

MPhil/PhD Examinations Handbook

**For: All MPhil/PhD Students,
Supervisors and Research Tutors**

(Last Updated September 2018)

Introduction

This handbook is provided to clarify roles, timescales and regulations from examination entry to the awarding of the MPhil/PhD. As such, you are advised to read it well in advance of your submission deadline.

The information given here has been collated and summarised from the [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#), [Degree Regulations](#) and Doctoral School guides for students, supervisors and examiners available on the website in 2018-19. This Handbook now replaces all previous guidelines.

Please see the Doctoral School Examinations [website](#) for an overview of all required forms. Links to individual forms can also be found in this handbook.

Candidates and supervisors are advised that all submissions (forms or bound theses) and email queries are dealt with in date order of receipt. Please also remember that we have up to 200 candidates going through the examination and/or correction process at any one time.

You are also asked to be aware that our work in the Doctoral School is not solely student-facing. In addition to liaising with candidates and their supervisors, the Doctoral School is also in touch with c. 400 examiners at any one time and dealing with their nomination, reports and payroll.

If at any stage either you or your supervisor are uncertain about what to do, please review this handbook and if you cannot find an answer to your question, then contact the Doctoral School: doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Frequently Asked Questions	5
Summary Timeline	8
1. Examination Entry - Overview	10
2. Nomination of Examiners – Guidance for Supervisors and Candidates	11
2a Internal or External Examiners	11
2b Expertise	11
2c Objectivity	12
3. Examination Regulations.....	13
4 Guidance for Working with your Examiners.....	14
4a Relationship.....	14
4b Communication	14
4c Submission of a revised thesis (Major or Minor Corrections)	14
5. Thesis Preparation and Binding	15
5a Open Access.....	15
5b Word length.....	15
5c Use of Personal Data in Research	15
5d Citation Style	16
5e Proof-reading.....	16
5f Page layout and binding.....	17
5g List of Binders	20
6. Thesis Submission.....	22
6a Thesis Submission Form	22
6b Submission Checklist for Examination:.....	22
6c Theses sent to the examiners	23
7. Examination Results	24
7a Outcomes.....	24
7b Pass	24
7c Minor corrections.....	24
7d Major corrections and re-examination.....	25
7e Award of MPhil.....	25
7f Fail.....	25
8 Thesis submission: Minor corrections	26
8a How to submit the corrected thesis	26

8b	Extension to the submission deadline.....	26
8c	Word length.....	26
8c	Satisfactory corrections	26
9	Thesis re-submission: Major corrections and Re-examination.....	28
9a	Binding	28
9b	Re-examination Outcomes:	28
9c	Re-examination Submission Checklist.....	29
9d	Word length.....	29
9e	New viva or results?	30
10	Thesis Submission: Final Copy.....	31
10a	Online repository / Embargo requests	31
10b	Publication of the thesis (in full or in part)	32
10c	Changes of Address	32
10d	Final Submission Checklist	33
11	Awarding.....	34
11.1	Degree certificates	34
11.2	Graduation.....	35
12	If things go wrong.....	36
12.1	Complaints about Training or Supervision	36
12.2	Appeals	36
12.3	Office of the Independent Adjudicator	36
13	Contacts	37

Frequently Asked Questions

1. When is the earliest I can submit my MPhil or PhD?

The minimum registration period is as follows:

MPhil / PhD (Full-time)	2 years
MPhil / PhD (Part-time)	4 years

Example:

If you began your studies as a full-time student in September 2018, then the earliest you may submit is 15 September 2020.

2. How can I apply for an extension to my submission deadline?

All candidates and supervisors are reminded that the submission deadline is noted on the offer letter and every Annual Report Form.

There is no automatic right to an extension to submission and any requests to extend the submission deadline can only be made on the basis of mitigating circumstances via our [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#). The request will be reviewed by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. Supervisors and candidates should be aware that an extension request is not automatically granted.

3. What happens if I don't submit by my deadline?

Failure to submit by the deadline without an approved extension will result in the Doctoral School initiating the [Withdrawal Policy for Research Students](#). This may lead to your withdrawal from the MPhil/PhD programme.

4. What if I've written more than the word count?

Supervisors and candidates are reminded that the maximum word count is 100,000 words for a PhD thesis and 60,000 for an MPhil thesis.

Any requests to allow the submission of a thesis that is over the permitted word count need to be made by the supervisor under the [Suspension of Regulations Procedure](#). The supervisor needs to complete the form, including any supporting evidence and rationale, **at least three months before the submission deadline**. It should then be sent to the Quality Assurance team via email on qa@soas.ac.uk. The request will then be reviewed by the relevant Associate Director of Research and the Academic Registrar. Supervisors and candidates should be aware that a request is not automatically granted and that the candidate may be required to reduce the word count before submission and still meet the deadline for submission.

5. When do I receive my award letter?

Awards are processed the month after the Doctoral School Office have received all parts of the final submission:

- i. 1 copy of the hard-bound thesis
- ii. 1 CD copy of the thesis
- iii. Electronic Thesis Agreement Form

Award Letters should be expected up to 8 weeks from the date of final submission of the hard-bound thesis.

6. When will I receive my PhD certificate?

You will receive one copy of your PhD certificate. SOAS MPhil and PhD certificates are printed and sent by PremierCert between 6 and 12 weeks after your award letter has been issued using the home address we have on record for you. For this reason, it is essential that you update your home address using the form below as soon as you have submitted the hard-bound copy of your thesis.

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/forms/student-change-of-address.html>

An electronic version of your certificate is available through [PremierCert +](#). You should have received an email when your certificate was first issued from PremierCert with instructions on how to access your documents online and permit access to third parties. Please note that this electronic version cannot be printed. Once you log on to PremierCert, you should see your documents listed and a magnifying glass symbol to the left. If you click on the magnifying glass, a PDF of your document should open. Different browsers have different behaviours, however you must ensure that pop-ups are not blocked. Please contact PremierCert if you need the password to your PremierCert account to be reset.

7. How many copies of my certificate may I have?

You will receive one copy of your PhD certificate. SOAS will not issue second copies of certificates, only a replacement in the event of loss, damage (the damaged copy must be returned to SOAS) or non-receipt. Certificates are re-ordered in batches, and requests for replacement may take several weeks to be processed.

