

# Joint Academic Regulations for PhD in the Political Economy of Development



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## 1. Introduction and Scope of the Regulations

- 1.1. These joint postgraduate research degree regulations apply to PhD Political Economy of Development offered by SOAS University of London (SOAS), UK and BRAC University (BracU), Bangladesh.
- 1.2. These regulations should be read together with the following SOAS regulations, policies and documents:
  - General and Admissions Regulations
  - Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees
  - Student Engagement Policy – Postgraduate Research Students
  - Mitigating Circumstances Policy for Research Students
  - MPhil/PhD Examinations Handbook
- 1.3. Non-academic regulations will apply depending on the nature of the situation. Students will be informed of the relevant policy as needed. Non-academic regulations relate to conduct and behaviour on campus and throughout the learning and research environments.

## 2. Enrolment and Fees

- 2.1. Students who are admitted to the programme should complete enrolment at SOAS before the start date, as specified in their offer letter. Students are not entitled to supervision or access to SOAS or BracU facilities until enrolment has been completed, including arrangements for the payment of tuition fees. In all cases, students must have completed enrolment no later than two weeks after the specified start date. Student data will be passed from SOAS to BracU to aid enrolment and to provide dual study status.
- 2.2. Students must enrol at the start of each subsequent year of their programme, unless an interruption of studies has been approved in advance. In order to be eligible to enrol in subsequent years, students must have complied with the progression requirements of their programme
- 2.3. A student who fails to enrol by the published deadline will be deemed to have withdrawn from their studies, and their record will be closed.
- 2.4. SOAS and BracU reserve the right to decline or withdraw the enrolment of students who do not hold the appropriate immigration status, or who fail to comply with the conditions of their visa.
- 2.5. Students will pay the relevant tuition fee for the expected period of study appropriate to their mode of attendance and target exit award (e.g. 3 years fees for a full-time PhD). Should studies continue beyond this period, a continuation fee will be charged.
- 2.6. Where a student submits a thesis before the end of the expected period of study, they must make arrangements to pay any balance of fees owing for the expected

period of study before the thesis may be examined. For example, a PhD student will be due to pay 3 years full-time tuition fee or part-time equivalent.

### 3. Research Degrees

- 3.1. The research degrees of the University are Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) and Master of Philosophy (MPhil).
- 3.2. The degree of Doctor of Philosophy is awarded to students who have registered for the SOAS/BracU PhD or MPhil/PhD programme, completed relevant research training, devised and implemented a research project within the degree requirements, and demonstrated that the work examined forms a significant, distinct and original contribution to the knowledge of the subject.
- 3.3. The degree of Master of Philosophy is awarded to students who have registered for a SOAS/BracU PhD or MPhil/PhD programme, completed relevant research training, devised and implemented a research project within the degree requirements, and demonstrated that the work examined demonstrates a thorough understanding and critical assessment of knowledge within the subject.
- 3.4. The minimum, expected, and maximum period of study, from first enrolment to submission of thesis is set out below:

Award	Minimum	Expected	Maximum
PhD full-time	2 years	3 years	4 years

- 3.5. Postgraduate research degree programmes must be pursued continuously except where an interruption of studies has been approved by the University. Students may apply, to the Doctoral School at SOAS for a period of interruption, and any interruption granted does not count towards the student's period of study. Normally no more than one year will be granted in total during the student's research programme. When a period of interruption is granted, a return to study date will be agreed. The student must register and resume their studies on that date; otherwise they will be withdrawn from study.
- 3.6. Interruption of study is intended to support students who require a block of time away from their studies, for example due to illness or maternity/paternity. For shorter, more routine breaks, each student has an annual leave allowance as set out in the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research Degrees.

### 4. Supervision and Engagement

- 4.1. All postgraduate research degree students are appointed a two-person supervisory committee to support them in their research project. There may be some circumstances where it is considered appropriate for a third member of the supervisory committee to be appointed to provide support for particular aspects of the research. The Principal Supervisor has overall responsibility for ensuring the

student receives support and is progressing, but other members of the supervisory team should be regularly involved in meetings. The supervisory team will include one member of academic staff from SOAS and one from BracU. The supervisory team may not be changed without the approval of BracU and the SOAS College Director of Doctoral Studies or Head of College.

