

MPhil (Master of Philosophy) in Philosophy

Student Handbook

UNIVERSITY OF ADELAIDE

2016

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1 The Degree

The MPhil degree is a research-only degree awarded for a 35,000-40,000 word thesis which consists of 36 credit points of the 48 credit points needed for the degree in total. The other 12 credit points will be taken up with Coursework which is embedded in the degree and not recorded on the transcript.

A student who has gained a Distinction Grade Point Average in their Philosophy Major in the BA (or equivalent) will be deemed to have satisfied the entrance requirements of the MPhil.

Students with at least a 2A in Philosophy Honours may also enroll in the Master of Philosophy.

Students may qualify for upgrade to PhD after one year if progress is deemed satisfactory. In the event of upgrade the year in the Master's program will be counted as a year of PhD candidature.

A student who enters the MPhil without Honours (or equivalent) cannot upgrade to the PhD before 18 months has been successfully completed. Where a student upgrades after 18 months, the time in the Master's program will be counted towards PhD candidature time.

Discipline Requirements

1. A discipline, Faculty, and University induction must be undertaken as well as a discipline and University OHS induction. The University general induction and the University OHS induction are completed on-line.
2. All students will be offered a session on thesis writing and preparation of a research proposal by a staff member or accessed through Faculty-AGC provided resources
3. All probationary students are required to
 - i. participate in the Philosophy PG Colloquium in June by giving a talk to staff and research students on their research proposals, (and continuing students are encouraged to participate by giving talks reflecting progress thereafter);
 - ii. complete Core Component of the Structured Program (CCSP) forms in June (or after 6 months (FT) of commencement) including a GAANT chart and Research Training Certificates accessed electronically from AGC; and/or
 - iii. complete an Major Review of Progress (MRP) (October 31) (12 months after commencing)
 - iv. complete a Pre-Submission Review (PSR) (October 31 at the 24 month point of full-time candidature)
4. In keeping with Faculty and University provisions and *in order to ensure disciplinary depth*, all philosophy MPhil students will need to satisfy coursework requirements as part

of the *basis on which their progress will be deemed satisfactory in annual and major reviews*. (The provisions are summarized below.)

Note: The coursework requirements for **all PG students** will be in addition to requirements pertaining to the Postgraduate Colloquium and its role in CCSP and Annual or Major Reviews.

A. Coursework requirement for (full-time) MPhil students entering the degree after completing Honours:

1. Reading for and participating in one Honours seminar per year over the course of their candidacy, to make a total of two. No essays will be submitted for assessment.
2. Students will, from the University's viewpoint, be auditing and not formally enrolling in Honours courses.

B. Coursework requirement for (full-time) MPhil students entering the degree without completing Honours:

1. Participation in four Honours seminars over the course of candidacy, Involving in each case submission of an *assessable* essay of 5000 words. Students will be required to complete at least one seminar per semester from the first semester of the commencing year. (A student upgrading to PhD after 18 months would approach their doctorate with roughly the equivalent coursework background as PhD students who completed Honours.)
2. The minimum grade required for each Honours seminar essay will be 70%
3. Students who fail to meet the grade for a seminar essay will be required to revise and re-submit the essay or undertake an alternative Honours seminar, submitting a new essay for the new course to count toward the final three seminars.
4. Completion of the coursework requirement is a condition of satisfactory progress in Major and Annual Reviews.
5. Students will, from the University's viewpoint, be auditing and not formally enrolling in Honours courses.

Honours student are currently required to attend for at least 75% of Honours seminar sessions; the same requirement will apply to MPhil students.

2 University Regulations

The University's regulations governing the award of the Master of Philosophy degree are contained in the **Academic Program Rules** which can be opened and downloaded from:

http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/program_rules/

Regulation 3.1 under "Master of Philosophy" (p.17) states: "The Master of Philosophy shall, in general, have the objectives of

- a. training students in research methodology and techniques
- b. developing critical evaluation skills appropriate to their research topic

- c. training students in the application of such methods by conducting a specified program of research under appropriate supervision and the development of new knowledge where possible
- d. providing training in literature analysis and
- e. encouraging debate in the substantive area of the thesis at an advanced level.”

The MPhil is awarded for knowledge of the relevant literature, and demonstrating the appropriate methodology, techniques and understanding of the topic. The development of new knowledge is not a requirement of the MPhil as it is for the PhD.

