

# **Guide to Undergraduate Examinations**

2017 - 2018

## Introduction

Examinations and assessment are an integral part of studying at Cambridge. The University of Cambridge takes great care to ensure that the examinations it requires students to sit are as fair as they are demanding, and they represent an appropriate way of assessing the knowledge and skills that students will have acquired over the course of their studies to date.

The University's assessment procedures are not dissimilar to those administered by large regional, national or international examination boards. However, we recognise that the language and processes of the Collegiate University have a long and intricate history, are sometimes less than apparent to the newcomer, and have attracted a number of myths as they have evolved.

We also recognise that because the responsibility for examining students falls to many and the support to students is spread amongst the collegiate University, there is no single summary of the University of Cambridge's Tripos examinations.

Consequently, there was a desire to provide a transparent, comprehensive, and singular guide to examinations for all staff who have a role in examinations as well as for students who wish to understand the end-to-end process.

This guide contains summaries of each of the stages in the journey towards, through and after an examination and in each case is accompanied by links to more detailed guidance. These will vary by subject but we hope they will provide reassurance and clarity. Students with questions about any aspect of the process should consult their Tutor, Director of Studies or their Tutorial Office. Examiners should ask the Chair of their Board of Examinations or the Student Registry.

Finally, we have included a glossary of a number of local Cambridge terms to provide greater clarity (see Glossary of terms).

The guide has been authored by academic staff of diverse disciplines, who have undertaken many of the varied roles associated with examinations and assessment, both in Faculties and Departments and in Colleges. These academic staff have also experience of supporting students through examinations and assessment. I am most grateful to them for supporting this ambitious task and for the continued commitment to seeing this idea through.

Secretary of the Board of Examinations

September 2017

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# Assessment at Cambridge

## Governance

1. University Ordinances govern the form, content, and assessment of courses.
2. A Faculty Board must seek approval for any change to the modes of assessment through a Form and Conduct Notice. Due Notice must be given to all parties about any changes to course delivery or assessment so that no candidate is disadvantaged.
3. Where a Faculty permits a Tripos candidate to take a paper from another Tripos, the General Board have agreed that the Faculty can also specify the form the assessment takes, if the paper allows for a choice of forms of assessment.

@	<a href="http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/changes-existing-courses/changes-regulations-and-supplementary-regulations">www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/changes-existing-courses/changes-regulations-and-supplementary-regulations</a>
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## Programme Specification

4. Each course has a Programme Specification that sets out the course aims, the learning outcomes, and the assessment methods.

@	<a href="http://www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/">www.camdata.admin.cam.ac.uk/</a>
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## General Board Policy on Assessment

5. Whilst the General Board's general policy is that the three hour written examination paper should be the main basis of summative assessment of Tripos performance, this policy is flexible. Consequently, Faculty Boards, in consultation with External Examiners as appropriate, might review the assessment modes used with a view that each Part of a Tripos includes at least one elective option for assessment by a method other than the traditional unseen examination (e.g. dissertation, portfolio, coursework, exercises).
6. The key criterion, in any review, should be the effectiveness of the form to assess properly the intended learning outcomes of the course and assurance of a reasonable level of comparability across a Part of a Tripos, so that one candidate's choice of papers does not lead to a combination of forms of assessment substantially different from another's.
7. The General Board encourages reflections on assessment procedures and offers a framework to facilitate this, which might be used in conjunction with reports of External Examiners, reports of other examiners and statistical data arising from the examinations.

@	<a href="http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment">www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment</a>
@	<a href="http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/assessment-practices-and-expectations">www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/assessment-practices-and-expectations</a>

## General Board Guidance on Plagiarism to candidates, Examiners and Supervisors

8. The University expects students to familiarise themselves with the University's definition of plagiarism and the referencing and academic practice guidance issued by their Faculty/Department. Plagiarism is a serious issue and can result in disciplinary charges.
9. The following is an excerpt from 'The University's definition of plagiarism' webpage.

Examples of plagiarism include copying (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are a candidate's own), by:

- **quoting verbatim** another person's work without due acknowledgement of the source;
- **paraphrasing** another person's work by changing some of the words, or the order of the words, without due acknowledgement of the source;
- **using ideas** taken from someone else without reference to the originator;
- **cutting and pasting** from the Internet to make a pastiche of online sources;
- **submitting someone else's work** as part of a candidate's own without identifying clearly who did the work. For example, buying or commissioning work via professional agencies such as 'essay banks' or 'paper mills', or not attributing research contributed by others to a joint project.

