Public Awareness on Sickle Cell Anaemia
Active Role on Wider Stage

The Oman National Bioethics Committee, which was established in 2005, has been very active since its inception in conducting various activities pertaining to different topics in bioethics. The Committee has organized several forums on bioethical issues such as abortion, DNA screening, test tube babies, stem cell research, sex reassignment surgery, and Omani national document on human and animal research guidelines, etc. In collaboration with UNESCO, SQU, and TRC, the National Bioethics Committee organized the first international bioethics conference in March 2015. The conference turned out to be a great platform for exchange of information and knowledge on bioethics, and for networking. Recently, the National Bioethics Committee of Oman, in association with SQU, UNESCO and WHO, hosted the first Eastern Mediterranean/Arab States Regional Summit of National Ethics/Bioethics Committees. Oman was selected for holding the first regional summit Eastern Mediterranean/Arab States region, considering the active National Bioethics Committee in place, which hosted the first international conference on bioethics in association with UNESCO. Moreover, Oman is one of the countries on the Intergovernmental Bioethics Committee of UNESCO.

A survey conducted by WHO/EMRO in 2015 to map the current situation of bioethics in Member States and identify areas of progress and improvement of bioethics for each country. It highlighted some key challenges that face countries of the region regarding bioethics. These include low level of bioethics education, illiteracy among patients, lack of resources in the field of bioethics, lack of coordination among different bodies that deal with misconduct or claims, and lack of consistency of the regulation and practices between different institutions. The UNESCO legal survey (2009) dealt with issues related to medical and genetic research such as human reproductive and therapeutic cloning, embryonic stem cell research, genetic testing, human genome and gene analysis, research involving human subjects, organ transplant, assisted reproductive technologies, pharmaceutical research, medical practice and abortion in the Arab States. The survey had illustrated vacuum in legal provision across the regional on advanced technologies, treatments and research. With its active National Bioethics Committee, the Sultanate can do a lot in overcoming challenges facing bioethics in the region through current actions and setting and implementing plans of action for the days to come.
Art Weeks Held

The First Art Week was held at Sultan Qaboos University under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Essam bin Ali Al-Hilali, Deputy Chairperson of the Public Authority for Craft Industries at the Grand Hall of the Cultural Center. The exhibition included 14 artistic works of 52 members of the Fine Arts Group. The event concluded with a Music Day held under the patronage of H.E. Hamoud bin Khalfan Al Harthy, Undersecretary at the Ministry of Education for Education and Curriculum.

SQU among Top 50 "Generation Y" Universities


According to THE, “Generation Y” institutions excel when it comes to internationalization, with the highest average proportion of international students when compared with the “Generation X” and “Millenial” groups, as well the cohort of institutions founded in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. Sultan Qaboos University was established in 1986, when there were only 500 students. There are now more than 18000 students. Between 2010 and 2015, SQU recruited students from 38 countries, while academics hailed from 69 nations. The institution also collaborates with universities across the world; it has agreements with universities in Asia, Europe, Australasia, North America and South America.

Forum on Theses Supervision Held

The Deanship of Postgraduate studies at Sultan Qaboos University organized the first Forum on the Supervision of Postgraduate Theses on 9 April under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Ali bin Saud Al Bimani, the Vice Chancellor of the University. Postgraduate students and supervisors from all nine colleges at SQU attended the event.

Speaking on the occasion, Prof. Abdullah Khamis Ambusaidi, Dean of Postgraduate Studies at SQU, said that research is a key component in achieving excellence and competition within and between universities and research centers around the world. “Postgraduate students have an important role on the institution’s research output, so promoting their research skills is one way in which an institution can enhance its research reputation. SQU is keen to achieving distinction and international recognition in research. One way of realizing this recognizing excellence and research skills among postgraduate students”, he said.

“Supervision is an interactive process between the students and the supervisor. Good relationship between both of them leads to high quality research, which will positively affect the university reputation of researching. The main aims for the forum is to provide support for the supervisors of the postgraduate students and ease the communication between them and their supervisors. It is the best way to help supervisors and students share experience. Moreover it will introduce the most effective ideas in supervision to shed light on the difficulties and the possible good chances that are connected to the concept of supervision for the post-graduate students”, Prof. Ambusaidi said.