8. My certificate has not arrived or has been damaged. What should I do?

If you did not receive your certificate within 3 months of award or you have since lost your certificate, please contact doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk so that one can be re-ordered.

If your certificate arrived and was damaged in the post, then a new one will only be issued once the damaged original has been returned to the Doctoral School. Please contact doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk in the first instance.

9. I have a job offer and need confirmation that my award has been approved. What do I do?

Please log into SID and request a letter. Doctoral School staff will produce an 'under examination' letter that can cover all stages of the examination process:

- i. Submitted; waiting for viva
- ii. Completed viva; waiting for results
- iii. Submitted corrections; waiting for examiners to respond
- iv. Corrections completed; award pending

Candidates should also be aware that the award letter is sent separately.

10. When can I attend a graduation ceremony?

In order to be included in the July Graduation ceremonies, candidates should have been issued the Confirmation of Award Letter by 31 May of that year at the very latest. If your award date is after 31 May, then you will be invited to the graduation ceremony the following year.

If you are unable to attend the ceremony this year, you may be able to defer to July 2020. Please let us know by emailing the [Graduation Ceremonies Office](#), who will record your request and ensure you are sent an invitation to the ceremony in 2020.

Summary Timeline

It is expected that a viva voce examination will take place within 3 months of submission of the thesis, depending on the availability of examiners. The result is normally sent to the candidate within 2 months of the viva taking place depending on when the Examiners' Joint Report is received by the Doctoral School.

Candidates should note that failure to submit the [Examination Entry Form](#) 2 months prior to submission will delay the examination process as it is the trigger for supervisors to begin the nomination of examiners.

A thesis can only be sent out to examiners once they have been reviewed (by Department) and appointed (by the Doctoral School).

2 months before submission

- Candidates should submit the [Examination Entry Form](#)

1-2 months before submission

- Supervisor completes the [Nomination of Examiners Form](#) and sends it to the Departmental Research Tutor for review.
- Nominated examiners reviewed by Department and appointed (Candidate and supervisor will be advised by the Doctoral School once this is confirmed)

Submission Deadline

- Thesis submissions can be accepted by the Doctoral School Office between 10.00 and 16.00, Monday to Friday.
- Candidates are reminded that there is no right to late submission and failure to submit by the deadline results in the risk of withdrawal from the programme.
- Thesis sent to examiners between 2-4 weeks after submission if examiners have already been appointed. (Candidates are reminded that there will be c. 200 students going through the examinations process at any one time).

1 month after submission

- Supervisor to organise viva (suggest date/time and book a room)
- Viva date agreed between examiners, candidate (and chair, if applicable)

3 months after submission

- Viva normally takes place, depending on availability of examiners

After the viva

- Doctoral School receives the examiners' reports and notifies candidate of outcome by email.
- Note that examiners have up to 3 months after the viva to submit the joint report and the Doctoral School aims to notify candidates of the outcome within one month of receiving the paperwork from the Examiners.
- Candidate works on major or minor corrections and submits a revised thesis
- Examiners advise whether the revisions are acceptable
- Doctoral School confirms the outcome – this may be 1-2 months after the submission of the hardbound copy if the award has been confirmed

1. Examination Entry - Overview

Candidates (and their supervisors) are reminded that entry to examination is not automatic, but is indicated by the candidate submitting the **Examination Entry Form** **TWO MONTHS** prior to the submission deadline.

Example:

Submission Deadline	Examination Entry Form Deadline
15 September 2019	15 July 2019

You may submit your thesis earlier if you have completed the minimum registration period (2 years full-time study or 4 years of part-time study). Please note that early submission of the thesis may affect the tuition fee you are asked to pay and you are advised to contact the Doctoral School if you are unsure.

All examination forms can be found on the Doctoral School [website](#). Please ensure that you submit signed forms to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk. Forms should be sent via email.

Please note that neither dates for viva voce examinations should be scheduled nor rooms booked until the examiners have been approved.

- i. The [Examination Entry Form](#) should be completed and **signed by the candidate and the supervisor**. The completed and signed form should then be submitted to the Doctoral School **by the candidate**, at least **two months** before the submission deadline to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk. Electronic signatures (with emails copied to all signatories and using SOAS accounts) are acceptable.
- ii. The **Doctoral School will confirm receipt of the Examination Entry Form and** check the **candidate's** eligibility to submit. This will normally be within two weeks of submission, depending on the volume of work.
- iii. The **candidate** should email their **supervisor an abstract** of the thesis (approximately 300 words) as this is required for nominating the examiners.
- iv. The **Doctoral School** will send the **supervisor** the [Nomination of Examiners](#) form.
- v. The **supervisor** is asked to complete this form and then forward it to the **Departmental Research Tutor** for review. The **Research Tutor and Panel** will complete the review process and send the completed form to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk for the Associate Director of Research to review and approve.

2. Nomination of Examiners – Guidance for Supervisors and Candidates

It should be noted that all prospective examiners are required to go through a **formal nomination and review process** within the Department before they are approved to act, which will take place after informal discussion with the supervisor to ascertain whether they would be willing to examine the thesis and provide all the ensuing examination documents to the Doctoral School in a timely manner. This review process is to ensure the good standing of SOAS, University of London research degrees and the robustness of quality assurance procedures.

The aim of the approval mechanism is to appoint examiners **who will be able, and be seen to be able**, to make a fair and independent assessment of the candidate and the thesis and to ensure that appropriate and consistent standards for the PhD and MPhil prevail throughout the School.

Examiners should be approved well before the candidate submits the thesis so that the School can formally appoint the examiners, and the examination process can start immediately on submission of the thesis to the Doctoral School.

Supervisors are reminded that it is recommended that the viva take place within **3 months of submission** of the thesis.

Supervisors should not set a date for the viva and finalise arrangements until confirmation of the approval of examiners is sent by the Doctoral School.

2a Internal or External Examiners

Supervisors are asked to nominate **two examiners** at least one of whom must be external to SOAS. One examiner may be a member of the candidate's Department, but attention should be paid to section 2c as any internal examiner may not have acted as a supervisor for the candidate or been involved in their upgrade or PhD studies.

