



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

Centre for Gender Studies

**MPhil in
Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies
(MGS)**

**Student Handbook
2014-2015**

(subject to updates, see: <https://www.gender.cam.ac.uk/mphil/students/documentation>)

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Contents

Contents.....	2
Contact information:.....	4
MPhil Aims.....	5
Term Time Residence	5
MPhil Structure	5
Core Courses/Seminars/Lectures:.....	6
Theory and Controversy (MGS 1)	6
Research Methodologies (MGS 2)	7
SSRM Modules	7
Gender Research Methodologies.....	8
Text Seminar (MGS 3).....	8
Gender Research Seminar.....	10
The Multi-disciplinary Speaker Programme	10
Dissertation.....	11
Research Ethics.....	11
Risk Assessment.....	12
Dissertation Supervision	13
Assessment	14
Unsupervised Coursework.....	14
Dissertation	14
Dissertation deadline	14
Bell Scholar.....	15
Format of Written Work	15

Essays.....	15
Dissertation	15
Oral Examination.....	16
Submission of Assignments.....	16
Continuing from an MPhil to a PhD	17
Other Opportunities.....	17
Learning Outcomes.....	18
Who do I turn to?	18
Warning on Plagiarism and “Poor Scholarship”	18
Turnitin UK.....	19
Graduation	19
Submission Deadlines	20

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MPhil Aims

The MPhil in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies provides rigorous advanced training in the multi-disciplinary study of gender. The course is designed for those students who wish to prepare for PhD or further research and also, for those who want to enhance their understanding of 'gender' by undertaking a one-year MPhil only.

The primary objective of the course is to introduce students from a wide variety of academic, business and policy backgrounds to the traditions, methods and front-line research that shape an advanced gender analysis of human society. Over twenty different departments within the University of Cambridge come together on this course to address a range of topics such as Conflict; Globalization; Labour Market Inequality; Public Policy; Culture; Bio-medical advances, Experimental Psychology, Human Rights and Justice, Literature and the Arts, Culture and Antiquity. Graduates from this MPhil will emerge as highly desirable candidates for NGO, governmental, policy, business, and academic careers.

Term Time Residence

The course begins in October 2014 and terminates with final confirmation by examiners in September 2015. Courses within the University of Cambridge are organized each year across three terms (each term is 8 weeks long):

Michaelmas Term: 7 October 2014 – 5 December 2014

Lent Term: 13 January 2015 – 13 March 2015

Easter Term: 21 April 2015 – 12 June 2015

It is a University regulation that all students must be resident during term.

MPhil Structure

Students will take the following:

1. **Theory and Controversy (MGS 1)**
2. **Research Methodologies (MGS 2)**

3. Multi-disciplinary Text Seminar (MGS 3)
4. Multi-disciplinary Gender Research Seminar
5. Multi-disciplinary Speaker Programme
6. Dissertation

Courses and seminars will run for the first two terms (Michaelmas and Lent). Dissertations are expected to be completed throughout the third term (Easter) and the vacation under guidance from a supervisor.

Students are introduced to a wide range of disciplinary methods and research topics and are encouraged to debate ideas and concepts throughout the course. In addition, students will have the opportunity to interact with world-leading experts in gender theory hosted by the Centre throughout the year through the Diane Middlebrook and Carl Djerassi Visiting Professorship. Group discussion, led by experts, forms the core of the MGS 1 and MGS 3 courses. In addition to the research dissertation, students are required to produce two unsupervised essays of not more than 5000 words. These essays are assessed to examine how well the student has understood the complex debates and theoretical ideas taught in MGS1, MGS2 and MGS3.

Core Courses/Seminars/Lectures:

NB: Attendance at all specified symposia/seminars/lectures is a *formal requirement*. These will be indicated on your MPhil timetable available from Ms Lesley Dixon (Centre Administrator). If a student is unable to attend any session please email Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk) in advance.

Theory and Controversy (MGS 1)

This broad course of lectures provides an introduction to gender. It gives students the chance to analyse why gender scholars (or other relevant thinkers) disagree and what it is they disagree about. There is an emphasis on fostering students' abilities to critically assess the ontological and epistemological assumptions characteristic of different theoretical approaches; and to critically evaluate their empirical research potential. Students will be expected to relate the theoretical analyses discussed throughout this course to their own research.

Students will be expected to make presentations on selected texts.

Research Methodologies (MGS 2)

This course is designed to prepare students for primary research. The course includes general methods sessions on for example, research design; the collection, management and analysis of data (quantitative and qualitative); research ethics; and how to present research in dissertation form. Additionally, students are taught to critically evaluate various research methods and to compare the value of different methodological techniques and approaches.