Forum Focuses on Cybersecurity and Privacy

The Department of Information Systems at the College of Economics & Political Science, Sultan Qaboos University organized the First Information Systems Forum on the topic “Cybersecurity, Privacy and Trust” under the patronage of H.E. Hussein bin Ali Al Hilali, the Attorney General. Researchers, developers in Information Systems security, and industry professionals from across Oman attended the event to exchange their knowledge and experiences on how to address security and privacy challenges for information systems, especially in business and governmental organizations. Along with technological issues, the forum discussed social issues related to cybersecurity and privacy. The forum addressed aspects related to cyber security and privacy that are of concerns to organizations and individuals, thus creating new opportunities for academics and practitioners in private and governmental sectors to exchange their knowledge and allow for discussion on the problems and solutions in the emerging area. Delivering the welcome address, Hon. Dr. Saeed Mubarak Al-Muharami, Dean of the College of Economics & Political Science, said that with Internet-based services becoming more and more involved in everyday sensitive and critical applications and business processes, IS security, privacy and trust and forensic investigations are becoming an important concern especially with tremendous increase in cybernetic crimes.

The first keynote was delivered by Eng. Badar Ali al Salehi, Director General of Oman National CERT at the Information Technology Authority. He gave a general overview of cybercrimes across the world and in Oman in particular and the legal, social and technical issues, which cybercrime presents. Dr. RamaSubrahmaniam, Director and CEO of Valiant Technologies, Abu Dhabi, gave the second keynote on “cyber security governance”. The event included two panel discussions on “cybersecurity for emerging technologies”, and “cyber laws, trust and security awareness”. The forum ended with closing remarks by Dr. Kaml Ali Al Busaidi, Head of the Information Systems Department at SQU.
Public Awareness on Sickle Cell Anaemia

Despite the free availability in local health centres, few Omaniis reported having undergone premarital screening services previously. According to a study, health promotion and education programmes are needed in Oman in order to increase public awareness of Sickle Cell Anaemia and the value of premarital scanning. The study was led by Dr. Mohammed Al-Azri, from the Department of Family Medicine & Community Health at the College of Medicine & Health Sciences at SQU. Dr. Robin Davidson from SQU, Dr. Rajaa Al-Belushi and Dr. Muna Al-Mamari from the Ministry of Health, Oman, and Dr. Anil C. Mathew from PSG Institute of Medical Sciences, Tamilnadu, India participated in the research. The findings have been published in SQU Medical Journal (November 2016, Volume 16).

Sickle cell disease (SCD) is a global health concern associated with high childhood morbidity and mortality; in Oman, the prevalence of SCD is 0.2%. Public awareness of SCD and the need for premarital screening (PMS) are essential to reduce the incidence of this disease. This study aimed to assess awareness of and beliefs regarding SCD and PMS among Omani in a primary healthcare setting. This cross-sectional study took place in five health centres located in Al-Seeb Province, Muscat, between June and August 2015. A total of 500 Omani adults aged less than 18 years old attending the clinics were invited to participate in the study. A total of 450 Omani adults completed the questionnaire. The majority (67.8%) of respondents were aware that SCD is genetically inherited and 85.1% believed in the value of PMS. However, only 24.4% reported having undergone PMS previously. Few participants were aware that SCD can be very painful (20.2%) and can cause strokes, infections and organ damage (20.0%). More than half (56.7%) reported that the availability of educational material on SCD or PMS in Oman was inadequate.

The world health organization recognises SCD as a global public health problem. Approximately 5% of the global population and over 7% of pregnant women worldwide are carriers of haemoglobin disorders such as SCD. Moreover, the burden of SCD and other haemoglobin disorders is expected to increase in developing countries; in such countries, SCD is associated with high childhood mortality; many children with SCD die before five years of age, mainly due to infectious complications and severe anaemia. In Oman, the local population is comprised of a wide range of ethnic groups; however, the prevalence of consanguineous marriages is 58%. Three infants per 1,000 live births in Oman have major haemoglobin disorders and there are approximately 106 new cases annually. Sickle haemoglobin (HbS) is the most common structural mutation of normal adult haemoglobin (HbA), which is inherited as a Mendelian trait. Thus, knowledge of the genetic inheritance of SCD is essential for couples where one or both individuals are carriers in order to make informed decisions about marriage and family planning.

