

Guide for Examiners and Assessors for the Degrees of MPhil by Advanced Study and MRes
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1. Rationale

Thank you for agreeing to act as an Examiner or Assessor for the University of Cambridge.

This guide is intended to be a helpful reference for Examiners and Assessors in undertaking their duties for examinations for the MPhil by Advanced Study and MRes degrees. The following notes should be read in conjunction with the Regulations for the Master of Philosophy by Advanced Study and Master of Research Degrees in the Ordinances (Chapter7), which are available at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/so/>. The guide is also a useful reference for those with associated administrative responsibilities. Additionally, a copy of related procedural documents may be viewed here:

- Appointment of Examiners and Assessors <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/appointment-examiners-and-assessors>
- Information for Examiners <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners>

It is unlikely that Examiners and administrators will need to refer to all the information provided but individual sections may be relevant at particular stages of the examination process.

Any queries regarding the guide or views on how it may be improved can be forwarded to the Secretary to the Examination and Assessment Committee (email: examiners@admin.cam.ac.uk).

2. Appointment of Examiners and Assessors

Examiners are nominated by the relevant Faculty Board or Degree Committee and formally appointed by the General Board via the Education Quality and Policy Office. Assessors are appointed by the relevant Faculty Board or Degree Committee.

2.1 Letter of appointment

Examiners and External Examiners will receive a letter confirming their appointment from the Education Quality and Policy (EQPO) on behalf of the General Board.

Assessors - The relevant Faculty Board or Degree Committee send confirmation of appointment to Assessors.

It is expected that all Examiners and Assessors check that they have been appointed for the correct examination(s) before confirming their acceptance. Any queries relating to appointments should be directed to the Faculty/ Departmental Office in the first instance.

2.2 Useful documentation

The Chair of Examiners, where appropriate, will call a meeting of all Examiners to outline and discuss local procedures and duties. The following information should be provided at the meeting:

- contact details of relevant officers (e.g. the Chair of Examiners, Course Administrator);
- the University Regulations for the examination and any published Form and Conduct Notice;
- examples of any examination papers (usually the previous year's);
- the marking and classing criteria agreed by the Faculty Board or Degree Committee (or other authority);
- the Faculty or Departmental Examinations Data Retention Policy on script retention and writing on scripts; and any policies on the writing and submission of Examiners' Reports;
- the dates of future and the Final meetings.

The date of the Final Meeting is normally known in advance but it is not the end of the process. Examiners need to inform the Chair of Examiners of their whereabouts and availability for the succeeding month for possible involvement in an Examination Review Procedure.

Please note: Examiners should contact the Faculty Board or Degree Committee office or other authority if the above details are not provided routinely.

2.3 Conflict of interest

Examiners should be aware of any potential conflicts of interest arising during the tenure of their appointment (such as being a supervisor in any area relating to an examination) are encouraged to read the University's [Conflict of Interest Policy](#).

It is the responsibility of Examiners and Assessors to disclose any conflicts of interest in writing to the Head of Institution. The Head of Institution will record the declaration in the institution's register of conflicts of interest and decide on the most appropriate course of action.

3. Attendance at Examiner meetings

Examiners should attend all meetings relating to the examination and this is particularly important for the Final Meeting at which the marks of the candidates are approved and the recommendations on awarding of a degree are made.. ALL Examiners are required to attend and sign the Class List. Attendance can either be in person or via virtual means, e.g. Skype, Zoom or MS Teams. Dispensation must be sought from the Vice Chancellor, via EQPO, if an Examiner cannot attend the Final Meeting and it is only granted in exceptional circumstances. A form for such a request is available [here](#).

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Examiners

Examiners are responsible collectively for the following:

- setting question papers;
- notifying the Exams Team of any special requirements for written examinations (such as data books, graph paper or semi-log paper which will need to be placed on candidates' desks);
- attending written examinations for the first 20 minutes to answer queries from candidates and being available by telephone for the remainder of their examination in case of a subsequent query;
- marking formal examination papers and other forms of assessment in accordance with the relevant marking scheme or criteria agreed by the Faculty Board or Degree Committee (or other authority);
- attending Examiners' meetings;
- determining the agreed marks of the candidates and the Class List;
- when required, interviewing candidates for the purpose of an oral examination or interview where agreed by the Chair of Examiners;
- reviewing candidates' scripts as instructed by the Chair in relation to those cases submitted under the Examination Review Procedure.