At least one of the examiners must be able to provide independent external oversight of the SOAS [Regulations and Procedures](#).

2b Expertise

The appointed team of examiners **must demonstrate sufficient experience of examining in the University of London and the UK Higher Education sector**.

If there is insufficient experience between the two examiners, a third examiner may need to be appointed, or **the supervisor could be required to name a Chair** to ensure adherence to the Regulations.

Both examiners shall be experts in the field of the thesis but not necessarily in all parts of the precise topic. The aim should be to appoint a team of examiners who, between them,

cover all aspects of the work to be presented by the candidate and who demonstrate experience of SOAS and University of London examination procedures.

First time Examiners: It is accepted that at some stage every academic has to examine a PhD thesis for the first time. In such cases the examiner should be paired with an experienced Examiner and a Chair may be appointed to ensure adherence to the SOAS Regulations and Procedures.

2c Objectivity

The examiners proposed **shall have had no direct involvement in the candidate's research or close connections with either the candidate or the supervisor** which might compromise a completely objective examination. It is accepted that examiners will usually be acquainted with the supervisor, and sometimes with the candidate, and this in itself is not a bar to acting as an examiner.

- **Current or former** members of the candidate's supervisory committee are automatically ineligible to serve as that candidate's internal examiner.
- Nominations of examiners **from within the same Department as the supervisor/candidate are discouraged, but not prohibited.** In such cases, a statement from the supervisor to the Faculty Associate Director of Research will be needed justifying such an appointment. This can be provided on the **Nomination of Examiners Form**.
- Academic staff who have taken an active role in considering a candidate's **upgrade** to PhD are ineligible to serve as examiners.
- Staff members who may have attended **seminars/presentations** given by the candidate may act as examiners.
- **Former members of the academic staff of the School** are not eligible to serve as external examiners **until three years after** the date of their departure from the School.
- Supervisors and Departments are asked **to avoid repeatedly using the same examiner**, either SOAS or external, or being repeatedly nominated to act as examiners for a colleague's students.
- **The supervisor and/or Research Tutor are asked to name a Chair on the [Nomination of Examiners](#) form.** The Faculty Associate Director of Research may then ask for the Chair to be appointed if it is felt that the examiners may need a **Chair to ensure adherence to the Regulations and Procedures.**

3. Examination Regulations

The following is reproduced from the SOAS, University of London, [Code of Practice for Research Degrees](#), regulatory points 58-63 (2017-18).

Please note that these are subject to annual review. For the latest version of all Degree Regulations please go to:

<https://www.soas.ac.uk/registry/degreeregulations/>

58. The student will need to fill in the appropriate examination entry form for submitting the thesis. This form should be completed and returned to the Doctoral School TWO MONTHS before the intended date of submission to avoid delays in appointment of examiners and arrangement of the examination.

59. It is the responsibility of the supervisor to recommend examiners in accordance with the nomination guidelines. At least one of the examiners will be external to the School.

60. Only the following people are permitted to be in attendance at the viva:

- a) the candidate*
- b) the nominated examiners*
- c) a supervisor; and*
- d) where required, a nominated Independent Chair*

*61. It is also the responsibility of the student to see that the thesis is prepared in the approved format and with the required number of copies. It is especially important to follow the maximum length for **MPhil (60,000 words) and PhD (100,000 words) theses**. The bibliography is excluded from the word count; footnotes are included within the word count; appendices are excluded from the word count and should include only material which examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish.*

62. For both MPhil and PhD degrees candidates are required both to submit a thesis of the required standard and to defend their work to the satisfaction of the examiners in a viva (oral examination).

63. The examiners of a PhD thesis have a number of options open to them: they can deem the candidate as having fully met the requirements of a PhD (or ask for only minor amendments to be made); they can require more substantial changes to be made and the revised thesis represented within the School deadline for resubmissions.

4 Guidance for Working with your Examiners

4a Relationship

The candidate should **not have a prior relationship with the examiners, nor must a relationship be established beyond the normal expectations of an examination.** This includes all correspondence with the examiners.

4b Communication

We hope that the examination process is smooth, but it should be noted that **candidates must not contact their examiners independently** during the examination process whether before or after the viva.

If a candidate has questions regarding the Joint Report or the corrections required of them, then they must email their supervisor who will contact the examiners on their behalf and copy the Doctoral School in to their reply.

Candidates **should not** meet with examiners, speak on the telephone, email or communicate via any other method outside of the viva, both before and after the examination, until the time the candidate has been awarded.

Supervisors are permitted to liaise with the examiners in case the candidate has questions about the scope of the corrections, but not for the purposes of providing material to and from the candidate before or after the examination and this includes forwarding an electronic copy of the thesis.

4c Submission of a revised thesis (Major or Minor Corrections)

Candidates will be asked to submit their corrected thesis and a letter summarising the changes made to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk. The Doctoral School will send the revised thesis to the examiners, liaise with the examiners regarding the reports and inform the candidate of the outcome.

5. Thesis Preparation and Binding

Every candidate submitting a thesis for examination must do so in accordance with the instructions below. Please note that Doctoral School staff can require that a new submission is made should the binding not be to the required specifications.

Examples of hardbound MPhil/PhD theses can be found in the SOAS Library. Candidates are advised to consult recent examples in the SOAS Library if they are unsure as to the required format.

5a Open Access

Candidates should be aware that it is expected that MPhil/PhD students submit their work to the publicly available online repository once the award of MPhil or PhD is confirmed. There may be in exceptional circumstances the need for an embargo to be placed on both the printed and electronic version of your thesis.

If this is the case then you are required to fill in the [request form](#) and take it to your Supervisor and Department Research Tutor for consideration. The request will then be considered by the Faculty Associate Director of Research who will decide whether an embargo should be recommended and considered by the SOAS Research Ethics Panel.

5b Word length

The thesis submitted for examination must be in line with school policy on **word length**. Candidates are expected to produce a PhD thesis of no more than 100,000 words (60,000 for MPhil). The School reminds candidates that working to a set brief is an important research skill.

