



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin

School of Social Sciences and
Philosophy – Department of
Political Science

PhD in Political Science Handbook

2023-24

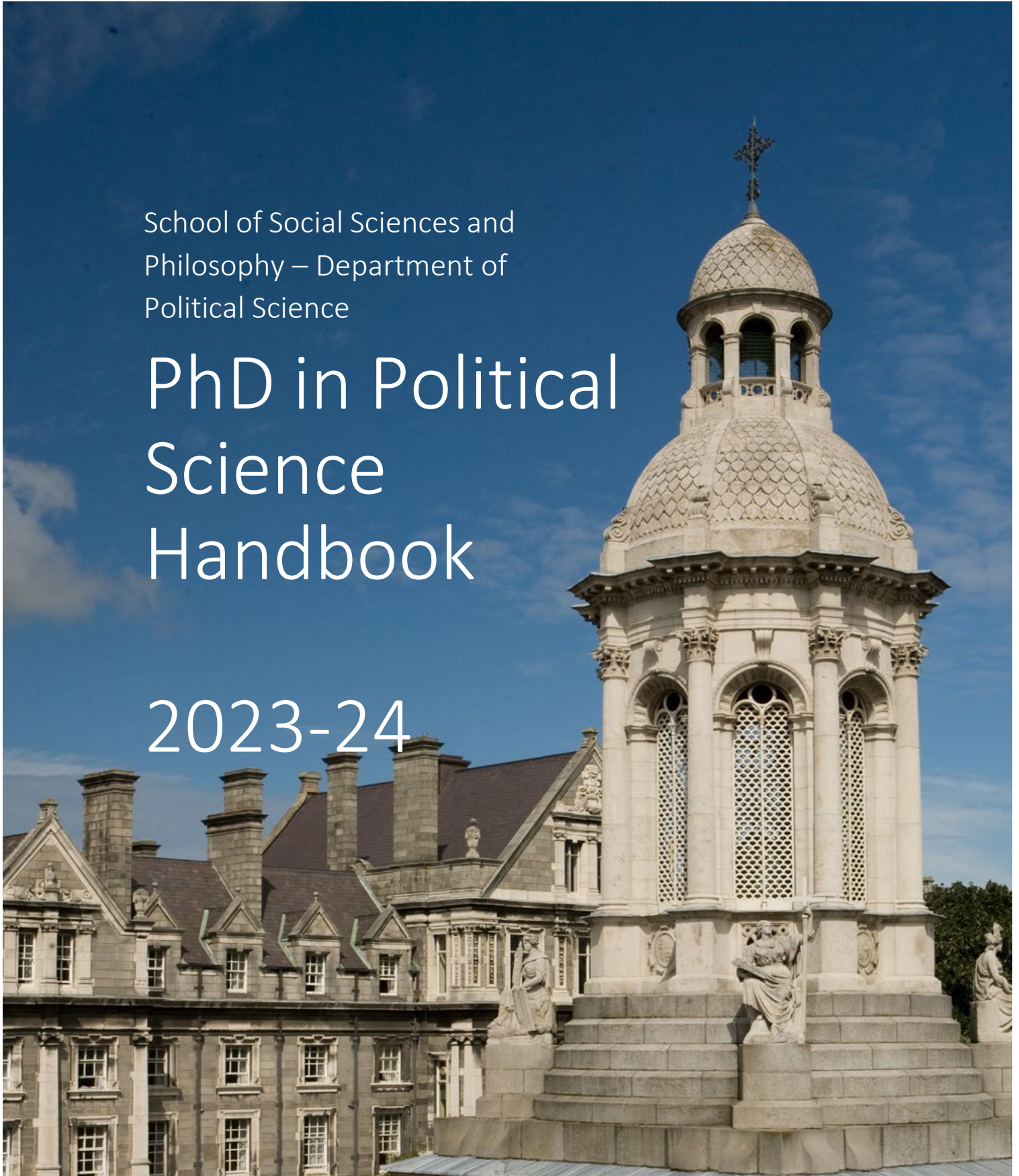


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1. GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

This handbook sets out the basic structure and requirements of the PhD in Political Science programme and the mutual obligations of staff and students involved. The handbook is intended to be your guide to understanding the Ph.D. programme and also a tool to get you started on the path to making the most of your degree. It also refers to additional resources to help you get the most out of many of our regular activities such as the Friday seminar presentations. The key thing to remember is that we value our postgraduate students very highly, particularly the close, constructive and informal interaction between all that is the mark of any good department.

1.2 Contact Details

Staff Name	Role/Title	Contact
Professor Paul O'Grady	Head of School of Social Sciences & Philosophy	pograd@tcd.ie
Dr Tara Mitchell	School Director of Teaching & Learning (PG)	mitchet@tcd.ie
Prof. Peter Stone	Head of Department of Political Science	pstone@tcd.ie
Dr Alexander Held	Director of PhD in Political Science	helda@tcd.ie
Ms Sarah Smullen	Administrator of PhD in Political Science	polgrad@tcd.ie

1.3 Key Locations

Please see interactive campus maps [here](#).