MGS 2 paper consists of 2 components:

- i. Social Science Research Methods (SSRM) modules taught centrally within the University.
- ii. Research Methodologies sessions conducted within the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies.

SSRM Modules

Students should undertake agreed modules of the SSRM course which cover a large range of different methodological approaches to research including Statistics, Survey Design and Qualitative Methods.

All students **must** attend the SSRMC Induction at **1600 on Wednesday 8 October 2014** in the Lady Mitchell Hall, Sidgwick Site.

The modules you will do should relate to the nature of your research topic and also your current knowledge of methods. You should discuss your preferred options with your supervisor (and the MPhil Course Director if that would be helpful). For full details, see: www.ssrmc.group.cam.ac.uk

NB Once you have agreed on the best SSRM options with your supervisor, you should book a place via the SSRM website, see:

<http://www.ssrmc.group.cam.ac.uk/ssrmc-modules/core/making-a-booking/how>

Students wishing to take statistics modules should first complete the skills audit at the following link:

<http://www.ssrmc.group.cam.ac.uk/take-skills-audit>

Students who are planning to continue on to PhD must ensure that, following discussion with their supervisor, they take the relevant modules in order to show appropriate research methodology training to support both their application to study at PhD and any associated funding support applications they make.

Gender Research Methodologies

The final component of the **Research Methodologies** paper (MGS 2) is a series of Research Methodology lectures and seminars held in the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies as well as a series of methods sessions focused on students' research dissertations. Details of these can be found in your MGS timetable.

Text Seminar (MGS 3)

The Multi-Disciplinary Texts component of the MPhil introduces students to expert scholars from over twenty university departments engaged in gender research. Experts introduce key texts from within their own field and then engage in debate with students about the merits of their own subject's approaches. The Directors will facilitate discussion on the particular ontological, epistemological and methodological benefits (or potential problems) of differing ways of 'doing' gender research. Students therefore also gain a crucial understanding as to how clashing perspectives can be generative of a more holistic and nuanced approach to gender analysis.

These sessions will be used to scrutinize a series of primary texts under the guidance of academic experts from across the Social Sciences, Arts, Humanities, and (Natural) Sciences.

All students will follow **6 Topics in the Text Seminar (MGS 3):**

1. Gender, Public Policy and Social Justice

- Faculty of Philosophy
- Faculty of Education
- Faculty of Law
- Public Policy

2. Gender, Culture and Antiquity

- Faculty of History
- Department of Archaeology
- Faculty of Classics

3. Gender, Evolution and Bio-medical Sciences

- Leverhulme Centre for Human Evolutionary Studies
- Department of Psychology (Social and Developmental)
- Faculty of History and Philosophy of Science

4. Gender, International Relations and Development

- Development Studies
- Faculty of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies
- Department of Geography
- International Relations

5. Gender, Identity and Family

- Department of Sociology (Reproductive Technologies)
- Department of Social Anthropology
- Psychoanalysis

6. Gender and Representation

- Visual Arts and Media Programme
- Faculty of English
- Department of Italian
- Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages

Reading lists for this paper are available from Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk). Reading lists for this course indicate both the texts to be discussed for each Text Seminar ('core texts') and also suggested background reading for each Seminar.

Students **must** read the prescribed core texts before each text seminar and will be expected to voice pre-prepared questions on each core text. Questions can be on any aspect of the text, for example, something that the student did not understand or an interesting claim that they would like to criticise or challenge. Again, students will be expected to think about how these various disciplinary approaches might inform their own research.

Text packs, which include a selection of core readings, are available for purchase from Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk).

Gender Research Seminar

In addition to the courses above, there is a Multi-disciplinary Gender Research Seminar which will convene at regular intervals throughout Michaelmas and Lent. The purpose of this seminar series is to present front-line research in the multi-disciplinary approaches to gender by senior scholars within and beyond Cambridge, as well as by younger academics, post-doctoral research fellows and advanced graduate students. Whilst the Multi-disciplinary Gender Research Seminars series is open to members of the University and the public, it is a compulsory component of the MPhil.

A list of speakers, presentation titles, dates, times and venues will be published on the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies web site: <http://www.gender.cam.ac.uk/seminars/researchseminars> and will be indicated on your timetable.

The Multi-disciplinary Speaker Programme

The Centre runs a world-class public events programme supported by Cambridge University Press, the oldest and most prestigious academic publisher in the world. The Centre is unique in that it focuses on research from all disciplinary fields – from Physical Sciences, Technology, Biological and Medical Sciences, right through to the Social Sciences, Humanities and the Arts.