As noted in point 61 of the **Code of Practice for Research Degrees**, the word count
The bibliography is excluded from the word count; footnotes are included within the word count; appendices are excluded from the word count and should include only material which examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis, but to which they may refer if they wish

Theses submitted that are over the word limit, where a case has not been made before submission, will be significantly delayed in passing through the examinations process as permission will need to be sought via the **Suspension of Regulations Procedure** before the thesis can be sent to the examiners. Candidates should be aware that a Suspension of Regulations is not automatically granted and that they may be required to edit their thesis. Should this result in a late submission, then the Doctoral School may initiate the **Withdrawal Policy for Research Students**.

5c Use of Personal Data in Research

Any PhD student who is collecting or using personal data as part of their PhD research must read and adhere to the [School's Code of Practice for Use of Personal Data in Research and data protection legislation \(UK, EU and International\)](#) throughout their research and when submitting their thesis for examination and to the Library and SOAS Research Online. PhD students must ensure that personal data is anonymized before they

submit their thesis unless they have received specific informed consent that it can be included.

Informed Consent

PhD students must ensure that they carefully prepare for collecting informed consent from research participants used in their PhD research. The **School's Code of Practice for Use of Personal Data in Research** includes a template consent form which includes all the information you need to provide to research participants. The form can be adapted to a particular research project and language context. Evidence of the consent you have collected should be kept as long as you keep and use the data for your PhD research and future publication and you should include a blank version of the consent form you used in your thesis when it is submitted.

Research Data Management and Personal Data

Before the collection of any personal data for research PhD students must ensure they are aware of the practical steps that need to be taken in order that personal data it is collected, handled and shared in accordance with data protection legislation.

In addition to the **Code of Practice for Using Personal Data in Research**, we have provided essential practical advice and training about collecting and using and storing research data online. PhD students must read the guidance below before collecting research data.

- [SOAS Research Data Management](#) pages includes dedicated information on working securely and safely with personal data and general good practice relating to research data management
- Research Data Management Training is also available throughout the year at SOAS including Working with Personal Data and Data Management Planning. PhD students should attend prior to undertaking data collection. Training is advertised through the [Library Training & Events Page](#)

If you need any further help or information you should contact:

- dataprotection@soas.ac.uk for further advice about UK and International Data Protection Legislation
- researchdata@soas.ac.uk for further advice about research data management

5d Citation Style

SOAS does not have a standard citation style. Depending on Departmental preferences, Candidates may use MLA, APA, Harvard or any other style. Consistency is of the utmost importance once a suitable discipline-specific style has been chosen and candidates should seek Departmental/supervisory advice for the appropriate style for their discipline.

5e Proof-reading

Candidates are permitted to have their work proof-read prior to submission to iron out any errors and inconsistencies in the language and overall presentation of the written work. It should be noted that the thesis submitted for examination must be the candidate's own

work. The use of a third-party proof-reader or proof-reading services must not compromise the authorship of the research.

The term 'proof-reading' refers to the final stage of academic writing. It is intended to iron out any errors and inconsistencies in the language and overall presentation of a written work.

The School encourages all students to proof-read their own work since it is an essential academic skill. However, it is also recognised that in some instances it is appropriate for researchers to seek help with proof-reading, whether from professional proof-readers or from colleagues, friends, and family members.

The candidate who wishes to have help in proof-reading the final version of a thesis should discuss with their supervisors beforehand and keep them informed subsequently of the proof-reading process, asking for further advice on the scope and nature of changes as may be felt necessary.

A proof-reader may

- identify spelling, typographical and punctuation errors;
- identify poor grammar;
- highlight formatting and layout errors or inconsistencies (e.g. page numbers, font size);
- identify errors in labelling of diagrams, charts, or figures;
- highlight a sentence or paragraph that is overly complex or where the intended meaning is not clear;
- draw attention to repeated phrases or omitted words.

A proof-reader may not

- add content in any way;
- reduce content so as to comply with a specified word limit;
- rewrite content where meaning is ambiguous;
- rearrange paragraphs to enhance structure or argument;
- alter argument or logic where faulty;
- check or revise calculations, formulae, equations or computer code;
- re-label diagrams, charts or figures.

Proof-readers may be invited to assist only if they adhere to these guidelines. Proof-readers should not make any changes or corrections directly to a given draft, but instead alert the author by identifying typos or inconsistencies by means of highlighting or comments in the margin where further improvements are needed.

5f Page layout and binding

Candidates are advised to read this section with particular care as the Doctoral School can and will require that a new submission is made if the thesis does not adhere to the binding requirements listed below:

- i. **Number of Copies:** Two copies must be submitted to the Doctoral School (GS305) 53 Gordon Square. However, a candidate may be required to provide a third copy of his/her thesis if a third examiner is appointed, or at any stage in the examination process. Each candidate is required to bring one additional copy to the oral examination, paginated in the same way as the copies submitted to the Doctoral School, and adequately bound. **Candidates must also submit an electronic copy (.pdf) version to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk.**
- ii. **Presentation:** Theses must be presented in a permanent and legible form in typescript or print except that mathematical or similar formulae may be inserted neatly by hand. Photographic and other illustrations should be permanently mounted on A4 size paper and bound in with the thesis. In no circumstances should sticking tape or similar materials be used for any purpose. Candidates must make every effort to correct errors before submission. It is not the task of Examiners to act as editors and/or proof-readers of a thesis.
- iii. **Paper:** A4 size paper (210 x 297 mm) should be used. Plain white paper must be used, of good quality and of sufficient opacity for normal reading. Only one side of the paper may be used.
- iv. **Layout:** Margins at the binding edge must be not less than **40 mm (1.5 inches)** and other margins not less than 20 mm (0.75 inches). Double or one-and-a-half spacing should be used in typescripts, except for indented quotations or footnotes where single spacing may be used. It is advised that a font size of a minimum of 12pt be used.
- v. **Pagination:** All pages must be numbered in one continuous sequence, i.e. from the title page of the first volume to the last page of type, in Arabic numerals from 1 onwards. This sequence must include everything bound in the volume, including maps, diagrams, blank pages, etc. Any material which cannot be bound in with the text must be placed in a pocket inside or attached to the back cover or in a rigid container similar in format to the bound thesis.
- vi. **Title Page:** The title page must bear the officially-approved title of the thesis, the candidate's full name as registered, the name of the School and the degree for which it is submitted. A [template of the format of the title page](#) is available on the Doctoral School website. The title page should be followed by a signed declaration (page) that the work presented in the thesis is the candidate's own. A suggested wording for this declaration can be found [online](#).
- vii. **Abstract:** The signed declaration should be followed by an abstract consisting of no more than 300 words.
- vii. **Table of Contents:** In each copy of the thesis the abstract should be followed by a full table of contents (including any material not bound in) and a list of tables, photographs and any other materials.