- The Political Science Department is located on the fourth and fifth floors of 1 College Green building, just off the west end of the main campus. All instructors and the administrator for the course can be found here unless otherwise indicated.
Note: 1 – 5 College Green is a combined building; the main entrance is at 3 College Green. Turn left on exiting the main lift or staircase in order to reach 1 College Green. If taking the lift to the fifth floor of 1 College Green, press *four*; if taking the lift to the fourth floor of 1 College Green, press *three*.
- The Arts Building (on the main campus) and Phoenix House (7-9 Leinster St South, just off the east end of the main campus) host the majority of Political Science lectures.
- Blackboard is the College online learning environment, where lecturers will give access to material like lecture notes and discussion forums. The use of Blackboard varies from module to module and individual lecturers will speak to you about the requirements for their module. In order to access a module on Blackboard you should be registered to the module by the Course Administrator.
Blackboard can be accessed here: <https://tcd.blackboard.com/webapps/login/>
- Your @tcd address only will be used for correspondence. You should check your email on a regular basis. When emailing the Administration, make sure to include your TCD Student ID Number.
- My.tcd.ie allows students to view their own central student record containing all relevant information related to the course for which you are registered. To access the system, you will need your College username and network password. If any details on your timetable/module list are incorrect, you should contact the Course Administrator.
- Academic Registry (“AR”) manages course registration and fees. Their website can be accessed here: <http://www.tcd.ie/academicregistry/>. If your personal student information listed on SITS is incorrect, you should email academic.registry@tcd.ie. The Academic Registry offices are located in the Watts Building, on the east side of the main campus

1.4 Key Dates

Important dates and submission deadlines

Please see the Academic Year Structure here: <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/academic-year-structure/>

Michaelmas Term

4 – 8 September 2023	1 st and 2 nd years inform Course Administrator MT module choices, having received approval from supervisor and the Course Director.
12 - 13 September 2023	2 nd , 3 rd year students' viva examinations.
15 November 2023	2 nd , 3 rd year students who received 'revise and resubmit' at viva examinations submit proposals to the Course Director.
1 December 2023	1 st , 2 nd year students' Independent Study (Literature review, Further piece of the dissertation project) papers due to supervisors.
12 January 2024	1 st , 2 nd year students' Independent Study (Literature review, Further piece of dissertation research) forms due to supervisor and the Course Administrator.
8 - 19 January 2024	Exam grading; TAs should plan to be in Dublin.

Hilary Term

22 January 2024	1 st , 2 nd year students inform Course Administrator of HT module choices, having received approval from supervisor and the Course Director in advance.
12 April 2024	1 st year students' Independent Study (Research proposal) Papers due to supervisors.

Trinity Term

26 April 2024

1st, 3rd year students' College progress reports due to Course Director and Course Administrator

3 May 2024

1st year students' Independent Study (Research proposal) forms due to supervisor and Course Administrator

29 April – 24 May 2024

Exam grading: TAs should be in Dublin until 24th May.

15 August 2024

1st year students' revised thesis proposals due to supervisor and Dr Held

TBA (September 2024)

1st year students' viva examinations ('confirmation process')

15 November 2024

1st year students who received 'revise and resubmit' submit proposals to the Course Director.

Late August – early September 2024 Supplemental exam grading for TAs for 1st and 2nd year modules.

Note: Students participating in modules in UCD as part of the TCD-UCD joint teaching of PhD modules in Political Sciences are required to attend classes throughout the UCD term, including in weeks that may otherwise constitute "reading weeks" on the TCD calendar. Students will be informed of any necessary changes to these dates by email during the year.

1.5 Timetable

Lecture Timetables are published to student portals (my.tcd.ie) at least one week before the beginning of the academic year. Once a student is registered, they can view their timetable on their student portal. The onus is on students to check their timetable at regular intervals to identify any changes to venues or lecture times.

2. ACADEMIC WRITING

2.1 School of Social Sciences and Philosophy Procedures for Dealing with Plagiarism Plagiarism and Referencing Guide

If you copy another student's essay, engage someone to write your work, quote material from any published or electronic source without acknowledgement, or extensively paraphrase such material without acknowledgement, you have committed the offence of plagiarism. A mark of zero may be awarded. The College's definition of plagiarism and specification of its consequences can be viewed on the Trinity website: <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academicintegrity>

These webpages are designed to help you to understand what plagiarism is and to employ the principles of academic integrity so as to avoid plagiarising. They also set out the regulations in Trinity relating to plagiarism offences and how they are dealt with.

The College Calendar defines plagiarism, gives examples of the kinds of actions that are deemed to constitute plagiarism, and elaborates on the procedures for dealing with plagiarism cases. It is essential that you read the Calendar entry that is relevant to you as a postgraduate student. The webpages also contain materials and advice on citation styles which are used to reference properly. You should familiarise yourself with the content of these pages. For further information please visit: <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity>

All students must complete our Ready Steady Write plagiarism tutorial and sign a declaration when submitting course work, whether in hard or soft copy or via Blackboard, confirming that you understand what plagiarism is and have completed the tutorial. If you read the information on plagiarism, complete the tutorial and still have difficulty understanding what plagiarism is and how to avoid it, please seek advice from your College tutor, your Course Director, your supervisor, or from Student Learning Development.

To access this tutorial please visit: libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity/ready-steady-write

Plagiarism Declaration

Each coversheet that is attached to submitted work should contain the following completed declaration:

"I have read, and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the University Calendar for the current year. I have also completed the Online Tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready Steady Write'.

Please refer to your relevant School/ Department for the format of essay submission coversheets.

