This guidance relates to examinations taking place in Colleges. Queries regarding In College examinations should be sent to exam.arrangements@admin.cam.ac.uk

A Guide to In College Exams

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1. Basic Principles

This guidance has been prepared to assist you with running in College examinations and is designed to both support and to share ideas for good practice. It is aimed at Preliminary examinations, Tripos examinations and MPhil's and should be read in conjunction with the other guidance available on the webpages. The sections found within this guidance outline formal University procedures but it is acknowledged that Colleges have an additional layer of support and organisation that will not be discussed in this guide.

The guide will be updated annually and any information that Colleges would like to see included or any good practice tips that you think would be useful to share with your colleagues should be sent to exam.arrangements@admin.cam.ac.uk.

2. Making an Application

Sitting examinations in College is for exceptional and complex cases only and the request to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC) is made at the discretion of the College, following discussion with the student. There are other circumstances, such as sudden illness, that may also require a student to sit their examination(s) in College and these are dealt with via the late fal ller process.

Students with examination arrangements will normally sit their examinations in a central University venue (writing or typing dependent on the recommendation) that accommodates reasonable adjustments, or where agreed in College. Where it has been agreed that the student will sit in College, the College then assumes responsibility for the practical implications and the examination environment.

During the Easter term the central University typing venue that accommodates reasonable adjustments is normally the Titan Teaching Rooms. The Titan Teaching Rooms can only accommodate students whose total amount of time taken to complete an examination (including extra time, rest breaks and reading time where applicable) does not exceed 4 hours. This is due to the amount of time it takes to print and pack completed scripts, before promptly starting the next examination.

During the Easter term the central University writing venue that accommodates reasonable adjustments is normally the Examination Halls in the Student Services Centre. The Examination Halls can only accommodate students whose total amount of time taken to complete an examination (including extra time, rest breaks and reading time where
If a student has approval for extra time and/or rest breaks which would see an exceeding of the times stated above for sitting in the Titan Teaching Rooms or Examination Halls, or if they need to be in a single room (for instance if an amanuensis/reader is required), then students would be required to sit their examinations in College.

Applications for students to take examinations in College should be made as early as possible in the academic year and no later than the communicated deadline preceding the examination (where the examination occurs in the Easter term). For examinations occurring at other times of the year, applications should be made no later than two weeks before the examination is scheduled. Requests for students to sit their examination(s) in College are made by Colleges via the CamSIS functionality and are reviewed by a member of the Exam Arrangements Team on behalf of the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC). The requests are made at the discretion of the College following discussion with the student and should reference any medical evidence and/or recommendations from Student Support Document’s (SSD’s) issued by the Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre (ADRC).

If an application meets the necessary requirements, and it is approved by the Exam Arrangements Team, a notification email is sent (via CamSIS) thus enabling Colleges to alert students in a timely manner and thereby give students the opportunity to start practicing for their examinations. If an application to sit in College has been approved, the College assumes responsibility for all the practical considerations, examination environment and any necessary processes/procedures. For instance official examination start times apply and an examination in College is subject to the same University examination regulations as other central examination venues, including a possible inspection by a Proctor.

3. Preparing for the Examination

Where an application to sit an examination in College has been approved, it is then the Colleges responsibility to ensure that the the practicalities of preparing for examinations are taken into consideration. The responsibilities include:

- Finding and appointing suitable Invigilators – including undertaking any necessary Right to Work checks and issuing of paperwork.
- Ensuring that any further or additional requirements that the candidate sitting may have are provided – for instance use of a computer, voice activated software etc.

- The collection and return of examination scripts – the details surrounding this will be communicated to Colleges directly nearer the time of any given examination series.

- Identifying suitable rooms for examinations – making sure to consider where possible potential noise disturbance (for example from students in surrounding rooms), location and proximity of bathroom facilities, ventilation within the room and overall suitability for sitting an exam for a long period of time. For instance, is there natural light with operational blinds/curtains in case of glare, is the room large enough to house student(s) and the additional staff if required for running the exam etc.

- Ensuring that students are informed once the room for examination has been identified so that they know in good time which room they have been allocated. If they are sitting examinations in different rooms throughout the examination period you should ensure that students are familiar with all of them and that they know which room they are in for each exam.