- 4.2. Postgraduate research degree students are required to take responsibility for their own learning and research by meeting regularly with their supervisors, undertaking the annual training needs analysis and engaging with their agreed training plan.
- 4.3. Postgraduate research degree students are considered to be studying in attendance unless registered on a designated distance or blended programme. Doctoral students should ensure that they attend in person as required, pursue their research and participate in training and meetings in accordance with the SOAS Code of Practice for Research Degrees and the Student Engagement Policy. As a minimum, all students must meet with their supervisors monthly.
- 4.4. Postgraduate research degree students studying on a programme specifically designated as being a distance or blended programme are required to attend on such occasions as outlined in their programme specification. Students are expected to maintain regular contact with their supervisor and engage with research training and other required activities.
- 4.5. Following completion of the consideration for upgrade to PhD (see section 5), postgraduate research degree students may be granted permission for fieldwork away from SOAS or BracU, subject to relevant provisions of the SOAS Code of Practice for Research Degrees and applicable departmental requirements.

## 5. Progression

- 5.1. Postgraduate research degree students whose aim is to complete a PhD are initially registered as MPhil/PhD students and considered for upgrade to PhD enrolment during the first year of full-time study.
- 5.2. Students must complete the Research Integrity Programme and submit an application for ethical approval of the proposed research project within 6 months of first enrolment. Failure to do so will delay the upgrade process and could have a negative impact on the student's ability to progress.
- 5.3. The progress of research students will be evaluated by an annual progression review. This review will consider the student's progress towards agreed milestones in their research, as well as their engagement with training opportunities and development of research competencies. The review panel will include academic staff from both BracU and SOAS.
- 5.4. A formal progression review will be held for each student after 9 months' study. The review panel may recommend any of the following to the Doctoral School:
  - a) To note satisfactory progress towards the student's intended qualification aim;

- b) At the year 1 review for a full-time student, to confirm progression as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy;
- c) Where sufficient progress has not been made, to transfer enrolment to Master of Philosophy;
- d) Where progress is unsatisfactory, to require the student to withdraw from the research degree programme;
- e) In exceptional circumstances, to defer a decision, once only, for not more than 3 months, with a follow-up review to be held. In such cases, the reviewing panel may set conditions that the student is required to meet before the follow-up review. Failure to meet such conditions could result in transfer of enrolment or withdrawal.

In the case of recommendations under (c) and (d) above, the Doctoral School will convene a meeting of the Research Degrees Panel to consider the recommendation.

- 5.5. Where a student has not met the requirements to upgrade to PhD at the first-year review (which may include a single deferral as outlined in (e) above) they will no longer be eligible for progression to PhD.
- 5.6. Where the student's enrolment is transferred, the maximum permitted period of enrolment for the new qualification aim will apply, and the period of study prior to transfer will count towards that maximum period.
- 5.7. In cases where the student is unable to complete within the maximum permitted period for the new target award, a Suspension of Regulations may be sought, on the recommendation of the Research Degrees Panel, and if approved, a final completion date agreed.
- 5.8. Progression is overseen by the Research Degrees Panel, and a student has a right of appeal against a progression decision taken by the Panel, under the Academic Appeals Procedure.

## 6. Writing Up and Examination

- 6.1. Doctoral students on a full-time enrolment for the three-year programme are expected to undertake writing up of the thesis during the third year of study following completion of fieldwork and/or data collection in year two.
- 6.2. Doctoral students are permitted a maximum of one additional year at the conclusion of their normal period of full-time study for completion of the writing-up of their thesis on Extension of Writing-up status. The thesis must be submitted for examination by the end of this additional year of study; otherwise the student will be deemed to have withdrawn from the University, and their record will be closed.
- 6.3. A successful thesis for the award of Doctor of Philosophy must meet the following requirements:

- a) not exceed 100,000 words, excluding bibliography and appendices. Appendices must only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis but to which they may refer if they wish;
  - b) be written in English;
  - c) consist of the student's own account of their investigations, the greater proportion of which shall have been undertaken during the period of enrolment with SOAS and BracU.
  - d) form a distinct contribution to the knowledge of the subject and afford evidence of originality by the discovery of new facts and/or by the exercise of independent critical power;
  - e) be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument;
  - f) demonstrate research skills relevant to the thesis being presented;
  - g) satisfy the examiners with regard to literary presentation;
  - h) merit publication in whole or in part or in a revised form.
- 6.4. A successful thesis for MPhil award must meet the following requirements:
- a) not exceed 60,000 words excluding bibliography and appendices. Appendices must only include material which the examiners are not required to read in order to examine the thesis but to which they may refer if they wish;
  - b) be written in English;
  - c) consist of the student's own account of their investigations, the greater proportion of which shall have been undertaken during the period of enrolment with SOAS and BracU.
  - d) be a record either of original work or of an ordered and critical exposition of existing knowledge and shall provide evidence that the field has been surveyed thoroughly;
  - e) give a critical assessment of the relevant literature, describe the method of research and its findings and include a discussion on those findings; (f) be an integrated whole and present a coherent argument;
  - f) satisfy the examiners with regard to literary presentation.
- 6.5. In order to move into the examination phase of study, the doctoral student must complete an Entry to Examination request no later than two months before submission of the thesis for examination. Failure to do so will delay the viva voce examination.
- 6.6. The University will appoint an Examining Panel following a student's entry to examination request which will be comprised of the following:
- a) At least two suitably qualified and experienced examiners, at least one of whom shall be external to both SOAS and BracU.
  - b) One member of SOAS academic staff to act as independent internal chair.
- 6.7. Submission forms and an electronic copy of the thesis must be submitted to the SOAS Doctoral School via PhD Manager as set out in the Code of Practice for Postgraduate Research by the student's deadline for submission. Failure to submit

