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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 Master of Philosophy by Advanced Study and Master of Research 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/>.

1. 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 Board of Examinations.) The Degree Committee is also responsible for the nomination of Examiners and appointment of 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, 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.

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 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.

3 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 Board of Graduate Studies expects an **oral** examination to be held.

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

4 Examination of dissertations

The notes in this section relate solely to the examination of MPhil and MRes dissertation. 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. 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 include a short summary containing a **definite recommendation**. If you find it necessary to suspend judgement until after any 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 note that Assessors' reports on dissertations will be provided to the candidate when the result of the examination is confirmed.

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.

(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 Board of Graduate Studies. 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.

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 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 Board of Graduate Studies 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 3 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 he or she 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.

6 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 he or she is asked to act as a third independent Assessor, for example, in cases of disagreement between the Assessors (see Section 4c).

7 Marks and reports sent to Degree Committee

The signed mark sheet for any written papers (including essays and exercises) together with the Assessors' independent reports on dissertation and the joint recommendation of the result 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.*

8 Attendance at Examiner meetings

Every Examiner who has taken part in the examination must be present at the final meeting of the Examiners at which the marks of the candidates are approved and a provisional pass-list signed. Examiners who for grave cause are unable to attend this meeting must seek permission from the Vice-Chancellor (through the Education and Student Policy team) to be absent prior to the meeting.

9 Plagiarism

If an Examiner or Assessor 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 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.

10 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 the examination again, except under exceptional circumstances as provided for in 11 below.

11 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 for an examination allowance. 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 or Assessors 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 of Graduate Studies who will consult with the Board of Examinations and other interested parties as appropriate. Special arrangements can also be made for viva voce examinations. You will be informed of any such arrangements made prior to the examination.

12 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.

13 Review Procedures in connection with the Examination

The University has processes for a request for a review to 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.

The Review Process

Representations must be made within three months of the decision of the Degree Committee to which they relate and should be addressed to the Secretary of the Board of Graduate Studies. 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 representations, it may agree upon the remedial action to be taken.

If the Board **rejects** the representations as unjustified, the candidate has an opportunity to make further representations (or have them submitted on his/her behalf) directly to the Review Committee.

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.

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

14 Return of dissertation

The Degree Committee will inform of arrangements for the return of dissertations.

15 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*. and

(b) £10 for each complete paper examined; and

(c) £70 for each dissertation.

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.

External Examiners 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 Education and Student Policy team.

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.

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.