

MATHEMATICAL, PHYSICAL AND LIFE SCIENCES DIVISION

Confirmation of DPhil Status - Checklist for Students

The purpose of confirmation of status is to enable research students to receive an assessment of their work by two assessors, other than your supervisor(s). It is intended to provide an indication that if work on the thesis continues to develop satisfactorily, then consideration of submission of the thesis within your funded period/four years (for DPhil) would appear to be reasonable. It therefore provides a second stage of formal progress review in the four years of your overall research programme. It should be noted that successful completion of confirmation of status provides an indicator only for readiness for submission, not for the final outcome of the examination of the thesis.

The confirmation assessment is different to the transfer assessment. The assessors will be focusing on how the research is progressing, the quality of the work completed, whether it is at the right level, and on the plan for completion. The assessors will therefore be looking to ensure that you are making the appropriate amount of progress in the development of your thesis, so that submission will be achieved within your funded period/four years (for DPhil). Primarily, they will be looking to see that your work/research does/will make a 'significant and substantial contribution' to your field of study. The assessment can also be used as a good opportunity to prepare for the *vive voce* examination of the thesis.

*Students are reminded that they **must** have completed the University's online research integrity training before applying for transfer of status, but if not, should do so before applying for confirmation. The training is available at <https://weblearn.ox.ac.uk/portal/hierarchy/skills/ricourses>*

What assessors will be expecting/looking for from students at Confirmation of Status:

- That your work/research makes or will make on completion and submission, a 'significant and substantial contribution' to your field of study. You should have presented a statement of the subject of your thesis and the appropriate written work as defined by your department.
- That you have to date undertaken advanced research.
- That you have sufficient background and in depth knowledge of the field related to your work.
- That you show evidence that the project has yielded sufficient results to date and within the time remaining, e.g. through a plan of work, which includes a timetable for writing up.
- That you are likely to submit a satisfactory thesis within your funded period/within 12 terms (for DPhil)
- That you are working as an independent researcher as appropriate.
- That your work to date is of a good standard and quality.
- That you are able to express ideas clearly, in English, both in writing and orally.
- That your ideas and plans for completing your research/thesis are clear and realistic.
- That you can defend your completed and future work.
- That you have engaged well with both academic training and professional development/career skills activities. You should also be able to show what further activities you expect to engage with, and that you have considered your career post DPhil
- You should have a critical understanding of the relevant literature.

Department Specific Guidance:

- That you have completed all of the 5 required broadening courses
- That you have taught at least two sets of intercollegiate classes

Please note that you do not need to wear sub-fusc.

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- Arrange meeting(s) with supervisor(s) to discuss confirmation requirements
- Complete all of the 5 required broadening courses (this MUST be completed before you apply for Transfer of Status)
- Teach at least two sets of intercollegiate classes (this MUST be completed before you apply for Transfer of Status)
- Check department deadlines and requirements for confirmation with the Graduate Studies Administrator
- Draft/prepare confirmation work following department requirements, which should include a brief written report about your research achievements to date and timetable for submission.
- Submit confirmation work to supervisor(s) for review
- Refine/complete confirmation work following supervisor's feedback
- Complete any relevant forms (including GSO.14 form) and submit to the Graduate Studies Administrator
- Submit confirmation work directly to the assessors for assessment by required deadline
- Confirmation assessors appointed by Department/DGS
- Confirmation assessment date arranged by assessors/department
- Following assessment official confirmation of recommendation from the MPLS Graduate Office received, with a copy of the assessors report

Other key points:

- Research Ethics Approval has been applied for (if relevant)
- Keep a log/record of any permission for inclusion of 3rd party copyright material.
(http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/ora/oxford_theses/copyright_and_other_legal_issues/copyright_held_by_third_parties_and_other_rights)
- Keep a log/record of any subject-specific (e.g. research methodology; data analysis and management; record keeping; bibliographical skills; presentation of research) and personal and professional skills (e.g. time management, language skills, IT skills, team work, problem solving, presentation skills, teaching skills, career planning) which you have already acquired Identify any skills which might require further development or refinement
- Keep a record of any other related activities,(e.g. presentation of posters, attendance at conferences, courses attended, publications, opportunities to undertake teaching, etc.), which have made a contribution to the development of your work