



Module Syllabus

HPSC0041 Dissertation

module description

HPSC0041 is a full-year, one-unit course for third-year students. Students undertake a research project largely of their own design in the field of science and technology studies. Project management is their responsibility. An appropriate supervisor is agreed with the course coordinator, and research is discussed during regular tutorials. Students submit a 10,000-word dissertation summarising their findings. They also deliver a presentations presenting their work-in-progress.

Moodle: <https://moodle.ucl.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=41992>

Module tutor

tutor	Your supervisor is your principal point-of-contact.
module organiser	Charlotte Sleigh
email	c.sleigh@ucl.ac.uk
office location	22 Gordon Square, room 3.2
office hours	Monday 1-2 (office) term 1; term 2 by appointment

Timetable and room information

Students are expected to schedule, at the minimum, fortnightly sessions with their supervisor. The regularity of those meetings may change in the course of the year.

Throughout the year we will run several workshops to support the dissertation work: on ethics, on research planning and organisation, on topics selected by the students, on work in progress. These will be advertised and listed on the Moodle site.

Assessment

Students registered for this module have the following assessment:

Type	Description	weight (%)
Written	Dissertation (10,000 words)	80
Oral	Oral examination (viva) (15-20 minutes)	20

Schedule

activity	due date	instruction
Research plan	18 November 2024, 5pm	Formative assessment
Dissertation (10,000 words)	28 April 2025, 5pm	Submit through Moodle as one file
Oral examination (20 minutes)	Week of 2 June 2025	Dates and times to be agreed

Aims and objectives

This course provides an opportunity to pursue an independent project under the guidance of a supervisor. The main aims of HPSC0041 are:

1. pursue an independent project in science and technology studies, developing some of the student's own academic interests
2. review and appraise existing literature
3. develop research, analysis, writing and editing and organisation skills through an extended exploration of a single topic
4. integrate different themes and approaches in science and technology studies
5. work independently and critically, with tutorial support
6. enhance the understanding of the demands, and the inevitable compromises, of academic work, including project definition and management

During the course, students will demonstrate their progress by the following activities:

1. meeting with their supervisor regularly to discuss progress
2. recording notes on their work: reading, original empirical work, draft chapters, questionnaire responses, or other material
3. submitting a 10,000 word dissertation — including abstract, contents page and full bibliography — by the specified deadline
4. performing in an oral examination where they will answer probing questions about their research choices and insights.

Reading list

There are no specific required readings. See Moodle for suggestions for how-to guides

Course plan

See Moodle for key dates.

One key milestone in the dissertation is the date when the first complete draft is finished. It is recommended that students aim to achieve this **several weeks before the final deadline for submission**, to allow time for editing and honing the argument. Your supervisor can be asked to read **one** draft of the dissertation **within term time**.

To prepare for the viva students are encouraged to re-read their thesis and to review their research notes and data.

Matters of policy

See Moodle