



University of Cambridge

## **PhD Handbook 2015-16**

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# INDUCTION PROGRAMME

## Tuesday 6 October

Please find the induction programme for new CLAS students below, which contains a number of events and meetings for you as new PhD students at the Centre.

10.00-11.00 (please arrive promptly)	MPhil students	Introduction to the Centre of Latin American Studies (Library – facilities – CLAS seminars – academic visitors) Introduction to the MPhil in Latin American Studies (Course structure – Core Course – forms of assessment – supervision)	Joanna Page, Director of CLAS	Meeting Room, Centre of Latin American Studies, 2nd Floor, Alison Richard Building, 7 West Road, Cambridge
11.00-11.30	MPhil students	Coffee		Common Room, CLAS
11.30-12.45	MPhil students	Introduction to the Optional Modules for the MPhil	MPhil Director and course tutors	Meeting Room, CLAS
12.45-1.45	MPhil students	Lunch & informal discussion with course tutors		Common Room, CLAS
12.45-1.15	New PhD students	Lunch		Common Room, CLAS
1.15-1.45	New PhD students	Meeting for new PhD students	Joanna Page, Director of CLAS	CLAS Meeting Room
2.00-2.30	New PhD students	Introduction to Training and Development Programmes	Matthew Lane, Researcher Development Facilitator	CLAS Common Room (or another office in CLAS)
1.45-2.30	MPhil students	Research Skills/Transition to Postgraduate Study (Reading for seminars – giving seminar papers – writing essays – approaching the thesis – graduate training provision)	Joanna Page	CLAS Meeting Room
2.30-4.00	MPhil students and new PhD students	Tour of CLAS Library and University Library (Introduction to the Latin American collection – borrowing procedures – using the Newton Catalogue – searching electronic databases). The MPhil 2013-14 cohort photograph will also be taken in this slot.	Julie Coimbra, CLAS Librarian	
4.30-6.00	MPhil students and new PhD students	Cambridge walking tour (meeting point: front entrance to King's College on King's Parade)		
6.00-	MPhil students and new PhD students	Informal pub gathering for all new students, with other CLAS students and staff		The Maypole, Portugal Place

### Note: Social Science Research Methods Centre (SSRMC) Induction, Wednesday 7 October, 4pm

Those students who may need to use quantitative or qualitative research methods in the research and writing of their thesis should also attend the induction session for the SSRMC on Wednesday 7 October at 4pm, in the Lady Mitchell Hall, Sidgwick Site. A full list of the courses offered by the SSRMC is available here:

<http://www.ssrnc.group.cam.ac.uk/ssrnc-modules/core/full-list>.

You must attend the induction session if you plan to book for any SSRMC modules.

## **About the Centre**

The Centre of Latin American Studies was created in 1965 as a meeting place for those from across the university with scholarly interests in Latin America, with a mission to encourage the study of Latin America throughout the University and to facilitate relations with the countries of the region. It provides a focal point for historians, lawyers, sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists, economists, archaeologists, linguists, and students of culture, and a point from which information about a wide range of events of Latin American interest is disseminated. It runs a multi-disciplinary MPhil programme and provides a home for approximately 15-20 doctoral students working on Latin America from a variety of different disciplinary (and interdisciplinary) perspectives. It organizes research seminars, workshops and other events during term, welcomes visiting scholars and speakers, provides a base for the annual visiting Simón Bolívar Professor, considers applications for funding for fieldwork in Latin America, and provides a specialist library.

## **The research community at the Centre of Latin American Studies**

Welcome to the research community of the Centre of Latin American Studies. There are usually around 15-20 PhD students based at CLAS at any one point, and we also admit between 10 and 16 students for the MPhil in Latin American Studies every year. In addition, you will find that there are other Latin Americanist research students registered at other Faculties in the university. One of CLAS's key roles as a multidisciplinary postgraduate institute is to hold regular seminars and other events during term-time to bring together postgraduate students working on Latin America across the university. You are strongly encouraged to attend as many of these as you can, both to broaden your knowledge of Latin America in general and to become fully integrated into the research community at CLAS.

There are about 25 members of academic staff involved in teaching and research on Latin America in the university, across all disciplines. Two of these are core members of CLAS staff and a further two are postdocs based at the Centre; others are based in other Faculties but also play a significant role in teaching postgraduate students at CLAS. One of our strengths as a relatively small Centre is that relationships between academic staff and graduate students are usually very informal. You will often be able to find us in our offices at CLAS during the day, and there are plenty of opportunities to share ideas and chat more generally. There are some occasions, however, at which CLAS staff (and of course your Supervisor) will take a more formal role in guiding you through the PhD and assessing your progress, and one of the purposes of this Handbook is to outline these procedures. It should be read in conjunction with the University's Code of Practice for graduate students, available [via this link](#).

## **Academic staff based at the Centre of Latin American Studies**

The Centre draws on the teaching expertise of lecturers across the university and its colleges. Two members of academic staff are based within CLAS itself: the Director of the Centre, Dr Joanna Page (Senior Lecturer in Latin American Cultural Studies) and Dr Graham Denyer Willis (Lecturer in Latin American Development Studies). In addition, two postdoctoral researchers are based at the Centre: Dr Carlos Fonseca and Dr Charles Pigott.

**Joanna Page**

Email: [jep29@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jep29@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Page is a Senior University Lecturer in Latin American Cultural Studies at CLAS and also a member of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. She specialises in Argentine literature and cinema. She is the author of *Crisis and Capitalism in Contemporary Argentine Cinema* (2009), *Creativity and Science in Contemporary Argentine Literature: Between Romanticism and Formalism* (2014), and *Science Fiction from Argentina: Technologies of the Text in a Material Multiverse* (forthcoming in 2016). She is also the co-editor of *Visual Synergies in Fiction and Documentary Film from Latin America* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). Current research projects focus on Chilean and Argentine cinema, and graphic novels in Latin America. She is the Principal Investigator for the AHRC-funded international research network on 'Science in Text and Culture in Latin America'.