viii. **Illustrative Material:** Illustrative material may be submitted in the following forms and should be listed in the table of contents:

- (a) Audio recordings: Compact cassette tape C60 or C90
- (b) Photographic slides: 35 mm in 2" x 2" frame
- (c) A reliable brand CD-R with Phthalocyanine dye (clear light green or light green disc hue), DVD-R or DVD+R
- (d) Illustrative material in other forms (including videotapes) may be submitted at the discretion of the Department at which the student is registered. Enquiries should be made well in advance of the submission of the thesis to the Doctoral School.

Any material which cannot be bound in with the text must be placed either in a pocket inside or attached to the back cover or in a rigid container similar in format to the bound thesis. If it is separate from the bound volume it must be clearly labelled with the same information as on the title page. Each copy of the thesis submitted must be accompanied by a full set of this material.

- ix. **Practice/Performance PhDs:** A candidate who is undertaking practice/performance in accordance with the provisions of the relevant MPhil and PhD regulations should have sought approval from his/her School in the form of the retainable documentation in advance of submitting the thesis. A thesis may be submitted in A3 format where provision has been made in the relevant regulations or where the School of registration has agreed there is a demonstrable need.
- x. **Binding:** In the first instance candidates should submit two soft bound copies of their thesis.

All theses (whether soft or hard-bound) must:

- (a) be covered in **royal blue or medium blue cloth** and must be a water resistant material
- (b) be lettered in gold up the spine with Degree, Year, Surname and Initials in the same form as the School records, with letters 16 or 18 point (.25 inch).

Example: PhD 2016 OTHER, A.N.

- (c) The **outside front cover should be blank** and should not be embossed with writing.

ONLY History of Art & Archaeology theses are permitted to be bound in two volumes. Any other thesis **MUST** be bound in one volume. Any candidate who wishes to bind across two volumes and is **NOT** in the Department of History of Art & Archaeology **MUST** make a formal case, in writing, to doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk which will be reviewed by the Faculty Associate Director of Research.

If the thesis has to be bound in two volumes, the spine should indicate this clearly, using the following convention: Vol. 1 and Vol. 2.

The date on the copies of the thesis submitted for examination in November and December should be that of the following year.

If submitting the thesis for re-examination after a 12 month referral, the date on the thesis should be that of the re-entry and not the original submission.

Hard-bound theses must have the pages sewn or be mechanically fixed in a permanent manner.

Soft-bound theses should have the pages glued in.

5g List of Binders

PhD candidates are strongly advised to choose an **experienced academic binder** when preparing their thesis for submission as a high street copy shop is unlikely to have sufficient expertise. Below is a short list detailing companies offering a thesis binding service.

Inclusion on the list below offers no guarantee that the work will be carried out to SOAS, University of London specifications.

It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that the work is carried out to the standards laid down in **Section 5 of this handbook**.

Candidates must also ensure that the binder has the correct delivery address for SOAS Doctoral School (Doctoral School, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG) if they undertake delivery for candidates. We can accept deliveries from couriers between 10.00 and 16.00, Monday to Friday and no deliveries can be left with Security outside these times.

THE BOOK BINDER

Tel: 07814 642 272

Address: The Book Binder, c/o Cascade Group printing),
1st Floor, South Entrance, Staple Inn Buildings
London **WC1V 7PZ** (next to Chancery Lane Underground station)

Website: www.the-book-binder.co.uk

Email: admin@the-book-binder.co.uk

BLISSETT BOOKBINDERS

Tel: 020 8992 3965

Address: Roslin Road, London W3 8DH

Website: www.thesisonline.co.uk or www.blissetts.com

Email: admin@blissetts.com

CITY BINDERS

Tel: 020 7248 7990

Address: City Binders, 1st Floor, 39 Ludgate Hill, London, EC4M 7JN.

Website: www.citybinders.co.uk

Email: info@citybinders.co.uk

COLLIS-BIRD & WITHEY

Tel: 020 7607 1116
Address: 1 Drayton Park, London N5 1NU
Website: www.thesisbookbinding.co.uk
Email: info@collisbirdandwithey.co.uk

THE DOCUMENT CENTRE

Tel: 020 7928 9738
Address: 92, Southwark Bridge Road, Southwark, London, SE1 0EX
Website: www.document-centre.co.uk
E-mail: info@document-centre.co.uk

eTHESIS

Tel: 020 7581 0334
Address: 9 Elvaston Mews, London SW7 5HY
Email: enquiries@ethesis.co.uk
Website: www.ethesis.co.uk

WALTER NEWBURY (PARTNERS) LTD

Tel: 020 8472 0526
Address: Unit 19 Dagenham Business Centre, 123 Rainham Road North, Dagenham RM10 7FD
E-mail: info@walternewbury.co.uk
Website: www.walternewbury.co.uk

THE WYVERN BINDERY

Tel: 020 7490 7899
Address: 56-58, Clerkenwell Road, London EC1M 5PX
Website: www.wyvernbindery.com
E-mail: info@wyvernbindery.com

6. Thesis Submission

6a Thesis Submission Form

When the candidate is ready to submit their thesis to the Doctoral School they should, if they have not already done so, download and complete the [Thesis Submission Form](#). The form must be signed by the candidate and the supervisor.

This form will need to be submitted at the same time as the two bound copies of the thesis. The deadline for submitting this form is the same deadline as that of the thesis submission. The form should be submitted to the Doctoral School via doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk if the binder will be delivering the thesis.

Theses may be delivered to the Doctoral School in person (Monday to Friday, 10-4) or sent to the Post Room via our postal address (Doctoral School, SOAS, University of London, Thornhaugh Street, Russell Square, London WC1H 0XG). Theses or forms cannot be left with Security outside office opening times.