4.2 Chair of Examiners and Senior Examiners

Additionally, the Chair is responsible for:

- briefing new Examiners, External Examiners and Assessors on their remit and procedures to be followed;
- convening meetings of Examiners;
- uploading the final copy of question papers to MS Teams by the required date as stated by the Exams Team. The Exams Team will organise printing of question papers for in person examinations
- co-ordinating the business of Examiners and liaising with and submitting information required by the Exams Team (such as confirming the final timetable, special stationery requirements and supplying script distribution details);

- ensuring that all Examiners receive information on candidates with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLDs);
- confirming the Examiners responsible for attending the first 20 minutes of each examination paper;
- delivering (electronically) the agreed marks of the candidates, signed Class-List and minutes of the Final Examiners' meeting to the Degree Committee for approval;
- ensuring that all examination data is processed in a rigorous manner;
- uploading mark information onto CamSIS for official University transcripts or by returning the 'Grade Roster' via email to the Exams Team (grade.rosters@admin.cam.ac.uk) as agreed;
- the Chair must be available for up to one month following the publication of the examination results to deal with representations made under the Examination Review Procedure which will also involve two more Examiners from the Board. There is a further stage of the Appeal process, Regulation 7 which will also require the attention of the Chair and perhaps the full Examiners' Board;
- the Chair may be required to respond to requests for consideration should an allowance be approved by the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee;
- resolving and ruling on any examination matter where there may be a difference of opinion amongst Examiners;
- submitting a report on the overall examination process to the Secretary of the Examination and Assessment Committee particularly relating to the general conduct of the examination, commending, advising and suggesting improvements for consideration. Comments specific to plagiarism would be particularly relevant;
- ensuring that Form TAUT, the Fees and Expenses Claim Form is completed (<http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/appointment-examiners-and-assessors>) by all Examiners eligible to receive payment (NUTO Examiners and Assessors and External Examiners and Assessors).
- finally, it is good practice to facilitate continuity of the examination process by providing informed support to succeeding Chairs of Examiners.

There is additional guidance specifically on the roles and responsibilities of External Examiners at <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/appointment-examiners-and-assessors/external-examiners>.

4.3 Assessors

Assessors are responsible for:

- marking formal examination papers and other forms of assessment in accordance with the relevant marking scheme or criteria agreed by the Faculty Board or Degree Committee (or other authority);
- when required, interviewing candidates for the purpose of an oral examination or interview where agreed by the Chair of Examiners.

4.4 Confidentiality

Prior to the examination

Examiners should observe absolute confidentiality in the drafting of question papers and information on how to securely create, store and collaborate on question papers can be found online here: <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners>

Examiners who undertake College supervisions should act with appropriate circumspection in the conduct of supervisions.

Anonymity

All examination scripts and submitted work are marked anonymously. The Exams Team allocates a spread of numbers (four numerical digits followed by an alphabetic check digit) called a Blind Grade Number to each Final

List of Candidates. They are allocated to students in each list randomly and candidates write their Blind Grade Number, not their name or College, on their scripts.

Examiners receive scripts in numerical order and instructions on how to relay marks to the Chair or administrator. The final list of marks is agreed at the Final Examiners' Meeting anonymously. Only when the final list has been finalised should the candidate numbers be replaced with the names and Colleges of students.

5. Arrangements and timetable for examination

The Master of Philosophy (MPhil) by Advanced Study and Master of Research (MRes) Degrees are awarded for further study and training after a course of three or six terms full-time or six or twelve terms part-time. The conduct of examinations for the MPhil by Advanced Study 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 Examinations and Assessment Committee, acting on behalf of the General Board.)

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

The timetable for the examination of scripts and other pieces of required written work (including dissertation), and for holding oral examinations, should be arranged by the Examiners at their mutual convenience in consultation, where appropriate, with the Degree Committee.

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

6. 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 also governed 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 marking scheme, please consult the Chair of Examiners or the Secretary of the Degree Committee.