The Centre has an unparalleled record of eminent speakers on gender including academics such as Judith Butler, Conor Gearty, and Carol Gilligan; Nobel Prize winners such as Amartya Sen and Shirin Ebadi; writers and activists such as Larry Kramer, Nawal el Saadwi; professionals such as Helena Kennedy and scientific pioneers such as Carl Djerassi.

Whilst this Multi-disciplinary Speaker Programme is open to members of the University and the public, it is also a compulsory component of the MPhil.

Dissertation

Dissertations will be of not more than 20,000 words in length, excluding footnotes, tables, appendices, and bibliography, on any gender related subject approved by the dissertation supervisor and the Graduate Education Committee. Students will be expected to submit a 500 word dissertation abstract and title **by 1130 on Wednesday 4 February 2015** to Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk).

Students should first submit a draft version of their dissertation abstract to Ms Dixon by **Wednesday 28 January 2015** for assessment by the course directors, prior to formal submission on Wednesday 4 February 2015.

All students will be expected to participate in dissertation progress workshops in the Lent and Easter terms (dates to be confirmed). Dissertations are to be completed over the third term (Easter Term) and must be submitted **by 1130 on Wednesday 15 July 2015** to Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk).

The structure of the dissertation differs from that of an essay. The dissertation should have a clear research objective, a detailed account of the methodological approach(es), and an account of how the research makes an original contribution to existing literature.

Research Ethics

The Centre is committed to promoting and facilitating the conduct of ethical research. All postgraduate students must be aware of the personal ethics that characterise professionally-prosecuted research, and seek to identify, evaluate, and respond to, any ethical issues that could, or do, arise within their research. All students must complete the following self-assessment procedure before beginning empirical research and by no later than **1130 on Wednesday 28 January 2015**.

Please complete and submit Section 1 of the Postgraduate Research Ethics Assessment Form, available from Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk), by no later than **1130 on Wednesday 28 January 2015**. If you are able to answer 'no' to all the questions on the form, no further ethical review is required at

this stage. However, it is your responsibility to ensure that, should your plans change, a further process of self-assessment is undertaken.

If you have answered 'yes' to *any* of the questions in Section 1, please discuss the relevant issues with your supervisor as soon as possible and then complete and submit Section 2 of the Postgraduate Research Ethics Assessment Form, available from Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk), by no later than **1130 on Wednesday 28 January 2015**.

Please be aware that although straightforward applications are normally dealt with within 3 weeks, it can take much longer for approval to be granted where proposals raise significant ethical issues. You are therefore advised to submit your form as early as possible.

Risk Assessment

Prior to fieldwork it is essential that all students consult their supervisor about the risks which they are likely to encounter, and of the control measures necessary to counter these.

Students must complete and submit a detailed Fieldwork Risk Assessment Form, available from Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk), before commencing fieldwork and by no later than **1130 on Wednesday 28 January 2015**.

Please ensure that you include all contact details relating to: where you are staying, the nearest embassy, the site of analysis, and the local hospital. Also include information about your travel insurance and immunisations and ensure that you consult the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website for advice on your chosen destination, see: www.fco.gov.uk. The Centre will not endorse projects that take place in a country/ies or within an area where the FCO advises against all travel (or the particular type of travel to be engaged in for the research project).

If you are conducting interviews, you must either be accompanied or the interview must take place during the day-time in a public place and you must include these details on the risk assessment form.

Dissertation Supervision

The MPhil in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies provides a great deal of interaction with course co-ordinators, lecturers and topic experts. These intense periods of interaction form a key element in the student's development of their research ideas. Students will also perform two presentations on their dissertation research, in the Lent and Easter terms, and receive specific feedback from the course co-ordinators.

In addition each MPhil student is allocated a dissertation supervisor prior to, or soon after, the beginning of the course. Your dissertation or thesis supervisor will advise you on your studies, not direct you. You must accept responsibility for your own research activity and candidacy for a degree. Postgraduate work demands a high degree of self-discipline and organisation. Students are expected to take full responsibility for producing the required course work to the deadlines specified under the timetable for submission. An important function of research is to train and assess how well students cope with working both as an independent scholar, and as part of a team with other students during assignments or with academic staff within research groups. It is therefore essential for you to understand that you will have to establish a working routine and timetable, for working with your supervisor, and working with the directors of your MPhil.