Please note that failure to submit completed forms or the submission of a wrongly-bound thesis will result in your viva date being delayed.

6b Submission Checklist for Examination:

Task	Completed?
The thesis is the correct word length .	
The full thesis has been printed by the binders, including bibliography, all tables and appendices – please check that any graphs or pictures are in colour or black and white as you had planned.	
The thesis is bound in one volume with consecutive page numbering .	
The thesis is bound in Royal or Medium Blue bookcloth , the spine is embossed in gold lettering and the outside front cover is blank .	
There are two soft-bound copies printed on one side of the paper only.	
The thesis has a signed declaration page for the appropriate thesis, MPhil or PhD. This page comes after the title page, but before the abstract.	
The Thesis Submission Form is included.	

6c Theses sent to the examiners

Once both copies of the thesis have been received by the Doctoral School, they will be securely sent to the approved examiners within 2-4 weeks of submission, or within 2-4 weeks of Associate Dean of Research approval of the examiners, whichever is later. The examiners will be sent all necessary forms, instructions and guidance together with the bound thesis. Candidates and supervisors are reminded that they should not send copies of the thesis to the examiners independently.

The candidate's supervisor will be notified that the copies of the thesis have been sent and requested to set a date for the examination. The candidate will be copied into this confirmation. The viva date is mutually agreed between the examiners, the candidate and the supervisor. This is normally within 3 months of submission, but can vary depending on whether examiners are available and how long it takes for examiners to be approved.

Once the details of the date and time of the viva have been set, the supervisor should confirm with the candidate, examiners and the Doctoral School.

7. Examination Results

It is normal for the examiners to give an informal and indicative result to the candidate at the close of the viva examination. However, the official result will be communicated to candidates by the Doctoral School.

The Doctoral School can only release results to candidates when all copies of the reports have been agreed, signed and submitted to us. We are in touch with examiners at all stages of the process.

Please do be aware that examiners are asked to submit the signed Outcome Form and Joint Report to the Doctoral School within **3 months** of the viva, though most are submitted sooner.

7a Outcomes

At the viva voce, there are **seven** possible outcomes:

- i. pass;
- ii. pass with **minor corrections** to be submitted **within 3 months**;
- iii. not pass, but with **major corrections** (referral) to be submitted within **12 months**;
- iv. not pass, but with recommendation of award of MPhil (if sitting for the PhD degree);
- v. a recommendation that MPhil be awarded upon satisfactory completion of minor corrections within 3 months;
- vi. a recommendation that MPhil to be awarded upon satisfactory completion of major corrections within 12 months (referral);
- vii. fail.

7b Pass

Should the outcome be 'pass', then the examiners may notify the candidate during the viva (**but not after**) and will notify the Doctoral School accordingly. Any result communicated to the candidate during the viva is not formal and final until notified by the award letter from the Doctoral School.

An award letter will be issued to candidates within **one month** of receipt of the examiners' reports and the correctly bound theses (see Section 5).

7c Minor corrections

Should the outcome be 'pass with minor corrections', candidates should ordinarily be notified of this at the viva, and will be informed as to what corrections are required (normally in writing and normally within four weeks of the date of the viva, though examiners have up to three months to communicate the results).

The examiners will notify the Doctoral School of the result and submit their Joint Report. Candidates should submit the corrected thesis (normally by email) to the Doctoral School.

The three month period candidates have for completing these corrections will start from the date of the outcome letter to the candidate from the Doctoral School.

Guidance on how to submit minor corrections is found in Section 10 of this handbook.

7d Major corrections and re-examination

Should the outcome be 'not pass with major corrections', candidates may be notified of this at the viva, and will receive a letter from the Doctoral School confirming this, together with a copy of the examiners' Joint Report.

Candidates should submit two soft-bound copies of the corrected thesis together with the [Examination Re-Entry Form](#) to the Doctoral School and ensure that they have paid the [re-entry fee](#) (£300) within a maximum of 12 months of the date of the official result letter.

Further guidance on how to submit major corrections is found in Section 9 of this handbook.

7e Award of MPhil

If candidates have submitted the thesis for a PhD examination and the outcome is a recommendation for the award of MPhil (whether with or without corrections), then candidates have the choice of accepting this award, not accepting, or appealing against the decision. Candidates will be advised of the process for appeal in their outcome letter.

7f Fail

Should the outcome be 'fail', then candidates will not be allowed to re-submit for examination, but do reserve the right to appeal against this decision. Candidates will be advised of the process for appeal in their outcome letter.

8 Thesis submission: Minor corrections

This section is only relevant to candidates who have been given the outcome of ‘pass, with minor corrections’.

Candidates are reminded that they have **three months** in which to complete minor corrections and submit them to the Doctoral School. The time for corrections is not three months within the date of the viva, but three months from the date of the outcome letter sent to you by the Doctoral School once we have received all the forms and reports from your examiners.

8a How to submit the corrected thesis

The amended thesis should be sent as an electronic copy (.doc or .pdf) to the Doctoral School via doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk together with a covering letter to your examiners indicating what changes you have made with references to the relevant page numbers. The candidate can choose whether to submit the updated thesis with track changes included. Candidates are not required to submit a second soft-bound thesis once they have completed the minor corrections.

The Doctoral School will then forward your revised thesis to the examiners and ask them to notify us of the outcome within **3 months**. Candidates and their supervisors should not forward the thesis to the examiners themselves.

8b Extension to the submission deadline

Any requests to extend the submission deadline can only be made on the basis of mitigating circumstances via our [Mitigating Circumstances Policy](#). The request will be reviewed by the Mitigating Circumstances Panel. Supervisors and candidates should be aware that an extension request is not automatically granted.

8c Word length

The revised thesis submitted must be in line with school policy on **word length**. Any required corrections do not mean that the thesis can be over the word limit. Candidates are expected to produce a PhD thesis of no more than 100,000 words (60,000 for MPhil). The School reminds candidates that working to a set brief is an important research skill.

Theses submitted that are over the word limit, where a case has not been made and approved before submission, will be significantly delayed in passing through the examinations process as permission will need to be sought via the [Suspension of Regulations Procedure](#). Candidates should be aware that this request is not automatically granted and that they may be required to edit their thesis and submit by the advised deadline.