**Graham Denyer Willis**

Email: [gdw27@cam.ac.uk](mailto:gdw27@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Denyer Willis is a University Lecturer in the Centre of Latin American Studies and the Centre of Development Studies. His work brings together debates about public security, state-society relations and urbanization to raise and address new questions and understandings of development, security and governance in cities of the Global South. His first book, *The Killing Consensus: Police, Organized Crime and the Regulation of Life and Death in Urban Brazil*, is based on research carried out alongside homicide and other detectives in São Paulo from 2009-2012 and will be published in early 2015 by the University of California Press.

**Carlos Fonseca**

Email: [cf432@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cf432@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Fonseca is a British Academy Postdoctoral Fellow in Latin American Cultural Studies at CLAS. He specializes in Latin American 19th and 20th Century literature as well as Latin American art history. At Princeton, he completed his dissertation *States of Nature: Catastrophe, History and the Reconstruction of Spanish America*, which he is currently transforming into a book manuscript. He is the author of the novel *Coronel Lágrimas* (2015), published in Spain and Latin America by the publishing house Anagrama. He is currently involved in research projects on archival fictions across literature and the arts. He is an active member of the AHRC-funded international research network "Science in Text and Culture in Latin America".

**Charles Pigott**

Email: [cmp72@cam.ac.uk](mailto:cmp72@cam.ac.uk)

Dr Pigott is a Postdoctoral Researcher at CLAS, holding an Early Career Fellowship awarded jointly by The Leverhulme Trust and The Isaac Newton Trust. He specializes in the indigenous cultures and languages of Latin America, particularly the Maya and Quechua, and incorporates anthropology, linguistics, literature and philosophy in order to attain a holistic understanding of these societies. His current project, *Ecological Visions in Mayan and Quechua Literature: A Comparative Study*, compares Maya and Quechua literary production in terms of how the natural world is perceived, understood and engaged with, and constitutes the first comparative study of a Mesoamerican and Andean culture in their native languages. Located broadly within the emerging paradigm of Environmental Humanities, the wider theoretical aim is to explore the extent to which the categories of 'humanity' and 'nature' can be meaningfully distinguished. The project will result in a

monograph and several articles. Charles was previously awarded a Mexican Government Postdoctoral Scholarship, held at the Autonomous University of the Yucatan, and a Research Associateship at the Department of Zoology, University of Oxford.

## **Other Latin Americanist staff members and CLAS associates**

Please see the [staff section of the website](#) for the full list of Latin Americanists involved in teaching at the Centre – we hope that you will meet and get to know many of these during your time at Cambridge.

## **Administrative staff at CLAS**

**Administrator** (post currently filled by a temporary employee)

Email: [admin@latin-american.cam.ac.uk](mailto:admin@latin-american.cam.ac.uk)

The CLAS Administrator deals with the general administration for the Centre, as well as coordinating the MPhil course, and anything that falls under the remit of the Graduate Education Committee and Degree Committee.

**Julie Coimbra, Librarian; Events and Publicity Officer**

Email: [jac46@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jac46@cam.ac.uk)

As well as handling book requests for the CLAS library, Julie is often involved in organizing CLAS seminars and events.

**Helen Williams, PhD Administrator**

Email: [hw407@cam.ac.uk](mailto:hw407@cam.ac.uk)

Based in the POLIS administrative office on the first floor of the Alison Richard Building (room 142), Helen handles the administrative side of the PhD programme, including PhD registration and assessment.

## **CLAS library**

The Centre's collection of roughly 14,000 volumes is primarily a teaching collection, reflecting the range of courses that have been offered in Latin American Studies over the past forty years. It is housed in the Seeley Historical Library, ground floor of the History Faculty, Sidgwick Site (in the first six bookstacks on the right-hand side of the mezzanine). Please visit the library during your first week to introduce yourself and sign up for library induction. To borrow books from the library, you will need your University Card and to use the library computers, a PWF (personal workstation facility) password. The CLAS Librarian ([jac46@cam.ac.uk](mailto:jac46@cam.ac.uk)) is happy to respond to requests for book purchases.

Opening hours: During Term Monday-Friday 9.00am-7.15pm, Saturday 9.00am-6.00pm, Sunday 1.00-6.00pm; During Vacations Monday-Friday 9.00-5.00pm.

Please consult the [Seeley Historical Library website](#), for further information regarding photocopying and printing, temporary changes to opening hours, etc.

## **CLAS audiovisual collection**

The Centre has a large collection of audiovisual material, mostly on DVD, for students to borrow or to watch in the Centre's meeting room, which may be booked for this purpose if there are no meetings or seminars taking place. Please contact the Librarian (Julie Coimbra) if you wish to borrow material and the Administrator if you wish to book the meeting room.

## **Consortium in Latin American Cultural Studies**

Doctoral students working on any topic within Latin American literary, visual or cultural studies will automatically become members of the Latin American Cultural Studies Consortium when they start their doctoral research at Cambridge, regardless of whether they made their original application via the Department of Spanish and Portuguese or the Centre of Latin American Studies. Under the Consortium arrangement, students will be full members of both the Department and the Centre, and will have access on an equal basis to all the training, development, and funding opportunities offered by each. These include teaching assignments, travel funds, research expenses, working space, library rights, and other events of an academic or social nature hosted by each department.