7. Course requirements

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

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

(b) where a candidate's **failure in the dissertation 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 Examinations and Assessment Committee expects an **oral** examination to be held.

Please note that if the rubric for the course you are an Examiner for differs from the above, the rubric will override these rules.

8. Examination Access Arrangements

8.1 Adjustments

The University has established procedures for authorising adjustments for candidates with an illness or disability to take their examinations using 'alternative arrangements'. The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee is responsible for approving and arranging appropriate adjustments to ensure fairness for all candidates. A range of adjustments are available including:

- awarding extra time;
- providing examination papers in accessible or alternative formats such as Braille, large print or with colour overlays;
- using an amanuensis or word processor.

Most adjustments, apart from those required for practical examinations or for candidates with a diagnosed SpLD, are arranged without reference to Examiners. However, there may be instances when an Examiner is asked to advise on requests involving the use of computers and specific software.

8.2 Arrangements for practical examinations

The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee is responsible for authorising adjustments for *written* practical examinations for candidates with an illness or disability. However, non-standard adjustments for other types of practical examinations are usually considered in consultation with the Chair of Examiners. Departments may also seek advice from the Secretary of the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee and the Disability Resource Centre on the appropriateness of the adjustments requested.

Adjustments might include:

- altering the height and layout of laboratory benches or making signage or information accessible by enlarging print or translating into Braille;
- using specialist equipment or modifying existing equipment;
- adjustments to the labelling and use of operating equipment;
- arranging for students to be accompanied by a reader or interpreter.

Examiners intending to set questions involving the use of radioactive materials should consult the relevant Departmental Radiation Officer. A practical examination that might involve a potential risk to health or safety should be discussed with the University Safety Office and the appropriate Departmental Safety Officer.

8.3 Marking and Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

Examiners are required to mark all work in the same way and in accordance with the agreed marking scheme. They are *not* asked to judge how well a candidate might have performed had circumstances been different.

The Examination Access and Mitigation Committee's only exception to this policy relates to candidates with a diagnosed SpLD. The Chair of Examiners will receive a list (issued by the Exams Team) of those candidates for whom it has received notification of a diagnosed SpLD. The Chair is responsible for forwarding this information to the relevant Examiner(s). In such instances, the University's policy is to request that minor errors of grammar and spelling are *not* penalised but otherwise Examiners should mark the work normally. (**Please note:** language papers where correct grammar and spelling are essential elements of the assessment are excluded.)

8.4 Deferment of deadline for dissertations, theses and extended essays or projects

Examiners should note the deadlines for any assignments submitted outside the written examination and ensure that candidates are aware of the deadlines and know where and to whom to submit their work. Arrangements should be made to record the receipt of each candidate's work.

The Chair of Examiners will be notified and consulted about applications for extending submission dates. Short extensions which would still allow assessment before the Final Examiners' meeting should be considered locally. Where an extension to a dissertation would impact on the examination process such that the results could not be considered at the scheduled Final Examiners' meeting, application for extension should be made by the student through CamSIS.

Extensions are only permitted when there is proven good cause such as illness or other extenuating circumstances.

In the absence of an extension, Examiners should consult their Examinations or Faculty Board guidance on late submission and penalties that may be applied.

9. Written examinations - Preparation

9.1 Setting and preparing examination question papers

Question papers should comply with the relevant examination regulations and the mode of assessment submitted in the annual course collection exercise under the Framework for Assessment.

The Chair convenes meetings of the Examiners to discuss and finalise the question papers to ensure their accuracy prior to final uploading / printing. External Examiners should be invited to participate in the final approval of question papers although their detailed involvement is likely to differ according to each Degree Committee guidelines.

Guidance notes for Faculties and Departments for the production of examination question papers are available online [here](#) and include information on security, deadlines and checklists. The information also includes a specimen question paper and the Examination and Assessment Committee expects question papers to comply with the template monitors compliance against the template This information is circulated to departments annually at the end of the Michaelmas term.

Final versions of papers produced entirely in Departments must be uploaded to MS Teams by required date set by the Exams Team. The Chair of Examiners can visit Reprographics by arrangement to view final versions of question papers and related materials as appropriate.