- Ensuring that there is a contact person nearby in the event of a query or a working telephone in the room (the telephone should be silenced).

- Where possible considering any alarms that may be scheduled to ring (for instance fire alarm testing) and seeing if these can be altered so that students are not disturbed.

4. Mock Examinations: Applying the Standards

During the Lent term it is not uncommon for Colleges to run mock examinations to provide practice scenarios for students.

Where this is the case students who have applied or been approved for reasonable adjustments to their examinations should also be provided with the same opportunities to practice in real time. Applications for reasonable adjustments are approved as swiftly as possible upon receipt and as such Colleges are encouraged to contact their students early in the Michaelmas term so that all mock examinations can take place within the same time periods for all students. It is advised that Colleges apply as early as possible for reasonable
adjustments and until an application is approved the mock examinations should adhere to the maximum standard.

5. Students requiring computer provision

As online assessments have now become a norm within the University, more students will be required to utilise a laptop or computer in order to sit their examinations where that is the format of assessment. However, where students are permitted to type an examination (due to disability) but the format of assessment is ‘in person, written’ then some students may require a computer or laptop (and possibly printer) to be provided by College. If providing a device Colleges should ensure that:

- The Invigilator monitors the device usage at all times and the Invigilator should therefore be placed behind the student to ensure they are not accessing unauthorised content.

- Students may only access the UK spellcheck. Students sitting language papers are not permitted to utilise the spelling and grammar checks for that language as these are core competencies of their examination. In addition, students are not permitted to use the spelling or grammar check functions after the examination has finished.

- Students should be familiar with the relevant system – for instance Moodle, Inspera or Microsoft Word (if being used).

With the exception of clinical examinations, where students are typing their examination and the system being used is Microsoft Word we also advise that:

- Answers are held in case of queries or subsequent appeals, either on a USB, on the student’s device or online software.

- Answer papers should not be made available to students.

Further guidelines on the retention of examination scripts has been provided by the Education Quality and Policy Office (EQPO) and can be found here: Retention of examination data.

6. Invigilators

If examinations are taking place in College it is the responsibility of the College to find and appoint suitable Invigilators and ensure fulfilment of all the legal requirements as necessary.
for appointments.

Invigilators appointed for in College examinations are welcome at the University led Invigilator briefings which normally take place during the Lent term. Once the dates of these briefings are known this information is circulated to Colleges. There are no official qualification requirements for Invigilators apart from possessing some common sense and being willing to learn where required. Guidance notes for Invigilators are normally circulated to Colleges before the start of the examination season and these documents should be made available in examination rooms.

All Invigilators are required to wear gowns in examination rooms so that they can be easily identified. Except where identified (small groups, 1:1 etc) Invigilators are required to remain vigilant throughout the examination session and should attend all requests – they should not be reading, undertaking marking, browsing the internet etc. If an Invigilator is invigilating a small group or it is 1:1 invigilation then they are permitted to read or undertake marking etc as it may be off-putting for the student(s) if they are simply being watched when there could be few numbers of them in the room. **Nonetheless, Invigilators should still remain attentive and alert to any requests or needs.**

Invigilators need to know how to contact someone in case of an emergency or in case they need to leave the room for a reason. Colleges must ensure that Invigilators can make this contact without leaving the room unattended. Invigilators are required to complete a **blue session report form** for every examination that they oversee. Once completed the form needs to be returned to either the Student Services Centre or to the Exams Office. The blue session report forms are retained for six months in case of queries or complaints.

An Invigilator should be aware of the end time of the examination for **each student** in the room as these may vary. All students should be informed when they have 30 minutes and then 5 minutes left. Where possible an Invigilator should try not to disturb the other candidates with these notices. Some Colleges prefer to make announcements more frequently (for instance hourly) – **this decision is for the individual College to make but regardless of announcement frequency the Invigilator must alert students to their 30 minute and 5 minute notices.**

Payment rates are reviewed annually in December and the University rate of payment for Invigilators will be circulated once confirmed.

Additionally, the University appoints Invigilators and they may be used for one or all of the
following situations:

- Small groups of students and for standard written examinations
- Larger groups of students when more than one Invigilator is required or for complex examinations such as the Medical Tripos.
- To manage ‘wet’ practicals in the MVST and NST.