The Academic Program Rules set out the University’s requirements concerning enrolment, duration of candidature, work for the degree, review of progress, format and submission of thesis, appointment of examiners, and other matters. The student is advised to read the Program Rules closely. For further information also consult *The Research Student Handbook*:

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/handbook/>

Please take special note of Appendix 1: 6.1-6.4 Responsibilities of Research Candidates; and Appendix 5: Guidelines and Rules for Responsible Practice in Research. Responsibility for the award of the Master of Philosophy resides with the Research Education and Development Committee (REDC), convened by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

RULE CHANGE FROM 2016

Academic Program Rules for Research Degrees will henceforth require the introduction of a minimum number of hours for transferable skills development:

60 hours of courses for Masters Students over the course of candidature

Students will be able to choose courses accessible through AGC and will submit an Eportfolio at time of thesis submission. The DVCR’s office will be providing some courses and specific courses will be offered to Arts students, including on MOOCs and teaching workshops. (Tutoring will be counted as skills training in making up the hours.)

The administration of all higher degree candidatures is handled by the Adelaide Graduate Centre. The Adelaide Graduate Centre website provides access to documents setting out the University’s administrative policies and procedures for MPhil candidates:

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/>

3 Enrolment and Fees

All enquiries about University enrolment, scholarships and fees should be directed to the Adelaide Graduate Centre at: <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/>

4 Inductions

General inductions are conducted at both University and Faculty level for all commencing Postgraduate students. You will receive information by email about times and places regarding the Faculty induction. The discipline induction, including **compulsory** OHS inductions, will be organized at the start of your candidacy by the PG Coordinator. The University inductions are conducted online. You will find information about this at the Graduate Centre website.

During your first week of candidacy, you will meet with the **Post-Graduate Coordinator (PGC)** who will acquaint you with this Handbook, and give you a tour of the department, covering study accommodation, photocopying, computing facilities, common room; and issue of keys.

An informal luncheon may be held for PG students at some time during first semester at which new students are introduced to members of the department and to other postgraduates.

All new PG students should contact **Judy Bailey** who is the librarian with responsibility for Philosophy, and organize to meet her. Fiona will introduce you to the Philosophy resources in the Barr-Smith Library. Fiona's email is Judith.bailey@adelaide.edu.au

5 Structured Program

A condition of your enrolment and successful progress in the Master of Philosophy is that you complete a Structured Program of activities. This includes a 'core' component and a 'development' component.

5.1 Core Component of the Structured Program (CCSP)

The CCSP must be completed within the first six months of your candidature, or within one year for part-time students. It involves:

- finalizing your research proposal,
- preparing a literature review for your topic,
- writing up a detailed timeline for the stages involved in the research/writing of your thesis,
- attending the required induction sessions,
- regularly attending the Philosophy Research Seminar Program
- presenting your Research Proposal to a Departmental Post Graduate Colloquium in June (December for students commencing after March).

5.2 The Research Proposal

Guidelines setting out what is expected in the research proposal are to be found in the *Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Research Proposal Proforma*. Your presentation to the PG Colloquium should include the following sections:

1. **Project Title**. Provide a short descriptive title of no more than 20 words.
2. **Project Summary**. In no more than 100 words, intelligible to a reader who is not a specialist in this field, summarize the aims, significance and expected outcomes.

3. **Project Details.** You are urged to avoid the use of jargon and to express yourself clearly and concisely. For the presentation, summarize your proposal in a length (about 3,000 words) that you can comfortably cover in a twenty-minute presentation. Please include:
 - i. Introduction and Background.
 - ii. Research Questions. This section will explain the research question and may include the hypothesis or problem to be addressed.
 - iii. Aims of the Project. This section will explain how the problem is to be addressed.
 - iv. Significance/Contribution to the Discipline. This section will normally justify the project from a review of the literature on the topic.
 - v. Theoretical Framework. This section will discuss the sources to be consulted.

5.3 Development Component of the Structured Program

The first year of your candidacy is considered *provisional* and during that time you will need to complete the **CCSP** (as above), an **Annual Review** (unless you have commenced candidacy after the first of August in the year of the review) and a **Pre-Submission Review** on 31 October

5.3.1 Major Review of Progress

A major review of progress occurs 12 months from commencement of candidature and confirms candidature if successful. Passing this milestone is necessary both for **those who are active in candidature and those on leave of absence**. AGC will notify you by email regarding upcoming review milestones.