In Muscat, a premarital screening (PMS) programme was introduced in 1999; from 2001 onwards, the programme was gradually extended to cover other regions. Currently, the PMS programme includes free optional screening, counselling, health education and advice for carriers of common haemoglobin disorders (e.g. thalassaemia, SCD and SCT). This study indicates that although the majority of Omani adults believed in the value of PMS screening, very few reported having taken part in PMS previously. The Ministry of Health (MOH) in Oman offers free optional PMS for haemoglobin disorders; low attendance at these services might therefore reflect a lack of health promotion of the availability or need for PMS or insufficient motivation on the part of the individual to take advantage of the services. Alarmingly, very few participants in the current study believed that SCD could affect their families personally, that they were at risk of having a child with SCD or that their partner could be a carrier of the SCD gene. To this end, Dr. Al Azri and team recommend that the MOH in Oman implements and promotes media and education campaigns in order to increase young people’s awareness of the importance of PMS for SCD. These campaigns could involve the distribution of leaflets and posters in hospitals, local health centres and schools.

Despite the recent decline in consanguineous marriages in Oman, the practice is still relatively common; in 2000, the rate of first-cousin and second cousin marriages was 35.9% and 20.4%, respectively. Individuals still adhere to cultural norms despite an awareness of the associated risks of congenital and genetic disorders. It is essential that Omani couples who are SCD carriers are made fully aware of the medical, psychological and financial consequences of deciding to proceed with the marriage. However, it is important that the counselling of these couples takes place with cultural sensitivity and support from religious leaders within the community.

Despite the availability of free PMS services in all local health centres in Oman, few participants in the current study reported having undergone screening themselves. This is alarming considering the high incidence of SCD in Oman. It is essential that every effort is made to increase awareness of the consequences of intermarriages between SCD carriers, including the possible medical, psychological and financial problems often experienced by parents with SCD-affected children. Health promotion and education programmes are therefore needed in order to increase public awareness of SCD and the value of PMS among the Omani public. Government-mediated media and education campaigns will benefit not only SCD patients but the Omani community as a whole.
The Western originators of the multi-disciplinary social sciences and their successors, including most major Western social intellectuals, excluded religion as an explanation for the world and its affairs. They held that religion had no role to play in modern society or in rational elucidations for the way world politics or/and relations work. Expectedly, they also focused most of their studies on the West, where religion’s effect was least apparent and argued that its influence in the non-West was a primitive residue that would vanish with its modernization, the Muslim world in particular. Paradoxically, modernity has caused a resurgence or a revival of religion, including Islam. As an alternative approach to this Westo-centric and hegemonic stance and while focusing on Islam, my talk argues that religion is not a thing of the past and that Islam has its visions of international relations between Muslim and non-Muslim states or abodes: peace, war, truce or treaty, and preaching (da’wah).

Islam establishes the foundation of relations (alqaat) between peoples or nations on the ground whether they are believers or non-believers. Labeeb Ahmed Bsoul (2007: 74), quoting Ibn Al-Qayyim, in his Zaad Al-Ma’ad, states that, ‘relations between the Prophet and the unbelievers remained ill-defined until a portion of surat “al-Tawba”, (Quran 9: 1-4) was revealed, dividing the unbelievers into three groups: muharibun (those in a state of war with Muslims), ahil al-a’hd (people in a treaty relationship with Islam), and ahil adhima (non-Muslims who are protected with a treaty of surrender). On that basis Muslim jurists and scholars divided the world into domains or abodes, one known as (dar al-Islam/Peace) and the other called (dar al-harb/enmity). In theory, (dar al-Islam/Peace) was at permanent war with (dar al-harb/enmity).

Furthermore, the above-mentioned classical division of the world into (dar al-Islam/al-salam) and (dar al-harb/al-adawah) is not laid down explicitly in the Qur’an. Instead, it is understood to be a legal and political structure for international relations between Muslims and non-Muslims. One could also claim that the juristic and scholastic traditional notion of a dualistic division of the world on pure religious grounds into dar al-Islam and dar al-harb is not an integral part of the contemporary Muslim approach to international relations (IRs) and is rejected by the majority of contemporary Muslim scholars. This divisional paradigm has been ‘effectively abrogated’ (naskha) because Muslim nations-states have adopted Western principles of territorial sovereignty and territorial laws and adapted to the legal structures and fundamental rules of the hegemonic and predominantly secular West. Another reason for such abrogation (naskha) is the fact that the origin of Muslim relations with non-Muslims is not founded on hostile but rather on peace (salam) or peaceful relations. According to Muhammad Tal’at Ghunaymi, a contemporary Muslim scholar, “the relationship between Muslim and other nations is based on how the other nations perceive Islam. If these nations have the intention of arriving at a peaceful agreement with Muslims such as truce or muwaddah, this would determine the type of mutual relations. Upon the establishment of such relations with given nations, Muslims are prohibited from taking any type of offensive action against them” (Ghunaymi, 1988: 104).