9.2 List of Candidates and mark books

The List of Candidates includes candidates' names, Blind Grade Numbers and papers taken. It is possible for departmental administrators to run the lists on demand, with instructions [here](#).

9.3 Classing criteria

Examiners are responsible for marking criteria and determining the classification method in accordance with the relevant criteria approved by the Faculty Board or Degree Committee (which must be issued by no later than the end of the full Michaelmas Term preceding the examination). The General Board expects marking schemes and classing criteria to be published or otherwise made available to students.

10. Written examinations - Conduct of written examinations

10.1 Examiners' attendance in examination rooms

The Chair of Examiners is responsible for ensuring that an Examiner for the relevant paper is in attendance promptly at the beginning of each examination session and at each centre where the paper is held. The Chair should notify the Exams Team at examops@admin.cam.ac.uk of the Examiners attending the start of an examination.

The Examiner attending should be dressed suitably and wearing a gown (and a hood may also be worn).

10.2 The role of the Examiner in the examination room

Examiners are required to be present for the first 20 minutes of examinations. For those examinations where reading time is available, we suggest that Examiners arrive at the beginning of the reading time and remain in the room until 20 minutes into the written examinations.

The primary purpose of Examiner attendance is in case of certain types of query about the examination paper. Examiners should remain in the designated area near the copy of the question paper, usually at the front of the room, during the 20 minutes.

Examiners should not walk around the room or approach candidates if they raise their hand. The Invigilator will deal with all student queries in the first instance and only raise them with the Examiner if it appears that a correction or clarification on a paper is needed.

The exceptions to this are where Examiners might be asked to help check additional materials that students can bring into the examinations, such as calculators or reference texts. These checks will start once the examination has begun and Invigilators may ask for assistance with these checks.

Examiners should only communicate with candidates where the matter concerns a correction. Any other queries raised by students will be managed by Invigilators.

10.3 Announcements of corrections

If there is an error in the question paper, the Examiner should:

- i. announce the correction to all the candidates in the main examination room and arrange for the announcement to be made in any other rooms where candidates are sitting the examination (for example, the University Centre or Titan Suite);
- ii. ensure that the correction to the question paper is communicated to the Examination Office (via the Supervisor) who will inform all the Colleges who have a student sitting that paper in College;
- iii. annotate and sign a copy of the corrected question paper and return it to the Supervisor or Invigilator. An annotated version should be returned to the Reprographics Centre for incorporation into the bound volumes of question papers.

Some candidates may have completed the question to which there is a correction; if there are queries from candidates as to how they should proceed, the advice is not to go back and redo the question but to continue and report it to their College Tutorial Office which will be familiar with the procedures available.

10.4 Queries other than corrections

Examiners are not allowed to interact with candidates in the examination venue unless requested to by an Invigilator. Common queries that are raised might be concerned with:

- explanation/clarification of a word (either an English one or a word in a foreign language) – in these cases Examiners should not assist candidates with terminology; their only role in the examination room is to deal with errors;
- a query where a candidate raises an expectation that a certain question or topic would be covered when no such question appears. If this occurs, the Examiner should indicate that the question paper has been approved and that any queries should be raised with the candidate's Tutor on their return to College.

10.5 Withdrawal through illness of an Examiner or Assessor

If an Examiner or Assessor is taken ill and the examination cannot be completed without a replacement, please contact the Examinations Office on (7)64995 or (3)34488. Outside of this time, please email examops@admin.cam.ac.uk

10.6 Incidents

If it is necessary to report an unusual incident during the main examination period in May/June, please telephone the Examinations Office which is open from 7.30 a.m. to 6.00 p.m., Monday-Saturday including Bank Holidays on (7)64995 or (3)34488.

Any critical incidents which may affect the integrity of the examination should be reported to Jenny Green, Head of Exams, Assessment and Mitigating Circumstances on ext (7) 64694. Where it is not possible to contact Jenny Green, please email examops@admin.cam.ac.uk

10.7 Procedure for dealing with suspected unfair practice (including suspected cheating or plagiarism)

The use of unfair means is treated with utmost seriousness by the University. The Invigilator will have reported the matter in most instances where a candidate is suspected of using unfair means. When an Examiner suspects a candidate of cheating they should consult the University's guidance at <http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/univ/plagiarism/index.html> .