Academic Integrity

It is clearly understood that all members of the academic community use and build on the work and ideas of others. However, it is essential that we do so with integrity, in an open and explicit manner, and with due acknowledgement. Any action or attempted action that undermines academic integrity and may result in an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any member of the academic community or wider society may be considered as academic misconduct. Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism - presenting work / ideas taken from other sources without proper acknowledgement. Submitting work as one's own for assessment or examination, which has been done in whole or in part by someone else, or submitting work which has been created by using artificial intelligence tools, where this has not been expressly permitted.
- Self-plagiarism - recycling or borrowing content from the author's own previous work without citation and submitting it either for an assignment or an examination.
- Collusion - undisclosed collaboration of two or more people on an assignment or task, or examination, which is supposed to be completed individually.
- Falsification/fabrication.
- Exam cheating - action or behaviour that violates examination rules in an attempt to give one learner an unfair advantage over another.
- Fraud/impersonation - actions that are intended to deceive for unfair advantage by violating academic regulations. Using intentional deception to gain academic credit.
- Contract cheating - form of academic misconduct in which a person uses an undeclared and/or unauthorised third party to assist them to produce work for academic credit or progression, whether or not payment or other favour is involved. Contract cheating is any behaviour whereby a learner arranges to have another person or entity ('the provider') complete (in whole or in part) any assessment (e.g., exam, test, quiz, assignment, paper, project, problems) for the learner. If the provider is also a student, both students are in violation.

Further examples of the above available at www.tcd.ie/teaching-learning/academic-integrity

Academic Misconduct in the Context of Group Work

Students should normally submit assessments and/or examinations done in co-operation with other students only when the cooperation is done with the full knowledge and permission of the lecturer concerned. Without this permission, submitting assessments and/or examinations which are the product of collaboration with other students may be considered to be academic misconduct.

When work is submitted as the result of a group project, it is the responsibility of all students in the group to ensure, so far as is possible, that no work submitted by the group is plagiarised, or that any other academic misconduct has taken place. In order to avoid academic misconduct in the context of collaboration and group work, it is particularly important to ensure that each student appropriately attributes work that is not their own. Should a module coordinator suspect academic misconduct in a group assignment, the procedure in cases of suspected academic misconduct must be followed for

each student.

Avoiding Academic Misconduct

Students should ensure the integrity of their work by seeking advice from their module coordinator or supervisor on avoiding academic misconduct. All schools and departments must include, in their handbooks or other literature given to students, guidelines on the appropriate methodology for the kind of work that students will be expected to undertake. In addition, a general set of guidelines for students on avoiding academic misconduct is available at libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity

For further information including details of the procedure to be followed in case of suspected plagiarism, please refer to Section 1, 'Academic Integrity' (pages 30 & 31) of the Graduate Studies Academic Calendar: www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/completepart-III.pdf

2.2 Research Ethics

We wish to draw your attention to the need for you to comply with the School's research ethics policy. Full details can be found at <https://www.tcd.ie/ssp/research/ethics/>. The most consequential aspect of this that, should you be planning to observe, interview, poll, or experiment on human beings, you will need to get ethics approval. This involves completing a form that you will find via the link above and then having it approved/signed by the Department's Research Ethics representative. **Failure to comply with the School's research ethics policy could result in penalties, up to and including a zero mark for the dissertation.**

2.3 Procedures regarding Dignity and Respect Matters

The School of Social Sciences and Philosophy is committed to fostering a learning environment that upholds principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion. We strive to ensure that all students and staff can pursue their academic and professional goals without fear of discrimination, harassment, bullying, or any form of mistreatment.

Recognizing the adverse impact harassment can have on individuals' performance, morale, confidence, health, and learning, the School seeks to create a culture where such behavior is unequivocally condemned. Our goal is to encourage an atmosphere in which individuals can address harassment concerns without fear of ridicule or retaliation.

[Trinity Dignity and Respect Policy](#) serves as a guiding framework for addressing any matters related to dignity and respect. This policy outlines the resources and support available to both students and staff when facing issues related to harassment or discrimination.

Should any student encounter issues related to dignity and respect, as outlined above, we strongly urge them to immediately reach out for support from the designated contact person, who will

provide guidance and support in accordance with the Dignity and Respect Policy:
<https://www.tcd.ie/hr/assets/pdf/dignity-and-respect.pdf>

Director of PhD in Political Science: Alexander Held, helda@tcd.ie

Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate): Tara Mitchell, mitchet@tcd.ie

3. TEACHING AND LEARNING

3.1 Programme Structure

The Ph.D. programme lasts four years, and is a level ten QQI – NFQ qualification. Structured training is given to students in the first two years in the form of a series of modules. Unlike traditional Ph.D.s in Europe, the programme combines intensive training with a substantial project of supervised original research resulting in a thesis. Students' progress is assessed throughout the programme. A particularly important assessment point take place after the first year, as detailed below. These assessments are designed to establish whether students are making satisfactory progress. Continuation on the Ph.D. register each year is contingent on the demonstration of satisfactory progress as outlined below. In addition to the credits required as part of the structured PhD, the module CA7000 Research Integrity and Impact in an Open Scholarship Era (5 ECTS) must be completed prior to the confirmation on the PhD register as part of the official confirmation process. The course is delivered online and may be taken at any stage prior to a student undertaking his or her confirmation/transfer process (see Appendix). Students are expected to take the module Teaching & Supporting Learning as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (5 ECTS), which is offered by TCD's Centre for Academic Practice, Trinity Teaching & Learning."

3.2 Programme Structure and Workload

The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) is an academic credit system based on the estimated student workload required to achieve the objectives of a module or programme of study. It is designed to enable academic recognition for periods of study, to facilitate student mobility and credit accumulation and transfer. The ECTS is the recommended credit system for higher education in Ireland and across the European Higher Education Area.