Data drawn upon to assess your progress for review will include:

- Report by supervisors and post graduate coordinator of your presentation to the PG colloquium that is held in June of the year of the review;
- One extended sample of your work of 5000-7000 words in length.
- a general description and projected structure of the overall thesis, as currently envisaged. (Approx. 1000 words.)
- an account of any differences between this projected structure and the one outlined in your Research Proposal or at your previous review (whichever is more recent).
- an account of the progress made in the past year.
- an account of your participation in ‘Training activities for a career in Philosophy’
- activities over the previous year including PG colloquium, conferences, Philosophy Research Seminars, reading groups, Philosophy Club, Honours seminars and publication.
- a structured Bibliography, giving an account of material you have read so far, and
- projected further reading.

Major Review Panels

Once notification of an MRP milestone is received from AGC **students are responsible** for arranging interviews with principal and co supervisor (or two joint supervisors).

Students should make sure panel participants are given sufficient notice to arrange meetings/interviews sufficiently in advance of the deadline for submission of forms to AGC.

One week in advance of the meeting, the student should provide to members of their Panel the information listed under 5.3.1 above.

The Panel will meet with the student to discuss these documents, giving advice on the content and direction of the work, and the strategies in place to lead to its timely completion. The Panel will also meet separately to discuss the student's progress. In this context, it will consider the student's level of teaching commitment within the Discipline. The supervisor will then convey the conclusions of this discussion to the student.

Your supervisor has the discretion to convene the Review Panel at other times. You are entitled to ask your supervisor to do so if you think it would benefit your studies.

It will be the Review Panel's responsibility to determine whether, on the evidence before it, the student is making satisfactory progress towards the award of an MPhil within the time scheduled for completion. The Panel will take into account:

- The quality of the work sample submitted to it.
- The quantity of work you report having produced towards the completion of the project.
- The planned stages towards the completion of the project within the remaining time, and the feasibility of your carrying them out.
- The completion of the requirements of previous reviews and any additional written requirements which have previously been set by the Panel.

What constitutes satisfactory progress in the first year is covered in some detail at 5.3.2.

5.3.2 Training activities for a career in Philosophy

A student in the Philosophy discipline is expected to participate in various activities that provide the necessary training for a career in Philosophy. These include:

- Peruse copies of PhD and Masters theses submitted by former Adelaide students (kept in Philosophy tea room) and by students of other Australian universities (online in Barr Smith library).
- Present a paper each year at the Adelaide Philosophy Discipline's Postgraduate Colloquium in June (compulsory). Attend the full program, ask questions in other students' papers and provide feedback where possible.
- Continue to regularly attend the Philosophy Research Seminar Program compulsory.
- Attend and present papers at national philosophy conferences such as the Australasian Association of Philosophy Postgraduate Conference: for details see: <http://aap.org.au/>

- Participate in the Philosophy Club and/or yearly camp (usually held around October): see our web page for details: <http://www.arts.adelaide.edu.au/humanities/philosophy/>

The skills that you should aim to develop by participating in the above activities include:

- time management, reading and note-taking in Philosophy.
- how to write a Philosophy article for publication.
- how to present a paper at a Philosophy seminar.

In addition to the CCSP and the Development component as outlined above, you may also be advised to complete a **Directed Studies Component**, at the discretion of your supervisor and/or the Postgraduate Coordinator. This consists of unassessed participation in courses or reading groups relevant to your thesis topic (in addition to the two Honours seminars required of MPhil students with Honours and four Honours seminars for MPhil students without Honours).

5.4 Satisfactory progress

- paper presentation each year at the Adelaide Philosophy Discipline's Postgraduate Colloquium in June
- attendance at the Philosophy Research Seminar Program
- submission of essays in four philosophy Honours seminars over the course of your candidature (no-Honours MPhil students)
- attendance and participation in two Honours seminars over the course of your candidature (MPhil students with Honours)

6 Supervision

Your principal supervisor has responsibility for meeting you regularly throughout the year to supervise your studies. The frequency and duration of your meetings with your principal supervisor should be established by mutual agreement. However, you are entitled to receive, as a minimum, an average of one contact hour with your principal supervisor per fortnight and one contact hour at least per semester from your co-supervisor.