Whilst supervision is organised to offer you personal research guidance, it is important to remember that supervisors are not always available (supervisors may be away on research fieldwork, etc). They have other commitments, and generally prefer to work towards meeting dates fixed in advance in diaries with targets for outputs achieved for each meeting. Students must also remember in preparing their timetables that they must allow reasonable time for their supervisors to read and comment on any preparatory material. Timetables, therefore, need to be arranged carefully with individual supervisors, with their other commitments, in mind.

Supervisors do not read drafts of dissertations, but can advise on chapter headings and brief preparatory material during meetings with students.

All supervisors complete a report on each student's progress at the end of each term on CAMSIS. After review by the Graduate Education Committee, the report is released to the student. The reports form part of your student record and are intended as frank assessments of progress. In the event of

concerns about a report by the student, these should be raised in the first instance with the supervisor, the MPhil Course Director or the Chair of the Graduate Education Committee.

Supervisors do not advise on essays or coursework (i.e. work other than the dissertation). In general, submitted essays and course work for MPhil degrees are expected to be completed by students as independent work without direct assistance or advice from course teachers or MPhil Directors. Under no circumstances should your Supervisor or any other member of staff be asked to read or criticise a draft or completed essay. (There are no regulations to prevent peers from reading draft essays or dissertations but all students should be on their guard for possible plagiarism).

Assessment

Assessment for the MPhil consists of two parts: unsupervised coursework and a supervised research dissertation. Coursework and dissertations will be marked on a numerical scale, with 60% or above being a pass and 75% being a distinction. All elements of the MPhil assessments must be passed in order for the degree to be obtained.

NB: Students wishing to continue on to a PhD in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies must obtain a minimum mark of 70% overall.

Unsupervised Coursework

The unsupervised coursework will count for 30% of the final mark. There will be two essays of no more than 5,000 words each. Essay 1 is to be submitted by 1130 on Wednesday 11 March 2015 and Essay 2 is to be submitted by 1130 on Monday 27 April 2015. Each essay will count for 15% of the final assessment. Each essay is to be handed into Ms Lesley Dixon at the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies, Room 213, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DT.

Dissertation

Dissertation deadline

The dissertation will be of no more than 20,000 words, to be submitted by 1130 on Wednesday 15 July 2015 to Ms Lesley Dixon University of

Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies, Room 213, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DT.

The dissertation will count for 70% of the final mark.

Bell Scholar

Each year the author of the best research dissertation will be awarded the title of *Bell Scholar* in recognition of outstanding scholarship. (Lady Primrose and Sir David Bell are esteemed patrons of UCCGS).

Format of Written Work

Essays

Essays must be typed on one side of A4 paper, double-spaced, in Times New Roman 12 with 3 cm margins on the left and right-hand side. The essays do not have to be bound but should at least be stapled. Three hard copies **including a completed cover sheet** must be handed to Ms Lesley Dixon by 1130 on the given dates and an electronic copy must be sent by email (pdf or word format) to Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk). The electronic file name should include the name of the student and the date of submission (eg 'Jake_Smith - 10_03_2010.doc').

Essays should **not** exceed the word limit of 5000 words, and the number of words used should be shown at the end of each essay. Tables, diagrams, maps, etc, will be taken to be equivalent to the number of words that could be typed, double-spaced, in the place they occupy. Referencing in the text and in the bibliography should follow the Harvard style. References do not count towards the word limit (but footnotes/endnotes do).

Essay cover sheets are available from:

<https://www.gender.cam.ac.uk/mphil/students/documentation>

Dissertation

The dissertation should not exceed the word limit of 20,000 words, excluding footnotes, tables, appendices, and bibliography. The layout of the dissertation should otherwise be the same as stated in the previous section for the essays. You should hand in **three** hard copies and an electronic copy. The hard copies need to be soft bound, ie using comb binding or channel binding. The

dissertations should be handed in by 1130 on the due date. Please allow time for printing and binding.

The University submission requirements are at:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/students/studentregistry/exams/submission/mphil/>

Please consult the above link for the most up to date information. However, at the time of printing this Handbook the requirements stipulate that:

1. The front page of your dissertation should state:
 - your dissertation title
 - that it is a dissertation for the degree of MPhil in Multi-disciplinary Gender Studies
 - your name
 - your supervisor
 - your College
 - the word count
 - the date of submission
 - and a Declaration stating "This dissertation is submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy."
2. You should also include in the Preface the statement: "This dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration except where specifically indicated in the text".

Oral Examination

At the discretion of the examiners, an oral examination on the dissertation may be required in mid September 2014 (precise date to be notified). Students must be available for this if required.

