problems should be referred to them.

GRADUATE SUPERVISION REPORTING (GSR)

At the end of each term, your supervisor(s) will submit a report on your academic progress. To facilitate this reporting, the University operates an online Graduate Supervision Reporting (GSR). Within this system, you have the opportunity to contribute to your termly supervision reports by reviewing and commenting on your own progress.

You are strongly encouraged to use this opportunity to:

- Review and comment on your academic progress
- Measure your progress against the timetable and requirements of your programme of study
- Identify skills developed and training undertaken or required
- List your engagement with the academic community (e.g. seminar/conference attendance or any teaching you have undertaken).
- Raise concerns or issues regarding your academic progress to your supervisor

Your supervisor(s) will review and comment on your academic progress and performance during the current term and assess skills and training needs to be addressed during the next term. Your supervisor should discuss the report with you, as it will form the basis for feedback on your progress, for identifying areas where further work is required, for reviewing your progress against an agreed timetable, and for agreeing plans for the term ahead.

All students should briefly describe which subject-specific research skills and more general personal/professional skills they have acquired or developed during the current term. You should include attendance at relevant classes that form part of your programme of study and also include courses, seminars or workshops offered or arranged by your faculty or the Division. Students should also reflect on the skills required to undertake the work they intend to carry out. You should mention any skills you do not already have or you may wish to strengthen through undertaking training.

If you have any complaints about the supervision you are receiving, you should raise this with your Director of Graduate Studies. You should not use the supervision reporting system as a mechanism for complaints.

Students are asked to report in weeks 6 and 7 of term. Once you have completed your sections of the online form, your self-assessment report will be used by your supervisor as a basis to complete a report on your performance this reporting period, for identifying areas where further work may be required, and for reviewing your progress against agreed timetables and plans for the term ahead.

GSR will alert you by email when your supervisor or Director of Graduate Studies has completed your report and it is available for you to view. Directors of Graduate Studies are responsible for ensuring that appropriate supervision takes place, and this is one of the mechanisms they use to obtain information about supervision.

College advisors are a source of support and advice to students, and it is therefore important that they are informed of your progress, including concerns (expressed by you and/or your supervisor).

Access to GSR for students is via Student Self Service (www.ox.ac.uk/students/selfservice). You will be sent a GSR automated email notification with details of how to log in at the start of each reporting window, and who to contact with queries.

RESEARCH DEGREES

A research degree, which takes up to four years of full-time study, offers you the chance to acquire research skills and do a substantial piece of original research. The Faculty of Medieval and Modern Language offers the following research degrees:

- **Doctor of Philosophy in Medieval and Modern Languages** (FHEQ Level 8)
The degree of Doctor of Philosophy (known as a 'DPhil' at Oxford and a 'PhD' at other institutions) is an advanced research degree, normally requiring between nine and twelve terms full-time study to complete and is awarded following submission of a thesis and an oral examination.
- **Master of Letters in Medieval and Modern Languages** (FHEQ Level 7)
The degree of Master of Letters (MLitt) is a research award normally requiring six terms full-time study to complete, and is awarded following submission of a thesis and oral examination.

All applicants for research degrees are admitted first as Probationer Research Students (PRS). They are expected to have taken the MSt. in Modern Languages or an equivalent first-year graduate course, either at Oxford or another university.

The two degrees differ in the length of the thesis and in the rigour of the requirements. The maximum length of a DPhil thesis is 80,000 words, while the maximum length of an MLitt thesis is 50,000 words. In both cases the word-count includes notes, glossary, and appendices, but excludes the bibliography.

The DPhil may be undertaken either as a full-time or a part-time student. A full-time DPhil student would be expected to complete the thesis in three to four years. A part-time student is expected to complete within six to eight years. The MLitt can only be taken as a full-time student and should normally be completed within two years. The MLitt is a degree which can only be awarded to DPhil students who, for unforeseen circumstances, are unable to complete their DPhil degree.

Language

MLitt and DPhil theses are normally written in English, but with special permission may be written in an appropriate language other than English. Before seeking permission to write in a language other than English, students should consult with their supervisors and give careful consideration to the wider implications of their request. It is important to recognise that the language of the thesis will to some extent determine the opportunities for subsequent publication and, ultimately, future career choices. Permission to write in a language other than English should be sought from the Director of Graduate Studies, well in advance of the submission of the thesis.

Supervision

The MLitt and DPhil are research degrees for which students work under the guidance of a supervisor who is a specialist in their subject.

You might expect to see your supervisor once a fortnight in the early stages of your research, and less often as you become more independent. Your supervisor will also expect to stay in touch with you outside the eight weeks of Full Term, but cannot guarantee to be available at short notice

during the vacation. Guidance for research students and their supervisors is available on the Modern Languages website at: www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/graduate/current-students.

If your research requires guidance in two separate areas, you may be assigned two supervisors. In exceptional circumstances, the Director of Graduate Studies may agree to the appointment of an external supervisor based at another university who will act jointly with your internal supervisor.

At the end of each term, your supervisor is required to submit a report on your progress, on work received, and on the frequency of academic contact. This reporting continues to be made even if you have completed your residence requirements and are no longer resident in Oxford.

Supervisors' reports are carefully reviewed so that action may be taken if there appears to be problems concerning your work. Supervisors are also required to inform the Director of Graduate Studies at once if you appear unlikely to reach the standard required of the research degree for which you are reading.

If you are worried about your supervision in any way, you should first try to discuss your concerns frankly with your supervisors. If you find this difficult, please seek advice or mediation from the Director of Graduate Studies. You may apply to change your supervisor(s) if your research moves in an unexpected direction.

RESEARCH SUPERVISION: A BRIEF GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

The role of the Supervisor is to:

- Advise, guide and support you in all aspects of your research, providing clear intellectual leadership and giving precise guidance about academic expectations.
- Agree with you a clear plan of research, identify milestones and provide information on the availability of research resources
- Agree with you a timetable for:
 - Regular meetings (normally twice per term) for detailed discussion of your progress
 - The submission of written work, which the supervisor should return to you within a reasonable time
 - Liaise with you to produce a detailed joint report on your progress at the end of each term.
- Ensure that you are aware of the formal requirements for transfer of status, confirmation of status and final submission, and that these are incorporated into your plan of work.
- Discuss with you subject-specific and general research skills required for your doctoral studies; work with you to identify areas where you require additional training to develop these and other skills; advise you on how these needs may be met, and assess your skills development and training requirements at least once a year.
- Assist and encourage you to participate in the wider academic community.
- Ensure that you are aware of relevant University guidelines and regulations, e.g. student handbook, Examination Regulations, guidance on plagiarism, and lecture lists.

For more details, see the Code of Practice on Supervision of Graduate Research Students, available [to consult online](#).

The role of the Student is to:

- Attend induction sessions arranged by the faculty, Library Services and Computing Services.
- Meet with your supervisor regularly and take note of his or her advice and guidance.
- Draw up a research plan and timetable of work in consultation with your supervisor, and to keep relevant records of all aspects of your work.
- Liaise with your supervisor to produce a detailed joint report on your progress at the end of each term.
- Work with your supervisor to draw up a programme for identifying and developing your subject-specific and general research skills, and personal and professional skills.
- Attend appropriate classes, lectures, and seminars.
- Be aware of relevant University guidelines and regulations, e.g. student handbook, Examination Regulations, guidance on plagiarism, and of any ethical or legal issues, health and safety requirements, or intellectual property issues arising from your research.

- Work with your supervisor to pursue opportunities to engage with the wider academic community at university, national and international level.

Further information: If you require further details or have any questions about the above, please ask your supervisor or the Director of Graduate Studies.

ACADEMIC MILESTONES

Detailed guidance on each academic milestone is available to consult at the end of this handbook, in [Appendix 2](#). We recommend you consult this information in advance of each milestone deadline.