The ECTS weighting for a module is a measure of the student input or workload required for that module, based on factors such as the number of contact hours, the number and length of written or verbally presented assessment exercises, class preparation and private study time, laboratory classes, examinations, clinical attendance, professional training placements, and so on as appropriate. There is no intrinsic relationship between the credit volume of a module and its level of difficulty. The European norm for fulltime study over one academic year is 60 credits. 1 credit represents 20-25 hours estimated student input, so a 10-credit module will be designed to require 200-250 hours of student input including class contact time, assessments and examinations.

Year 1: Compulsory modules & Thesis proposal

- The first year of the integrated Ph.D. programme includes the following compulsory modules in the 2023-24 academic year (Variations from the Quantitative Methods I module and/or the Quantitative Methods II module can be granted by the Ph.D. Director): Quantitative Methods I (10 ECTS)
- Research Design (10 ECTS)
- Independent Study (Literature review) (10 ECTS, Pass/Fail, see below)
- Independent Study (Research proposal) (10 ECTS, Pass/Fail, see below)
- Field Seminar (10 ECTS)
- Quantitative Methods II (10 ECTS)

Independent Study

The Independent Study (Literature review, Research proposal) is crucial for 1st year students for the development of their thesis proposals. Each first year student will be assigned a supervisor for the Independent Study (Literature review) at the beginning of the Michaelmas Term and will follow a programme designed on an individual basis to provide structured reading. At the start of the course, both the student and lecturer will agree a reading list and a schedule of informal meetings to review progress on these. At least three meetings should be scheduled. The Independent Study (Literature review) culminates in the student submitting a written paper of 5,000 words to be submitted by the end of the Michaelmas Term (1 December 2023). This paper will be a thorough review of the scholarly literature that clearly identifies a research question, and identifies areas for future research. It should thoroughly explore a topic and its issues, mapping out the territory for the student's own thesis project. The Independent Study (Literature review) itself is graded by the supervisor, on a pass/fail scale, on the basis of the detailed literature review of the student's research area submitted by the Independent Study (Literature review) deadline.

The Literature Review paper in Michaelmas Term differs from the Independent Study (Research Proposal) in Hilary Term in that it is typically longer, focuses more on summarizing existing research and identifying lacunae, and contains fewer precise details about the research design and the student's own potential contribution to the field than does the Research Proposal. The importance of the Literature Review lies in the fact that it serves as the basis for the Research Proposal in Hilary Term, which in turn is the basis for the 'Thesis Proposal' to be defended in September 2024 after the first year.

At the start of Hilary Term, both the student and lecturer will agree a schedule of informal meetings for the Independent Study (Research proposal). At least three meetings should be scheduled. The Research Proposal should be clearly based on principles of research design: defining some variation to be explained, identifying alternative explanations, proposing clear tests which can distinguish between alternative explanations, discussing issues of data collection

and measurement issues, etc. (This assumes the dissertation is empirical in nature; a theoretical project, for example, would require a different structure.) The Independent Study (Research Proposal) culminates in the student submitting a written paper of 4,500 words (including footnotes etc, but not the bibliography) to be submitted by the end of Hilary Term (12 April 2024). The Independent Study (Research proposal) itself is graded by the supervisor, on a pass/fail scale, on the basis of the student's research proposal submitted by the Independent Study (Research proposal) deadline.

Revised Thesis Proposals and Confirmation Process

A 10-15 page revised Thesis Proposal must be submitted by 15 August 2024 and will be defended at the beginning of their second year in September 2024 (TBA) in front of a committee composed of an External Examiner, the Ph.D. Director, and another Internal Examiner ('Confirmation process').

The Thesis Proposal is a revised version of the research proposal which was developed under the guidance of the student's supervisor during Hilary Term. It should be clearly based on principles of research design: defining some variation to be explained, identifying alternative explanations, proposing clear tests which can distinguish between alternative explanations, discussing issues of data collection and measurement issues, etc. (This assumes the dissertation is empirical in nature; a theoretical project, for example, would require a different structure.) The proposal should be double-spaced including normal margins, and should amount to no more than 4,500 words including all footnotes etc, but not the bibliography. Please include a word count on the first page. The paper must follow the format set out in the document titled "Ph.D. research proposals formatting and structure", available on the departmental website.

Following its defence, the Thesis Proposal may receive one of the following evaluations from the Assessment Committee:

- Eligible to proceed.
- Revise and Resubmit to proceed. In this case, students should resubmit their Thesis Proposal, or other piece of work required by the Assessment Committee, by 15 November 2024. They will be informed of the revised decision by mid-December.
- Ineligible to proceed with Ph.D

Year 2: Confirmation process, Compulsory independent study and Elective modules

Providing that the student is eligible to proceed to the second year of the programme, they will defend their Thesis proposal in September 2024 in front of a committee composed of an External Examiner, the Ph.D. Director, and another Internal Examiner (see details above). The successful defence of the Thesis proposal is a key component of the student's confirmation process.

Students will also have to make up 30 ECTS credits in total this year. 10 ECTS are based on a compulsory Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project agreed by the

supervisor and the student). The other 20 ECTS can be chosen from TCD MSc modules, additional Ph.D. level modules taught at TCD, or from Ph.D. or MSc. level modules available at UCD. Students must first seek approval from their supervisor and the PhD Director and then contact the Course Administrator to register for elective modules.

At the start of Michaelmas Term, both the student and lecturer will agree a schedule of informal meetings for the Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project). At least three meetings should be scheduled. The further piece of the dissertation project should be clearly based on principles of research design: defining some variation to be explained, identifying alternative explanations, proposing clear tests which can distinguish between alternative explanations, discussing issues of data collection and measurement issues, etc. (This assumes the dissertation is empirical in nature; a theoretical project, for example, would require a different structure.) The Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project) culminates in the student submitting a written paper of 4,500 words (including footnotes etc, but not the bibliography) to be submitted by the end of Michaelmas Term (1 December 2023). The Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project) itself is graded by the supervisor, on a pass/fail scale, on the basis of the student's further piece of the dissertation project submitted by the Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project) deadline.

