

## **MPhil in African Studies: Training in languages other than Swahili**

Item 1(d) of the MPhil in African Studies examination regulations states that the scheme of examination consists of:

“A certificate of proficiency awarded by the University of Cambridge Language Centre in Swahili or another language that has been approved by the Degree Committee, or a certificate of attendance awarded by the University of Cambridge Language Centre for training in an African language that has been approved by the Degree Committee.”

The University of Cambridge Language Centre can only award a certificate of proficiency for courses taught as part of CULP (Cambridge University Language Programmes). Normally, MPhil in African Studies students will be registered for CULP Swahili, but they may apply to study another CULP language if they wish. Such applications must be received by 30 September in order to allow time for consideration by the Graduate Education Committee. Students are not guaranteed places on CULP courses other than CULP Swahili.

If a student admitted to the MPhil in African Studies wishes to study an African language that is not taught by CULP, he or she must first apply to the MPhil Academic Secretary for permission to be exempted from CULP Swahili and second, the student must request authorisation to study an African language (usually related to his/her dissertation research) by self-training. If approved by the Academic Secretary, the request will be forwarded to the Graduate Education Committee for consideration.

Students are required to complete a minimum of 30 hours of language training to be awarded a Certificate of Attendance. They will normally be supported in this by the John Trim Centre for Independent Learning in the Language Centre, which houses resources in over 150 languages. Where possible, the Centre of African Studies (CAS) will liaise with the Language Centre to arrange language-training workshops with a specialist teacher. Alternatively, the CAS Graduate Education Committee may award a language-training bursary (subject to approval from the Director of the Centre of African Studies), to subsidise a student's enrolment on a short course at the SOAS Language Centre. Students will normally be expected to submit a portfolio of their language studies no later than the end of Lent term. Subject to this portfolio being assessed as satisfactory, the student will be awarded a Certificate of Attendance.

Notes:

1. Students wishing to apply for exemption from CULP Swahili must do so by 30 September. This application must be emailed to the MPhil Office together with a supporting statement from the student's supervisor. The MPhil Academic Secretary will then consult the CAS Graduate Education Committee about the application.
2. Upon receiving a request to register for a Certificate of Attendance, the MPhil Academic Secretary will arrange a meeting with the student and their dissertation supervisor in the first week of Michaelmas term, to discuss whether the student's language training plans are feasible. Approval of the request is dependent on the outcome of this meeting.
3. Requirements for the language-training portfolio will be agreed at the meeting above, in consultation with the University of Cambridge Language Centre.