Transfer from PRS to MLitt or DPhil

You must apply for transfer to MLitt or DPhil status no later than **Friday week 6 of Trinity Term** (your third term in PRS status) by submitting to the Graduate Studies Office:

- (i) A fully completed **GSO.2** form, signed by your supervisor and by an officer of your college (normally the Tutor for Graduates). GSO forms can be accessed online: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression. Please note that the signature of the DGS is sought by the Graduate Studies Office following the assessment.
- (ii) Three copies of a detailed outline (not exceeding 1,000 words) providing the proposed thesis title, subject and an overview of the manner in which it will be treated, including a provisional list of chapters and their proposed coverage. This should also include an indication of the intended place of the submitted work in the thesis as a whole.
- (iii) Two copies of a written submission of 10,000 words, presented in a scholarly form, which will usually be a draft chapter of the thesis, but may be an essay related to it. Such an essay may deal with the theoretical issues raised by the thesis, or with the historical and literary background, or with the source material relevant to the proposed subject. If the submitted work is not a draft chapter, then the candidate should provide a clear explanation of the written work's relationship to the thesis. If the student's submitted work greatly exceeds 10,000 words, they are advised to section the piece in such a way that the assessors can choose not to read beyond the 10,000 words.

Further information on Transfer of Status is detailed later in this handbook, within [Appendix 2](#). Please be aware that the MML deadline is different from the one suggested in the University Regulations.

Confirmation of Status as a DPhil student

A further formal assessment of progress takes place when you are required to apply for the confirmation of your DPhil status. DPhil students are required to apply for confirmation of status no later than **Friday week 8 of Trinity Term** (the end of the sixth term after your admission as a PRS).

To apply for confirmation of status please submit the following items to the Graduate Office:

- (i) Three copies of a statement (of not more than 1,000 words) giving the title of the proposed thesis, providing a list of chapters, and explaining how the subject will be treated and how much work remains to be done (including a proposed timeframe for completion). Students are also required to indicate the intended place of the submitted work in the thesis as a whole.

(ii) Two copies of a piece of written work of approximately 15,000 words, including notes but excluding bibliography (except where text is accompanied by graphs or statistical material), being a draft of a chapter of the thesis (excluding the introductory or concluding chapters, and any section submitted for the first transfer assessment). If the chapter(s) you plan to submit greatly exceed(s) 15,000 words, you are advised to section the submitted work in such a way that the examiners can choose not to read beyond the 15,000 words.

(iii) A fully-completed **GSO.14** form, signed by your supervisor and by an officer of your college (normally the Tutor for Graduates). GSO forms can be accessed online: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression. Please note that the signature of the DGS is sought by the Graduate Studies Office following the assessment.

Further information on Confirmation of Status is detailed later in this handbook, within [Appendix 2](#). Please be aware that the MML deadline is different from the one suggested in the University Regulations.

SUBMISSION OF THESES FOR THE MLITT OR DPHIL

Students nearing the end of their programme of study are advised to consult the Notes of Guidance for Research Examinations (GSO.20a) which can be downloaded online: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression.

Confirmation of DPhil status must have been approved prior to thesis submission. Students must submit two copies of a thesis to the Research Degree Examination Office at the Examination Schools no later than the end of their final term on the graduate register.

Prior to submission of the thesis, students must submit an Application for the Appointment of Examiners through a GSO.3 form, accessible from the above link. The application must be completed by the student, supervisors and college and submitted to the Modern Languages Graduate Studies Office for approval by the Director of Graduate Studies. **Students are strongly advised to apply for the appointment of examiners at least four to six weeks prior to submission.**

All examinations must be advertised by the examiners in advance of the viva date, and students must be examined from a thesis that has been formally submitted to the Research Degree Examination Office. The thesis will be dispatched to examiners following submission to Examination Schools, and the formal confirmation from the examiners of their willingness to act.

Students should not contact examiners directly unless requested to do so by a formally appointed examiner in relation to the process of arranging a viva date. Furthermore, students should not submit a copy of their thesis directly to the examiners; they must be examined from the formal copy sent to the examiner by the Research Degree Examination Office. This is to ensure that there is a definitive version of a thesis, which is the subject of the examination.

After the viva has taken place the examiners are required to submit a joint report to the Modern Languages Graduate Studies Administrator for approval by the Graduate Studies Committee. The Research Degree Examination Office will then notify students of the outcome in writing. **Please allow sufficient time for this process to be completed when making arrangements to attend a degree ceremony.**

In cases where a student has applied for an early viva, the Research Degree Examination Office will make every effort to accommodate these requests. However, candidates should be aware that

the examination date requested should not be earlier than one calendar month after the date on which the thesis has been received at the Examination Schools, or after the date on which the examiners have formally agreed to act, whichever is the latest. The actual date of the examination will depend primarily on the availability of both examiners.

Thesis Submission

Presentation guidance is detailed in the later section, [Presentation of a Thesis](#). For the examination you are required to submit two copies of your thesis, which must be bound in either hard or soft covers. Loose-leaf binding is not acceptable. Each copy should contain a short abstract normally not exceeding 300 words, and a longer abstract normally not exceeding 1,500 words for an MLitt and 2,500 words for a DPhil. The library copy of the thesis must be in a permanently fixed binding, drilled and sewn, in a stiff board case in library buckram in a dark colour, and lettered on the spine with the student's name and initials, the degree and the year of submission.

You must ensure that within each copy of the thesis to be sent to examiners, you enclose a note of the address where you can be contacted about the viva voce examination. The copy to be deposited in the Bodleian should contain any corrections or amendments which the examiners may require and you should note that you may not proceed to take your degree until you have fulfilled the requirement to submit a library copy of your thesis. For further information on preparation and submission, please see document GSO.20a on the forms website (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression).

The Abstracts

Students will include with their thesis a short abstract normally not exceeding 300 words, and a longer abstract normally not exceeding 1,500 words for an MLitt and 2,500 words for a DPhil.

The shorter abstract of the thesis should concisely summarise its scope and principal arguments. It should be printed or typewritten, on one side only, of A4-sized paper. Each copy of the abstract should be headed with the title of the thesis, the name and college of the candidate, the degree for which it is submitted, and the term and year of submission.

The purpose of the longer abstract is to make clear to the examiners, before they read the thesis, what problems you have set out to solve, how you have approached them, and where you believe the originality of your thesis to lie. Although this abstract will inevitably summarise the content of the thesis, it should not be a mere summary or synopsis. Rather it should be an attempt to describe your own work: what you have tried to do, why the effort was worth making, where you think you have succeeded. It should indicate, very briefly, the state of the question at the time, should explain the method you have adopted, and should give a very brief synopsis of the content and conclusions of the thesis. The abstracts are best written independently, after the thesis is complete and corrected and you can view your own work, as it were, from outside and as a whole.

One copy of the abstracts prepared at the time of the examination should be bound into each submitted copy of the thesis. Subsequently, when the examination is completed, candidates should also arrange for a copy of the abstracts to be bound into the library copy of their thesis, and should submit with the library copy a separate, unbound copy of the shorter abstract, which may be despatched to ASLIB and published. The copy of the abstract which is earmarked for dispatch to ASLIB should be presented separately in a form suitable for microfilming, i.e. it should be (1) on one side of a single sheet of A4 paper, and (2) a typed single-spaced top copy, a clear photocopy,

or a printed copy (i.e. it should not be a carbon or poor photocopy, and (3) headed up with name, college, year and term of submission and the title of the thesis.

Further information about the requirements for abstracts can be found in the edition of Examination Regulations for the year in which the thesis is presented for examination.

The Oral Examination (Viva Voce)

When the examiners have formally agreed to act and copies of the thesis have been sent to them, you will be notified of the names of your examiners. The examiners are expected to arrange the date of the viva voce examination as soon as practicable (even if the actual date is a number of weeks ahead) and to notify the student formally of the date, time and place. You must present yourself punctually at the viva in proper academic dress (i.e. sub-fusc), and you are strongly advised to have a copy of the thesis with you during the examination. The date and place of the examination will be published in the Gazette. The examination is open to members of the University wearing full academic dress, though they are expected, as a matter of courtesy, to let the student and the examiners know beforehand if they intend to be present.