As a general rule, Consortium students will formally be registered in the department in which their principal supervisor is based. However, in practice they will be members of both the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Centre of Latin American Studies. Accordingly, all students will be able to apply on an equal basis to use PhD workspace in CLAS and in the MML Faculty; will have full access to borrowing rights in the CLAS and MML libraries (and other libraries within their respective Schools); will be offered equal opportunities to gain teaching experience; will have full access to the training programmes run by each department and their respective Faculties and Schools, and will be encouraged to participate in research-related and social activities organized by both the Department and the Centre. Students will also be able to apply on an equal basis to funds available for travel and other expenses administered by the Centre of Latin American Studies (the Simón Bolívar Fund) and by the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. Any bursaries or fieldwork funds granted by the School of Arts and Humanities and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences are excluded from this arrangement: in these cases, students should apply to the School in which they are formally registered. Students' profiles will appear on the PhD student webpages of both CLAS and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese.

In most cases, the formalities regarding registration, annual progress reviews, graduate training and thesis submission are identical for Consortium students across both the Department of Spanish and Portuguese and the Centre for Latin American Studies, but where the requirements do occasionally differ, students should follow the Handbook of the Department or Centre in which they are formally registered. Registration, leave to work away, intermission, the appointment of examiners, the approval of examiners' thesis reports and all other business managed by the Graduate Education Committees or the Degree Committees will be conducted via the routes established for the Department or Centre in which the student is formally registered.

Students will be assigned a Coordinator of Graduate Studies based either in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese or in the Centre of Latin American Studies. The appointed coordinator will have oversight with regard to issues arising from supervision, as well as the appointment of advisors and the conduct of annual progress reviews, and will also deal with requests for intermission or leave to work away from Cambridge, passing such requests on to the relevant Graduate Education Committee or Degree Committee as appropriate.

## **Supervision**

Your relationship with your Supervisor is inevitably among the most important parts of academic life. Generally the supervision system works well and is extremely supportive and beneficial for both parties. Students can often be initially unsure of what to expect from their Supervisor, and the following guidelines may be helpful. They give some indications of good practice, but it is also vital not to over-regulate: the relationship between you and your Supervisor, and the structure of your meetings, must be kept flexible so that they may suit two specific individuals. If problems arise, which occasionally happens, you should not hesitate to seek advice (see the relevant section of this Handbook).

You might reasonably expect to see your Supervisor 2-3 times each term, although meetings may take place more often at the beginning of your research and in the lead-up to submission. If either party needs to postpone a meeting, reasonable notice should be given; do not leave it until the last minute. Give at least 24 hours' notice if possible. Sometimes meetings will be focused around a piece of work submitted by the student; the Supervisor will endeavour to provide detailed feedback, constructive criticism and suggestions for further reading or development of ideas. However, there is no need for written work to be provided for every meeting: general discussion and planning is vital, too, particularly at the early stages of research. The length of a supervision can vary, depending on the stage you are at and on the nature of the written work, if any, to be discussed, but they will usually last between 30 and 90 minutes.

It is particularly important that you and your Supervisor meet up early in the first term of research to discuss expectations of how meetings should work and to agree on a plan for the first few weeks. Some Supervisors like to start by assigning a piece of work (for instance, a literature survey or overview essay) to help focus your interests. If a particular structure of meetings and discussion is not working for you, say so: it is likely that you will be able to establish a different routine that suits you both.

Both the student and the Supervisor have responsibilities. The onus is on the student to contact the Supervisor to arrange a meeting (for example, when a section of work is nearing completion), but the Supervisor should also keep in touch with the student to check on progress. Students should be aware that Supervisors are extremely busy at certain times of the year (for instance, around undergraduate examinations), and you may find that your Supervisor can give you more time outside of the undergraduate teaching term. It is important that you ascertain the extent of your Supervisor's availability outside of term-time, however: he or she is likely to be away for parts of each vacation in order to attend conferences or undertake research outside Cambridge. You will probably also find that your Supervisor takes sabbatical leave at least once during the course of your research. You may be able to keep in touch as normal during these times, but if your Supervisor expects to be absent from Cambridge for a term or more, he or she should arrange for a substitute Supervisor to be appointed during the period of leave.

## **Additional support**

All CLAS PhD students are assigned an Advisor in addition to a Supervisor. The main role of the Advisor is to provide an alternative source of advice. He or she will normally be the person who participates, with another assessor, in the registration interview at the end of the first year. An Advisor will usually be appointed at some point during your first year of doctoral work, and will often be the member of teaching staff whose research interests are closest to your own (after your Supervisor).

Dr Joanna Page is the Graduate Studies Coordinator at CLAS, and you may wish to contact her with general queries about training, end-of-year assessments, any issues arising from supervision or anything else relevant to your progress.

## **Annual assessments**

PhD students undergo a formal assessment process at the end of each year. The assessment takes a slightly different form each year. The first-year assessment determines whether a student may be formally registered for the PhD. Details are given below of this process, as well as the Sixth Term (end of second year) and Ninth Term (end of third year) assessments.

The assessment process is partly designed to meet funding bodies' requirements for the annual monitoring and assessment of doctoral students' individual training needs, but also to solicit feedback from students regarding supervision and institutional support in a more systematic way. You should find the assessment process to be a helpful and constructive one: a source of valuable feedback (including from academic staff other than your Supervisor) and the opportunity to 'take



stock' of your current progress and future plans. While the annual interviews are part of a formal assessment exercise, they are conducted in an open and supportive atmosphere and students are encouraged to discuss any issues they wish relevant to their work. In the case of first- and second-year students, part of the interview will be devoted to discussing the individual training needs of the student.

### ***First Year: PhD Registration***

Your initial registration status is set out in the letter from the Student Registry that gives final, unconditional, confirmation of your admission. You will probably have been admitted in the first instance for a probationary period during which you are not officially registered for any degree. The question of your continuation and registration as a candidate for the PhD will be formally considered towards the end of your first year. Satisfactory progress is a condition for being registered as a doctoral student and for remaining on the register. Failure to demonstrate satisfactory progress may result in a student not being registered or being removed from the register and not being able to continue on the course. Such an outcome would be unusual (although not unprecedented), and we would normally expect problems with progress to be picked up at a much earlier stage in the year and be resolved together with the Supervisor. It is of course essential that you discuss with your Supervisor any circumstances that may interfere with your studies or any concerns you may have about your progress as soon as they occur.