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[www.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/what-plagiarism/universitys-definition-plagiarism](http://www.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/what-plagiarism/universitys-definition-plagiarism)

## General Board guidance on examinations data and scripts

10. Faculty Boards should produce an examinations data retention policy, which is in line with the General Board's guidance on examinations data and scripts. This must be on the Faculty's website and communicated to students and Boards of Examiners. The policy should outline:
  - the data to be retained, for example, marks and classes;
  - how students can apply to receive any copies of the data and the deadlines for such requests;
  - the retention period for each type of data;
  - the script retention policy, including cases where examiners' marks are made on the scripts.

## Examiners' responsibilities for data retention

11. Examiners are responsible for the production and short-term retention of data. They are required to retain all data including scripts for at least one month after the publication of results and then should forward all data and scripts to the Faculty Board or equivalent (or to personnel specified by it).

## Archiving assessed work

12. A sample of examination scripts, duly anonymised, may be retained in order to:
- review the course standards
  - inform students of the standard required for a certain level of achievement
  - inform examiners of standards
13. Anonymised scripts (i.e. with all indications of the identity of the candidate removed) are not subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998. This might change with the General Data Protection Regulations (applicable from 25 May 2018). Any changes will be communicated.

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[www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/retention-examination-data](http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/retention-examination-data)



# Types of Assessment

## Continuously assessed work

14. This guide is concerned mainly with summative assessments for undergraduate students but not all assessments are end-of-year written examinations. Some take place at various intervals throughout the year instead. Depending on the subject, these might include dissertations, laboratory reports, oral presentations etc. Students are expected to read the information provided to them by their course organisers, know when the deadlines are, and what is expected of them.

## Formative Assessment

15. Formative assessment gives students opportunities throughout the year to practice their skills and knowledge without affecting their formal academic results and may include material submitted for supervisions and departmental seminars, classes or projects. The work, assessed in comments and often gradually moving towards allocating marks given by supervisors, is an essential way of improving skills, deepening understanding and adding to knowledge but this work does not count towards students' degree classifications.

## Summative Assessment

16. Summative assessment is a formal measurement of students' attainment, skills, and knowledge. The more usual summative assessment at Cambridge is through timed, written examinations, the majority of which are held at or near the end of the academic year. The outcome as judged by a board of Examiners contributes to the award that students achieve.
17. Faculties and Departments might also have other means of measuring skills and knowledge, according to the nature of the discipline being examined. These also form part of the summative assessment that contributes to the award students achieve. The undergraduate handbook should include details of schedules, submission deadlines, and the proportion of marks allocated to these other forms of assessment.

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[www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/types-assessment](http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/types-assessment)

## Mock examinations and examination practice

18. Mock examinations or progress tests are another example of formative assessment and may be set at the beginning of Lent or Easter Terms. Directors of Studies oversee these mock examinations, which may consist of specially set examination papers or past Tripos ones. Colleges may also offer invigilated opportunities to practice answering examination papers under timed conditions. This can be useful especially if the majority of a student's work from week to week has not involved extended periods of writing by hand.

19. Where a student's performance in a mock examination gives cause for concern, Colleges may take action as appropriate on a case-by-case basis to help the student address particular difficulties with study or examination skills to help them achieve their potential in subsequent summative forms of assessment.

### **Viva Voce examinations**

20. Some Departments and Faculties reserve the right to call an individual to an oral or viva voce (by live voice) examination where questions have arisen about one or more examination scripts or other submitted work that cannot otherwise be addressed, usually in cases of suspected plagiarism. Other Triposes routinely use viva voces to complete summative assessment of an element of the examination, such as a project.
21. Since practice varies by discipline, students should consult with their Director of Studies and Faculty handbook/information for candidates on the arrangements in their subject.

### **CamCORS Supervision Reports**

22. CamCORS reports written by supervisors are available to students and approved by their Directors of Studies. They provide a useful summary of progress over each term as well as allowing supervisors to reflect on the level of interest and commitment shown by a student, and on their attendance at supervisions. Supervisors are expected to provide an indication of the level of attainment of the term's work, and this indication is expressed as a class, or a range of classes. Directors of Studies and supervisors often use the comments provided for discussions with students, and use the comments to inform references. However, the 'estimate of a term's work or more' is not, and should not be regarded as a prediction. It is an overview of the student's work during that term.
23. If a student makes an application for an examination allowance, the student's CamCORS reports may be used as evidence (see Examination Allowances).