The examiners for an MLitt thesis are required to certify (a) that the student possesses a good general knowledge of the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls; (b) that the student shows competence in investigating the chosen topic; (c) that the student has made a worthwhile contribution to knowledge or understanding in the field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls; and (d) that the results have been presented in a lucid and scholarly manner.

The examiners of a DPhil thesis are required to certify (a) that the student possesses a good general knowledge of the particular field of learning within which the subject of his thesis falls; (b) that the student has made a significant and substantial contribution in the particular field of learning within which the subject of the thesis falls; (c) that the thesis is presented in a lucid and scholarly manner; and (d) that the student has presented a satisfactory abstract of the thesis.

Viva Voce Outcomes

In most cases, the examiners recommend to the Graduate Studies Committee that the student be given leave to supplicate for the degree for which they were registered as a student, but it is not uncommon for examiners to stipulate that corrections (such as typographical errors) should be carried out before the thesis is deposited and the degree can be conferred. From 13 October 2013 examiners have the option of requesting minor corrections (to be completed within one calendar month) or major corrections (to be completed within six months).

Should the examiners decide that the thesis does not meet the standard required, the regulations permit them to recommend to the Committee that the thesis be referred back to the student for resubmission. In the case of the degree of DPhil, the examiners may recommend to the Board that the thesis be referred back to the student (i) for resubmission for the degree of DPhil, with or without the option of giving the student leave to supplicate for the degree of MLitt for the thesis as it stands; or (ii) for resubmission for the degree of MLitt. In certain instances, the examiners may recommend, in place of resubmission, the award of the MLitt for the thesis as it stands. The only other option open to examiners is to recommend outright failure, but this is extremely rare.

In the case of reference back, the student is notified of the respects in which the thesis fell short of the standard required for the degree and they are informed of the revisions which would have to be

made for the thesis to be successfully resubmitted for the degree. Students are given an additional period of status as research students in which to revise the thesis, and supervision continues as before the examination.

Notification of Results

Students for the degrees of MLitt and DPhil will be notified of the result of their examination after the Faculty has considered the report of the examiners, and the examiners' report has been sent to the Examination Schools.

Deposit and Consultation of Theses in the Bodleian Library

The Regulations require that one bound copy of each thesis submitted successfully for the degree of DPhil, MLitt, or MPhil be deposited in the Bodleian Library. Theses so deposited are made available for consultation, including photocopying and microfilming, by other readers on condition that they sign a declaration stating they recognise that the copyright of the thesis belongs to the author, and that no part may be published without the prior written consent of the author. You may apply, at the time of submitting the thesis for examination, for dispensation (for a limited period) from the requirement that the thesis be made available for consultation, but dispensation is not normally granted except in special circumstances, where good reasons have been provided (in writing) by the student. Where confidential material has been obtained for use in the thesis on condition that it is kept confidential, it is possible to apply for certain parts of the thesis to be blocked out in the library copy made available for consultation. The Modern Languages Board's policy is not to restrict access to successful theses (even for a limited period) apart from instances in which sensitive information or private material is involved, and where the student has fully justified the need for access to be so restricted.

Publication of Theses

You should bear in mind that you are at liberty to publish material to be incorporated subsequently in a thesis to be submitted for the degree of MPhil, MLitt or DPhil, and there is a great advantage in submitting material to reputable refereed journals. If you intend to publish material you may wish to seek further advice on publication possibilities both before and after the thesis has been accepted for the degree for which it was submitted. The Modern Languages Board is able to propose the publication of suitable MLitt or DPhil theses by the Oxford University Press in the Oxford Monographs series, and examiners of theses are asked to make recommendations in such cases. Naturally, the number of theses which can be published in this way is extremely limited and, in any case, not all theses would be acceptable in terms of content or length for inclusion in this particular series. Please note that University of Oxford DPhil theses are also published electronically via the Oxford Research Archive (ORA). See details of both schemes [below](#).

Some other faculty boards and committees now accept theses which consist of a collection of more or less related, article-length papers (which may or may not have been published previously). The Modern Languages Board does not accept theses in this form.

The Presentation of a Thesis or Dissertation

Between composition and examination lies the problem of presentation. Tidy and rational presentation makes easy reading, and references which are incorrectly or eccentrically given can

be very irritating to the best-intentioned reader. Between a paper prepared for oral discussion (such as an undergraduate essay) and a manuscript which will be published (if only by being made available to other scholars in the Bodleian Library) there is an essential difference as regards the kind of accuracy required in such matters as quotations, bibliographical references, etc.: the former rarely provides an adequate model for the latter.

The regulations require that, unless the Board of the Faculty has excused the student from this requirement, a thesis for the degree of DPhil or MLitt must be printed or typed with a margin of 3 to 3.5 centimetres on the left hand edge of each page (or on the inner edge, whether left-hand or right-hand, in the case of a thesis which is printed on both sides of the paper). Theses in typescript should present the main text in double spacing with quotations and footnotes in single spacing. In the case of word-processed or printed theses, double spacing should be taken to mean a distance of 0.33 inch or 8 millimetres between successive lines of text. You are advised that it is your responsibility to ensure that the print of your thesis is of an adequate definition and standard of legibility.

You should note the regulations concerning word limits and state on your application for the appointment of examiners (GSO.3) the approximate number of words in your thesis.

The copies intended for examiners must be securely and firmly bound in either hard or soft covers – loose-leaf binding is not acceptable. Each copy should be packed into a separate but unsealed parcel or padded envelope, ready in all respects except for the address, to be posted to the examiners when appointed by the Examination Schools. Each envelope should bear your name and the name of your college and the words MLitt/DPhil (as appropriate), 'Thesis and Abstract' in block capitals in the bottom left-hand corner. A slip giving the address to which the examiners should write in order to contact you about the arrangement for the oral examination should be enclosed with each copy of the thesis. These should be submitted to the Examination Schools, 75 – 81 High Street, Oxford, OX1 4BG. If sent or posted they should be enclosed in one covering parcel.

Spacing and Pagination

The main text should be in double spacing. Quotations from verse, if of more than one line, should be indented and in single spacing. Quotations from prose should run on in the text if they do not exceed two or three lines; otherwise they too should be indented and in single spacing. The pages of the thesis must be numbered. Pagination should run through consecutively from beginning to end and should include any appendices, etc. Cross-references should include page numbers.

Footnotes

Footnotes should normally be placed at the bottom of each page. Where they are given at the end of each chapter or at the end of the thesis, two separate unbound copies of footnotes should also be presented, for the convenience of the examiners. Notes at the bottom of the page to which they refer are easier to read and check. If they are placed at the foot of the page they should be separated from the text by a short horizontal line. All footnotes should be typed in single spacing.

Abbreviation

Students may, if they wish, refer to works by quoting in the body of their thesis the year of publication and, where necessary, a letter distinguishing the particular work from others published

by the author in the same year - e.g. (J. Smith 1989 c) would indicate the third work listed in the bibliography for 1989 under that author. There would then have to be a note at the head of the bibliography explaining this form of reference. It is suggested that letters and not numerals should be used to identify the work concerned within the year in question, in order to avoid any possibility of confusion with page numbers.

Conventions in Transcription

Students whose theses include quotations from Russian, Yiddish and Greek literature are advised to consider the following conventions for transcription.

(i) Students of Russian should note that the normal transcription system from Cyrillic should be British Standard (BS 2979:1958, as modified in Oxford Slavonic Papers), though the International System should be used in theses on philological subjects.

(ii) Students of Yiddish should cite items and passages quoted from textual sources in the Yiddish alphabet, and supply transcription and translation. Citations in the Yiddish alphabet should follow the Code of Yiddish Spelling (Oxford 1992) except where variant historic spellings are at issue, in which case the supervisor's guidance should be sought.

Transcriptions of literary citations, proper names and titles of works in bibliographies must be in accordance with the faculty's approved system of transcription. Where phonetic accuracy is at stake in linguistics theses, phonetic script is used instead. Where linguistics theses draw upon fieldwork and scholarly literature, Yiddish alphabet citations may be omitted, subject to your supervisor's approval.