As an alternative to the bipartite paradigm, Muslim scholars resort to the earlier crafted juridical or legal labels to represent the kinds of relations with non-Muslim states and their subjects, such as hudna or muwaddah (truce), sulh (armistice or treaty), aman (safety), mitbaq (covenant or pact), dhimmi (non-Muslim subjects of the Islamic state) and ‘ahd (covenant or pledge). All these relations are forms of ‘aqd (contract) that are considered binding, provided that they do not stipulate anything that contradicts the fundamental sources of Islamic law. These contracts or treaties can be either written or oral, depending on the nature of the treaty.

In addition to contractual relations with non-Muslims, Muslims have known and used preaching or call (da’wah) throughout the history of Islam, hence the existence of a fourth abode of preaching (Dar Al-da’wah) which acknowledges that Islam is a missionary religion that urges Muslim believers to absolutely avoid ‘compulsion’ or coercion in calling non-Muslims to embrace it. That the most convenient method to convert non-Muslims to Islam would be to peacefully persuade them of Islam’s universal mission of mercy (rahmah) and guidance (hidayah).

The talk emphasized universal peaceful co-existence, tolerance, co-operation, and security as the original pillars of ‘Islamic International Relations Theory’ and that ideas of perpetual war between Islamic and non-Islamic polities as espoused by various militant Muslim groups are alien to and rejected by Islam. It also attempts to present a ‘way ahead forward’ to investigate and challenge the contemporary universalized and hegemonic Westo-centric paradigms and practices of IRs. That it is timely for the Non-Western World, including Islam and Muslims, to, rationally, utilize its rich and diverse epistemological potentialities to conceptualize an ‘International Relations Theory (IRT)’ that derives from its global cultural and civilizational heritage, including religions and pursuits for good life.

This article is a summary of the talk entitled “Is There an International Relations Theory (IRT) In Islam? Towards a De-Westernized IRT” recently delivered by Dr. Gubara Said Hassan, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Political Science at the College of Economics and Political Science (CEPS), SQU. The author may be contacted by email gubara@squ.edu.om
Workshop Addresses Biorisk Management

The Risk Management Office and the Department of Soils Water and Agricultural Engineering at the College of Agriculture and Marine Sciences, SQU organized a workshop on “Biorisk Management” at the College. The workshop targeted professionals who work with biological materials like plants, animals and humans. The main objective of this event was to create awareness on biorisk management, introducing the key principles of risk assessment, risk mitigation, and performance management. The ultimate goal is to reduce hazards and threats and to develop a safe and secure practices among life scientists at Sultan Qaboos University.

Working in laboratory environments require special skills and training on best practices and procedures to minimize risks. Therefore, raising awareness and building competencies among lab workers seems to play a key role in controlling the accidents frequencies and their consequences. Furthermore, life scientists working with biological materials and toxic agents should pay further attention to the safety and security within their work environment. Therefore, Biorisk management evolves a set of practices and procedures to ensure biosafety and biosecurity and the biocontainment of infectious agents and toxins used in laboratories. The workshop adopted the framework of the WHO Biorisk Management Trainer Program and was facilitated by Dr. Jwan Ibbini a Soil Microbiologist at the Department of Soils Water and Agricultural Engineering, and Dr. Ali Al Abri the WHO/ MOH Focal point for Biosafety & Biosecurity and Head of Quality & Risk Management at the Directorate General of Disease Control & Surveillance at the Ministry of Health. The facilitators followed the Team-based learning approach through group sessions, practical exercises and questions and answers. The workshop highlighted that biosafety and biosecurity are essential components of improvements to laboratory services, and also stressed the importance of disease prevention as a means to ensure effective improvement of public health. The participants represented multidisciplinary backgrounds; they actively engaged in workshop activities and contributed to successful outcomes. Knowledge gained and capacity building were evaluated through the pre/post assessment questionnaire.
The 2017 TESOL Arabia Conference moved to a new venue, shifting from the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Deira Corniche to the Ritz Carlton near Sheik Zayed Road, in what is now called Downtown Dubai. For those traveling by public transport, this is an area well served by both the Dubai Metro and the city’s excellent public buses. Those arriving by car, however, are met by a maze of super-highways, service and dual carriageways. Even the road outside the hotel makes it difficult to do a U-turn, so some tempers were frayed even before arrival.