The modules typically meet 10-11 weeks for 2-3 hours per week. The compressed time and the small size of the groups involved means that participation and attendance are compulsory. Students may also be asked by the instructor to make presentations. *Unexplained absences from class will not be tolerated and persistent absence from courses and/or the Friday seminar may result in the department deciding that, with immediate effect, a student may not continue in the Ph.D. programme.* In the second year, it is also expected that students will meet regularly with their supervisors to continue the progress made in the first year on their particular dissertation topic.

Students who are either eligible to proceed to with the Ph.D., or who have successfully revised and resubmitted their proposal work on converting the ideas developed in the first year into a more concrete research proposal in the second year of the programme. It is expected that students will continue to meet with their supervisors as in the first year (see the Independent Study (Further piece of the dissertation project) above), to refine their proposals in the second year.

Years 3 and 4: The Ph.D. Thesis

The final two years of the programme are spent preparing a thesis on a substantial and original topic, developed in consultation with one (and in some cases two) supervisor(s). The supervisor of a student's thesis will ideally be the member of staff with whom the student did their independent study (literature review, research proposal, further piece of the dissertation project). In exceptional circumstances the department may ask someone who is not a member of

the staff of the department to assist in the supervision of the thesis.

The Ph.D. Director will act as adviser to all Ph.D. students, dealing with matters not directly related to the subject matter being researched. Our expectation is that every thesis should be publishable, and that every attempt should be made to publish it in some form or another, such as articles in established journals.

The relationship between supervisors, Ph.D. Director, and research student is critical to determining the quality of the student's postgraduate experience. This relationship is one of collaboration in a common enterprise. For a successful collaboration, all parties must recognize their separate responsibilities, which are set out below.

Submitting and Defending the Dissertation

When the thesis is complete, it is submitted to the College (Graduate Studies) for examination. At the same time, you must submit the datasets (or other relevant replication material) used in your dissertation, if any. All data and other relevant replication material should be sent electronically to the Ph.D. Director, your supervisor, and the Course Administrator. The datasets must be clearly named, documented, and submitted in a single file (e.g., zip). The department (or examiners) may also, at their discretion, request other supporting materials (e.g. notes of interviews, documents etc.) as necessary. You are also strongly encouraged to submit your replication code, if any. The thesis is read by an internal examiner who will be a member of the department other than the supervisor, whose job will be to evaluate the thesis in the context of its contribution to the profession as a whole, and by an external examiner from another institution, who has detailed professional knowledge of the thesis topic and whose job will be to provide an expert assessment of this. In exceptional circumstances in which no suitable internal examiner can be found, that role may be filled by a faculty member in another department at Trinity (e.g., Economics, Philosophy, or Law) or from outside College.

It is the full responsibility of the Ph.D. Director, who will consult with both the candidate's supervisor and the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), to choose the external examiner of the thesis in order to maintain the objectivity of the examination process. Clearly, students may have views on who is best to serve as external examiner and they are thus encouraged to discuss this with their supervisors well in advance of the date of final submission; their supervisors will then discuss the matter with the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) who will make the final the decision. In no circumstances are students to approach and ask potential external examiners of their willingness to serve on the examination committee.

Once the thesis is read by both the internal and external examiners, an oral examination will be held generally between two and four months after the thesis has been submitted to Graduate Studies. (Students who would prefer a viva held before Christmas are advised not to submit their draft dissertations at the last possible moment near the beginning of the Michaelmas term, as

experience shows that oral examinations for such dissertations can frequently be scheduled only in January or February of the following year). The examination should last about two hours and the internal and external examiners may ask questions on any aspect of the thesis and the theme with which it deals.

Detailed rules for submission of thesis are contained in the [College Calendar](#), Part 3, and these must be consulted carefully by the student before any plans for submission are made. The Calendar provides for students to submit theses without the prior approval of the supervisor, but in practice it would be extraordinarily unwise for any student to do this. Both department and supervisor have a strong interest in having good theses accepted by the examiners and, if they advise against submission, then this advice should be taken very seriously by the student. It almost certainly means that the thesis will encounter serious problems when it is examined. After the thesis has been examined in this way, the examiners will recommend one of the following:

- The thesis passes as it stands;
- The thesis passes after minor corrections have been made (the internal examiner must certify that these corrections have been made before the final thesis is submitted and the degree awarded);
- The thesis must be revised in a more major way, and then be submitted for reexamination (in this event the examination procedures outlined above will be repeated, although there is no oral examination);
- A lesser degree (such as a Master's) should be awarded;
- The thesis should fail outright.

All years: Teaching

The most important contribution that Trinity College makes to Irish society is the teaching of our undergraduate students. The department takes the teaching of undergraduates very seriously and expects that postgraduates participating in teaching undergraduate modules do the same. Obviously, modules will differ in their requirements and Teaching Assistants should consult with the module instructor for the module they will be teaching to determine exact arrangements. In general students may be required to grade papers and exams under the guidance of the instructor, lead tutorials ('discussion groups'), note student attendance at tutorials, hold office hours, answer student email, and distribute and collect materials from students, and other course related activities, working of course in conjunction with the module instructor and – for particularly large classes – the head teaching assistant.

