Thank you for agreeing to act as an Examiner or Assessor for the University of Cambridge. The following notes are a guide to the Regulations for the MPhil and MRes Degrees and should be read in conjunction with the Ordinances (Chapters 6 & 7), which are available at [http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/](http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/)

1. Arrangements and timetable for examination

The MPhil and MRes Degrees are awarded for further study and training in research after a course of three or six terms full-time or 6 or twelve terms part-time.

The conduct of examinations for the MPhil and MRes Degrees is the responsibility of the Degree Committee concerned (except for those administrative arrangements for written papers which are the responsibility of the Board of Examinations.) The Degree Committee is also responsible for the appointment of Examiners and Assessors.

The dates of written papers will be set by the Board of Examinations in consultation with the Chair of Examiners appointed by the Degree Committee, and the submission dates for essays, exercises, theses and other pieces of written work that may be required for examination will be set by the Board of Graduate Studies on the recommendation of the Degree Committee.

The timetable for the examination of scripts and other pieces of required written work, and of theses, and for holding oral examinations, should be arranged by the Examiners at their mutual convenience in consultation, where appropriate, with the Degree Committee. The schedule of meetings of the Degree Committee should be borne in mind so far as is possible when setting this timetable.

In the interests of all parties concerned, Examiners are asked to complete the examination, including any oral examination, as expeditiously as possible, and to hold any oral examinations before the candidates concerned leave Cambridge. Please see also Section 5 (Oral examinations).

Please address enquiries about the examination to the Secretary of the Degree Committee in the first instance.

2. Form and standard of the examination

The form of the examination varies between subjects, as set out in the Special Regulations for the subject published in *Ordinances*, and is governed also by the General Regulations for the Degree. If you have not been sent a copy of the Special Regulations for your subject, please contact the Degree Committee Office.

If you need clarification of the mark scheme, please consult the Chair of Examiners or the Secretary of the Degree Committee.

3. Candidates required to pass in each part separately

Where the examination consists of *more than one part*, for example written papers (including essays and exercises) as well as a thesis, candidates are required to pass in *each part separately*, except in the following special circumstances:

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(a) a candidate whose failure in the written papers (including essays and exercises) is marginal should be allowed to submit a thesis, and a high performance in the thesis may be taken into account by the Degree Committee.
(b) where a candidate’s failure in the thesis is marginal, a high performance in the written papers (including essays and exercises) may be taken into consideration by the Degree Committee.

In the circumstances described under (a) and (b) the Board of Graduate Studies expects an oral examination to be held.

Candidates in this type of examination whose failure in written papers or essays is more than marginal will not normally be permitted to proceed further with the examination.

Please note that if the rubric for the course you are Examiner for differs from the above, the rubric will over-ride this rule.

4. Examination of theses
The notes in this section relate solely to the examination of MPhil and MRes theses.

(a) Independent reports required

Please note that Examiners’ reports on the thesis are to be regarded as ‘open’ and will be provided to the candidate when the result of the examination is confirmed.

If an oral examination is to be held, each of the two Examiners should, before the oral, make an independent report on the thesis. These reports should provide the Degree Committee with full technical information about the content of the dissertation, so that the Committee can, with the guidance of the reports, make their own assessment of the dissertation.

Each independent report should conclude with a short summary containing a definite recommendation. If you find it necessary to suspend judgement until after the oral examination, or if the candidate’s performance in an oral examination is such as to cause you to alter the recommendation you have already made, you should submit a supplementary report containing the reasons for the final recommendation reached.

Each report should be signed and dated. Please do not make notes in the thesis.

(b) Standard of the thesis
In recommending a pass mark, Examiners should satisfy themselves that the thesis is clearly written, that it takes account of previously published work on the subject and that it represents a contribution to learning.

(c) Correction of errors – MPhil/MRes courses examined by thesis and oral only
If the thesis is satisfactory for the award of a masters degree subject only to correction, you may require a candidate to make minor amendments and corrections to the thesis as a condition of approval for the degree. You should indicate that the result is a conditional pass and provide a list of the corrections required.