### **Results and Degree Classification**

24. Unlike other UK universities, Cambridge does not award a final degree classification but, instead, each Part of the Tripos is classed. This means that, whilst examinations occur at the end of each Part of the Tripos and results are classed, there is no cumulative class at the end of the course.

# Pre- examination

## Board of Examiners

25. The responsibility for examining undergraduate students falls most notably on a board of Examiners that comprises of a Chair of Examiner (or Senior Examiner in the Natural Sciences Tripos), Examiners, Assessors, and External Examiners.
26. The board of Examiners is collectively responsible for setting and marking examination papers and other forms of assessment in accordance with the relevant marking scheme or criteria agreed and determining the Class list. The Examiners' Guide details the roles and responsibilities of the Chair of Examiners and Examiners.
27. External Examiners play an essential part in ensuring that formal procedures are adhered to, that the standards of awards in Cambridge are comparable to those elsewhere, and in suggesting improvements to the examination process. All External Examiners are required to write reports on the procedure, conduct, and outcomes of the examination.
28. Each Faculty Board (or equivalent body) nominates the Chairs of Examiners and Senior Examiners to the General Board for the start of the academic year. Other Examiners are nominated before the division of Michaelmas Term, whilst Assessors are nominated up to four weeks before the beginning of an examination.
29. All Examiners and Assessors, including External Examiners are appointed annually. External Examiners may be re-appointed for up to two additional consecutive years; other Examiners and Assessors may be re-appointed at the discretion of the nominating body.
30. The Student Registry website holds information about the appointment of Examiners and Assessors.

@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners</a>
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## Setting examination papers

31. In Michaelmas Term, the Student Registry issues guidance notes on the preparation and production of examination papers to ensure compliance with the format standards, to ensure papers are prepared in a secure environment and produced to published deadlines.

@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners</a>
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## Examination enrolment

32. Examination enrolment is conducted on-line through CamSIS during the early part of the Michaelmas Term. Some enrolments are carried out in Lent Term.
33. Before the start of the Michaelmas Term the Student Registry publishes a table with key dates relating to the examination enrolment process, including deadlines for corrections.
34. The Student Registry enrolls students who make their paper/module choices via their Faculty or Department (such as Part IIA, Part IIB of the Engineering Tripos).
35. For those students who cannot be enrolled in October (such as MML students taking a year abroad), a placeholder is added to their record.
36. Enrolment for students taking subjects with only compulsory papers/modules will be done through the bulk enrolment process in early October. The Table of Dates outlines which subjects/papers these are. Colleges do not need to chase enrolments for these papers.

@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/examination-entry-procedures">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/examination-entry-procedures</a>
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## Responsibilities of students

37. Students on Triposes, which offer a choice of papers, are responsible for enrolling in the correct examinations. Students on Triposes where there is no choice of papers will be enrolled automatically for the entire set of examination papers for their Part of the Tripos.
38. If there is a choice of examination papers, students should discuss paper choices with their Director of Studies to ensure that it is appropriate.
39. In Lent Term students will be asked via email to check their entry in CamSIS and confirm it is correct. Changes to examination entries are possible up until the communicated verification deadline in the above Term. Students who wish to change their choice of papers must speak to their Director of Studies as soon as possible. If the change is agreed, students must ask their Tutorial Office to process the change request.

## Responsibilities of Directors of Studies (and Tutors, where applicable)

40. Directors of Studies should advise students about the examination requirements in the subjects they are undertaking, and where options exist, these should have been discussed with the student at the start of the year. Directors of Studies should check and approve examination entries and if changes become necessary ensure that those changes are notified as early as possible.

41. Directors of Studies should ensure that the papers for which the candidate is entering are a permitted combination under the regulations set out for that Tripos and that the student is 'in standing' (that is, eligible). If there is any doubt whatsoever, the Director of Studies should refer to the Student Registry's Guide to Standing or consult the relevant Faculty.
42. The process of monitoring of enrolments, via CamSIS Search, is explained in the Online Examination Verification Guide.