10.8 Interviews (excluding suspected cheating and plagiarism, and oral examination)

Examiners may need a candidate to attend an interview to clarify an aspect of the candidate's work and the process may be used for any written work examined including:

- an examination script;
- a dissertation;
- a thesis;
- an essay submitted in substitution for or in addition to a written paper;
- a project report;
- a laboratory notebook.

Some examples of the circumstances in which Examiners may wish to seek clarification include:

- ensuring that the work is complete and that sections have not been omitted in error;
- enabling the candidate to decipher an illegible passage when it would be excessive to require the whole assignment to be typed or rewritten legibly;
- determining which written paper is being substituted when there is any doubt.

Examiners are advised to summon a candidate for interview via the relevant Senior Tutor.

In certain subjects, it may be customary to conduct a *viva* for all candidates or in circumstances such as borderline candidates or sampling. If this is the case, no specific authorisation is required although the Examination and Assessment Committee would normally expect candidates to have been made aware of such practice.

11. Written examinations - Arrangements after the examination

11.1 Examination scripts

How scripts are received

Scripts should be delivered by the internal examination messenger within a day of the examination in question (Saturdays and Bank Holidays may interfere with script delivery). Also, Examiners may arrange to collect their scripts from the examination room by prior arrangement with the Examinations Officer or the Examination Room Supervisor. It is not possible to collect scripts from the Examinations Office due to the volume and complexity of script management.

Please note: Scripts will only be delivered to a Department on a Saturday or Bank Holiday if the Examinations Office has been informed that the Department is open and able to receive such a delivery.

Scripts for online examinations can be downloaded by the nominated administrator or examiner once the exam has ended. Further information can be found on the [Moodle Support Hub for Online Assessments](#).

Candidates taking examinations in other locations (examination access arrangements)

Examiners will receive the scripts of candidates who took their examinations in other locations *later* than the main batch from the primary venue (the first markers will be advised of these scripts). The scripts can be delayed for several reasons: they have a longer route; there are some instances when a student has taken the examination at a different time; and other instances where a student has been taken ill during the examination. All scripts taken under these arrangements, as stated previously, must be marked in the same way as scripts written under normal conditions except for those identified as SpLD ones.

Please refer back to section 8.3 – ‘marking and Specific Learning Difficulty’.

Marking of scripts

Examiners and Assessor should mark work in accordance with the relevant marking scheme or criteria agreed by the Faculty Board or Degree Committee (or other authority).

Retention of scripts

Scripts are normally retained for a minimum of **six months** after the examination in case they are needed as evidence in any challenge of a result. However, Examiners should consult any additional guidance from their Faculty.

Scripts should be disposed of in accordance with the Faculty Board’s [Examinations Data Retention Policy](#). The Exams Team can arrange for the disposal of scripts on year after the examination and all Departments will be contacted to arrange for collection.

11.2 Withdrawn students

Where a student withdraws from some or all written papers, they will appear on the report that accompanies the main examination scripts from the primary site. Work submitted, whether it is written examinations or project work prior to the written examinations should still be marked and those marks transmitted to the Exams Team.

This information may be used by Colleges to determine representations to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee.

11.3 Extenuating circumstances and examination allowances

The University has an established procedure for considering medical and other extenuating circumstances. Examiners are not empowered to consider the extenuating circumstances of candidates and must mark the work as presented. Such cases are referred to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee. Details of the Allowances available can be found online [here](#).

11.4 Examination Warnings

There are two types of Examination Warnings relating to a) disability and b) illness or grave cause. They are used to:

- notify Examiners of candidates with Specific Learning Difficulties. Examiners are asked to not penalise minor spelling or grammatical errors unless they form an essential element of the assessment (such as in language assessments) or for candidates who are colour blind;
- inform the Exams Team about candidates suffering from illness or other grave cause who are in danger of failing or underperforming. This information is not shared with Examiners, but will be accessed by the EAMC if an application for an allowance is submitted.