The registration procedure must be initiated by the end of the 11th month following your admission as a Graduate Student (i.e. by 31 August following admission on 1 October). Most graduate students will probably find the end of their third term of research the most appropriate time to apply for registration.

You will be required to submit:

- a) **A completed self-assessment form and log of training.** The form you should submit is available on request from the PhD administrator. You should use it to reflect on your progress, noting any problems or difficulties, and to comment on your supervision and on the training provision and support facilities provided by the Centre and by the School. You are also asked to record all the training that you have undertaken in the course of the year.
- b) **A summary of work completed to date.** In about 1,000 words you should give a brief account of what has been investigated and achieved over the year. You should also identify the research that remains to be undertaken and provide a timetable for how you intend to do this.
- c) **A plan of the thesis.** This should be no more than 1,000 words and outline the aims and objectives, give a list of chapters, a brief account of what each might cover, e.g. what kinds of material you will be consulting, the sorts of questions or issues that you intend to address and the research methods you will be adopting.
- d) **A piece of written work of around 10,000 words.** This should have a central relationship to the proposed thesis. It could be, for example, a draft chapter, or a preparatory study of some aspect of the research topic, or more than one separate essays relating to the research project.

These documents should be sent directly to the teaching staff involved in your end-of-year assessment in good time before the interview, in either hard copy and electronic form, as agreed with them. They should also be sent, at the same time, to the PhD Administrator. Documents should be word-processed and conform to a recognized citation system. You will then be interviewed on the basis of those documents, usually by your Adviser and another assessor.

The interview, which is sometimes referred to as a viva, will last approximately one hour. You will have the opportunity to discuss your plans for future research with your assessors, and they will offer advice. The two assessors will then make a written recommendation concerning registration and this is passed to your Supervisor. Your Supervisor will incorporate the comments into the CGSRS report, which after being submitted, will go to the Head of Department, Degree Committee and College for approval. After this, the Student Registry will either approve you for registration to the PhD, defer registration until you have carried out further work of an appropriate standard, or, in rare cases, recommend you are registered for a lower degree or taken off the register of graduate

students. You will be able to view your completed report via CamSIS once the process has been completed. Assuming successful registration, you will be registered retrospectively as a candidate for the PhD from the beginning of your first term.

If any student has a complaint about the conduct of the first-year registration procedure, he or she should approach the Secretary of the Degree Committee.

### ***Sixth Term Assessment***

This takes the form of an interview conducted by your Supervisor and another Assessor. It should usually take place before the end of the sixth term of PhD study, but in the case of students with leave to work away from Cambridge it may be appropriate to hold the interview at a slightly earlier or later date.

You will be required to submit items a), b) and c) from the list above for the First-Year Assessment. No other written work needs to be submitted. As with registration, documents should be sent to the two members of staff conducting the interview, and also to the PhD Administrator.

### ***Ninth Term Assessment***

This interview should normally take place during or shortly after your ninth term of PhD study.

You will be required to submit items a), b) and c) from the list above for the First-Year Assessment. No other written work needs to be submitted. As with registration, documents should be sent to the two members of staff conducting the interview, and also to the PhD Administrator.

The interview will also be used to discuss potential examiners, procedures for seeking remission of University fees, or seeking an extension on the submission date should this be necessary.

## **The thesis: length and presentation**

The word limit for PhD dissertations submitted by students registered at the Centre of Latin American Studies is set by the Degree Committee, and must adhere to the following regulations:

‘A PhD dissertation must not exceed 80,000 words, and will normally be near that length. The word limit includes appendices but excludes footnotes, references and bibliography. Footnotes should not exceed 20% of the dissertation. Discursive footnotes are generally discouraged, and under no circumstances should footnotes be used to include material that would normally be in the main text, and thus to circumvent the word limits. Statistical tables should be counted as 150 words per table. Only under exceptional circumstances, and after prior application, will the degree committee allow a student to exceed these limits. A candidate must submit, with the dissertation, a statement signed by her or himself attesting to the length of the dissertation. Any dissertation that exceeds the limit will be referred back to candidate for revision before being forwarded to the examiners.’

These official regulations notwithstanding, CLAS students are strongly encouraged to keep their total word count, including footnotes, as close to 80,000 words as possible. From past experience, the most effective and well argued theses are also well trimmed ones, and extensive footnoting is generally not considered good scholarly practice in the UK.

Should you wish to apply to exceed the word limit you must write to the Student Registry at least three months before submitting your thesis with a full supporting statement from your Supervisor.

You are not allowed to include the whole or the major part of your MPhil thesis within your PhD. However, you are entitled to include such parts that are connected with the argument of your PhD. You should state in a preface to your thesis which parts, if any, have been drawn from earlier MPhil work.

Theses should conform with the advice concerning abbreviations, quotations, footnotes, references etc published in one of the major academic style guides (you should agree which one with your Supervisor), and the conventions must be applied consistently. The precise style will vary according to the academic discipline your work belongs to. One commonly used citation system is the ***Style Book of the Modern Humanities Research Association (Notes for Authors and Editors)***. This can be purchased from local bookshops or consulted in most Cambridge libraries, and can also be downloaded [online from this website](#).

You should note that one of the requirements of a PhD thesis is that it is clearly written. Amongst other things, this means that it must be written in grammatically correct, idiomatic English. If you are not a native English speaker (and even if you are!) you should pay particular attention to this and perhaps ask a non-specialist friend or even a professional thesis editor/proof-reader to read through your thesis before submission. Your Supervisor will be concentrating on content and cannot be responsible for correcting all grammatical and stylistic mistakes, although s/he will tell you what kind of errors you are making. Your Supervisor will not allow you to submit until s/he is satisfied that you have done your best to eliminate such errors, since it is unacceptable for your examiners to have to act as proofreaders. They are likely to take a dim view of work that has clearly not been proofread.