(iii) Students of Greek should note that it is most unusual for Modern Greek texts to be transliterated (except of course for linguistic purposes, when a phonetic or phonemic representation is used). In a thesis the only items that need to be transliterated are proper names and (optionally) titles of publications, etc. In deciding which system is to be adopted for proper names etc., you should consult your supervisor.

Print Quality

You should give careful consideration to the need for clarity of type and for neat presentation. Some dot matrix printers do not, for instance, produce a legible enough copy. It is preferable that relevant diacritics - accents and the like - should not be inserted by hand unless this is absolutely necessary.

Order of Contents

After the title-page there should normally follow in sequence:

(i) Preface (if any): this should be kept as short as possible, and should be used to call the reader's attention to any new discoveries and important points about sources, treatment, and obligations to other work.

(ii) Table of Contents: this should show in sequence, with page numbers, all the sub-divisions of the thesis. The titles of chapters and appendices should be given.

(iii) List of abbreviations, cue-titles, symbols, etc.

- (iv) Thesis: divided into chapters together with an introduction and a conclusion. Each chapter should have a clear descriptive title.
- (v) Appendices (if any): also with descriptive titles.
- (vi) List of books and manuscripts used.

Matters of Detail

Students writing a thesis will soon find themselves faced by questions relating to such matters as the following: the practice of underlining and the use of quotation marks; the form of abbreviations; the use of capital letters; the form of dates and of references to books and articles; the ordering of footnotes. The Faculty Board does not lay down regulations covering these points but you are expected to handle them in a clear, neat and consistent fashion, in conformity with generally accepted practice. You can find very helpful detailed guidance about this whole matter in a work published for the Modern Humanities Research Association: MHRA Style Guide. A free online copy is available at: www.mhra.org.uk/style/download.html. This manual makes it unnecessary to go into further detail in these notes. However, since the preparation of bibliographies in theses is frequently a source of difficulty, the following further comments may be made.

Bibliography

The bibliography is a functional part of a thesis. It is not a mere list of matter read, nor, a fortiori, of matter unread. Unlike that in a book, the bibliography in a thesis should list all sources used. However, you should only include books and manuscripts which you have both read and found useful; and if only a small part has been useful, or a book is relevant to only a small part of the thesis, say so.

The bibliography, thus disciplined, can best be subdivided into (a) manuscript sources and (b) printed sources; and the printed sources should be subdivided into (i) primary sources and (ii) secondary sources. Manuscript sources should be listed according to the places in which they are to be found. Printed sources should be listed alphabetically, by surname of author followed by the initials (if any). Anonymous printed sources should be listed alphabetically by the first word of the title (excluding the articles 'The', 'A', 'An' or their foreign equivalents).

In the preparation of a thesis it is wise to write a card or slip for each book, article, or volume of documents the first time it is consulted and to include on the card or slip the abbreviated form of reference that is to be used. These cards or slips will also serve as the raw material of the bibliography. Computing facilities can also be used for this purpose.

CHANGE OF THESIS TITLE

If you find at any time that the title of your thesis no longer accurately reflects the direction your research is taking, you may apply for a change of title. The change might be a relatively minor one, or it might even involve a major change of subject area. In either case, such changes should be discussed with your supervisor before you apply.

To apply for a change of thesis title, please complete a GSO.6 form, available to download at: www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression, and submit to the Graduate Studies Administrator.

It is particularly important that the title under which you propose to submit your thesis is precisely that which the Committee has already approved. If necessary, you should apply for a change of title at least one clear term before submission, so that any difficulties which your supervisor or the Committee might have with the change can be resolved in good time.

TIMETABLE FOR SUBMISSION OF MLITT OR DPHIL THESES

The Examination Regulations allow for MLitt and DPhil students to submit their thesis at the end of two years of study following their admission to that student status (for most students this is two years after Transfer of Status, but for students coming direct from the MPhil, this is two years after starting DPhil studies). The Regulations also indicate that - unless an extension of time has been granted - an MLitt thesis must be submitted not later than the end of the ninth term after admission to that status, and a DPhil thesis not later than the twelfth term after admission to that status.

It is expected that most students will complete their thesis within the normal period. If this proves impossible, however, three options are available: application for an extension; application for temporary suspension of status; lapse of status. An [extension](#) is suitable for students who are near to completion, and who are able to continue to work regularly towards completion. [Suspension](#) of status should be considered by those who expect their research to be interrupted for a limited period of time (up to one year). [Lapse](#) of status is appropriate where the student's research will be interrupted for a longer period of time, but may be resumed later.

Please note that the university will apply a termly **continuation charge** once students have exceeded the standard period of tuition fee liability. The charge is approximately £500 per term and will apply to all students (regardless of Home/EU or Overseas status).

i) Extensions

The Regulations explain that extensions of time for the completion and submission of MLitt or DPhil theses may be granted on account of 'exceptional causes' of delay in completing the thesis. Extensions up to a limit of six terms may be granted by the Modern Languages Board. It is University policy to discourage the 'perpetual student', and the Modern Languages Board will not, as a matter of policy, grant any extension for more than one term at a time. When extensions are applied for, you will be asked to make a reasoned case for the extra time and to present a feasible schedule for completion. The most recent supervisor's reports will be reviewed and supervisors may be asked for further information to ensure that extensions are not granted except to deserving cases.

Prior to applying for an extension, students and supervisors should consider carefully whether extension of candidature or suspension of status is the more appropriate course.

To apply for an extension please complete a GSO.15 form (accessible at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression) and submit it to the Graduate Studies Administrator. Please ensure your supervisor and college have completed the form first.

It is recommended that extensions are applied for as soon as possible in advance of the deadline; extension approval is not guaranteed, and therefore last-minute applications are not advised. Retrospective extensions will only be considered in cases with serious extenuating circumstances.

ii) Suspension of Status for a Limited Period

Suspension of status as a postgraduate student is possible, on certain grounds, for a specified period not exceeding one year at a time (three terms). To apply for a suspension, please complete a GSO.17 form (accessible at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression) and submit it to the Graduate Studies Administrator. If the application is approved, the student will not be liable to pay fees during the period of suspension, and may resume their former status at the end of the period. No student may be granted more than six terms' suspension of status unless there are exceptional circumstances.

Applications will be considered on the following grounds:

- (a) where the student is prevented from study in circumstances which are outside their control though there are good grounds for believing that work could be resumed within a reasonable period (e.g. cases of unforeseeable financial difficulty, physical or mental incapacity, maternity leave, or unexpected domestic crises);
- (b) where it is desirable that a student should give up study for a limited period to undertake some other project, course, or temporary work relevant to their proposed career, which cannot reasonably be deferred;
- (c) where a UK student is studying abroad and their studentship is suspended, or any award received does not cover fee liabilities, or the work is unduly delayed by difficulties in completing such study abroad.

Prior to returning from a period of suspension, students are required to complete a GSO.17a and submit it to the Graduate Studies Administrator. At the end of a period of suspension, students must confirm to the Graduate Studies Office whether or not they intend to return to study.

iii) Withdrawal or Lapsing from Status and Reinstatement

It sometimes happens that, for one reason or another, students are unable to complete their research work or thesis writing before the time limits mentioned above. Students who fail to apply for an extension, or whose applications for an extension of time are not approved, automatically lapse from MLitt or DPhil status at the end of their period of registration, and must apply for reinstatement before the thesis can be submitted for examination. In some cases, when it becomes clear that they will be unable to complete the thesis within the time limits set, the student may wish to withdraw from status with a view to applying for reinstatement when the thesis is virtually ready for submission. There is no time limit restricting the possibility of reinstatement, although the Graduate Studies Committee of the Modern Languages Board will only approve applications for reinstatement where the student has given good reasons for it, and where there is adequate supervision available. Applications for reinstatement should be made on a GSO.23 form (accessible at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression). Applications are considered by the Graduate Studies Committee. If the application is approved, the student's previous fulfilment of the requirements regarding fees and residence will still count, and their supervision will be resumed.