@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/guides-colleges">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/guides-colleges</a>
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### **Examination entry corrections**

43. Should a student need to make an amendment to their paper choices or change their Tripos subject when the enrolment window is closed, the College Tutorial Office will need to submit an Examination Correction Form to the Student Registry as a matter of urgency.

### **Examination Entry Confirmation Form (ECF)**

44. Students will receive a hard copy of their Examination Entry Confirmation Form (ECF) at the start of Easter Term via their Tutorial Office. The ECF is a double-sided document containing important information including the student's examination timetable, examination procedures, and their individual Examination Candidate Number. Students must check their ECF upon receipt to ensure that it contains details of all their expected examinations and report any errors to their Tutorial Office immediately.

### **Plea of incuria**

45. There are instances of candidates preparing for a combination of papers not permitted by the Tripos or Award Regulations and the General Board is empowered to approve irregular combinations of papers but it will only do so under the following circumstances:
  - where a candidate has been entered for an illegal combination of papers where changing to the correct combination would cause serious difficulties for the student, in which case the tutor will need to submit a plea of incuria to the Education Section;
  - where there are extenuating circumstances, such as when a candidate degraded and the Regulations governing the combination of subjects have changed by the time of their return.

## Permitted Materials

46. Calculators are allowed in certain examinations. It is the student's responsibility to confirm if their examinations permit its use, and to check which makes and models are permitted. Calculators must have an approved marking (usually an official yellow sticker). Students requiring further information should contact their Director of Studies or refer to the information published in the University Reporter in Michaelmas Term.

## Adjustments to Examinations and Assessment for reasons of disability

47. The Equality Act 2010, Section 20 of the Act imposes a duty on Higher Education Institutions to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, including in relation to assessment.
48. Institutions are not required to make adjustments that would compromise the academic 'competence standards' of the course.
49. The General Board's Code of Practice: Reasonable Adjustments for Disabled Students describes the University's procedures for determining and approving reasonable adjustments to ensure that disabled students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison with their non-disabled peers.
50. In making a judgement on the appropriateness of an adjustment, the authorising body will be guided by the competence standards for the award. Competence standards will vary between subjects, but the Programme Specification should provide a basis for determining them.

@	<a href="http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students-learning-and-teaching">www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/supporting-students-learning-and-teaching</a>
@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/guides-colleges">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/colleges/guides-colleges</a>

## Responsibilities of students

51. Students do not have to disclose their disability to the University. However, where a disabled student does not disclose their disability, the University will not be able to make reasonable adjustments or ensure that a student has appropriate support. The Disability Resource Centre can provide further information about disclosing a disability.
52. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their requirements with their Tutor or Tutorial Office early in Michaelmas Term in order for them to have enough time before their examinations to obtain the appropriate supporting documentation and practice with the approved adjustment (where appropriate).

53. To receive an examination adjustment or to request an alternative mode of assessment, students must apply via their College, with the required supporting documentation.
54. The deadline for applications for examination adjustments is the division of Lent Term and for applications for an alternative mode of assessment is the end of Michaelmas Term.
55. Examination adjustments do not carry forward from year to year, so as to ensure that there is a review each year of the previous adjustment against any change to the disability and any change to the nature of the examinations and to ensure that any adjustment continues to provide a level playing field. Therefore, examination adjustments should be sought for each year of study.

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/examination-access-arrangements](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/examination-access-arrangements)

### **Adjustments to Examinations and Assessment for reasons of faith**

56. University examinations occur throughout the year, and take place Monday to Saturday. The University Faith Policy makes provision for when the examination timetable might clash with religious observance that restricts work.

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[www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-guides](http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/policy-guides)

### **Responsibilities of students**

57. In order to make an application under the University Faith Policy, students must complete a self-declaration form, countersigned by their College, and submit to the Student Registry by the advertised deadlines.

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/faith-provision-university-exams](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/faith-provision-university-exams)

## Examination venues & staff

58. Examinations take place in multiple venues across the University estate, with the majority in University teaching spaces and some in external venues. Exceptionally, some students sit examinations in College (see Examination arrangements below).
59. The examination venues vary in size, but each is set up according to the standards set by the Board of Examinations.
60. Outside the examination room there will be:
  - a seating plan and the desk number indicating the candidate's seat;
  - a copy of the Proctorial Notice on University Examinations;
  - attendants who escort candidates to the lavatory.
61. Unauthorised material (e.g. mobile phones, coats, bags) must be kept outside the examination room either with the Attendants or at the back of the examination venue (depending on space). Such material is not accessible during the examination.
62. Inside the examination room there will be:
  - on each desk, a coloured desk ticket showing the candidate number, name, College abbreviation, examination code, and paper code;
  - an examination question paper, answer paper (a booklet or loose-leaf paper) treasury tags and a pad of rough paper on each desk;
  - clocks and notice boards (to display any corrections to the examination paper).