## **Preparing to submit**

Please see the advice available from the Student Registry on the [Submitting your thesis webpage](#).

### ***Applying for Examiners***

You should think about applying for examiners in plenty of time before submitting your thesis as the process can take some time, especially if you begin the process during a vacation. You should discuss possible examiners with your Supervisor who will make a formal application for examiners to be appointed via the Degree Committee. The PhD administrator will provide your Supervisor with the Appointment of Examiners application form. In most cases both the Internal and External Examiner will be contacted by your Supervisor to confirm their willingness to examine prior to the application form being submitted to the Degree Committee for approval.

You will need to give your Supervisor a copy of your thesis abstract to attach to the form, giving the exact title of the thesis and the date by which you propose to submit it. Please note that it is imperative that you give a realistic submission date. It causes examiners great inconvenience if you submit your thesis at a later date than anticipated and sometimes completely new examining arrangements have to be made in such circumstances, considerably delaying the whole process.

Once the form is complete, your Supervisor should pass it to the PhD administrator who will send it on to the Degree Committee. The formal appointment of examiners remains the responsibility of the Degree Committee and you should not seek to initiate contact yourself.

### ***Dissemination of the thesis***

The general expectation is that all theses will be shared/disseminated after examination, and that restriction to access will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. Students wishing to consider restriction to access, or with concerns about the sensitivity of their data, should discuss this with their Supervisor as early as possible and **this should not be left until submission of the thesis**. Supervisors with concerns or queries should approach the Degree Committee for guidance.

## **Submission of the thesis**

Two copies of your thesis, three copies of a summary, and other documents (detailed on the [Submitting your thesis webpage](#)) should be submitted to the Student Registry. It will then be dispatched (by the PhD administrator) to the two Examiners that the Degree Committee has appointed.

You may submit either soft-bound or hard-bound copies of your thesis. You should bear in mind that it is a condition for proceeding to the Degree that you submit a hard-bound copy for the University Library. If you submit a soft-bound copy in the first instance, you will not be asked to produce the final hard-bound copy until after receiving a letter of approval for the Degree from the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies. Please be aware that this step may delay the date you can graduate.

Full guidelines for submission are available from the Student Registry via the link above.

## **Extending your end of registration date**

It is expected that you will be able to complete your thesis within three full-time years of starting doctoral research, and this is the basis on which most studentships work. For the purposes of the Student Registry, the official final deadline for submission is four full-time years after having started the PhD. If you are unable to meet this deadline, you must apply via your CamSIS Self-Service account to extend your end of registration date, proposing a realistic new timetable. Your Supervisor will need to add a supporting statement. All applications to extend the end of registration date are considered by the Degree Committee. A special case will need to be made for any extension that takes a student into his or her fifth year of PhD work and extensions beyond the fifth year will not normally be allowed. It is open to the Degree Committee to decline applications. In such cases the student's name may be removed from the Register of Graduate Students. Although this does not preclude the possibility of being reinstated at a later date when the thesis is ready for submission, it does mean that the student will be deprived of his or her student status (which will have visa implications) and he or she will not be entitled to use university facilities, such as the University emailing system and the University Card.

## **The viva and examination procedure**

The final part of the assessment process for the PhD is the viva voce examination, the oral defence of your thesis. Unlike the practice in many countries, this is an entirely private occasion, usually held in the office of the internal examiner, who will have contacted you to arrange the time and place of the viva. Before this takes place, both the examiners (normally one from Cambridge, the internal, and one from outside Cambridge, the external) will have read your thesis and written independent reports on it to be submitted to the Degree Committee. In exceptional circumstances where there is no suitable internal examiner available, the viva may be conducted by two external examiners. In this case, the Degree Committee appoints an internal Chair to ensure that everything is conducted in accordance with Cambridge regulations.

The viva itself provides the examiners and you with the opportunity to discuss your thesis in detail. The Internal Examiner will contact you to arrange a viva. The length may vary: it is seldom shorter than 90 minutes, but may be rather longer than this. The examiners may wish you to clarify any points that may have been unclear in the thesis, or to explore other points which you may not have had space to develop, but principally it is an opportunity for you to explain and defend the methodology, content, and conclusions of your research. It allows you to discuss your ideas with experts other than your Supervisor and Adviser, and to benefit from a fresh perspective on your work. The examiners are also at liberty to ask you more general questions relating to your research. In some cases, the examiners may offer advice on turning the thesis into a book, and will often become referees for job applications or approaches to publishers.

Following the viva, the examiners may indicate an outcome of the examination process, and may release corrections to you. However, you must be aware that the formal process for awarding a PhD is as follows:

1. Examiners agree on a joint recommendation on the outcome of the examination process and pass this to the Degree Committee;
2. The Degree Committee considers that recommendation and passes its decision to the Student Registry (in the majority of cases this is straightforward, and the Degree Committee ratifies the examiners' recommendation);
3. The Board of Graduate Students (part of the Student Registry) considers the Degree Committee's recommendation and makes a final decision;
4. Once the examination process is complete and the outcome is beyond dispute, you will be informed of the decision and copies of the examiners' reports will be sent to you.

As the Degree Committee and the Board of Graduate Studies only meet once a month or so, and do not meet at all during the vacations, you should be prepared for some delay between the viva and receiving the final decision. If a viva is held late in the Easter term or during the summer, you need to be aware that if examiners' recommendations following the viva are not received in time for consideration by the Degree Committee at its July meeting, they will be held over for consideration in October.