8c Satisfactory corrections

Examiners are requested to confirm to the Doctoral School that the corrections have been made to their satisfaction in line with the recommendations provided to the candidate in

the Joint Report. Once the Doctoral School has received confirmation of the result, they will notify the candidate and give guidance on the submission of the hard-bound thesis.

9 Thesis re-submission: Major corrections and Re-examination

This section is only relevant to candidates who have been given the outcome of ‘not pass, with major corrections’.

Candidates should submit two soft-bound copies of the corrected thesis together with the [Examination Re-Entry Form](#) to the Doctoral School and ensure that they have paid the [re-entry fee](#) (£300) within a maximum of 12 months of the date of the official result letter.

9a Binding

Please refer to Section 5 for full details of the regulations regarding thesis preparation, layout and binding. All entries for re-examination must be soft-bound.

Two soft-bound copies of the revised thesis must be delivered to the Doctoral School together with the **Examination Re-Entry Form** by your advised re-submission deadline.

9b Re-examination Outcomes:

At the viva voce for re-examination, there are **six** possible outcomes for PhD and **three** for MPhil (for further details, candidates should contact the Doctoral School).

Examinations for the **PhD** degree:

- i. **Pass:** the candidate has satisfied the Examiners in the examination for the degree.
- ii. **Pass subject to minor amendments:** to satisfy the Examiners in the examination the candidate must complete specified minor amendments within 3 months of the date of the results letter to the candidate from the School (the Candidate has been informed of this at the viva).
- iii. The candidate has met the requirements for the degree of MPhil and should be offered this degree.
- iv. To satisfy the requirements for the degree of MPhil, the candidate is required to make specified minor amendments to our satisfaction within 3 months of the date of the results letter to the candidate from the School (the Candidate has been informed of this at the viva)
- v. The candidate is permitted to enter the examination for the degree of **MPhil** and to re-present the thesis in a revised form within 12 months.
- vi. **Fail:** the candidate may not re-enter for the degree of PhD or MPhil.

Examinations for the **MPhil** degree:

- i. **Pass:** the candidate has satisfied the Examiners in the examination for the degree.
- ii. **Pass subject to minor amendments:** to satisfy the Examiners in the examination the candidate must complete specified minor amendments within 3 months of the date of the results letter to the candidate from the School (the candidate has been informed of this at the viva).
- iii. **Fail:** the candidate may not re-enter for the degree of MPhil

9c Re-examination Submission Checklist

Task	Completed?
The thesis is the correct word length .	
The full thesis has been printed by the binders, including bibliography, all tables and appendices – please check that any graphs or pictures are in colour or black and white as you had planned.	
The thesis is bound in one volume with consecutive page numbering .	
The thesis is bound in Royal or Medium Blue bookcloth , the spine is embossed in gold lettering and the outside front cover is blank .	
There are two soft-bound copies printed on one side of the paper only.	
The thesis has a signed declaration page for the appropriate thesis, MPhil or PhD. This page comes after the title page, but before the abstract.	
The Thesis Submission Form is included.	
Re-submission fee has been paid in full	

9d Word length

The thesis submitted for re-examination must be in line with school policy on **word length**. Any required corrections do not mean that the thesis can be over the word limit. Candidates are expected to produce a PhD thesis of no more than 100,000 words (60,000 for MPhil). The School reminds candidates that working to a set brief is an important research skill.

Theses submitted that are over the word limit, where a case has not been made and approved before submission, will be significantly delayed in passing through the examinations process as permission will need to be sought via the [Suspension of Regulations Procedure](#). Candidates should be aware that this request is not automatically granted and that they may be required to edit their thesis and submit by the advised deadline.

9e New viva or results?

When a candidate has submitted a thesis following major corrections, the examiners may schedule a new viva examination or may read the thesis and advise the Doctoral School of the outcome. There is no requirement that a second viva be scheduled after the student has submitted the corrected thesis. The examiners will submit new reports to the Doctoral School and they have **3 months** to do so.

If a new viva needs to be scheduled, then this will be done in consultation with the candidate and the supervisor to arrange a mutually convenient date. The Doctoral School will also be informed of the new viva date.

The outcome (from the list for MPhil or PhD as in section 9b above) will be sent by the examiners to the Doctoral School who will send formal notification to the candidate and their supervisor.

10 Thesis Submission: Final Copy

The Doctoral School will contact candidates who have submitted minor or major corrections as soon as their examiners have confirmed that the corrections have been made to their satisfaction and the notification of the outcome will be sent by email. Candidates will then be asked to submit a hard-bound copy of the thesis, a .pdf copy on a CD and the Electronic Thesis Agreement Form.

Candidates and their supervisors are reminded that the award of MPhil or PhD can only be processed after these have been received. Candidates should submit the hardbound copy of the thesis within 2 months of the date of the outcome email.

10a Online repository / Embargo requests

Candidates are required to deposit a print and an electronic copy of their thesis. The print copy of the thesis will be deposited in the School Library for consultation. The electronic copy will be deposited in the School's online institutional repository (SOAS Research Online) and may be made publicly accessible.

SOAS encourages candidates to allow for online availability of their thesis to ensure maximum visibility and access to SOAS theses. However, the School is aware that there may be circumstances where it is necessary for a candidate to restrict access to their thesis:

- The thesis contains a large volume of third-party copyright material that candidates do not have permission to make available online.
- The thesis contains personal data relating to individuals who have not consented to allowing their information to be made available online.
- The thesis contains data that is otherwise sensitive

We have provided guidance on Copyright and E-theses [online](#). Candidates should have considered issues such as this at an early stage with the supervisor. There is guidance on the use of personal data in research on the SOAS [website](#).

If possible:

- avoid including such data in the thesis;
- consider whether the arguments could be made using anonymised data;
- if candidates must include personal data, consider whether it could be included in an appendix to the thesis so that the main body of the thesis could be made available.

If none of these things is possible, candidates may apply to exclude the thesis from the online repository. The hard copy of the thesis will also be restricted. Candidates must indicate which parts of the thesis are affected so that these can be withheld if the thesis is the subject of a Freedom of Information request or Inter-Library Loan request. If possible, Candidates should also indicate when the data will cease to be sensitive (the general assumption is that personal data can be disclosed 100 years after the birth of an individual).