7. On the Day

On the day of the examination, students should arrive at the room where they will be sitting their examination promptly and the examination should begin at the same time as in the main sites. If the student has permission to sit the examination at another time then the College should hold the student incommunicado.

Whilst a student may be sitting an examination in College, the same rules apply as if it were a centrally managed venue. Unless otherwise agreed via a Food, Seating and Medication (FSM) application, students are only permitted to take a small bottle of non-carbonated drink to the exam for drinking during the examination. Food or other items of drink are not permitted unless the student has an approved FSM application. Cigarettes, e-cigarettes and vaping is also prohibited from all examination venues. It should be noted that members of staff, including Supervisors, Invigilators, Examiners and Proctors have the authority to confiscate and withhold unauthorised items until an examination session has ended. If a student requires a specific item then Colleges should ensure an FSM application is submitted and thereby avoid confiscation.

A student who arrives late, but within the first 30 minutes of the examination, should be admitted and allowed to sit the examination in the remaining time. No extra time due to lateness is permitted – this should be made clear to the student.

A student who arrives late, and after the first 30 minutes of the examination, should not be admitted to sit the examination. If the student objects and you feel you need support enforcing this decision you should notify a member of the Exams Team (outside of the early and main period) or the Exams Office (during the early and main period).

Students may leave the room before the end of the examination – this applies to all sites including students sitting in College. Students are not permitted to remove any examination stationery from the venue – Invigilators should ensure that they are aware of
this and remind students. In addition, there are some restrictions on the removal of question papers from examination rooms that apply to in College exams and students as well. The list of subjects approved for 2022-2023 will be circulated nearer the Easter term exam period.

**Corrections**

If a student has a query about the examination paper, the Invigilator should telephone the Exams Office (01223 (3)34488 or 01223 (7)64995) and they will then contact the Examiner and ask them to call the College directly. The Examiner will not visit the College but they will deal with the query over the telephone.

There are cases where corrections or clarifications are made during the examination and these will normally originate in the main venue where an Examiner will be called to in case of a query. If an Examiner determines that a correction or clarification is needed then an announcement will be made in the venue. During this announcement, or immediately after, the Exams Office is alerted to it. The correction or clarification is then emailed to all Colleges and those with students sitting the paper will receive a telephone call from the Exams Office to ensure that the correct has been received and will be passed to students accordingly. It is up to Colleges to ensure that they have supplied the correct addresses and that staff have access on Saturdays and Bank Holidays.

Students sitting the examination at a later time or date should have the correction available at the start of the exam. Any student sitting the exam early (exceptionally) would not usually have access to an Examiner and therefore no corrections. In these cases, the student would be advised to attempt an alternative question.

Examiners are required to attend the main examination venue for the first 20 minutes of an exam as well as leave contact details for the duration of the exam. During the period of the main exam sitting, it should be possible to contact the Examiners in case of query. However, once the main cohort sitting has finished it is not usually possible to contact the Examiner in case of query. Students sitting in College should be encouraged to read through the questions during the main cohort scheduled time and raise any questions during this time.

**8. Rest Break Procedure**

If a student has an approved application for rest breaks the clock stops until the end of each of these periods of rest. For further information please see the 'Guidance for Rest Breaks' procedure.
9. Additional Requirements

Some examinations allow or specify the use of particular items needed for the examination – for instance use of a calculator or data book. Where this is the case, the permissible item(s) will be shown on the front of the question paper with some of these items being subsequently provided within an examination pack. Queries on permissible items should be directed to the Exam Ops team as they will hold a definitive list.

Dictionaries (in any language) **must not** be used unless specifically stated as permissible on the front of the question paper. The below is a list of some items that may be permissible for an examination, and whilst not exhaustive it offers some examples of what could be provided:

- Data book – this would normally be supplied in the examination pack and often applies to the Engineering Tripos.
- Calculators – students should supply their own approved calculator. Calculators are considered approved if they have a yellow label with ‘CU’ written on it. The list of subjects allowed a calculator is published annually in the Reporter.
- Formulae sheets or information – this would normally be supplied in the examination pack.
- Specialist graph paper – this would normally be supplied in the examination pack. A template is available on request from the Student Registry if you require to print your own.
- Shakespeare: Complete Works – this would normally be supplied in the examination pack and often applies to the English Tripos.
- Bibles – this would normally be supplied in the examination pack and often applies to examinations in Theology.