Once inside, however, tranquility was restored. Speakers presented in spaces that ranged from the positively huge (Samaya Ballrooms 1, 2 & 3) through the cozy (Sehabs and Salons) to the intimate (the Junior Suites). The exhibition space was also easier to navigate than that at the Hyatt Regency, but the number of exhibitors appeared to be fewer. This year, moreover, Garnet Publications were conspicuous by their absence. Similarly, the Job Fair gave the initial appearance of being organized in a haphazard manner. For this it has already been criticized by one contributor to Dave’s ESL Café, but even that critic admitted that the job interviews themselves were conducted in a highly professional manner.

So what of the Conference itself? There were no really major “names” among the plenary speakers in 2017. Even so, quality remained high. One of the best sessions that I attended was offered by Daniel Xerri, who teaches at the University of Malta. In a paper entitled “It’s a Many Splendored Thing; Reconceptualising Teacher Creativity”, Xerri examined conventional conceptions of creativity – the Eureka moment; the lone genius – before pointing out that creativity is always circumscribed by the confines of a domain, or that it transforms an existing domain into a new one.

Illustrating his presentation with a striking set of monochrome power-point slides, Xerri demonstrated the truth of his argument, stating that the barriers to creativity often lie in our own mindsets, and that we have to give ourselves both the time and space in which to be creative. He suggested that in the 21st Century, all students will need to develop the capacity to be both enterprising and creative. Such a paradigm shift will also demand an effort from teachers, who will be challenged to find both new alternatives and the connections between their current practice and the demands of their changing educational environments.

Dr Ali al Issa, from the SQU College of Education, also provided two excellent papers. In “From Reflection to Scholarship; A Trajectory of Professional Development in ELT”, he reminded us that critical reflective practice relied as much on understanding what went before as on envisioning what is to come, and that if current practice were to be improved, then a critical analysis was necessary. He outlined the steps of On-action, In-action and For-action reflective practice, explained the terms, and then offered eight steps that would lead to a systematic study of teaching and learning. He cautioned, however, that such study was essentially meaningless unless there were a public sharing and review of such work through presentations and publications.

This theme was developed in his second paper “Deconstructing ESP; Towards a Critical Perspective”. Suggesting that ESP might signify both English for Specific Purposes and Engaging in Sustainable Professionalism, Dr. Ali indicated that both interpretations of the acronym entail acceptance of the social, political, economic and cultural dimensions of language education. Critical ESP faces a number of disparate challenges, and must examine exactly every aspect of “ESP literacy” in order to advance it and humanize it. He concluded by saying that ESP could also mean Empowering the Suppressed and Powerless, and that means both them – the students and us – the teachers.

Less successful, of course, were those papers that paid little, or no, attention to the cultural constraints of Arab Gulf societies. Marjory Rosenberg adopted a humanistic stance to teaching, suggesting that students should be encouraged to display their particular talents. Her examples, however, were not best chosen. The ability to stand on one’s head, or walk on one’s hands, may be valued among schoolchildren in Austria, but it is hardly practical in schools where boys wear dishdashas or thobes. Similarly, Mahal Abdallah’s “The Use of Music in ELT” endorsed a technique that I personally favour, and one which is generally uncontroversial. Even so, a decade ago, the Technical Studies Institute of the Royal Saudi Air Force prohibited any music other than the Saudi Arabian National Anthem. Even the opening bars of music played on commercially produced listening materials had to be excised before use in class. This policy may have changed, but music remains problematic.

Finally, some space must be allocated to a paper given by Sarah Hopkyns. “The Native-Speaker Fallacy; International Perspectives” revisited old territory, but provided yet more depressing evidence that while the concept of a native speaker is hard to define, all too often it is determined by appearance and place of birth. Hopkyns suggested that both terms, “native-speaker” and “non-native speaker”, should be rejected on the grounds that they are discriminatory, and that the strengths that non-native speakers bring to the classroom should be celebrated. Speaking as one who believes that monolingual speakers of English will be disadvantaged in the 21st century, I entirely endorse Hopkyns’ arguments, but this is a question that can only be resolved by stakeholders who operate at levels well above those of classroom teachers.