Procedure for dealing with Examination Warnings for candidates with SpLDs

The Chair will receive a report notifying them of candidates with SpLDs which they should use to inform Examiners before the commencement of marking. Apart from not penalising spelling and grammatical errors, Examiners are expected to mark the work in the same way as other candidates and in accordance with the relevant marking scheme and classing criteria.

Procedure for dealing with Examination Warnings for candidates with colour blindness

The Chair will receive a report notifying them of any candidates with colour blindness who may require adjustments to their practical examination. In such instances, the Chair is authorised to make appropriate adjustments in consultation with the Course Director and any relevant technical staff.

Procedure for dealing with Application Warning Letters relating to illness or other grave cause

The Chair will not receive a list of Warnings issued for candidates on the basis of illness or grave cause. Instead, these Warnings together with the supporting evidence will be referred to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee if an application for an examination allowance is submitted. The Examinations Board should treat the candidate in the same way as other candidates and then their case can be referred to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee by their College as needed.

The Committee may grant the relevant examination allowance or refer the matter to the Chair of Examiners for further review after the Class-List has been issued.

11.5 Borrowed papers

Some examinations borrow question papers from another examination. Candidates who sit borrowed papers are classed by the Board of Examiners based on the marks obtained for each paper including those marked by Examiners from the other course.

The Chair of the examination providing the borrowed papers should send the agreed final mark of each candidate to the relevant Chair of borrowing examination together with any other relevant details including an explanation of any codes or marking conventions before the Final Examiners' Meeting. The respective Chairs will need to liaise

regarding the dates of their Examiners' meetings and, in the event of queries and appeals, the availability of scripts. The Chair of the examination providing the borrowed paper may be asked to comment on representations relating to those papers.

Those candidates taking borrowed papers should only be included in the final mark list and mark book of the examination they have entered and not the examination providing the borrowed papers.

12. Examination of essays, coursework and other assessed work

Examiners and Assessors should carefully follow the marking standards provided for each form of assessment, and the local practice for recording marks and comments that support the academic judgements made on the work. Be aware that comments are considered personal data under data protection legislation.

Markers are encouraged to make use of the full range of marks available as this will assist in differentiation of candidates when it comes to determining overall performance in examination.

13. Examination of dissertations

Where the scheme of examination includes a dissertation, each candidate's dissertation shall be referred to two Assessors.

(a) Independent reports

Two Assessors will be appointed to assess each dissertation. Each Assessor should, *before the oral examination*, make an independent report on the dissertation.

Each report should be signed and dated.

Please do not make notes in the dissertation.

(b) Standard of the Dissertation

In recommending a pass mark, Assessors should satisfy themselves that the dissertation is clearly written, that it takes account of previously published work on the subject, and that it represents a contribution to learning. The assessors should sign a joint report of the result of the examination, including any mark assigned to the dissertation.

(c) Disagreement between the two Assessors

If the two Assessors do not agree in their recommendation, or if *for any other reason* the Degree Committee need further opinion, the Degree Committee may appoint additional Assessor(s), provided that not more than one additional Assessor may be appointed without leave of the Examinations and Assessment Committee. In such cases the External Examiner for the course may be asked to act as Assessor. Each additional Assessor must make an independent report on the dissertation, without having seen the marks or reports of the other Assessors. All three reports should be considered by the Exam Board and/or Degree Committee.

14. Oral examinations

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

In some MPhil by Advanced Study 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 Assessor(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 that the Examination and Assessment Committee normally requires an oral examination to be held at least in those cases where:

- the candidate's performance in the *dissertation 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 provisional 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 have considered the candidate's marks and view the failure as irredeemable;
- a **high level of performance in the dissertation component is required** if approval for the Degree is to be recommended (See Section 7 above);
- there is a **marked discrepancy** between Assessors' independent reports.

The oral examination may relate to the dissertation and wider field of knowledge in which the work falls but may also encompass other assessed work. When the oral examination relates to the dissertation both Assessors of the dissertation shall be among those present. Other Assessors or Examiners may be present if the regulations for the oral examination provide for questions on examined written work, as well as on the dissertation. The External Examiner for the cohort may also be present.

If a candidate is unable to attend an oral in person, the Degree Committee may authorise that they be offered the option of an oral examination by video conference.