Again, unlike many countries, there is a range of possible outcomes to the viva. The thesis may be approved without corrections (a very rare occurrence) or subject to minor, largely typographical corrections of which you will be given a list. Alternatively, the examiners may wish you to carry out more substantial corrections, which might entail rewriting or reorganising small sections of the thesis, but which can normally be carried out in a matter of weeks. If they have more thorough-going reservations, they may suggest more substantial changes, which may take a number of months to complete. It is also open to them to recommend the thesis for a lower degree (the MLitt) or to recommend that it fail altogether, though both these outcomes are rare. However, it should be noted that the views expressed by the examiners, which they will write up in a joint report to the Degree Committee, only have the status of recommendations. It is then up to the Degree Committee to make a recommendation on the basis of these reports to the Board of Graduate Studies, who will inform you officially of the outcome. However, the examiners may give you an idea at the viva what their recommendation is likely to be.

By way of preparation for the viva, it is a good idea to reread your thesis to familiarize yourself with your arguments, and to see your work from a slight distance. You may wish to think of possible objections to your methodology, arguments, and conclusions so that you can address them if necessary in a prepared manner during the viva. You might also wish to think about the bigger picture: what you hoped to achieve, why your work is significant, how you intend to move on. It is also a good idea to see your supervisor before the viva for a final briefing. And do not forget to take a copy of the thesis with you, as the examiners are likely to refer to specific pages of it.

## **Plagiarism**

Good scholarship involves more than knowledge of a particular field. It also means observing proper standards of referencing. Proper referencing makes academic work stronger: it shows the sources of a particular study and it highlights which aspects of it derive from existing work and which are original. Proper referencing also contributes to keeping academic integrity and avoids plagiarism.

Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement. It is both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

Clear guidance on plagiarism is available [here](#), and all students should consult the advice given here at the beginning of their doctoral work.

## Fieldwork and risk assessment

All PhD students undertaking fieldwork as part of their research must fill out a risk assessment form, which may be downloaded from [the Risk Assessment webpage](#). The form should be submitted to the Administrator in good time before the date of intended travel, and certainly no later than one month beforehand, as the details will need to be checked by the Graduate Education Committee. At the same time you should also submit a short account of your proposed methodologies and any practical, political, and ethical issues affecting the conduct of the research, which should have been discussed in detail beforehand with your supervisor. If concerns are raised by the GEC about any aspect of your proposed fieldwork, you and your supervisor will be contacted and asked to provide additional assurances, to put more robust systems in place to ensure your safety, or to adapt your plans.

Students who will be away for longer than three weeks for fieldwork purposes are also required to apply for leave to work away from Cambridge via their online CamSIS self-service account.

Students intending to travel for fieldwork purposes must attend a mandatory training course on Fieldwork Health and Safety provided by the University's Health and Safety Office on three dates during the year (see [Risk Assessment Training and Procedure](#)). They should also attend the 'Doing Fieldwork in Latin America' seminar held at the Centre towards the end of Lent Term, as well as other relevant seminars in research methods training as recommended by their supervisor or the Director of CLAS.

## Ethics approval

The university has strict policies on ethics in research, and you will be required to submit an ethics approval form for your research. Please read very carefully the information available on this site: [Ethical Approval for Research](#), as it gives the deadlines for applying for ethics approval, and clear advice on which form to use, depending on whether your research involves sensitive data, interviewing people, etc. If your thesis topic has no ethical implications whatsoever, you must still fill in the relevant form to explain why it should be exempt from ethics approval. Your supervisor will be able to give you advice if you are not sure how to proceed.

## Postgraduate training provision

The UK's research councils, such as the AHRC, recommend that, as part of a postgraduate degree, students develop not only research skills but also broader professional skills. The aim of this recommendation is two-fold: to equip you to complete high-quality research during your degree and, in an increasingly competitive job market, to give you the wider professional skills that all employers value, which will help you to gain satisfying employment after you have completed a PhD, whether in an academic role or outside of academia. These broader professional skills include expertise in a variety of areas: project and time management; presentation and communication; writing and editing; mental and emotional resilience; and career management. So while these are often called 'transferable skills' because they enhance your professional profile and can be transferred to any area of work, they are also valuable now for your own research.

PhD students at CLAS should undertake 10 days of skills training in the first year of their PhD; in the second and third years, the requirement is 8 days per year (see below for the definition of a 'day'). This training can take a variety of forms, and students should plan their own training to develop skills identified as a priority for their own personal development. Researcher Development



is not simply a matter of attending training sessions: your professional development skills are enhanced by a diverse range of forms of practice, such as learning a new language to assist your research, taking part in an academic conference, setting up your own website or writing for a blog, taking a role on a committee organizing a seminar programme or as part of a national organization for your subject, or organizing your own conference. These, and other different ways of enhancing your professional skills can also be counted towards your yearly total.

You should identify with your supervisor at the beginning of your doctoral study, and at your annual progress reviews, any training needs that you might have. You will need to keep a detailed record of training sessions attended over the year so that you can submit a training log at your annual progress interview – you are advised to request a blank log at the beginning of the year from the PhD administrator and update it as necessary.

What counts as training may include the following:

- Participation in any graduate training session held by the Centre of Latin American Studies, the School of Humanities and Social Sciences or other departments within the School, or sessions provided under the university's [Personal and Professional Development](#) programme
- In the case of students who are members of the Latin American Cultural Studies Consortium, participation in any graduate training session held by the Dept of Spanish and Portuguese, the Faculty of Modern and Medieval Languages or the School of Arts and Humanities
- Participation in modules offered by the [Social Sciences Research Methods Centre](#) - students should discuss with their supervisors which modules would be most relevant for them)
- Participation in workshops run by the AHRC or other funding bodies
- Participation in external events run by the Institute of Modern Languages Research in London or other similar institutions
- Attendance at CLAS open seminars (attendance throughout the year counts as 3 days for training purposes)
- Giving a paper and/or attending conferences or symposia
- Attendance at research seminars in other departments or at other universities
- Participation in training for the acquisition of specific skills, e.g. languages, writing web materials, learning to use bibliographic software