Any student looking to apply for reinstatement is advised to get in touch with the Graduate Studies Office as far in advance as possible, in order to allow good time to complete the practicalities of the process.

EXTENSION OF WORD LENGTH

DPhil and MLitt students are expected to adhere to the word limits on their theses (of 80,000 and 50,000 words respectively - excluding the bibliography, and any text that is being edited but including notes, glossary, appendices, etc) and leave to exceed these limits will only be given in exceptional circumstances. Any application to exceed the word limits should be made in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies as early as possible, and before the submission of either the Appointment of Examiners (**GSO 3**) form or the thesis itself. Such an application would need to demonstrate clear academic reasons for including additional material in the thesis, and would require strong support from the student's supervisor.

OXFORD RESEARCH ARCHIVE (ORA) & ELECTRONIC PUBLICATION

The University of Oxford is committed to the widest dissemination of research theses produced by its graduate students. Students following DPhil, MLitt and M.Sc.(by Research) programmes and registered from 1st October 2007, are required to deposit a hardbound and a digital copy of their thesis with the Bodleian Libraries. The digital copy should be deposited in the Oxford University Research Archive (ORA) at ora.ox.ac.uk. ORA provides high visibility and digital preservation for Oxford digital theses. Information about the deposit of and access to digital theses is available at www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora/oxford_etheses. Please contact ORA@bodleian.ox.ac.uk if you require further information, or have any queries regarding deposit of your digital thesis.

There is a 3-year default embargo for most theses. However, students funded by the Research Councils (AHRC, for example) are required, accordance with RCUK policy, to make their theses available within one year of leave to supplicate being granted. Where funding is provided by any other external body, students should abide by any terms and conditions for open access defined by their funding body; where there are discrepancies between these terms and the University's policy, the funding body's requirements should take priority.

When the embargo period ends, the full-text of the thesis is made freely available unless i) the author applies for and is granted an extension or ii) the thesis has previously been granted a longer embargo.

Authors can choose to override this default and make their thesis open access either at deposit or at any time during the three year embargo. Students who wish to make their thesis freely available on deposit or before the end of the three years should indicate as such on form GSO3a, and on the online ORA deposit form. However, if your thesis contains sensitive or copyright information such that it should be subject to dispensation from consultation beyond the end of the embargo, you should apply for dispensation using form GSO3c.

Students following programmes which are eligible for voluntary deposit in ORA should not make sensitive material publicly available, but do not have to apply for formal dispensation from consultation.

OXFORD MODERN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE MONOGRAPHS SERIES

Oxford Modern Languages and Literature Monographs Series, an OUP imprint, publishes a small number of successfully revised D.Phil. theses each year. The committee, made up of Faculty members, reviews examiners' reports on all theses submitted each term, and issues invitations to potential authors to have their work formally considered for publication by the Press. Whilst in the past, some projects have taken a very long time to move from initial invitation to publication, every effort is now made to bring the process to completion as swiftly as possible, without in any way compromising the high standards of scholarship exemplified by the Series. For the first stage of review, doctoral candidates are asked to send to the Graduate Office (at the same time as submitting their thesis) an additional copy of both the long and the short abstracts; this, along with the examiners' reports, will enable the committee to assess the potential of the revised thesis for publication.

GRADUATE FORMS

Students are recommended to consult the GSO forms webpage (www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression) to ensure they download and complete the most recent version of a form.

Forms Relating to Transfer of Status

| | |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| GSO.2 | Application for Transfer of Status. |
|--------------|-------------------------------------|

Forms Relating to Confirmation of DPhil Status

| | |
|----------------|--|
| GSO.14 | Application for Confirmation of DPhil Status. |
| GSO.14A | Confirmation of DPhil Status - Supplementary Information |
| GSO.14B | Application for Deferral of Confirmation of DPhil Status |

Miscellaneous Forms

| | |
|----------------|--|
| GSO.6 | Application for Change of Thesis Title (MLitt or DPhil) |
| GSO.8 | Application for Dispensation from Statutory Residence |
| GSO.15 | Application for Extension of Time (MLitt or DPhil) |
| GSO.17 | Application for Suspension of Status |
| GSO.17a | Return from Suspension of Status |
| GSO.23 | Application for Reinstatement as a Graduate Student |
| GSO.25 | Application for a Change of Supervisor or Appointment of a Co-Supervisor |
| GSO.28 | Change of Programme of Study |
| GSO.29 | Notification of Withdrawal from Programme of Study |
| GSO.30 | Notification of change of Personal Details, e.g. name or title |

Forms Relating to the Examination of Research Degrees

| | |
|---------------|---|
| GSO.3 | Application for Appointment of Examiners for DPhil or MLitt |
| GSO.3A | Deposit and Consultation of an MLitt or DPhil Thesis. This should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office with the library copy of the thesis and is required before a thesis can be deposited in the Bodleian |
| GSO.3B | Deposit and Consultation of an MPhil. Thesis. This should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office with the library copy of the thesis and is required before a thesis can be deposited in the Bodleian |
| GSO.26 | Thesis Cataloguing Form for MPhil., MLitt or DPhil. This should be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office with the library copy of the thesis and is used by the Bodleian for thesis cataloguing. |

Additional Forms:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| GSO.16 | Application for an Early Examination |
| GSO.18 | Application for Extension of Time to complete Minor Corrections for MLitt or DPhil (after the viva has been held) |
| GSO.3C | Application for dispensation from Consultation of Thesis MLitt/DPhil/M.Sc. |

The GSO.20a guidance notes are also available to consult online at www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/graduate/progression.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

PASTORAL AND WELFARE SUPPORT

Your General Supervisor, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of Masters Courses are available to assist graduate students in all aspects of their studies. In addition, graduate students have access in their college to many officers with responsibility for pastoral and welfare support. These include the college tutor for graduates, a designated college adviser for each student, the Chaplain, and the college nurse and doctor. There is also peer support from the Middle Common Room (MCR), which elects student officers with special responsibility for welfare, who liaise with the central Oxford University Students Union. The University provides support services for students with children. Financial support is available from central university and college hardship funds.

The Disability Advisory Service (DAS) can provide information, advice and guidance on the way in which a particular disability may impact on your student experience at the University and assist with organising disability-related study support. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/das.

The Counselling Service is here to help you address personal or emotional problems that get in the way of having a good experience at Oxford and realising your full academic and personal potential. They offer a free and confidential service. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/counselling.

A range of services led by students are available to help provide support to other students, including the peer supporter network, the Oxford SU's Student Advice Service and Nightline. For more information visit: www.ox.ac.uk/students/shw/peer.

OXFORD SU also runs a series of campaigns to raise awareness and promote causes that matter to students. For full details, visit: <https://www.oxfordsu.org/communities/campaigns>.

STUDENT REPRESENTATION AND FEEDBACK

Each sub-faculty elects a graduate representative, and additional representatives are elected from the DPhil, MPhil and MSt. cohorts. Together these graduate representatives form a Graduate Joint Consultative Committee (GJCC) which in turn can bring student concerns to the Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). Elections for these representative posts will be held in Michaelmas Term.

Student representatives sitting on the Divisional Board are selected through a process organised by the Oxford University Student Union (OUSU). Details can be found on the OUSU website along with information about student representation at the University level.

Students are surveyed each year on all aspects of their course (learning, living, pastoral support, college) through the Student Barometer, and previous results can be viewed [online](#).

THE MEDIEVAL AND MODERN LANGUAGES GRADUATE NETWORK

The MML Graduate Network aims to foster a sense of community amongst graduate students in the faculty, and provides an opportunity to socialise in an informal environment. The Graduate Network organises a variety of social and academic events each term. In addition to the mentoring programme for new graduate students, they also host lunches and evening events, film screenings, seminars and poetry readings, and fund an annual Graduate Conference. All Modern Languages graduates are automatically members of the Graduate Network.

COMPUTING & COMMON ROOM FACILITIES

A common room with kitchen facilities is available for graduate use in 47 Wellington Square.