Please note, however, that there is no provision for allowing a candidate to submit a revised thesis: that is, if you cannot make a recommendation that the thesis is of a standard to pass the degree unless it is revised and re-examined afresh, then the result is a fail (see 7 below). If you are in doubt about the distinction between pass subject to correction and revision (failure), please consult the Degree Committee Secretary.

(d) Disagreement between the two Examiners
If the two Examiners do not agree in their recommendation, or if for any other reason the Degree Committee need a further opinion or opinions, the Degree Committee may appoint additional Examiner(s), provided that not more than one additional Examiner may be appointed without leave of the Board. Each additional Examiner so appointed should be external to the Faculty and may be the External Examiner for the course, and each

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must make an independent report on the thesis to the Degree Committee, that is, he or she should not have seen the marks or the reports of earlier examiners.

5. Oral examinations
The regulations for oral examinations are specified in the Special Regulations for each subject.

In some MPhil and MRes examinations the oral examination is mandatory. Where it is not, the Special Regulations indicate the nature of the discretion which the Examiners may exercise. If you and your fellow Examiner(s) wish to exercise that discretion, please make clear the grounds for doing so in your reports. In making this decision, please bear in mind the Board’s policy:
The Board normally requires an oral examination to be held at least in those cases where:

- the candidate's performance in the thesis or other components of the examination is judged to be a marginal fail; in such circumstances, the marks would not normally be reduced by the performance in the oral, but the pre-oral marks may be confirmed or raised. If you change your mark as a result of the oral, please provide a statement of your reasons in addition to the joint report on the oral;

- the Examiners do not recommend the candidate's approval for the degree. Exceptionally the oral examination may be waived where the Examiners view the candidate's failure as irredeemable, provided that the candidate has been offered the possibility of attending an oral examination within a reasonable time-table and has been made aware of the seriousness of his or her situation;

- a high level of performance in the thesis component is required if approval for the Degree is to be recommended. (See Section 3 above);
- there is a marked discrepancy between Examiners' independent reports.

When the oral examination relates to the thesis both Examiners of the thesis shall be among the Examiners present at the oral examination. Other Examiners may be present if the regulations for the oral examination provide for questions on examined written work, as well as on the thesis. For courses with taught elements, the External Examiner for the cohort, may also be present. If a candidate is unable to attend an oral in person, he or she may be offered the option of a video conference.

Those conducting the oral examination must sign and date a joint certificate of the result, including any marks assigned to it.

6. Moderation by the External Examiner (courses with taught elements only)

The External Examiner for the cohort may moderate work across the cohort in any manner appropriate to the course, as agreed with the Senior Examiner. When moderating marks, the External will have access to the marks and reports of other examiners. The only exception would be if he or she is asked to act as the third independent examiners, for example, in cases of disagreement between the Examiners, see 4d.

7. Marks and Examiners’ reports sent to Degree Committee
The signed mark sheet for any written papers (including essays and exercises) together with the Examiners’ independent reports on dissertations and joint certificates of the result of any oral examinations should be submitted to the Degree Committee concerned as soon as possible. Please note that reports on the dissertation will be disclosed to the candidate when the result is confirmed.

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8. Plagiarism
If an examiner suspects that work submitted for examination contains unattributed work from other sources, he or she should report the matter to the Senior Examiner. The University’s procedures for dealing with suspected plagiarism are to be found at: http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/.
Examiners are asked specifically not to mark down work in a punitive way on suspicion of wrongdoing, but are asked to provide an assessment of the academic merit of the work of the candidate; this will provide a basis for the final result and for any disciplinary actions by the University.

9. No resit allowed
If the Degree Committee resolve that a candidate’s work is of insufficient merit to entitle the candidate to the degree, the student concerned will not be eligible to take the examination again, except under exceptional circumstances as provided for in 10 below.

10. Allowances for illness or other grave cause
If a candidate has been hindered by illness or other grave cause in preparing for or taking any part of the examination for the degree, his or her Tutor may apply to the Board of Graduate Studies. The Board has the power, providing satisfactory evidence of hindrance has been given, to:

either (a) approve the candidate for the degree without further examination, provided that the Degree Committee concerned judge the candidate to have acquitted himself or herself with credit in a substantial part of the examination
or (b) allow the candidate to be examined or re-examined under such conditions and at such time as may be determined by the Board after consultation with the Degree Committee.