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information)

### Responsibilities of examination venue Supervisors

63. Examination venue supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the venue set up and equipped for each examination, that it runs smoothly throughout the examination, calling on Examiners, Invigilators and Examination Office staff as required, during the examination.
64. If the Examiners announces any corrections or clarifications on a paper, the Supervisor will communicate these to the Examinations Office for onward distribution to others sitting in alternative venues.
65. Supervisors collect examination scripts at the end of the examination for distribution to Examiners.



## Responsibilities of examination venue Invigilators

66. Invigilators who are present for the whole examination and whose role is to start the examination, draw attention to any special instructions; check the candidate's ID and ensure that only permissible items are on the desk.
67. The Invigilator will patrol the room, attend to candidate's requests, deal with any disturbances, and note any irregularities, including suspicions of examination misconduct.
68. The Invigilator then makes the end of examination announcements.

## Responsibilities of the Examinations Office

69. The Examinations Office runs throughout the Easter Term examinations. Its role is to:
  - manage the distribution of question papers and examination stationery and the collection and distribution of examination scripts;
  - communicate examination paper corrections and clarifications to all the venues where candidates are sitting;
  - inform College tutorial staff of students who have not arrived at an examination venue;
  - respond to any reported irregularities and may call on the Proctors or the Secretary of the Board of Examinations to attend the venue.

## Responsibilities of Proctors

70. Proctors are formally responsible for overseeing examinations and may visit any examination venue, particularly when examination misconduct is suspected. They issue notices of guidance and regulation.

@	<a href="http://www.proctors.cam.ac.uk/">www.proctors.cam.ac.uk/</a>
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# Examination Day

## Examination timetables

71. Examination timetables are published no later than four weeks before the start of the examination near the beginning of term.

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/all-students-timetable](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/all-students-timetable)

## Responsibility of the Examiners

72. An Examiner, who has set the paper, is required to attend the principal examination venue for the first twenty minutes of writing time, to review the examination paper and to answer any questions raised by an Invigilator if it appears a correction or clarification on a paper is needed. The Examiner would then announce any corrections.
73. The Examiner remains on-call throughout the period of the examination.

## Responsibilities of students

74. Students should familiarise themselves with the examination venue and travel options to ensure they arrive for their examination in sufficient time. Examination venues may not be within walking distance of a student's accommodation.
75. Students should familiarise themselves with the detail provided on their Examination Entry Confirmation Form (ECF).
- Page 1 of the ECF provides the candidate's number, lists the time and venue for each of the Papers being sat and also specifies the time candidates might enter the room and when any reading time might start.
  - Page 2 details what items are required, permitted, and disallowed in the examination venue. It also explains what is required from students pre-examination, in the examination room, and post-examination.
76. Students who have fallen ill, and before arriving at the examination venue, must notify their College immediately, appropriate support will be offered.
77. Students are responsible for getting to the examination venue on time. Students arriving late, and within 30-minutes of the scheduled start time, are allowed to enter the examination but do not receive any extra time. Students who arrive 30 minutes or more after the examination start time are deemed to have missed the examination.

78. If a student falls ill during the examination, they should alert the Invigilator (see also 82).
79. Students should write legibly, but if the script is completely illegible the Chair of Examiners might request the student to produce a transcript, and within 48-hours of the request.
80. If a student breaches any rules, or participates in examination misconduct by accessing unauthorised material or gaining an unfair advantage in an examination they are subject to a fine or the circumstances may be considered by the Discipline Committee, which can issue a penalty that affects a student's academic results.

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/practical-instructions](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/practical-instructions)

### Missing students

81. University policy states that a student who misses an examination altogether without good cause, such as illness, or who arrives more than 30 minutes late will receive no credit for that examination paper.