To conclude, as my students say, TESOL Arabia 2017 did not disappoint, and it remains the premier venue for EFL/ESP/EAP teachers in the Arab Gulf.
Teaching and Learning at Cambridge University

Prof. Michael Proctor

Michael Proctor is a Professor of Astrophysical Fluid Dynamics at the University of Cambridge, UK and the Provost of King’s College, Cambridge. His research is mainly concerned with magnetic fields in the Sun, planets and stars. During his recent visit to the Department of Mathematics and Statistics (DOMAS) at SQU, Prof. Proctor, met many academics and researchers at the University to explore academic and research partnership with his organization. At SQU, Prof. Proctor gave a talk on “teaching and learning at Cambridge”. In this interview, Prof. Proctor talks about the structure of the University of Cambridge, and teaching and research.

Horizon: Could you shed light on the organizational structure of the University of Cambridge?

Prof. Proctor: The University of Cambridge is one of the world’s oldest universities and leading academic centres established in 1209. It is the second oldest university in the English speaking world. The University is a confederation, consisting of Schools, Faculties and Departments and semi-independent but constituent Colleges. The Colleges are governed by their own statutes and regulations, but are integral to the make-up of the University of Cambridge. Students live and socialise in one of the University’s 31 separate colleges. Colleges are part of the University, but have their own status and endowments. Undergraduates in Cambridge receive College supervisions – or small group teaching sessions – which is regarded as one of the best teaching models in the world. Each College has its own internal procedures. They select their own students, subject to University regulations, and most admit both undergraduate and postgraduate students. I should say that some of the colleges are rich, some others are poor. The largest college has 1100 students and the smallest has about 200. All colleges admit women and three admit only women as the University aims for equal numbers of men and women students.

Horizon: What are the functions of the colleges?

Prof. Proctor: Each college selects students based on their academic merit and performance in the interview. The colleges provide accommodation, food, leisure and sporting facilities to the students. The active student unions represent students’ views to the college administrations. In addition to regular lectures, the colleges provide small group teaching to students. The undergraduate students can make use of the college libraries for their studies. All colleges provide pastoral care to students, college nurses service, and mental health advisors and personal tutors. Financial support is provided to students who face hardships. As you know, admission to Cambridge is highly competitive. A large number of students graduated from all types of schools apply for every place. Applications for admissions are directed to the colleges of first choice who take into account academic success and quality of schools. All suitable candidates are interviewed. Offers are made on the basis success at public exams, interview and results of pre-testing. Some candidates are pooled so other colleges can look at their files and accept them if they meet the requirements.

The undergraduate students (18 years and above) follow three or four year taught courses in various disciplines. The undergraduate programs include lectures, lab works and college supervision. The Masters’ programs (for students who completed 21 years and above) are one year courses involving taught courses and some independent research. The research degree programs are open to students above 21 years. A typical research program is a three or four year program of independent research leading to awarding PhD degree.

Horizon: Could you explain the academic activity model?

Prof. Proctor: In Cambridge, the University is responsible for the organisation of lectures, labs, seminars and examinations. The Colleges provide direction of studies and supervisions to students. Students need to pass the yearly exams to proceed. The final exams are classed First, Second or Third. Each academic year consists of three semesters: Michaelmas (1 Oct to 1 Dec), Lent (15 Jan to 5 Mar) and Easter (21 Apr to 8 Jun) totalling 22 weeks. Students are given 12 hours lectures per week in addition to 2 to 3 supervisions per week. Supervisions are small group classes involving one academic and two or three students. Typically supervisions are given every second week in each subject studied. In supervision sessions, students work through problem sets in science subjects. In humanities students discuss essays set by the supervisor. The Easter term is mainly for revision classes and exams.

Research degrees are typically 3 year PhD programs with a year allowed for writing up. Typically these are 1-3 programs, i.e., a supervisor will have maximum three doctoral students. All students have research supervisor and research advisor. The students have to present their report after four terms (15 months) to allow further progress in their courses. The final thesis exam is held by internal and external examiners. Passing the final exam is not a formality. Students have to defend their work and their knowledge of the subject and will typically either pass with small corrections or be asked to do some rewriting or further work.