The required number of days should be made up in the following way:

1-2 hours = 1/4 day

2+ hours to 4 hours = 1/2 day

4+ hours = full day

The websites below should be of use in locating some of the training available to you:

[Skills for Postgraduate Students](#)

[Transferable Skills](#)

[Graduate Training at MML](#)

[Personal and Professional Development](#)

Your training programme will look quite different from someone else's, but the suggested pathway below may give you some useful ideas:

### **Year 1: Getting Started**

- IT/electronic resources for research and information management
- Specific research skills you may need
- Language training if required
- Generic research skills, such as project management
- Core generic skills, such as presentation skills
- Research seminars
- Training in small group teaching

Key courses provided by the Researcher Development Programme are: 'Starting your PhD'; 'I Don't Have Enough Time: Managing Your Priorities'; 'Writing your First Year Report'; 'Supervising and Small Group Teaching'

### **Year 2: Consolidating**

- Further IT courses as required
- Further specific skills identified in Year 1
- Teaching/Lecturing
- Writing papers and presenting research
- Research Seminars

Key courses: 'Presentation skills'; 'Cambridge GRADSchool'

### **Year 3: Finishing up and Moving On**

- Publication
- Careers Advice
- Developing post-doctoral research projects
- Presenting at national and international conferences
- Research seminars
- Organizing a conference

Key courses: 'Cambridge GRADSchool'; 'Completing your PhD'

## **Specific training for CLAS students**

The list below gives examples of the kind of training available most years which is organized by CLAS with the specific needs of Latin Americanist researchers in mind.

- A 'Doing Fieldwork in Latin America' seminar is held towards the end of Lent Term, run by senior PhD students and/or postdocs, and you should attend this in your first year.
- The **Language Centre** offers a wide range of workshops, supervisions and online modules for those who need to work on their written English for essays and the thesis. See [Available Courses](#). Your college may be able to help with any course costs involved, but in any case these are often very reasonable.
- A **workshop on 'Achieving Clarity in Writing'** will be organized for CLAS students in conjunction with the Language Centre, and you will be circulated with more information about this at the beginning of the year.
- The **Social Sciences Research Methods Centre** (<http://www.ssrnc.group.cam.ac.uk>) puts on a full programme of modules designed to equip students with vital methodological



skills needed for work in the social sciences, including qualitative interviews, statistical analysis, discourse analysis and ethnographic practice. If you think any of these may be relevant to you, you should attend the compulsory induction session at 4.00pm on Wednesday 7 October (see [SSRMC Induction](#)).

- **Spanish teaching** is available via the **Language Centre**, which offers a range of modules to suit different levels of competence. Those who already have A'level or degree-level Spanish may be particularly interested in the 'Advanced Plus through Film and Literature' module. More information [here](#). Spanish modules are FREE for CLAS students. You should register online by following the relevant links; you will then receive the standard email confirmation which includes a request to pay – ignore this as the cost of the course will be met by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences as part of their graduate training programme.
- **Brazilian Portuguese teaching** is arranged directly by the Centre of Latin American Studies, at beginner and intermediate levels, and is again free for all CLAS students, with the cost being covered by the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. More information is available [here](#).
- **Supervision workshops** (three over the course of the year) are run for students wishing to start teaching undergraduate supervisions, with specific reference to relevant papers organized by the Dept of Spanish and Portuguese, namely SP1, SP5, SP12 and SP13.
- CLAS also organizes a **Lecturing Workshop**, a seminar on **How to Publish in Latin American Studies**, and a session on **Applying for Academic Posts in Hispanic and Latin American Studies**, either once a year or once every two years.

## Research seminars and conferences

All PhD students should attend research seminars that fall both directly in their research field and in related areas. This is an essential part of graduate training and also a valuable way of getting a broader sense of your research field and of meeting other graduates, postdocs, visiting scholars and lecturers with related research interests. The main CLAS research seminar programme may be found online [here](#), and details of other events will be advertised during the year. CLAS PhD students may also wish to attend research seminars held in other departments and faculties, such as the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Social Anthropology, History, etc. It is also useful to subscribe to [talks.cam.ac.uk](http://talks.cam.ac.uk). Many interdisciplinary seminars, such as the Screen Media Research Seminar, are held at CRASSH (see [Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Science and Humanities website](#)).

PhD students are also strongly encouraged to attend relevant national and international conferences, and particularly the annual conference organized by Postgraduates in Latin American Studies (PILAS), which offers a good context in which to give your first conference paper, something you should plan to do in your second year. Seminars and conferences can be an excellent way of testing your own ideas and of finding out what others are doing in your field. They can also be really enjoyable from a social point of view and provide an opportunity to build up your own professional network.

## Individual research expenses

Cambridge library facilities and internet access mean that a lot of research can be carried out without leaving Cambridge. However, most students will need to undertake fieldwork or visits to archives in Latin America or elsewhere. PhD students at CLAS may apply to the following sources of funding for contributions towards travel to conferences or for fieldwork purposes (more details and deadlines available from the [Funding for Current Students webpage](#)):

University Fieldwork Fund (see the [Fieldwork Funding webpages](#))  
Santander Mobility Grants  
Simón Bolívar Fund  
Smuts Memorial Fund

In addition, the Society for Latin American Studies has funds to help with the costs of travel for fieldwork or to attend conferences (see the [SLAS funding webpage](#)).

Your college may also provide funding support for research expenses, and you should apply for any funds available before, or at the same time as, submitting an application for the above schemes. Those of you funded by research councils or similar bodies may also be able to apply for grants to cover fieldwork expenses.