There are two computing workspaces in the common room, two on the ground floor of 47 Wellington Square and workspaces opposite the Graduate Common Room. Your University card should automatically allow you access to the rooms.

There is a small computer room for Modern Languages students on the second floor at 47 Wellington Square. It contains 2 PCs connected to a laser printer for high-quality printing. All the computers are connected to the University network for services such as e-mail. Each computer also has a flatbed scanner with Optical Character Recognition software for input of textual and graphic materials. Graduate students should request a user account, password and door access code from the Modern Languages IT department: it-support@mod-lang.ox.ac.uk.

The OUCS run regular IT courses which students are encouraged to attend. Details and support for any other IT issues can be found online at www.it.ox.ac.uk.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF FUNDS FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The faculty encourage graduate students to make visits abroad, familiarise themselves with library resources, make contact with scholars in their field, and attend conferences (particularly if giving a paper). There are a number of prizes and awards available to Modern Languages graduate students. A list of all prizes and awards are available on the Graduate Studies WebLearn site: <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/site/:humdiv:modlang:graduates>.

Modern Languages students may also be eligible for funding from the wider University. You should consult the student funding website for more information: www.ox.ac.uk/students/fees-funding.

EQUALITY & DIVERSITY AT OXFORD

The University of Oxford is committed to fostering an inclusive culture which promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.” [Equality Policy](#) (2013).

Oxford is a diverse community with staff and students from over 140 countries, all with different cultures, beliefs and backgrounds. As a member of the University you contribute towards making it an inclusive environment and we ask that you treat other members of the University community with respect, courtesy and consideration.

The Equality and Diversity Unit works with all parts of the collegiate University to develop and promote an understanding of equality and diversity and ensure that this is reflected in all its processes. The Unit also supports the University in meeting the legal requirements of the Equality Act 2010, including eliminating unlawful discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and fostering good relations between people with and without the ‘protected characteristics’ of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and/or belief and sexual orientation. Visit our website for further details or contact us directly for advice: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop or equality@admin.ox.ac.uk.

The Equality and Diversity Unit also supports a broad network of harassment advisors in departments/faculties and colleges and a central Harassment Advisory Service. For more information on the University’s Harassment and Bullying policy and the support available for students visit: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice.

There is range of faith societies, belief groups, and religious centres within Oxford University that are open to students. For more information visit: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/religionandbelief/faithsocietiesgroupsorreligiouscentres .

DATA PROTECTION

You should have received from your college a statement regarding student personal data, including a declaration for you to sign indicating your acceptance of that statement. Please contact you college’s Data Protection Officer if you have not. Further information with regard to University Policy on Data Protection may be found at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/councilsec/compliance/dataprotection>.

RESEARCH INTEGRITY

The University is committed to ensuring that its research involving human participants is conducted in a way that respects the dignity, rights, and welfare of participants, and minimises risk to participants, researchers, third parties, and to the University itself. All such research needs to be subject to appropriate ethical review. More information can be found at the [Research Ethics website](#) and an online training course can be accessed on [WebLearn](#).

SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY

The academic and college environment at Oxford University is rich with opportunities for you to develop many transferable skills that are eagerly sought by employers. Undertaking an intellectually demanding academic course (often incorporating professional body requirements) will equip you for the demands of many jobs. Your course will enable you to research, summarise,

present and defend an argument with some of the best scholars in their subject. Under the direction of an experienced researcher, you will extend their skills and experiences through practical or project work, placements or fieldwork, writing extended essays or dissertations. In college and university sports teams, clubs and societies you will have the chance to take the lead and play an active part within and outside the University.

Surveys of our employers report that they find Oxford students better or much better than the average UK student at key employability skills such as Problem Solving, Leadership, and Communication. Hundreds of recruiters visit the University each year, demonstrating their demand for Oxford undergraduate and postgraduate students, fewer than 5% of whom are unemployed and seeking work six months after leaving.

Comprehensive careers advice and guidance is available from the Oxford University Careers Service, and not just while you are here: the careers support is for life. They offer tailored individual advice, job fairs and workshops to inform your job search and application process, whether your next steps are within academia or beyond. You will also have access to thousands of UK-based and international internships, work experience and job vacancies available on the Careers Service website: <https://www.careers.ox.ac.uk>.

COMPLAINTS AND ACADEMIC APPEALS

The University, the Humanities Division and the Faculty all hope that provision made for students at all stages of their programme of study will make the need for complaints (about that provision) or appeals (against the outcomes of any form of assessment) infrequent.

However, all those concerned believe that it is important for students to be clear about how to raise a concern or make a complaint, and how to appeal against the outcome of assessment. The following guidance attempts to provide such information.

Nothing in this guidance precludes an informal discussion with the person immediately responsible for the issue that you wish to complain about (and who may not be one of the individuals identified below). This is often the simplest way to achieve a satisfactory resolution.

Many sources of advice are available within colleges, within faculties/departments and from bodies like OUSU or the Counselling Service, which have extensive experience in advising students. You may wish to take advice from one of these sources before pursuing your complaint.

General areas of concern about provision affecting students as a whole should, of course, continue to be raised through Joint Consultative Committees or via student representation on the faculty/department's committees.

COMPLAINTS

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision made **by the faculty/department**, then you should raise it with the Director of Graduate Studies. Within the faculty, the officer concerned will attempt to resolve your concern or complaint informally.

If you are dissatisfied with the outcome, then you may take your concern further by making a formal complaint to the University Proctors. A complaint may cover aspects of teaching and learning (e.g. teaching facilities, supervision arrangements), and non-academic issues (e.g. support services, library services, university accommodation, university clubs and societies). A complaint to the Proctors should be made only if attempts at informal resolution have been

unsuccessful. The procedures adopted by the Proctors for the consideration of complaints and appeals are described in the University Student Handbook, available to consult online at: <http://www.proctors.ox.ac.uk/handbook>, and the relevant Council regulations, also online at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations>.

If your concern or complaint relates to teaching or other provision **made by your college**, then you should raise it either with your tutor or with one of the college officers, Senior Tutor, or Tutor for Graduates (as appropriate). Your college will also be able to explain how to take your complaint further if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of its consideration.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

An appeal is defined as a formal questioning of a decision on an academic matter made by the responsible academic body.

For undergraduate or taught graduate courses, a concern which might lead to an appeal should be raised with your college authorities and the individual responsible for overseeing your work. **It must not be raised directly with examiners or assessors.** If it is not possible to clear up your concern in this way, you may put your concern in writing and submit it to the Proctors via the Senior Tutor of your college. As noted above, the procedures adopted by the Proctors in relation to complaints and appeals are online at: <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations>.

For the examination of research degrees, or in relation to transfer or confirmation of status, your concern should be raised initially with the Director of Graduate Studies. Where a concern is not satisfactorily settled by that means, then you, your supervisor, or your college authority may put your appeal directly to the Proctors.

Please remember in connection with all the cases in paragraphs 5 - 7 that:

- (a) The Proctors are not empowered to challenge the academic judgement of examiners or academic bodies.
- (b) The Proctors can consider whether the procedures for reaching an academic decision were properly followed; i.e. whether there was a significant procedural administrative error; whether there is evidence of bias or inadequate assessment; whether the examiners failed to take into account special factors affecting a candidate's performance.
- (c) On no account should you contact your examiners or assessors directly.

The Proctors will indicate what further action you can take if you are dissatisfied with the outcome of a complaint or appeal considered by them.

Harassment

Both colleges and faculties have appointed Harassment Advisers within a network of such advisers organised centrally. A copy of the University's Code of Practice on Harassment is available at <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/harassmentadvice/policyandprocedure>. The faculty board's adviser on harassment is Dr Audrey Cahill.

APPENDIX 1 – HUMANITIES RESEARCHER DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING PROGRAMME

The Humanities Division has a team that supports the personal and professional development of postgraduate students and researchers. The key focus of the team's role is to enhance generic skills training offered to Humanities graduate students and researchers at the University of Oxford. The team works with faculties, TORCH (The Oxford Research Centre for the Humanities), other University departments and units and external partners to deliver a programme of training each year, aimed at:

- honing and developing the skills needed for research projects,
- gaining first-hand experience of engaging in collaborations, and
- taking the first steps towards pioneering and influential career paths.