### Students in distress

82. Students who arrive at the examination venue in distress should make themselves known to an Invigilator either in the examination room or in an anteroom; they are advised not to leave the building. Their College will be informed in these circumstances, and appropriate support can be offered. This will involve being accompanied by a Tutor or member of the Tutorial Office, who will give the student time and space to recover from distress, and will provide an opportunity for the student to complete the examination paper in College that day. During this period, the student is not permitted to contact family or friends, to use electronic devices or consult hard copy study materials.

### Distribution of Examination scripts

83. The Examinations Office manages the distribution of scripts to Examiners and seeks to distribute as soon as possible after the exam. Due to the various circumstances that allow a student to sit their examinations in a location other than the main venue, it may take up to 4 working days after the exam for the script to reach the delivery location supplied.

### Missing scripts

84. Experience shows that scripts are rarely missing, but often found to be with the student (who has erroneously removed the script rather than the question paper from the venue) or with the Faculty/Department or College. Only after a thorough investigation, and only after 4-working days have elapsed (see 83 above) might the Examinations Office classify a script as missing.

85. Where a script is classified as missing, the Examinations Office will contact the Chair of Examiners and the Senior Tutor.

### **Disruptions or irregularities in the conduct of an examination paper or venue**

86. Students who have reason to believe that the examination has been disrupted should report this to their Tutor as soon as possible and in any case within three days of the examination. With the student's agreement, the Tutor would report the irregularity to the Student Registry to instigate the relevant examination review procedure.

### **Examination celebrations**

87. Students are responsible for ensuring that any post-examination celebrations once the last of their or their friends' examinations are completed do not endanger others, cause damage to other people's property, or impede public byways. Students should be careful to avoid causing inconvenience or upset to others, including other students, University or College staff, and members of the public. The Proctorial Notice on exam celebrations provides further information about post-examination rules and fines on those who do not co-operate with them or other university or examination venue staff.

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[www.proctors.cam.ac.uk/notices](http://www.proctors.cam.ac.uk/notices)

# Post-examinations

## Marking

88. The University issues Blind Grade Numbers (BGNs) to all students enrolled onto subject areas on an annual basis and candidates, when completing any assessed work, use the number. All assessed work should be marked anonymously; this includes coursework, practicals, and all written examinations. BGNs are assigned to students using a CamSIS process and they take the form of four digits followed by a letter, i.e. 2648F.
89. Each subject has a prescribed number range therefore the student has a different BGN assigned for each subject in which they are enrolled. As such, some students are allocated multiple BGNs within a single year of study. This occurs where they are enrolled in more than one subject, e.g. Medical Students would expect a BGN for each Second MB Subject they are sitting and another for their enrolment on the Medical & Veterinary Sciences Tripos.

## Illegible scripts

90. Students are expected to write legibly. When an examiner reports a script as illegible and the Chair of Examiners or a Senior Examiner confirms this, the student's College will be notified and will collect the script from the Student Registry. The student responsible will be required to produce a transcript of the collected script, whether by dictation or by typing. The student's Tutor will compare the transcript with the original to ensure that there are no discrepancies. The transcript must be produced, checked and returned to the Student Registry within 48 hours. This is inconvenient for all concerned and the College may choose to pass on associated costs to the student.

## Examiners' meetings

91. Examiners, including External Examiners, attend Examiners' Meetings to discuss matters such as the assessment of student work, the release date of Class Lists and appeal procedures. A Final Examiners' Meeting is held for each part of the Tripos.
92. The University has good practice guidelines for the conduct and recording of Examiners' Meetings. These include guidance about the content, recording and archiving of minutes, reporting requirements and timetables and the procedural detail of the meeting.

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[www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners](http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners)

## External Examiners' reports

93. All External Examiners are required to write reports on the procedure, conduct, and outcomes of the Examination.
94. External Examiners address their reports to the Vice-Chancellor, who passes them to Educational and Student Policy (ESP) for scrutiny before they are forwarded to Faculties/Departments. The Faculty Board, or equivalent, is responsible for providing formal written responses to each External Examiner individually, and these are forwarded to the General Board's Education Committee, along with any additional commentary they care to make. External Examiners' reports for each Part of the Tripos are expected no later than the end of the Michaelmas Term following the Final Examiners' meeting.
95. External Examiners' reports should be made available to students, this is a QAA requirement, enacted through University policy that is monitored through the Learning and Teaching Reviews.
96. The ESP website has further information about responding to External Examiners' reports and other Examiners' reports.