Please note that the Examiners should not themselves make any allowances for illness or other cause when assessing a candidate’s work

Special arrangements can be made in particular cases for candidates to take written papers at times and places other than those previously advertised; applications to do so are submitted by the candidate’s College to the Secretary of the Board who will consult with the Board of Examinations and other interested parties if need be.

11. Confirmation of the result
All marks are provisional until confirmed by the Degree Committee. In some circumstances, provisional marks may be given to candidates by the Course Director on the understanding that they are not final, but please do not do this yourself.
The final result is confirmed by the Degree Committee after they have considered the results, so please avoid, indicating to a candidate the probable outcome of the examination and please do not give the candidate a copy of your report.

12. Review Procedures in connection with the Examination
The University’s regulations provide formally for the consideration of representations that may be made by or on behalf of a candidate about the conduct of the examination. The regulations limit the justifiable grounds for complaint to the following:
(a) there existed material circumstances relating directly to the examination (i.e. excluding circumstances relating to the candidate’s course of research or course of study) of which the Examiners were not aware;
(b) procedural irregularities occurred in the conduct of the examination, which were of such a nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the Examiners would have reached the same conclusion had the irregularities not occurred;
(c) there is demonstrable evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment in the examination process.

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The Review Process

- When representations are made, they will first be considered by the Board of Graduate Studies, who will consult the Degree Committee concerned who may in turn choose to consult the Examiners.
- If the Board accepts the complaint, it may, agree upon the remedial action to be taken.
- If the Board rejects the complaint as unjustified, the candidate has one opportunity to make further representations (or have them submitted on his/her behalf) to the Review Committee itself.
- All representations must be made within three months of the decision of the Degree Committee to which they relate.
- All representations are to be addressed to the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies.
- Any statements which the Review Committee receive in connection with the complaint are made available to the Board of Graduate Studies, the Degree Committee and Examiners concerned, and to any other person or body whom the Review Committee may specify. Each will be allowed an opportunity to submit a written statement to the Review Committee in response to the complaint.
- A comprehensive range of specified remedies is available to the Review Committee if the Committee finds a complaint to be justified.

The Review Committee's decision is final and will be given in writing, with reasons, to the complainant and the other parties concerned.

13. Return of dissertations
The Degree Committee will inform you whether the copies of the thesis should be returned to them after the examination, or returned to the student, or of any other arrangement.

14. Examiners' fees and expenses
Each Examiner and Assessor who is not an officer of the University of Cambridge (other than an Associate Lecturer who receives no stipend from the University) will receive a fee as follows:
- (a) £110 if he or she examines a written paper or papers, or other written work prescribed by the special regulations for a particular subject, irrespective of the number of candidates examined. This fee applies also in the case of examinations conducted by thesis and oral only; and
- (b) £10 for each complete paper examined; and
- (c) £70 for each dissertation examined as part of a course with taught elements.
These fees are reviewed regularly in the light of the range of fees offered by other UK Universities. All fees include Value Added Tax and no further payment by reason of that tax can be made.
For courses with taught elements, an Examiner from outside Cambridge is designated as the **External Examiner for the cohort**, and asked to undertake general moderating duties for which an additional fee of £600 is paid. NB: This does not include those examiners designated as 'external' for an MPhil degree examined by thesis only. External Examiners of MPhil and MRes courses for which the examination is not solely by thesis and oral examination will be asked to submit to the Board of Graduate Studies, as well as the traditional written report, a Report Cover-sheet. A copy of the written report should in addition be sent to the Chair of Examiners. Full details of these duties, together with a formal invitation of appointment will be provided by the Chair of Examiners or the Secretary of the Degree Committee.

Details of any **expenses**, including those for travelling, incurred by External Examiners should be sent to the Chair of Examiners. Subsistence allowance may be claimed by External Examiners, at rates determined from time to time by the Financial Board of the University, for any period of absence from their normal place of residence in connection with their duties. Please send details to the Secretary of the Degree Committee concerned with a request that these be forwarded to the Board, who will arrange for these to be paid as quickly as possible.