Joint supervision might involve meeting each supervisor alternatively every two weeks or might be arranged over alternate months or years, depending on whether the expertise of both supervisors is required throughout the thesis or each is required separately for different sections of the thesis. Supervision arrangements outside the University's teaching terms should be settled by mutual agreement.

Your principal supervisor is expected to read the entire penultimate draft of your thesis, and you are also entitled to receive detailed comments from your principal supervisor on this draft.

Your principal supervisor is the person officially assigned to assist you with advice about

reading, the organization of your studies, and any problems that are affecting your studies. However, you are free to approach other members of the Discipline to discuss your work. Discussing your thesis with anyone outside the University, rules that person out as an Examiner of your thesis.

7 Milestones and Forms

Students will be formally notified by email of each milestone in advance: the CCSP, the Major Review and the Annual Review. Forms for completing the Review and information concerning review requirements are accessible for download electronically from the AGC website.

The AGC also monitor changes to your F/T status and any periods of leave you may need to take. Any change to the details of your candidature need to be approved by your supervisors, and the Post-graduate Coordinator or the Head of School. Forms in regard to leave and change of status can be downloaded from: <http://www.adelaide.edu.au/graduatecentre/policy/>

8 Pre-Submission Reviews

Pre-Submission Reviews on 31 October replace the Annual Reviews for students close to completion of 24 months FT equivalent. AGC notifications to students and supervisors several months in advance provide time to prepare for submission of PSR. The PSR aims to assess whether thesis ready for submission to examiners. The PSR activities are designed by the discipline to provide opportunity for student to receive constructive advice from a broader range of academic staff that can be helpful for clarifying final tasks, erecting additional methodological scaffolding and taking measures to deflect examiners' objections. **Feedback from staff gained by presenting a paper at the annual PG Colloquium will help satisfy PSR requirements.**

PSR panel will include at a minimum (1) all supervisors of candidate (with input from external supervisors if there are any) and (2) one or more members of the academic staff including PGC.

9 Thesis

Theses should be submitted under current rules and specifications (available from AGC) to ensure the thesis delivered to examiners is consistent with current national and international expectations of a master by research thesis. The University has become more flexible allowing thesis to be submitted either at

- i. Conventional written narrative presented as typescript
- ii. Thesis by publication

iii. A combination of the above

Choice of thesis format must be worked out with supervisor. The discipline will decide in the case of thesis by publication how many papers and of what length are required for individual students.

Thesis by publication

The main body of work will contain in addition to the relevant publications a **contextual statement** which normally includes the aims underpinning the publication(s); a literature review or commentary that establishes the field of knowledge and provides a link between publications; and a conclusion showing the overall significance of the work and contribution to knowledge, problems encountered and future directions of the work. The discussion should not include a detailed reworking of the discussions from individual papers within the thesis.

Each paper must be prefaced by a ‘**statement of authorship**’. In case of joint or multiple authorship, its statement of authorship must **detail** each author’s contribution (in terms of the conceptualisation of the work, its realisation and its documentation)

The Department does not consider thesis by publication an “easy” option and not one suitable for all students.

10 Funding for Conference Attendance, Tutoring, and Teacher Training

The Philosophy Department will endeavour to assist you, within the constraints of its budget, with the expenses involved in conference attendance. For information about the guidelines for research student conference funding, and applications, contact the Postgraduate Coordinator.

MPhil students will not normally be offered tutoring work in the Philosophy Department in their first year of studies. When students are eligible for tutoring, if they wish to tutor the Department is willing to fund the cost of attendance at teacher-training courses run through the University’s Centre for Learning and Professional Development (CLPD). The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences also offer courses for new tutors.

11 Completion Bursaries

The Faculty makes a small number of “completion bursaries” (this year of \$250 dollars) available to students in the final stages who are almost ready to submit their thesis. Please contact PGC if you think you are eligible and intend to apply.

12 Complaints and Problems

Any problems with your studies or complaints about Departmental support should in the first

instance be brought to the attention of your principal supervisor. If you are not satisfied with the response, you are invited to approach:

- the Postgraduate Coordinator, then
- the Philosophy Department Head, then
- the Head of School, then
- the Adelaide Graduate Centre

There are independent student representatives and advisors available. Inquire at AGC if you wish to contact one.

[Updated by Denise Gamble, October 2015]