

## **Dissertation:**

A quarter of your final mark can be assessed from a dissertation of 6- to 10,000-words. This is an opportunity to impress: exam answers are inevitably limited by the time available but dissertations and long essays give you a chance to show your work in a more original and polished way. To avoid adversely affecting your performance on other papers you should start preparing your dissertation before Michaelmas and give your supervisor a first draft to read over the Christmas break.

### **Supervision guidelines**

- Students can expect to receive six supervisions
- Supervisors will read draft chapters once and a draft of the whole dissertation once, and provide written comments
- Supervisors will not read revised drafts
- Supervisors will advise on readings where they can, but students cannot expect supervisors to provide a comprehensive reading, which should reflect some independent initiative.
- Supervisions are expected to be given during term time

Dissertations for sociology do not have to contain original empirical research, but often will, since they should draw on a wide range of sources and/or primary material, which may include first-hand observations, experiments, interviews, undigested statistical data or archive holdings.

### **Layout**

- Font: Use 12-point font and double-spacing for the text and 11-point font and single spacing for footnotes, lengthy inset quotations, notes, and bibliographies.
- Margins: Allow an ample margin on both sides of the page.
- Pagination: Print on one side only, and number the pages serially from 1.
- Abbreviations: At the first mention give the full name and its acronym or abbreviation in brackets. For dissertations, it is often useful to include a list of the acronyms and abbreviations you use.
- Contents: A table of contents is useful for dissertations.
- Sections: Dissertations will normally have sections and perhaps even separate chapters (these do not have to start on a separate page). Long essays may also have sections (these can be numbered or given sub-titles).
- Acknowledgements: Any statement of acknowledgements should appear between the contents page and before the start of the examinable text.
- Word-count: This includes all preliminary matter (e.g., title, acknowledgements), footnotes and endnotes, but not the bibliography. Particularly for dissertations, you do not need to include consent/debriefing forms in your word count. Students are expected to keep to the word-count as much as possible and penalties will be applied to over-limit work. All work should be proofread; examiners will penalise work with many grammatical or typographical errors.

### **References and bibliographies**

Some word processing programmes (e.g., Endnote for later versions of Microsoft Word) format references automatically from a bibliographical database in a variety of accepted conventions – these can be extremely useful, particularly if you update your database each time you read new material. Be consistent throughout in the convention you adopt (e.g., 'author-date' citations in the text, with a bibliography at the end of the work).

Make sure that your referencing is complete: for journal articles etc. the author, the title of the article, the name of the journal, the volume number, the year and the pages (and where page numbering starts with each issue, the issue number also); for books and book sections the editor(s) as well as the author(s), the title of the book, the place of publication, the publisher, and the year. Examiners often follow up a selection of references and will be irritated if they cannot find what they are looking for. If you use sources other than books or journal articles, make sure to say what these are. For sources obtained from the web etc., give the access address. Print the titles of books and journals in underlined normal type or italics; the titles of articles etc. in normal type inside quotation marks.

### Submission deadlines

**SOCIOLOGY DISSERTATIONS**

**DEADLINES**

**Titles:** Friday 18 October 2020

*\*changes to titles must be submitted **not later than 10 Feb 2020***

**Submission:** **Friday 1 May 2020**, by 12.00 noon

*Electronic versions should be sent to [enquiries@sociology.cam.ac.uk](mailto:enquiries@sociology.cam.ac.uk) and TWO hard-copies to be handed-in at the Sociology Office*

*Requests for extensions must be sent by the Director of Studies to the Chair of Part II Exams **at least 48 hours in advance** of the deadline date. Medical evidence, where applicable, must be shown **before** the extension will be granted.*

*\*Both hard copies and an electronic copy must be received by the deadline shown above to constitute on-time submission. Penalties are applied for late submission*

### Late submission

All work must be submitted by 12.00 noon on the advertised deadline. **Both the hard copies and electronic copy must be received by 12.00 noon in order for the work to be considered as “submitted”**. Unless the student has been granted an extension, any work submitted after 12.00 noon will incur a **penalty** as follows:

- 1 point per hour or part thereof – up to 3 points (1 point per the first hour, another point for the second hour, and a third point for any further delay up to 12 noon the next day)
- Next 10 days or part of thereof – 3 points per day
- Any work submitted after 10 days is marked 0
- Electronic submission is mandatory
- Both the electronic and the hard copy need to be submitted by the deadline and have to be identical. If submission falls on weekend or holidays, the submission of electronic copy is taken as relevant for application of the penalties. Hard copy dissertation then needs to be submitted at the first possible opportunity.
- Handing times are standardised as 12pm on the due date, with daily penalties applied every 24 hours from the due time.

Students who have good reason to request an extension (e.g., serious health problem, major family difficulty) should contact their College as soon as possible, as all requests must be sent from the Director of Studies or the College's Senior Tutor to the Sociology Senior Examiner for Part IIA and IIB (**Dr Monica Moreno Figueroa**, [mm2051@cam.ac.uk](mailto:mm2051@cam.ac.uk)), copied to the undergraduate secretary: Odette Rogers, [ohmr3@cam.ac.uk](mailto:ohmr3@cam.ac.uk), at least 48 hours in advance of the deadline date. All requests must be accompanied by appropriate evidence.

### **Word limit**

Students and supervisors should note that the word limit is 10,000 words for Dissertations. **There is no leeway. Students exceeding the word limit will be penalised.** The word limit must be written on the coversheet for your dissertation at submission and the Faculty will carry out checks. At the final Examiners' meeting in June, the Examiners will discuss all overlength work and agree a penalty scale.

What is counted in the word limit will vary by subject (see below), so you should ensure that you have read the paper guide and are clear on what will be included. ***Word limit rules apply to the subject of the paper you are submitting, not the subject track you are on.*** As a general rule, any content that the Examiners must read in order to assess your work should be included in the main body and not in an appendix; overuse of appendices may be penalised if it impairs the understanding of your work.

***For all Soc assessed work***, the word limit will include all text except the bibliography and appendices; tables will be counted according to content. This means that the main text, captions, table of contents, footnotes, endnotes and all prefatory material at the start of the essay will be counted. Numerical tables, graphs or figures (for example, reports of statistical data) will be counted at a fixed rate of 150 words per table. Non-numerical tables, graphs or figures (for example, comparison tables showing attributes of various groups) will be counted per-word, and all content of the table will be counted.

***Important: You will be penalised if your dissertation word-count is inferior to 6000 words***

### **Plagiarism or unfair practice**

Concerns about plagiarism are taken very seriously and students should ensure that they are familiar with the Faculty's guidance (available in your handbook and current student webpages). Cases of suspected unfair practice including plagiarism, potential data fabrication or breaches of ethical research practice will be investigated by the Senior Examiner of Part II on a case-by-case basis. Students should read the University's Statement on Plagiarism at:

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