Note that, where relevant, Teaching Assistants are expected to be available to grade summer exam papers (as well as papers for 'Supplemental' exams, which are held in early September for students who fail or are absent from summer examinations) for courses they have acted as Teaching Assistants for over the year. The module instructor may also require that postgraduate teaching assistants attend undergraduate lectures to better prepare them to lead tutorials and grade student work. Teaching tends to improve with feedback and instructors may also ask Teaching Assistants to solicit anonymous feedback from the undergraduates on Teaching Assistants' performance and to discuss this feedback with the module's instructor.

Note that it is also school policy to require that undergraduate student course surveys will collect survey evaluations of individual Teaching Assistants and make them available for discussion within the department. Outstanding performances may be publicly acknowledged, for example through an annual prize ceremony. The department also solicits feedback on the performance of Teaching Assistants from module instructors.

All Years: Friday seminars

A Friday seminar series operates throughout the programme and is compulsory for all students registered in the programme. Its main purpose is to provide a forum for academic interaction and discussion in the department as a whole, and, in particular, for interaction between staff and postgraduate students. Every active student will be scheduled for a presentation at some point during each year. In addition, some of the seminars will be given by distinguished visitors while others may be given by staff members. Any suggestions from postgraduate students of topics, speakers, or both, for seminars will be very welcome and should be directed to the Friday

Seminar Coordinator (Professor Raj Chari in MT 2023 and Dr Liam Kneafsey in HT 2024), who will also set more detailed arrangements for presentations, circulation of papers etc.

Each student is expected to present progress on his or her Ph.D. topic once a year at a Friday seminar. Students may also present other work at a second or third seminar. It is a very important feature of the collegiality of the department that, as far as is humanly possible, all members of staff and all postgraduate students attend all departmental seminars. To miss a seminar without very good cause undermines the value of the series and is discourteous to colleagues.

3.3 Module Descriptors & Compulsory Reading Lists

Module descriptors and timetables will be available on the Departmental website shortly before the start of each term:

https://www.tcd.ie/Political_Science/programmes/postgraduate/phd-programme/taught-component/

3.4 Learning Outcomes

The Ph.D. programme in political science at Trinity College Dublin is designed to give students the highest level of training to become professional political scientists, including two years of modules covering research design, methods and a range of substantive areas of political science, and the writing of a thesis of original research. The programme is designed to impart substantive knowledge about politics, but train students in the techniques necessary to recognize, design and implement cutting edge research. We strongly emphasize and support the placement of our students in top-quality positions upon completion. Most of our graduates have pursued careers in research and teaching; but others have gone into careers in government and business. (See the [Former Students page on the departmental website.](#))

3.5 Coursework Requirements

The coursework requirements for each individual module will be detailed in the relevant syllabus.

Documentation

While strictly speaking the Department of Political Science imposes no particular house-style for written work, in practice we strongly recommend adhering to the Style Manual for Political Science booklet published by the American Political Science Association: <https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/>. This is a parenthetical referencing system based on the Chicago and "Harvard" styles used by such journals the European Journal for Political Research, West European Politics, the American Political Science Review, and the American Journal of Political Science, just to name a few. The booklet also clearly states guidelines for presenting quotations, tables, and figures. It does not contain guidelines about spelling and

punctuation, which in your written work may certainly follow the Irish and British conventions. Before submitting your Dissertation, you should also consult the College's rules for printing and binding.

Late Work

All work must be submitted against the specified deadlines set out by the module instructor. Late submissions will be penalised if no authorised extension is agreed with the instructor in advance, for example, with the support of medical certificate.

Plagiarism Declaration

Each coversheet that is attached to submitted work should contain the following completed declaration:

"I have read and I understand the plagiarism provisions in the General Regulations of the University Calendar for the current year, found at <http://www.tcd.ie/calendar>.

I have also completed the Online Tutorial on avoiding plagiarism 'Ready Steady Write', located at <https://libguides.tcd.ie/academic-integrity/ready-steady-write>

The College plagiarism policy can be found in the College Calendar here: <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/>

3.6 Attendance Requirements

All students in the Ph.D. programme are expected to be physically present and available to meet with academic staff at Trinity College in Dublin throughout the undergraduate teaching year, until the end of the summer examinations marking/court of examiners period. In the case of students working as Teaching Assistants – almost everyone in practice – they are expected to be present in Dublin and available to meet with academic staff to prepare for the teaching year ahead from Monday of the week before the first week of undergraduate teaching.

Teaching Assistants should discuss in advance with their module instructors work that may need to be done outside undergraduate teaching weeks, particularly over the Christmas period. Travel and holiday arrangements should be made with these constraints in mind. Of course, we know that students may need to engage in travel for research purposes, for example, and that under some circumstances travel during term time will be appropriate. Students should consult the Ph.D. Director and/or the instructor for the module on which they are teaching as appropriate in advance of making any travel commitments.

See the Calendar for College regulations regarding attendance and 'Off-Books' status: <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/complete-part-III.pdf>

3.7 Absence from Examinations

As specified in the [Calendar Part III](#):

Postgraduate students who consider that illness may prevent them from attending an examination (or any part thereof) should consult their medical advisor and request a medical certificate for an appropriate period. If a certificate is granted, it must be presented to the student's Course Director within three days of the beginning of the period of absence from the examination. Such medical certificates must state that the student is unfit to sit examinations. Medical certificates will not be accepted in explanation for poor performance; where an examination has been completed, subsequent withdrawal is not permitted. Further details of procedures subsequent to the submission of medical certificates are available in programme handbooks or from the Course Director.