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

15. Plagiarism

If an Examiner or Assessor suspects that work submitted for examination contains unattributed work from other sources, they 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 and Assessors 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.

16. Moderation by the External Examiner

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 they are asked to act as a third independent Assessor, for example, in cases of disagreement between the Assessors (see Section 13c).

17. Final Examiners' Meeting

All Examiners must be present at the final meeting unless special dispensation has been authorised by the Vice-Chancellor's Office via the Education Quality Policy Office and this is only given in exceptional circumstances. It should be noted that it is possible for examiners (internal and external) to join the meeting via video conference if attendance in person is impossible. If an Examiner is absent the proceedings should continue and their absence or late arrival recorded in the minutes of the meeting. The name of any Examiner not present at the meeting should be excluded from the Class-List.

The Examiners' Final Meeting must be conducted in accordance with its agreed procedures and only consider those matters it is empowered to deal with. Prior to the meeting the Chair should ensure that all marks have been transposed correctly into the mark book and that University Student Numbers (USNs) have been reconciled with candidate examination numbers. Also, the Chair should have received the following information:

- any representations relating to the conduct of the examination for consideration at the meeting;
- relevant Faculty/Departmental guidelines relating to the presentation of marks and mark books and the conduct of the meeting.

The Chair is responsible for arrangements to record formally the proceedings of the meeting which should include:

- the attendance of all Examiners, noting any dispensations for absence;
- the arrangements for marking and classing to agreed criteria;
- any exceptions and the reasons;
- discussion of marginal candidates;
- the decisions relating to any representations relating to the conduct of the examination. A brief note explaining the reasons for the decision should be included;
- confirmation of the mark book and Class List.

Examiners should refer to the General Board's good practice guidelines for the conduct and recording of Examiners' meetings [here](#).

The Chair is responsible for compiling the mark sheet and final Pass List which should be signed by all Examiners.

18. Results to the Degree Committee

The Chair is responsible for submitting the following materials to the Degree Committee as soon as possible following the Final Examiners' Meeting:

- signed mark sheet for all assessed elements (including written papers, essays and exercises)
- signed List of those candidates who have been deemed to have Passed
- oral examination reports and Assessors' independent reports on the dissertation (if relevant) for marginal fail candidates
- copy of the Meeting minutes.

19. 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 or give the candidate copies of any reports.

The **final result** is confirmed by the Degree Committee and communicated to the candidate by them. The Degree Committee will notify the Senior Examiner when degrees have been approved. Departments may then upload marks and classes directly to the CamSIS Grade Roster. A copy of the signed mark sheet, approved by the Degree Committee, should be provided to Exams Team who will check the Grade Roster before making marks available to the candidates.

20. Disclosure of marks, the General Data Protection Regulation and data retention

The General Data Protection Regulation entitles individuals to gain access to information recorded about them including details of their examination performance. This includes marks awarded to candidates; any interim/transitional marks allocated by individual Examiners and Assessors; and any comments recorded on the

examination scripts or other pieces of submitted work. The University is not, however, obliged to return examination scripts to students and the current policy is that requests from individual students to receive their examination scripts should be refused. A Faculty may request permission from the General Board to allow students to receive copies of their examination scripts by submitting a case which should include a pedagogical rationale.

The Faculty Board or Degree Committee or comparable authority is responsible for determining the nature and format of the marks and other information regarding examination performance that may be disclosed to students. Each Faculty has a formal Examinations Data Retention Policy which provides guidelines on the range of examination data routinely retained, the duration of the retention period and the named contact for submitting data requests. Examiners should familiarise themselves with the Faculty Board's Examinations Data Retention Policy.

Further information is included in the General Board Guidance on examination data and scripts at <https://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/assessment> and at <http://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection> .

21. Mark checks

Following publication of marks, some students will have queries relating to the marks obtained and may request an informal mark check. This would usually be limited to a check that the examination has been marked properly and the marks recorded accurately. Departments should have processes in place to allow students to request such a check, and respond in a timely manner.

22. Examination Review Procedures

The University has an Examination Review Procedure which is administered by the Office for Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals (OSCCA).

Representations must be made to OSCCA within a specified timeframe. Further information is available [here](#).