Experiential, hands-on learning is fundamental to their approach, with student-led and early career researcher-led initiatives and projects being generated and supported through a range of funds and initiatives such as the AHRC-TORCH Graduate Fund, Student Peer Review College, and the annual Public Engagement with Research Summer School. All of these mechanisms are in turn run (with support from the Divisional Research Development team) by early career researchers themselves.

The Humanities Researcher Development and Training Programme is open to all postgraduate students (Master's and DPhil) and early career researchers (including college-only appointments) in the Humanities Division.¹ An extensive programme of opportunities runs throughout the academic year, arranged into a number of 'pathways':

Business and Entrepreneurship – pitch an idea to the Humanities Innovation Challenge Competition and win £2,000, or find out what history can teach us about entrepreneurship through the Said Business School's series of lectures on 'Engaging with the Humanities'.

Career Confidence – develop your CV, draft a cover letter, practise fellowship interview techniques, or learn how to give a teaching presentation.

Digital Humanities – learn how to encode text, 3D-scan museum objects and write code, or participate in the world-leading Digital Humanities at Oxford Summer School.

Heritage – network with industry leaders in the heritage sector, learn how to set up a research collaboration with a historic house, take a tour of a museum under development with a lead curator, or contribute to [Trusted Source](#), the National Trust's online knowledge bank.

Public Engagement with Research – create a podcast, practise on-camera interviews, learn the techniques of 'storytelling' when talking about your research, apply for funding to support a public engagement project for your research through the Graduate Fund, or participate in the annual [Public Engagement with Research Summer School](#).

Preparation for Academic Practice – attend workshops on writing journal articles, preparing for the DPhil viva, organising a conference, or using EndNote. Pitch your idea for a monograph to editors from world-leading publishing houses, and prepare a fieldwork application for ethical review.

¹ Postgraduate students in social sciences who are in receipt of AHRC funding are also eligible to participate.

Teaching – build on the training offered by your faculty (Preparation for Learning and Teaching at Oxford) and gain accreditation to the Staff and Educational Development Association by enrolling in [Developing Learning and Teaching](#) seminars. Attend workshops on applying your teaching experience to the job application process, or learn how to teach with objects at the Ashmolean Museum.

All events and opportunities are **free** to attend, and a number of workshops, particularly those in the 'Preparation for Academic Practice' pathway, are repeated each term. See www.torch.ox.ac.uk/researcher-training for the full calendar of events, and www.humanities.ox.ac.uk/researcher-development for more information about the programme. You can also email the Humanities Training Officer, Caroline Thurston (training@humanities.ox.ac.uk) if you have any queries.

APPENDIX 2 – HUMANITIES PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK

Transfer and Confirmation of Status: Progression of Doctoral Students

Acronyms and Definitions

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| PRS | Probationer Research Student. This is the ‘status’ which the majority of students have when they are first admitted to a DPhil degree in a Humanities subject at Oxford. |
| Transfer | ‘Transfer’ refers to the process of transferring status from Probationer Research Student to DPhil student. |
| Confirmation | ‘Confirmation’ refers to the process of confirming status as a DPhil student. |
| DPhil | Doctor of Philosophy |
| DGS | Director of Graduate Studies |
| GSC | Graduate Studies Committee |

Summary of Recommended Timeline for a DPhil in a Humanities Subject at Oxford (for students admitted to PRS status)

| | | |
|--------|----|--|
| Year 1 | MT | Student admitted to PRS Status |
| | HT | |
| | TT | Apply for Transfer of Status |
| Year 2 | MT | Complete Transfer of Status |
| | HT | |
| | TT | Apply for Confirmation |
| Year 3 | MT | Complete Confirmation |
| | HT | |
| | TT | Thesis Submission |
| Year 4 | MT | |
| | TT | |
| | HT | <i>Final Date of Possible Submission</i> |

I. TRANSFER OF STATUS

Purpose and Criteria

- (i) To assess whether the candidate is capable of carrying out advanced research, and has had suitable preparation in terms of subject specific research training.
- (ii) To assess whether the subject of the thesis and the manner of its treatment as proposed by the candidate are acceptable and potentially of DPhil quality.
- (iii) To assess whether the thesis can reasonably be completed in no more than 6 to 9 terms from transfer.

Timing

(i) Students admitted to PRS status

Students who have completed a one-year Master's degree at Oxford or elsewhere or a two-year MPhil at a university other than Oxford must be admitted to PRS status.

Transfer of status from PRS to DPhil must take place in Trinity Term of Year 1 or Michaelmas Term of Year 2 as measured from the first term of PRS.

(ii) Students admitted to DPhil status

In the case of students who have completed a two-year MPhil at Oxford and who have already commenced work on their doctoral thesis, faculties are required to decide between:

- (a) admitting the student to PRS status, with transfer taking place no later than Trinity Term of Year 1 or Michaelmas Term of Year 2, or
- (b) Admitting the student to (non-confirmed) DPhil status, and waiving the transfer of status process.

If the faculty chooses option (b), it must be satisfied that the student meets the three conditions described under purpose of transfer of status above. In such cases, the admissions process should follow the same pattern as the transfer of status process, and all candidates who are admitted directly to DPhil status should be interviewed.

Material Required for Applications for Transfer

Students must check local faculty requirements for their subject area.

- (i) GSO.2 form (available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/gso/forms).
- (ii) A detailed outline (not exceeding 1,000 words) of the proposed subject and of the manner in which it will be treated, including a provisional list of chapters and their proposed coverage.
- (iii) Written work (or equivalent, e.g. a portfolio, score or CD/DVD), to be specified by the faculty. The submitted work should be on the topic of the proposed thesis, and if this consists of written work, should be about 10,000 words long (usually a draft chapter of the thesis; if the submitted work is not a draft chapter, then the candidate should provide a written explanation of the written work's relationship to the thesis).
- (iv) Reference from the supervisor: the supervisor (or supervisors, if there is more than one) must provide a full and detailed assessment of the student and the student's application for

transfer in the 'Comment' section of the GSO.2 form. Where there are two supervisors, either each one must submit an assessment report or both must sign a joint assessment.

- (v) Information about subject-specific research or other training completed by the student, e.g. proof of linguistic competence. The faculty should specify any research training/research skills (e.g. linguistic competence, ability to use archives, handling of ancient documents) which students are expected to have acquired by this stage of their doctoral studies.

Assessment

- (i) Assessors: the faculty must appoint two assessors, neither of whom must be the candidate's supervisor.
- (ii) Interview: an interview by both assessors, based on the submitted written materials, is compulsory. Academic dress is not required at the interview.
- (iii) Report: assessors must submit a joint written report, making a clear recommendation to the relevant Graduate Studies Committee of 'transfer' or 'not transfer', and providing reasons for their recommendation. The report should note any subject-specific research training still required by the student successfully to complete their doctorate.

Outcome of Assessment

- (i) The assessors may recommend that the candidate be transferred to DPhil status.
- (ii) The assessors may judge that the candidate is not (yet) ready to transfer, in which case they may:
 - (a) Recommend that the candidate should re-apply after undertaking further preparatory work, which should be clearly described in their report, or
 - (b) Recommend that the candidate should transfer to a lower level of research degree, such as the MLitt

Unsuccessful Applications

- (i) A candidate whose first application for transfer to DPhil status is not approved shall be permitted to make one further application, and will be granted an extension of time for one term if this is necessary for the purposes of making the application. Normally the assessors should be the same as for the original application.
- (ii) If, after considering a candidate's second application for transfer of status, the relevant faculty board concludes that the student's progress does not warrant transfer, the board must:
 - (a) Approve his or her transfer to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters (MLitt), or
 - (b) Arrange for the student to be removed from the University's register of students.
- (iii) Candidates who are transferred to MLitt status are permitted one further opportunity to apply for transfer to DPhil status, provided that (a) not more than 3 terms have elapsed from the

original transfer attempt, and (b) that the candidate's supervisor is prepared to support a further application.