Postgraduate students who consider that other grave cause beyond their control may prevent them from attending an examination (or any part thereof) must consult and inform their Course Director. The Course Director will then make representations to the [Dean of Graduate Studies](#) requesting that permission be granted for absence from the examination.

The acceptance of medical disability is entirely at the discretion of the Dean of Graduate Studies, who may ask for a report from the medical officers in charge of the [Student Health Service](#). The report will be strictly confidential to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

3.8 Marking Scale

To monitor students' progress in their training programme, the Department of Political Science uses the following grading scheme for assessment of all work, where there is one overall grade for each class:

- First Class Honours I 70-100%
- Second Class Honours, First Division II.1 60-69%
- Second Class Honours, Second Division II.2 50-59%
- Third Class Honours III 40-49%

The passing mark for all Ph.D. modules is 50%.

3.9 Progression Regulations

See the College Calendar for full details of College regulations regarding Progression <https://www.tcd.ie/calendar/graduate-studies-higher-degrees/complete-part-III.pdf>

Each year a student's continuation on the Ph.D. register and the continuation of financial support from the department (e.g. payment of fees), if provided, are contingent on the demonstration of

satisfactory progress.

Ph.D. Thesis Committee

A Thesis Committee shall be appointed for all PhD students. This committee comprises the Principal and any co-supervisors, and two faculty members. The role of the Thesis Committee is to monitor and advise in relation to the progress of the Ph.D. student throughout the lifespan of his or her structured Ph.D. The progress of graduate students will be reviewed each year, including taking into account the modules taken by students and grades received.

In the first, third and subsequent years of a student's period on the PhD register, save in the year in which [s]he intends to submit his or her thesis, [s]he and his or her Supervisor should complete a progress report. This form may be downloaded from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies website. The students should submit the progress report to the non-supervisor members of his or her Thesis Committee on **26 April 2024**.

Thereafter, a meeting will be arranged between the student and such non-supervisor members to discuss academic progress. Following this meeting and, if appropriate, following discussions between the supervisory and non-supervisory members of the Thesis Committee, the latter will sign the progress report form and indicate whether or not they recommend continuation on the register. If progress is unsatisfactory, Supervisors or non-supervisor members of a Thesis Committee may recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student's registration should be terminated.

Annual Progression

Progression on the PhD register is subject to annual reviews. Annual progress reporting is an essential requirement for all postgraduate students on the research register (full and part-time) in Trinity College Dublin.

Progress reports should be completed jointly by the PhD student and the supervisor/supervisory team. They must be submitted by the end of each academic year locally to the Course Director (helda@tcd.ie) as well as the designated administrator within the Department (polgrad@tcd.ie).

Forms for annual progression can be obtained [here](#).

Progression at the end of the second year is conditional on an official confirmation on the PhD-registry by the Thesis Committee as outlined above and the College Calendar, Part III, Section II.37-41.

3.10 External Examiner

Dr Sylvia Kritzinger

3.11 Student Feedback and Evaluation

Evaluation of courses and their constituent modules is an important component of College's commitment towards improving the quality of teaching and the support of learning. To this end, all postgraduate programmes that are taught by the School of Social Sciences and Philosophy are evaluated on a yearly basis using an online survey. This survey is anonymous, and the results are used in reviewing and improving aspects of each programme and its delivery.

3.12 Supports for Students

The [Postgraduate Advisory Service](#) offers free, independent, and confidential support, guidance and advocacy to registered postgraduate students. They are here to provide support on any matter that may impact upon your time as a postgraduate at Trinity. Some of the most common issues students come to PAS to discuss include: study-related stress or worry; concerns about academic progress; supervisor-relationship concerns; extensions and going off-books; queries regarding regulations and academic appeals; bullying; plagiarism and disciplinary cases, financial assistance.

Postgraduate students who have a disability are encouraged to apply to the [Disability Service](#) for reasonable accommodation.

Supports for Postgraduate Students includes:

- Academic Support
- Assistive Technology
- Occupational Therapy
- Support on Placements and Internships
- Preparation for Viva Voce examinations

An application can be made through my.tcd.ie via the 'My Disability Service' tab. Additional information is available in a step-by-step [How to apply for Reasonable Accommodations guide](#).

Any postgraduate student in Trinity (or prospective student) is welcome to contact the Disability Service to informally discuss their needs prior to making a formal application. Please email askds@tcd.ie or visit the Disability Service Contact page: <https://www.tcd.ie/disability/contact/>.

Where students have been provided by Disability Services with a LENS report, they may draw this to the attention of their instructor or dissertation supervisor when making a request for an accommodation.

Appendix I: Job Placement

As a department our success is ultimately measured by the success of our students, and that includes their job placement in top-quality academic institutions, governmental agencies, and private enterprises. Our goal is therefore to assist you on the job market in every way possible, both through guidance on your research projects and by providing opportunities to gain experience teaching and to contribute as a 'good citizen' in the department in ways which will help you on the job market. This process begins, of course, with the rigorous and comprehensive training you will receive as part of the normal programme, but it also includes a specialized support and training system designed to make you the most effective job candidate possible.

Students who are considering applying for academic jobs should first consult with their supervisor(s) and the Ph.D. Course Director to make sure that they are ready to go on the market. Only students who are deemed to be ready will be supported by the department in their job search. Students are strongly encouraged to hold specially scheduled practice job talks when actually on the job market.

Our Programme includes the following features designed to help your job search:

- A regular series of seminars and opportunities to present your research that will prepare you for job talks when being interviewed.
- A programme that requires students to produce many short papers and encourages and assists them in revising and possibly submitting these for publication.
- A programme that encourages and assists students to participate in additional training courses and professional conferences.
- A well-established and widely-respected faculty that is willing to recommend students who have the potential to pursue an academic career.