10. Collection and Return of Scripts

The specific details regarding the collection and returning of examination packs will be communicated to Colleges directly nearer the time of any given examination series.

It is important to check that the correct paper has been collected for the student(s) and you
are encouraged to check the pack(s) before you return to College. If there are any discrepancies or something is amiss you should alert staff as soon as possible so that it can be investigated and rectified as necessary.

The Colleges that are normally entitled to courier service during the Easter term are: Churchill College, Fitzwilliam College, Girton College, Homerton College, Hughes Hall, Lucy Cavendish College, Murray Edwards College and St Edmund’s College.

Examination packs should be returned to the delivery location (as communicated by the Exams Team) as soon as possible following the examination due to the need to supply the completed papers to Examiners. This needs to take place as swiftly as possible in light of the tight marking turnaround and deadlines.

When returning packs, you should ensure that only the items for marking are enclosed in the pack as it will not be opened until it reaches the Examiner. You should not include any excess stationery, the blue session report forms, desk tickets or markers that could identify the student. Instead, these items should be returned in a separate envelope and labelled with the following: the examination, the date, the time (AM or PM) and the College.

You should refer to Exam Bulletins and any emails for specific details on arrangements for examinations and the collection and delivery of packs, plus any other pertinent information that may be relevant.

11. Life Cycle of an In College Script

The following provides an overview of the life cycle of an in College script during the Easter term examination period and includes some possible delays to be aware of.

1. Exam pack is prepared – during the Easter term examination period this will be done by the Strong Room.

2. The pack is moved from the Strong Room to the Exams Office.

3. The exam pack is either collected from the Exams Office by the College directly, or if you are a hill run College this will be delivered to you by an agreed time.

4. The student sits the paper in College. A possible delay with this step could be that the student does not sit the paper at the same time as the main cohort due to illness.
5. The exam pack is returned to the Exams Office by the College directly, or if you are a hill run College this will be collected from you by an agreed time. Some possible delays in this step could be the student has sat the paper late, the collection has been missed as a result of a student sitting later, problems during the examination at College or the exam exceeding 3 hours.

6. Once received the exam pack will then be checked in by the Exams Office. A delay with this step could be that the focus will be on getting packs prepared for the next exams and ensuring ready for collection/delivery etc.

7. After check-in the exam pack is then parcelled by the Exams Office for the relevant Examiner. A delay with this process could be the sheer volume of packs to process.

8. The exam pack parcel is then collected by a courier and delivered to the relevant Examiner.

12. Security

The security of the examination pack is paramount to ensure the integrity of the examination. If the pack is received early, it must be held securely in a lockable cabinet until it is needed. Once the examination session has finished, the pack must be returned as soon as possible to the Exams team – where the pack needs to be held in College overnight, or for any period of time, you must ensure the security of the completed pack(s) and lock them away as required until return. Examination packs that have been held overnight must be returned at the earliest possible opportunity.

Any additional (or surplus) stationery or required extras that were provided in the examination pack should be returned in a separate envelope to the completed script. They must not be enclosed with the student’s answer script as the pack will not be opened until it reaches the Examiner. To further ensure the integrity of the examination, students should not remove any stationery (aside from their personal belongings) from the venue. Any rough work done by the student must be retained by the College in case of queries or reviews. Please ensure that all examination stationery is stored securely, and it is returned to the Exams team at the end of the examinations.

13. Late Fallers
There is always the possibility that a student might become a late faller as their circumstances change at the last minute and they need to be moved into College to sit their examination. If a student is a late faller, Colleges will need to provide the minimum following information in order for the necessary pack arrangements to be made: student name, BGN (USN or CRSid if unknown), date of exam, Tripos, paper code and paper title.

For further information please see the Guidance for Late Fallers procedure.

14. Incommunicado

Holding a student incommunicado means that they need to be kept isolated to ensure the integrity of the examination. If you have a specific query or case, you are advised to contact Jenny Green - Head of Exam Operations and Mitigating Circumstances.

For further information please see the Guidance for Holding Students Incommunicado for Examinations.