23. 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, their Tutor may apply to the Examination Access and Mitigation Committee for an examination allowance. The Committee 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 or Assessors should **not** themselves make any allowances for illness or other cause when assessing a candidate's work.*

24. Resits

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 examinations again, except under exceptional circumstances as provided for in Section 23 (Allowances).

25. External Examiner Report

External Examiners must submit a completed report form to the Vice Chancellor's Office and the Chair of Examiners no later than 1st October. Payment for acting as an External Examiner is dependent upon the receipt of the External Examiner Report.

Reports should be considered in faculties and departments as unreserved business by Faculty Boards or other relevant faculty or department committees. A written response addressing each issue raised by the External Examiner should be sent to the External Examiner and copied to educationalpolicy@admin.cam.ac.uk for consideration on behalf of GBEC.

Further information about the consideration and response to External Examiners' reports can be found on the [EQPO website](#).

26. Fees and expenses

All External Examiners are entitled to claim reimbursement for their work. Some internal Examiner and Assessors (NUTOs) are also eligible to receive payment for undertaking their duties. Payment rates are linked to the University's Single Salary Spine and further information about these can be found on the [University's website](#).

External Examiners are also eligible to claim reimbursement of reasonable expenses including the cost of overnight accommodation where necessary. Subsistence allowance may be claimed by External Examiners, at rates determined from time to time by the University, for any period of absence from their normal place of residence in connection with their duties. The University undertakes to meet all reasonable expenses within the limits specified on the reverse of the Expenses claim form. Completed claim forms and receipts should be sent to the Secretary of the Degree Committee concerned.

27. Contacts

Examination Officers	Jenny.Green@admin.cam.ac.uk Jo.Overhill@admin.cam.ac.uk
Grade Rosters / Class Lists	Grade.Rosters@admin.cam.ac.uk
Secretary to the Examination and Assessment Committee	Examiners@admin.cam.ac.uk
General Exam queries	examops@admin.cam.ac.uk
Accessibility and Disability Resource Centre	disability@admin.cam.ac.uk

Appendix

The following Examiner Guidelines are on display in each examination venue as a reminder of Examiners' duties. Any queries should be directed to the Supervisor of the examination venue on the day or emailed to examops@admin.cam.ac.uk

Examiner Guidelines

Arriving at the exam venue, inform the Supervisor:

- That you are the examiner for your exam and provide your contact details for the exam period.
- Indicate if you intend to return to the exam venue at the end of the exam to collect your scripts, and the supervisor will indicate what time your scripts might be ready for collection. We endeavour to have the papers ready for you to collect at the time agreed with the Supervisor. However, sometimes there is a delay as we collect the papers in candidate order to ensure that all papers are collected for each examination.

Start of the exam:

- Once the exam has started please wait for 20 minutes in case there are any immediate questions.
- You should position yourself in the designated area near the copy of the question paper.
- You should communicate with students only where there are matters of correction – the invigilator will deal with all other queries.
- The exceptions to this are where you might be asked to help check additional material that students can bring into the examination, such as calculators or reference texts. In these instances, the Invigilator may ask you to assist with the checks at the start of the examination.

During the exam:

- Keep your phone turned on and be alert to any calls from the Exam venue.
- The supervisor of the exam venue will ask you to return to the venue if there are queries or corrections to your paper, which need explaining.
- If there are corrections - at the exam venue, announce the correction and write the correction on a board visible to candidates.
- Annotate and sign a copy of the corrected question paper and return to the supervisor or invigilator. You should also return an annotated version to the Reprographics Centre to incorporate in the bound volumes of question papers.

If you are collecting scripts from the venue:

- Return to the exam venue at the time agreed with the Supervisor.
- If the papers are ready, complete the examiner collection form before taking the scripts.
- If the papers are not ready then please wait quietly while the papers are collected or agree to collect them later from either the exam office or the exam venue after signing the examiner collection form.

If you are expecting your scripts to be delivered:

- If you have opted to have your scripts delivered, the venue will pass them to the exam office, who will send these to the named person.

Collecting and distributing scripts from other venues:

- The Exam Office receives the scripts for students who took the exam in alternative venues and posts these within a day of their arrival in the exam office. These are sent in separate batches so as not to cause any delays to marking.