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[www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/examiners-reports](http://www.educationalpolicy.admin.cam.ac.uk/curricula-and-assessment/examiners-reports)

## Feedback

97. Students should be informed about feedback (i.e. what they will receive, how they will receive it and when, the nature, and function of the feedback).
98. Feedback from Examiners about exam performance is important to those who sat the examination, to those sitting future examinations, and to those setting the examinations. Therefore, students should have access to both the internal and external Examiners' reports.
99. Whilst in principle it would be beneficial for students to receive feedback to each answer they have provided, it is not feasible for Examiners in all disciplines to provide written feedback on student's individual performance in unseen examinations.
100. It is reasonable to expect Examiners to provide cohort reports which offer a commentary on the answers and on the performance of the cohort, and a breakdown of the marks (except for where only an individual sat a Paper) for example stating how many answered each question, the range of marks awarded to each question.
101. Only where appropriate, should Examiners provide model answers.

## Results and Class Lists

102. In order to ensure continuity between years and fair treatment to all candidates, Faculty Boards should set out their classing conventions clearly to students and to Examiners. Most student assessment outcomes appear at the end of the Easter Term. They are generally published in two phases: (i) the overall class (or pass/fail) and (ii) the release of the mark breakdown by paper.
103. The Student Registry prepares an annual schedule for Departments and Colleges, for the release of results to students. Directors of Studies and Tutorial Offices can inform students of the expected date of their results.
104. The Chairman of Examiners (Senior Examiners in the case of NST Parts II and III) is responsible for compiling the final Class List and supporting information, and submitting this to the Student Registry. After receipt, the Student Registry will process the class list and send individual class results to the student's CamSIS account as soon as possible throughout the day.
105. Traditionally, Class Lists are then be posted outside the Senate House from 4.30pm each day, with copies sent to Colleges.

## Grade Rosters

106. The University has a statutory requirement to provide students with an official University transcript after they have had a degree conferred either in person or in absence at a Degree Ceremony (excluding the Cambridge MA), or after they have completed a formal course of study where the qualification is not obtained by conferral at a Degree Ceremony. The data is drawn from information held in Grade Rosters.
107. Grade Rosters are tables in CamSIS (the student record system) that hold all data relating to assessment. There is a Grade Roster for every paper within a subject and another to record the Class/Pass/Fail information for each subject. This enables meaningful data to appear on a student's official University transcript.
108. It is the responsibility of the Chair of Examiners (or Senior Examiners in the case of NST Parts II and III) to complete the Grade Roster template issued by the Student Registry.
109. More information can be found in the Grade Roster Guide issued by the Student Registry.

@	<a href="http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/class-lists-and-grade-rosters">www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/class-lists-and-grade-rosters</a>
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## Mitigating circumstances, reviews and appeals

### Assessment other than examinations

110. Students should ensure that they are aware of their course guidance on what to do if extenuating circumstances mean that they will not be able to meet a deadline, or if they miss an assessed teaching session due to illness or other unavoidable cause. Students should notify their Director of Studies or Tutor promptly if they have any questions or concerns about their ability to complete work or meet deadlines.

111. Directors of Studies and Tutors should be aware of the policies/mechanisms for:

- deadline extensions and absences from assessed teaching sessions;
- alerting Departments and Faculties of any problems;
- formally requesting deadline extensions;
- requesting that a missed deadline or assessed teaching session be excused;
- what the Faculty does and does not consider valid reasons for missing such sessions.

### Examination allowances

112. Where illness or other grave cause has affected a student's examination results, students should discuss this with their Tutor who can place an Examination Warning on their record. The student's Tutor might apply to the Standing Committee on Applications (known as the Applications Committee) for an allowance. The application will need to include documented medical and other evidence. It will not include examination arrangements already agreed by the Student Registry. The Applications Committee may instruct the Chairman of the Board of Examiners and two other Examiners to review and amend the class. This review may take up to one calendar month.

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[www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-us/applications-committee](http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/about-us/applications-committee)

### Examination Reviews (examination appeals)

113. Students may request a review of results on the basis of one or more of the following grounds:

- A procedural irregularity in the examination process that has adversely impacted the Candidate's Examination Results;
- Demonstrable bias or the perception of bias within the examination process.