## **Funds for the organization of conferences and other events**

In the past, CLAS PhD students have organized a range of very successful conferences, workshops, screenings and other academic/cultural events with the support of the Centre, and you are encouraged to consider organizing (or co-organizing) some kind of event during your time here. You may apply for assistance from the Simón Bolívar Fund to help cover speakers' travel and accommodation costs, or other expenses associated with the event. You may also apply for funds from the Society of Latin American Studies (see above) and the Centre for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (CRASSH) at Cambridge. Be aware that the application deadlines for some of these funds are 12-18 months in advance of the planned event.

## **Seeking advice if problems arise**

If any problem arises with supervision, or with anything else affecting your work, you should contact one or more of the following as soon as possible:

- your PhD Supervisor
- your PhD Advisor
- the Director of Graduate Studies at the Centre of Latin American Studies
- the Director of the Centre of Latin American Studies
- your College Graduate Tutor

Generally speaking, your College Tutor should be your first port of call about financial matters, accommodation, and of course College matters. Personal issues can be discussed, if you wish, with either your Tutor, or your Supervisor, or indeed both. If in doubt, ask, as sometimes the two roles overlap. Requests to intermit your PhD studies or to defer submission must be supported by your Supervisor, your College Tutor and the Director of the Centre.

## **Intermission**

If on account of illness or other sufficient cause you need to intermit your course for one or more terms, you should discuss this with your Supervisor who will liaise with the Director and the Degree Committee.

## **Leave to work away from Cambridge**

Many students find that at some stage of their PhD they need to spend some time working in libraries or conducting fieldwork outside Cambridge. If the period that you intend to be absent from Cambridge is longer than 21 days you will need to apply formally to the Student Registry for leave to work away, after obtaining the agreement of your Supervisor. You will also probably need to inform your funding body. If you are likely to incur extra costs through working away your funding body may consider giving you extra financial help.

More details on applying for leave to work away from Cambridge are available on the [Work away from Cambridge webpage](#), and the application form is available via your CamSIS self-service page.

## **CamSIS and Extended Self Service (ESS)**

CamSIS is Cambridge's system for handling student information, records and transactions, from initial contact and application all the way through to graduation. It is a single shared system, with one record per student.

All transactions, processing and updates to the student's record are either carried out directly in CamSIS by University and College staff, the students themselves, or are downloaded into CamSIS by external organisations. This makes maintenance of the record simple and straightforward and ensures the accuracy and integrity of the information.

You will already be familiar with your self-service page, which is password-protected. The link below will take you to the Student log-in page. There is also a link to Extended Self Service (ESS), which is for students who have completed their studies. The log-in gives access to a number of 'how to' videos to help you navigate the system.

## **Student representation**

There is provision for one or two student representatives to sit on the Management Committee of the Centre. This position is usually filled by one or more of the Centre's PhD students, on behalf of the Centre's postgraduate community as a whole. Volunteers will be sought by email; if the seats are contested, an election may need to be organized.

## **Safety**

### ***First Aid***

The Alison Richard Building first aider is Mr Jamie Brittain, contactable on (01223) (7)61000.

### ***Fire Evacuation Procedure***

The fire alarm will be tested weekly. In the event of a fire practice or a genuine fire, the fire alarm will ring continuously. You must leave the building immediately, without stopping to collect any of your belongings and go straight to the fire assembly point under the raised Faculty Building. On arrival, report to one of the Fire Wardens. Do not re-enter the building until permission has been given.

### ***Sexual and Racial Harassment Policy***

The Centre, the University and the Colleges operate a very strict sexual and racial harassment policy. If you experience any difficulties of this kind, contact your College Tutor and the Director of the Centre without delay.

## **Useful resources and links**

### **[Student Registry webpages](#)**

Information about where to find the Student Registry, contact details, student information on examinations, fees and funding and university policies.

### **[Code of Practice](#)**

The Code of Practice sets out the University's guidelines for PhD students.

### **[International Student Team](#)**

IST provide specialist information and support to students who come from outside the UK to study at Cambridge and to Cambridge students who study overseas as part of their course.

### **[Language Centre](#)**

### **[University Computing Service](#)** (Now known as University Information Services)

Also see: <http://www.ucs.cam.ac.uk/topics>

### **[University Library](#)**

### **[University Centre](#)**

### **[Graduate Union](#)**

### **[University Map](#)**

Centre of Latin American Studies

**PhD Self-Assessment Form and Training Log**

**(FOR REFERENCE ONLY – please request an electronic copy from the PhD Administrator)**

*This form should be completed by all postgraduate students registered for a PhD and by all those not yet registered for any degree. It should be submitted along with all other materials required for the end-of-year assessment interview. Please type your responses in the boxes provided and use extra space if required.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

College \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Research Project \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Section 1: Self-assessment of progress**

Please comment on your progress over the past year, outlining what has gone well and noting any problems or difficulties.

**Section 2: Comments on Training and Institutional Support**

(If you prefer you may send your comments under this section directly to the Secretary of the Degree Committee.)

***(i) How would you describe the training provision you received?***

Very satisfactory  Satisfactory  Fairly satisfactory  Less than satisfactory   
(double-click to tick the appropriate box)

Please add any other additional comments about the training provision:

***(ii) How would you describe the supervision you received?***

Very good  Good  Fair  Problematic

Please make any other additional comments on the nature and extent of supervision received:

***(iii) Please make any other additional comments on the facilities and the support provided by your Department/the School.***

**Section 3: Training Log**

PhD students at CLAS must take part in a minimum number of days of training per year. Please consult the Handbook to confirm how many days are required in each year, and agree a programme of training with your Supervisor. If you have not completed the required hours of training, you must write to the Secretary of the Degree Committee to explain why not. S/he will assess each letter and respond directly to you.

Please record training that you have undertaken in the course of the year on the chart overleaf and ask the relevant session leader to sign in order to confirm your attendance.

Please make any comments on the training received:

If you are a first- or second-year student, please identify any further training needs that will need to be met over the coming year and how you think these might best be met.