Appendix II: Responsibilities within the PhD programme

A potential supervisor will not accept a student for supervision if there is any reason, such as lack of competence in the field of study, lack of facilities for the proposed research, lack of essential funding for fieldwork, the imminent departure of the supervisor from College, or over-commitment, that would lead to inadequate supervision during the projected period of the student's research.

Supervisors have both a reactive and a proactive role. On the one hand, a supervisor must be accessible to the student for academic help and advice during the progress of the research and the final preparation of the thesis. On the other hand, the supervisor has an active duty to be informed about the progress of the research student's work, to give frank and constructive opinions about this work (whether or not these are asked for), to make sure that the student is aware of the quantity and quality of work required, and to negotiate and monitor a timetable for its submission.

To this end, student and supervisor should negotiate a programme of meetings at the beginning of each academic year. For most students on this programme, monthly meetings should be the norm, and these meetings should be held whether or not the student has a particular piece of written work to submit for comments.

Supervisors will do everything they can to provide careful analysis and constructive criticism of all work submitted to them within an agreed period of time, and to make themselves available, when feasible, for discussions with students that might take place outside an agreed programme of meetings.

Responsibilities of the Ph.D. Director as Adviser

An adviser's essential job is to help the student in all dealings with the department and the College and to be aware of College regulations as far as they affect postgraduates: the Ph.D. Director fills this role. The reason for having an adviser who is not the supervisor is, of course, that the relationship between supervisor and student is one of the matters upon which advice might possibly be needed. Another reason is to give every student more people in the department with whom he or she should maintain routine contact. A more extensive discussion of the role of the adviser can be found in the section below on resolving problems.

Responsibilities of the Research Student

The research student must keep in contact with their supervisors and inform them on the progress of the research. They should meet the supervisors for discussions, submit written work and perform other academic exercises (for example, attending and contributing to the Departmental Friday Seminar) according to the timetable negotiated with the supervisors. While the doors of most members of the department are nearly always open to postgraduates, students should remember that members of staff do have other responsibilities, and that these may at

time preclude a member of staff dropping everything to give them immediate unscheduled attention. Students should inform their supervisors as early as possible of anything that might affect their ability to complete an agreed programme of work on schedule, rather than bringing problems to the department at only a late stage. The essential point to remember is that the department is on the side of its postgraduate students in relation to almost any problem that might arise, and will do everything possible to help, given good notice and the information necessary to do so.

Resolving Problems

Although rare, problems may arise between Course Director, supervisor, and student. In these cases it is important for students to know what to do. In the first instance, of course, student and Course Director or supervisor should meet informally to discuss the problem and attempt to resolve it in a balanced manner. Since almost all students and members of staff are reasonable people, by far the most likely outcome is that any misunderstanding can be ironed out smoothly at an early stage. If an informal discussion of problems fails to find a solution, then the student should write a letter to the Course Director or supervisor setting out the problem in more formal terms, and send a copy of this letter to the Course Director. (In exceptional circumstances, a student may be unwilling to commit such problems to paper, in which case a meeting should be sought with the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate). If the Course Director or supervisor is still unable to offer a resolution of the problems set out in the letter from the student, then the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate) will meet both individually and attempt to negotiate a solution. If the student is unwilling to accept the solution offered by the Director of Teaching and Learning (Postgraduate), then there is no alternative but to take the matter up with the Dean of Graduate Studies and implement the procedures set out in Part 2 of the University Calendar. It is, however, very unlikely that any problem, handled in an open and reasonable manner by all concerned, should ever get this far. If problems should arise in the course of work as a Teaching Assistant, the student should in the first instance discuss the issue with their instructor. If necessary the student may then meet with their thesis supervisor or the Course Director.

Appendix III: Research Integrity and Impact in an Open Scholarship Era – mandatory module

CA7000 is an online module which is a mandatory component of the PhD programme, and is worth 5 ECTS. The course aims to provide students with an understanding of ethical considerations, principles of intellectual property, data protection law and other issues involved in academic research. Students will be automatically enrolled in the module on Blackboard upon registration. The module is divided into 5 sessions, with each involving an MCQ assessment. A minimum grade of 80% on each of these assessments is required in order to pass the module. A completion certificate is awarded upon completion of the module; students are encouraged to save this certificate for their own records. The module also includes formative assessment in the form of a Learning Journal. This assessment is not required in order to pass the module but is for the student's own development. Students who complete the formative assessment will receive an additional certificate of achievement. Students are required to complete the module at any stage prior to them undertaking their confirmation/transfer process. Any questions or issues arising in relation to the module should be addressed to the course coordinator Niamh Brennan (nbrennan@tcd.ie) or the course administrator Monica Sanchidrian (sanchidm@tcd.ie).

Appendix IV: TCD–UCD Co-operation in Education of Ph.D. Students in Political Science

Ph.D. students in Political Science at Trinity College Dublin (TCD) can take postgraduate methods modules in the Political Science Department at University College Dublin (UCD). In addition, a TCD Ph.D. student may take one non-methods module at the other department (that is, one non-methods module in total, not one module per year). Students are to be aware that if they are taking a course at the other university attendance at class is compulsory including in weeks when otherwise a reading week is available at their home university.

Requirements for standards of student behaviour, including the requirement to avoid plagiarism, continue to apply. Students must make themselves familiar with, and comply with, rules of conduct established by University College Dublin