In some cases, theses might contain information which, if disclosed, would cause prejudice to other organisations or individuals, or possibly even to the State. For example:

- information that is commercially sensitive;
- information provided in confidence.

If candidates apply for the thesis not to be made available online for these reasons, they should explain which parts of the thesis are affected and what harm the disclosure would cause.

If possible, as with personal information, it would be helpful if candidates could indicate when these sensitivities will cease, as though candidates may still not wish the thesis to be made available online, restrictions can then be lifted on the hard copy of the thesis.

10b Publication of the thesis (in full or in part)

An embargo of the e-thesis is available if candidates are concerned that inclusion of the thesis in the SOAS e-repository will prevent them from finding a publisher for the thesis. This embargo will last automatically for three years if candidates select this option on the form. If candidates wish to extend this period, they should contact the Library for details of how to apply to do so.

The hard-bound copy of the thesis must be publically available in the SOAS, University of London library.

10c Changes of Address

During the examination process candidates must inform the Doctoral School of any changes to their contact address by completing the [online form](#).

10d Final Submission Checklist

Task	Completed?
The thesis is the correct word length .	
The full thesis has been printed by the binders, including bibliography, all tables and appendices – please check that any graphs or pictures are in colour or black and white as you had planned.	
The thesis is bound in one volume with consecutive page numbering .	
The thesis is bound in Royal or Medium Blue bookcloth , the spine is embossed in gold lettering and the outside front cover is blank .	
The thesis is hard-bound in one volume printed on one side of the paper only	
The thesis has a signed declaration page for the appropriate thesis, MPhil or PhD. This page comes after the title page, but before the abstract.	
Submit hard-copy of completed Electronic Thesis Access Agreement Form (E4)	
Electronic Copy - .pdf of final thesis on CD	

11 Awarding

It is recommended that you submit the hard-bound copy within 2 months of receipt of your outcome letter as failure to submit the hard-bound thesis will delay your award. Please note that your award will not be back-dated to the date you received confirmation of your results. The award date is always the last day of the month in which you have submitted your hard-bound thesis, electronic copy on CD and Electronic Thesis Agreement Form.

Awards are processed the month after the Doctoral School Office have received all parts of the final submission:

- i. 1 copy of the hard-bound thesis
- ii. 1 CD copy of the thesis
- iii. Electronic Thesis Agreement Form

Award Letters should be expected up to 8 weeks from the date of final submission of the hard-bound thesis.

The degree certificate will be issued within three months of the confirmation of award letter date. Once the result is processed and the outcome is a pass (which can now be awarded), the Doctoral School will first produce a Confirmation of Award Letter as official notification of the award.

All SOAS MPhil and PhD certificates are printed and sent to candidates by PremierCert between **6 and 12 weeks** after the award letter has been issued using the home address we have on record. For this reason, it is essential that candidates [update your home address](#) as soon as they have submitted the hard-bound copy of the thesis.

In order to be included in the July Graduation ceremony, candidates should have been issued the Confirmation of Award Letter by 31 May of that year at the very latest. If your award date is after 31 May, then you will be invited to the graduation ceremony the following year.

11.1 Degree certificates

SOAS will not issue second copies of degree certificates, only a replacement in the event of loss, damage or non-receipt. Certificates are re-ordered in batches, and requests may take several weeks to be processed.

If you did not receive your certificate within 3 months of receipt of your award letter or you have since lost your certificate: please contact doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk

If your certificate arrived and was damaged in the post, then a new one will only be issued once the damaged original has been returned to the Doctoral School. Please contact doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk.

An electronic version of your certificate is available through [PremierCert +](#). You should have received an email when your certificate was first issued, from PremierCert with instructions on how to access your documents online and permit access to third parties. Once you log on to PremierCert, you should see your documents listed and a magnifying glass symbol to the

left. If you click on the magnifying glass, a .pdf version of your document should open. Different browsers have different behaviours, however you must ensure that pop-ups are not blocked. Please contact doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk if you need the password to your PremierCert account to be reset.

11.2 Graduation

In order to be included in the July Graduation ceremony, candidates should have been issued the Confirmation of Award Letter by 31 May of that year at the very latest. If your award date is after 31 May, then you will be invited to the graduation ceremony the following year.

If you are unable to attend the ceremony this year, you may be able to defer to July 2019. Please let us know by emailing the [Graduation Ceremonies Office](#), who will record your request and ensure you are sent an invitation to the ceremony in 2019.

12 If things go wrong

We want you to have a pleasant time studying with us, but we understand there might be occasions where you are not as satisfied as you could be. That is what our complaints procedures are for – if you have any issues, we will do our best to resolve and learn from them.

12.1 Complaints about Training or Supervision

A student may complain about a perceived deficiency in research training or supervision under the terms of the Student Complaints Procedure.

The matter should be raised informally with the supervisor or with the Departmental Research Tutor in the first instance but, if this fails to resolve the issue, the student can thereafter approach the Head of Department and, if necessary, the relevant Associate Director of Research.

Here are the steps you could take:

[Step 1: Resolve your complaint or appeal directly](#)

[Step 2: Follow a formal complaints procedure](#)

[Step 3: Learn what happens during the procedure](#)

[Step 4: If you're dissatisfied with the final decision](#)

12.2 Appeals

Advice and guidance on how to make an appeal can be found on the [Degree Regulations](#) website.

12.3 Office of the Independent Adjudicator

If you are unhappy with our final decision at the end of the procedure, you can appeal to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator \(OIA\)](#), an independent ombudsman for student complaints. You must do this within 12 months of receiving the Completion of Procedures letter.

13 Contacts

Doctoral School

SOAS, University of London
doctoralschool@soas.ac.uk

Visiting address:

Doctoral School, 3rd Floor, Room GS305
SOAS, University of London
53 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PD

Postal address

Doctoral School
SOAS, University of London
Thornhaugh Street
Russell Square
London WC1H 0XG

www.soas.ac.uk/doctoralschool

@soasdoctoral

www.facebook.com/SOASDocSchool