15. Proctors

Proctors have a number of duties which include, but are not limited to:

- Ensuring good order and discipline in the University
- Serve on a number of University bodies, committees and boards
- Attend Congregations of the Regent House, the University’s governing body, for the conferring of degrees.

Within an examination context Proctors are responsible for overseeing the examination process from a procedural and disciplinary perspective and investigate allegations of cheating. They oversee the conduct of the University examinations whether at a central University exam venue or in a College.

During the main examination period Proctors will walk around different venues to inspect and ensure conduct is being properly maintained. Proctors aim to cover two thirds of the sessions and do not attempt to visit every room / venue. When a Proctor ‘walks a room’ they are assessing how appropriate the arrangements in place are for students sitting the exam, the environment itself and its suitability including ventilation and noise levels and they can assess the Invigilator to ensure that they have a gown on and are alert to the surroundings and needs of the students.
Proctors may speak with the Invigilator but they will not engage with the students. Any communication that they do have should be undertaken quietly so as not to disrupt or disturb students in the venue.

Proctors will be on call during the main examination period for investigating any suspected unfair means or allegations of misconduct. Colleges are advised to contact a member of the Exams team in the first instance who will then contact a Proctor on your behalf.

16. Good Practice Recommendations

The following offers some good practice recommendations which have been shared by Colleges on running successful College examinations.

Recommendation 1

Where a student has examination arrangements because they need more time than the maximum standard, or, less commonly, they require voice-activated software or an individual room, there should be a follow-up meeting with the student either immediately after the examination season or at the start of the following term to discuss how the examination arrangements worked and what adjustments will be required for the following season.

Recommendation 2

It can be useful to gather students together who will be sitting examinations in College for an information session, especially those sitting examinations for the first time. The session could include information on how to take rest breaks, the procedure for requesting a bathroom break, where they may be seated in the room and where the Invigilator may be. It may also include information on Proctorial visits.

Recommendation 3

Students should be encouraged to save their work regularly for safety and they should ensure that they check that all their work has printed successfully before it is placed into the envelope or before they submit this to Moodle/Inspera.

Recommendation 4

Students should complete the declaration form indicating that they have checked their work prior to submission. This form should be kept by the College and not placed in the envelope.
This practice already exists in the Titan Teaching Rooms.

**Recommendation 5**

Typed answers should be attached to a cover sheet rather than to the booklet. This reduces waste and easily identifies the student to the Examiner. Students must include their candidate number (not their name) in the header or footer of their answer papers.

**Recommendation 6**

It is useful to trial new Invigilators during College mock examinations. This will allow Colleges to see how well Invigilators manage differing end times, scripts etc., and it is a useful guide to reliability before Tripos examinations begin.

**Recommendation 7**

Students should bring their University card with them and leave it on their desks (as in the main sites). Proctors have a list of all students sitting examinations in College and this will allow them to double-check when they visit.

**Recommendation 8**

Colleges may wish to print copies of the above statement and leave them in the examination room or email a copy to students who have approved rest breaks. This should help them prepare and manage their time effectively.

**Recommendation 9**

Invigilators should arrive ten minutes before the beginning of the examination so that they can be briefed about rest breaks, permitted texts and other items, etc.

**Recommendation 10**

Colleges should make their students aware of the Corrections information available.

**Recommendation 11**

Colleges should make their students aware of the Examiner availability information in the guide.

**Recommendation 12**
Proctors will usually report to the Porter’s Lodge first and so Colleges should ensure that porters know what examinations are taking place, where they are and which students are sitting them so that Proctors may be directed easily.

17. Key Contacts

The specific contact details, for instance for the Exams Office, will be distributed before the Easter term examination period. However, the contacts below should be able to assist you with queries in the interim:

- Reasonable adjustments queries: exam.arrangements@admin.cam.ac.uk
- Exam operations or practical matters: examops@admin.cam.ac.uk

If you would prefer to speak to someone directly rather than via email then please message exam.arrangements@admin.cam.ac.uk and provide some details of your query and that you would like to speak to someone, and a member of the team will arrange to call you via telephone or Teams at the earliest convenience.

Further guidance and information can be found on the following webpages:

Guides for Colleges | Student Registry (cam.ac.uk)
Examination Arrangements | Student Registry (cam.ac.uk)
Examination Guidance | Student Registry (cam.ac.uk)