114. Students cannot request a review on the basis of their supervision reports in CamCORS; or on the basis that they believe that the mark given was unfair and did not reflect their ability. This type of request questions the examiners' academic judgment, which is not permitted. The University has robust procedures in place to ensure that academic judgment is used appropriately.
115. Requests for a review upon either of the permitted grounds must be submitted by the student on the University form within 28 days of a student receiving the result within CamSIS and will be considered by an Examination Review Officer who is not connected to the department or faculty, or the student's College.

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[www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews/undergraduate-and-postgraduate-1](http://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/examination-reviews/undergraduate-and-postgraduate-1)

### General Admission Congregation

116. The Vice-Chancellor or a deputy at the General Admission Congregation, which takes place at the Senate House, confers undergraduate degrees.
117. A student who is unable to or does not wish to take their degree in person may seek permission, via their College Praelector, to graduate in absentia.

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[www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/graduation](http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/graduation)

### Certificates and transcripts

118. Students who graduate in the Senate House are presented with the certificate immediately after their degree is conferred. If students do not graduate in person, the certificate is sent to their College. The Cambridge Students website explains how to order replacement or supplementary copies or alternative design certificates and the costs.
119. Academic transcripts are available to students.
120. The Cambridge Students website has further information about accessing and ordering transcripts, including the costs, and how to order additional or replacement copies.

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[www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/graduation-and-what-next/degree-certificates-and-transcripts](http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/graduation-and-what-next/degree-certificates-and-transcripts)

## Glossary of terms

<b>Applications Committee</b>	Formally, 'The Standing Committee on Applications', this Committee considers applications for examination allowances and similar requests.
<b>Assessors</b>	Assessors are appointed to mark examination papers (see also Examiners).
<b>CamCORS</b>	Cambridge Colleges' Online Reporting System for Supervisions
<b>CamSIS</b>	Cambridge University's online systems for managing student information, records and transactions.
<b>Candidate</b>	A candidate is a student who is enrolled into examinations.
<b>Chair of Examiners</b>	The Chair has a number of additional duties to those of Examiners including convening meetings and co-ordinating the business of Examiners. Further details may be found in the Examiners' Guide on the Student Registry website.
<b>Class List</b>	A printed list of the names of all candidates and their Tripos results arranged alphabetically by class achieved.
<b>Division of Term</b>	Division of Term is half-way through Term (not Full Term). The dates are the same for every year except for Easter Term: 9 November, 13 February and 14 May or 21 May depending on whether Easter Term starts on 10 April or 17 April.
<b>Examination adjustments</b>	Variations made to the standard examination conditions (time, venue, equipment permitted) for an individual student after application by their Tutor to the Board of Examinations.
<b>Examination Entry</b>	The process by which a student enrolls for particular examination papers and other examined elements; also the printed record of that registration, the Examination Entry Confirmation Form, once their Director of Studies has checked it and the Tutorial Office has submitted it.
<b>Examiner</b>	One of a team of academic specialists responsible for marking and classing an examination paper. Examiners are eligible for appointment as an Assessor (see also Assessors). <b>External Examiners</b> are appointed from institutions external to the University. Their role is defined in Chapter 7 of the QAA's Quality Code for Higher Education.
<b>General Board</b>	Formally, 'The General Board of the Faculties' is the body responsible for the academic and educational policy of the University.
<b>Invigilator</b>	Exam Invigilators or Supervisors are appointed by the Board of Examinations to ensure that every examination is conducted according to examination regulations.
<b>Matriculate</b>	When students enrol or register at their College.
<b>Praelector</b>	A College Officer with responsibilities including matriculating students and presenting students in the Senate House for admission to their degree.

<b>Proctor</b>	An elected member of the University whose duties include representing the interests of Regent House members, and maintaining discipline.
<b>Standing</b>	A student who is 'in standing' is eligible to take University examinations.
<b>Student</b>	(see also Candidate)
<b>Student Registry</b>	The primary role of the Student Registry is to provide administrative support to collegiate staff and several Committees, including the Board of Examinations.
<b>Supervisor</b>	(see also Invigilator)
<b>Tripes</b>	Broad subject areas are called Triposes. These are divided into Parts and students need to complete a number of Parts in one or more Triposes to qualify for their B.A. degree.
<b>Tripes Handbook</b>	The Tripes Handbook is an alternative title for Faculty Handbooks which all Faculties provide for undergraduate students.
<b>Tutorial Office</b>	Tutorial Offices are located in all undergraduate Colleges wherein they provide administrative support for all aspects of teaching and welfare functions from matriculation to graduation.

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