The intention behind these requirements is not to place obstacles in your way but to let you discuss your work with scholars other than your supervisor and benefit from other perspectives on your work.

Reporting

The report of the assessors must be considered by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), which may delegate authority to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Where authority is delegated, the DGS must report his or her decision to the GSC. A copy of the transfer report must also be sent to the student, supervisor and college.

Appeals

Candidates who wish to contest the outcome of the transfer assessment, either on procedural or academic grounds, should first discuss the matter with their Director of Graduate Studies. Where a concern is not satisfactorily settled by that means, the candidate, their supervisor or their college authority may make an appeal directly to the Proctors. The Proctors can only consider whether the procedures for reaching an academic decision were properly followed, and cannot challenge the academic judgement of the assessors; see the University complaints and appeals processes at: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>.

Loss of Probationer Research Student (PRS) Status

Candidates will lose their Probationer Research Student status if they have not gained admission to another status (e.g. DPhil or MLitt) within six terms of admission as a full-time student to the status of Probationer Research Student, unless they have been granted one term's extension following an unsuccessful transfer application; or if the faculty board concerned deprives them of such status (after consultation with the college/hall and supervisor). If a candidate loses his or her status as a PRS and has not gained admission to another status, the candidate is no longer registered as a student of the University.

Information for Students

Information about the purpose and procedures relating to transfer of status must be made available in handbooks and on the web.

(II) CONFIRMATION OF STATUS

Purpose and Criteria

The purpose of confirmation is to:

- (i) Assess the progress of the student's research, and
- (ii) To ensure that the student's research progress is such that the student may reasonably be expected to submit within six months to one year.

Timing

- (i) Candidates admitted to Probationer Research Student (PRS) status must apply for confirmation of status between Trinity Term of Year 2 of their doctoral studies and Trinity Term of Year 3 of their doctoral studies. The confirmation process must be completed no later than the end of Trinity Term of Year 3 of their doctoral studies.
- (ii) Application for confirmation of status should be made at least six months (i.e. two terms, or Trinity Term plus the summer vacation) prior to submission of the thesis

Material Required for Assessment of Applications for Confirmation

- (i) GSO.14 form (available at www.admin.ox.ac.uk/gso/forms).
- (ii) An abstract of the thesis, a list of chapters with a paragraph describing each chapter, a clear statement indicating which chapters have been written, and a detailed timetable for the completion of the remaining chapters.
- (iii) Written work (or equivalent, e.g. a portfolio, score or CD/DVD), to be specified by the faculty. The submitted work should be on the topic of the proposed thesis, and if this consists of written work, should be about 15,000 words long (usually a draft chapter of the thesis **including all footnotes, bibliography etc.**; if the submitted work is not a draft chapter, then the candidate should provide a written explanation of the written work's relationship to the thesis).
- (iv) Reference from supervisor: the supervisor must provide a confidential assessment of the student and their application (this must be in addition to, or instead of, the 'Comment' section of GSO.14). The faculty may specify additional references.
- (v) Confirmation material should normally include copies of the report(s) from the transfer process. This information will be compiled by the Graduate Studies Office.

Assessment

- (i) Assessors: the faculty must appoint at least one assessor, who must not be the candidate's supervisor. Ideally two assessors should be appointed.
- (ii) Interview: an interview by at least one assessor who is not the supervisor, based on the submitted written materials, is compulsory. Academic dress is not required at the interview.
- (iii) Report: the assessor(s) must submit a written report on both the written and interview components of the application, making a clear recommendation to the relevant Graduate Studies Committee. The assessors are required to report on the following points: whether

the subject of the thesis and the manner of its treatment proposed by the student are acceptable; and whether the thesis can reasonably be completed in three or at most four years of full-time study from the date of the student's admission as a research student.

Outcome of Assessment

- (i) The assessor(s) may recommend that the candidate's DPhil status be confirmed.
- (ii) The assessor(s) may judge that the candidate does not (yet) satisfy the purpose of the confirmation process as described above, and may:
 - (a) Recommend resubmission of the application at a later date within the normal timetable;
 - (b) Recommend that the candidate should transfer to a lower level of research degree, such as the MLitt

Unsuccessful Applications

- (i) If the candidate's first application for confirmation of status is not approved, the candidate is permitted to make one further application, normally within one term of the original application. The candidate will be granted an extension of time for one term if this is necessary for the purposes of making the application.
- (ii) If, after considering a candidate's second application for confirmation of status, a board concludes that the student's progress does not warrant confirmation, the board must:
 - (a) Approve his or her transfer to the status of Student for the Degree of Master of Letters,
Or
 - (b) Arrange for the student to be removed from the University's register of students

The report will be considered by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Studies Committee and if in light of the assessors' report it is decided that the subject is unsatisfactory for a DPhil thesis, or that you are unlikely to be able to complete it within the time limit, it may permit a further application by a specified date, or it may allow your admission to MLitt status. If after a second application the Committee continues to be unable to give approval, it will either admit you to MLitt status or take appropriate action to remove your name from the register.

The intention behind these requirements is not to place obstacles in your way but to let you discuss your work with scholars other than your supervisor and benefit from other perspectives on your work.

Deferral of Confirmation

In exceptional circumstances where unforeseen and unavoidable obstacles have arisen since transfer of status so as to delay a student's research progress, the student may apply to their faculty board for deferral of confirmation of status. The maximum total period by which confirmation may be deferred is 3 terms. An application for deferral must consist of:

- (i) A clear and detailed description of the obstacles;

- (ii) A statement of support from the student's supervisor;
- (iii) A statement of support from the Director of Graduate Studies.

Reporting

The report of the assessor(s) must be considered by the Faculty Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), which may delegate authority to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Where authority is delegated, the DGS must report their decisions to the GSC. A copy of the transfer report must also be sent to the student, supervisor and college.

Appeals

Candidates who wish to contest the outcome of the confirmation assessment, either on procedural or academic grounds, should first discuss the matter with their Director of Graduate Studies. Where a concern is not satisfactorily settled by that means, then the candidate, their supervisor or their college authority may make an appeal directly to the Proctors. The Proctors can only consider whether the procedures for reaching an academic decision were properly followed, and cannot challenge the academic judgement of the assessors. See the University complaints and appeals processes at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/complaints>.

Information for Students

Information about the purpose and procedures relating to transfer of status must be made available in handbooks and on the web.

(III) PROCEDURES FOR OXFORD MPhil STUDENTS PROGRESSING TO DPhil TRANSFER OF STATUS

Readmissions

The relevant faculty must decide whether a prospective doctoral student who has completed a two-year MPhil at Oxford should be admitted to Probationer Research Student (PRS) status or directly to DPhil status.

- Normally MPhil students should be admitted to PRS status if they have not already started work on their doctoral thesis.
- In the case of MPhil students who have started work on their doctoral thesis, the faculty may decide to waive the transfer of status process and admit the student directly to DPhil status.
- The faculty should only waive transfer if the student is judged to have reached the stage normally required successfully to complete the transfer of status process.

Timetable

(i) MPhil student admitted to PRS status

The timetable is the same as for students with a one-year Master's admitted to PRS status, i.e. the student is expected to complete transfer of status in Trinity Term of Year 1 or Michaelmas Term of Year 2 as measured from the first term of PRS.

(ii) Confirmation of status

(a) MPhil student admitted to PRS status

- (1) All candidates admitted to PRS status must apply for confirmation of status between the start of Trinity Term of Year 2 of their doctoral studies and by the end of Trinity Term of Year 3 of their doctoral studies.
- (2) Application for confirmation of status should be made at least six months prior to submission of the thesis.

(b) MPhil student admitted directly to DPhil status

- (1) The student must apply for and complete the confirmation of status process by the end of Trinity Term of Year 1 of their doctoral studies.
- (2) Application for confirmation of status should be made at least six months prior to submission of the thesis.