Submission of Assignments

Three copies of all assignments must be handed in as specified not later than 1130 on the dates indicated and a receipt obtained. **Please note that late submissions will NOT be accepted for examination without the prior agreement of the Senior Examiner.** On the rare occasion where a student

anticipates that s/he will be unable to meet the submission deadline, (due to serious illness or bereavement), s/he should liaise with Ms Lesley Dixon (ld356@cam.ac.uk) and also contact his/her College Graduate Tutor who may write to the Senior Examiner to request an extension. Supporting medical evidence will need to be provided to support the request.

Continuing from an MPhil to a PhD

If students intend to go on to do a PhD then, as with all students in Cambridge, they are required to re-apply for admission to a PhD. To be accepted candidates must satisfy the relevant department's admission criteria. For example, the University of Cambridge Centre for Gender Studies requires a minimum of 70% in the MPhil.

Requests for written references in support of a PhD application or funding application should be made to a student's supervisor in the first instance and well before the deadline for submission. It may not be possible to comply with requests for references where there is insufficient notice.

Other Opportunities

Extra Help

Students who need some additional language support should contact the University of Cambridge Language Centre, see:

<http://www.langcen.cam.ac.uk/lc/index.html>

Other Courses

Other lectures in the University aimed at undergraduates will be relevant in other disciplines. All are listed on the University's timetable system at:

<https://www.timetable.cam.ac.uk/>

Students are entitled to attend any undergraduate lecture and should make full use of this privilege. For a *seminar* it is necessary to ask the relevant lecturer for permission to attend.

Learning Outcomes

The MPhil programme is designed to enable students to conduct independent research in the field of gender studies. The outcomes of the programme are achieved both through focused study of a wide range of selected specialised aspects of gender analysis, and through development of more general research skills and methods that enable the student to produce original, independent work. The course aims to provide students with the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to:

1. use a range of methods for gathering, analyzing and interpreting research material.
2. apply normative theories to substantive research topics.
3. frame research questions, to construct appropriate research designs, and develop a thorough grasp of a wide range of methodological approaches.
4. interpret complex research publications effectively.
5. independently manage primary research, including data management and the writing up of research as well as understanding codes of research practice and research ethics.
6. present research and also to make use of constructive criticism.

Who do I turn to?

Consult your supervisor about planning and executing your dissertation research.

To deal with personal difficulties and circumstances (financial, illness, etc), contact your College Tutor in the first instance.

For administrative issues connected with the MPhil course, please contact Ms Lesley Dixon (UCCGS Administrator) ld356@cam.ac.uk .

Warning on Plagiarism and “Poor Scholarship”

This is an extract from the University’s definition of plagiarism:

Plagiarism is the unacknowledged use of the work of others as if this were your own original work. In the context of an examination, this amounts to passing off the work of others as your own to gain unfair advantage. Such use of unfair means

will not be tolerated by the University; if detected, the penalty may be severe and may lead to failure to obtain your degree.

It is also important to note that the distinction between what is considered to be plagiarism and what is considered to be “poor scholarship” is ambiguous. Your aim may not have been to deliberately pass off the work of others as your own, (hiding its origins in an attempt to mislead the examiner) but the result could be similar, ie unacknowledged, unoriginal work. Examiners are little impressed by the injudicious cutting and pasting of images and text from web sites and other sources or by over reliance on other authors’ work. This approach is best avoided as it represents poor scholarship and runs the risk of being construed as plagiarism. Be especially wary of material on the internet.

For further information, please see the University’s full statement:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/>

Turnitin UK

The University subscribes to Turnitin UK software which is widely used in UK universities and matches text in work submitted to the software to that in a large database of online sources.

Turnitin UK may detect direct plagiarism, paraphrasing and collusion as submitted work is compared with a vast database of online material and with a ‘private’ database of previous submissions. At the beginning of the year, students will be asked to read information about this, and to sign a consent form that will allow their submitted work to be run through the Turnitin UK programme, should suspicion arise.

Graduation

Your college will organise and arrange a series of congregations at which students, who are due to graduate at the end of the current academic year, may elect to have their degrees conferred. You will not be able to have your degree conferred until it has been approved by the Student Registry, and this is unlikely to happen before October 2015.

Submission Deadlines

Item	Submission date	Weighting (%)
Ethics Self Assessment Form to Lesley Dixon	28 January 2015	Required
Draft dissertation abstract and title to Lesley Dixon	28 January 2015	Required
Risk Assessment Form to Lesley Dixon	28 January 2015	Required
Final dissertation abstract and title to Lesley Dixon	4 February 2015	Required
Essay 1 to Lesley Dixon	11 March 2015	15%
Essay 2 to Lesley Dixon	27 April 2015	15%
Research dissertation to Lesley Dixon	15 July 2015	70%