a thesis for examination by the end of the maximum period of study will lead to the student being withdrawn and their record closed.

- 6.8. A non-electronic version of the thesis may be requested by either examiner, in which case the student is required to provide up to two hard copies to the SOAS Doctoral School.
- 6.9. Following submission, a date will be arranged for the student to undertake a viva voce examination as part of the examination and confirmed to the student, supervisors and examiners.
- 6.10. At the end of the viva voce examination, the examiners will confer and reach a unanimous decision on the outcome. While they may give an informal decision to the student, they must be clear that they are making a recommendation, and that the final decision rests with the University. The examiners will provide a joint written report that specifies the outcome of the examination, and append to the report a list of any corrections to the thesis that are required.
- 6.11. At the first examination for PhD, the following outcomes are possible:
- a) Pass;
  - b) Pass, provided minor corrections are made within 3 months of the release of the result;
  - c) Not pass, but resubmission with major corrections permitted within 12 months of the release of the result. In such cases a second viva may be held;
  - d) Not pass, but with recommendation of award of MPhil;
  - e) Not pass, with a recommendation of MPhil to be awarded upon satisfactory completion of minor corrections within 3 months of the release of the result;
  - f) Not pass, with a recommendation of MPhil to be awarded upon satisfactory completion of major corrections within 12 months of the release of the result. In such cases a second viva may be held;
  - g) Fail, with no opportunity for re-examination.
- 6.12. At the first examination for MPhil, the following outcomes are possible:
- a) Pass;
  - b) Pass with minor corrections to be made within 3 months of the release of the result;
  - c) Not pass, but resubmission with major corrections permitted within 12 months of the release of the result. In such cases a second viva may be held;
  - d) Fail, with no opportunity for re-examination.

## 7. Corrections and Re-examination

- 7.1. A student who is required to submit minor corrections within 3 months of the release of the examination result will be given a deadline date for submission of a revised thesis with the required corrections. Failure to submit the corrections by the due date will lead to the student being withdrawn and no award will be made.

- 7.2. Minor corrections will be reviewed by the Chair, Internal Examiner and External Examiner, unless the External Examiner has explicitly agreed that they may be reviewed by the Internal Examiner and Chair only. If the corrections are satisfactory, the Internal Examiner will notify the SOAS Doctoral School and the student will be recommended for the award.
- 7.3. A student who is required to resubmit as a result of a decision at the first examination of 'Not pass, but with major corrections' is permitted one re-entry to examination on resubmission of the corrected work. They will be given a deadline date for submission of a revised thesis, and must submit a re-entry to examination form two months before resubmission. Failure to resubmit by the required date will lead to the student being withdrawn.
- 7.4. The resubmitted thesis will be reviewed by the full Examining Panel, and having reviewed the corrections, the Panel may require a second viva voce examination to be held. The following outcomes are possible for students re-entered for examination:
- a) Pass;
  - b) Pass with minor corrections to be made within 3 months of the release of the result;
  - c) Award of MPhil;
  - d) Award of MPhil with minor corrections to be made within 3 months of the release of the result;
  - e) Fail, with no opportunity for re-examination.

## 8. Award of Degree

- 8.1. Students will be awarded the degree only when they have satisfied the examiners, and submitted to the SOAS Doctoral School one electronic copy of their final thesis and a completed E-thesis Access Agreement Form.

## 9. Appeals

- 9.1. Further information can be found in the General and Admissions Regulations and in the University's Appeals Policy.



## 10. Version Control

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<p><i>Note: All policies must be read in conjunction with all other SOAS policy, procedure and guidance documents. Printed copies of policies may not be the most up to date, therefore please refer to the policy pages on the SOAS external website or intranet for the latest version.</i></p>			