

**Final Honour Schools of Computer Science,
Computer Science and Philosophy and
Mathematics and Computer Science**

First Public Examination 2021

Notice to Candidates from the Examiners in Computer Science

Purpose of this notice

Full particulars of the examinations are given in the Examination Regulations 2020, and the Examination Conventions for 2020/21 can be found at

<http://www.cs.ox.ac.uk/teaching/examconventions/bacompsci.html>

You can find the examination regulations here:

[Preliminary Examination in Computer Science](#)

[Preliminary Examination in Mathematics and Computer Science](#)

[Preliminary Examination in Computer Science and Philosophy](#)

This notice is confined to matters that may need emphasis or amplification. It is addressed only to candidates in the Honour Schools of Computer Science, Computer Science & Philosophy and of Mathematics & Computer Science. If you are a candidate from another school (for example Mathematics) then you should refer for information to notices circulated by the chairmen of examiners in those schools.

The marking and classification scheme for prelims is described in the Examination Conventions.

PLEASE READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY!

Independence of Examiners

Please note that you are not allowed to contact the examiners directly. Any communication must be via the Senior Tutor of your college, who will contact the Proctors if appropriate. The Proctors will in turn communicate with the Chair of Examiners.

Conduct of the examination

Examinations this year will be in the open-book format.

The start time for your examination will depend on time zone and whether you have any alternative arrangements in place.

Exams starting in the morning in the UK

- If you are in the UK, or in the time zones GMT+2 to +7
You should begin your exam at 09.30 UK time

- If you are in any other time zone

You can start your exam at any point from 09.30 UK time but must start no later than 9:30 local time (i.e. the country you are in when you take the exam) - (this may be the day after the UK start time if your time zone is ahead of GMT). This flexibility is to allow you to sit during daytime hours, if that is your preference.

Exams starting in the afternoon in the UK

- If you are in the UK, or in the time zone GMT+2
You should begin your exam at 14:30 UK time

- If you are in any other time zone

You can start your exam at any point from 14:30 UK time but must start no later than 14:30 local time (i.e. the country you are in when you take the exam) - (this may be the day after the UK start time if your time zone is ahead of GMT). This flexibility is to allow you to sit during daytime hours, if that is your preference.

You will have 30 minutes of technical time to upload your answers into the system. This time will be added to the time you have to complete your paper, so for a 2.5-hour paper you will have 3 hours, and a 3 hour paper you will have 3 hours and 30 minutes.

PLEASE READ the University's guidance for open-book exams:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/open-book/trinity-term>

The University is going to use a new platform for open-book examinations, [Inspera](#). Inspera does not work on all internet browsers, so please make sure you take a demo exam (**format B**) in good time before your first exam is scheduled. You might want to install the Authy desktop app on your computer so that you are not reliant on your mobile phone for [multi-factor authentication](#).

When you first [open your exam](#) you will be required to confirm that you are going to abide by the [Honour Code for Open-Book exams](#).

In Inspera, your exam paper will open in a pdf file which you can export and open on a second device. This might be helpful for you if you decide to typeset your answers.

You are going to write your paper in “handwritten” mode. This means you will be required to answer all questions outside the system and upload **one** pdf with your answers. You can write your answers by hand and scan them, or typeset them, or a mix of all these, and it would be a good idea to practice how to create pdfs before you take your first exam.

By default, Inspera will provide a text box alongside the upload function. **Please ignore the text box.**

The markers will receive the pdf as you have uploaded it. Please make their life bearable by:

- arranging the upload in question number order
- marking clearly on your upload which question an answer belongs to – you might want to note the question number on the top of each page
- keeping the answers to each question together in one section of your pdf

If you need technical help during the exam, or if you have to submit your answers late, you'll need to complete an Online Service Request form (link on [the guidance site](#), tab 4) or call 01865 (6)12121. If you

submit late, you should submit a Mitigating Circumstances Notice to Examiners to explain the reason for your late submission.

Please note the following during the exam:

As the examinations are in open-book format, you are allowed to refer to lecture notes, textbooks, and any other written material during the examination. You are also allowed to use electronic resources, including calculators, automated tools such as computational algebra systems, and online notes.

You can include material from any of these sources directly in your submitted answers, as long as the source is acknowledged. Questions have been set so that complete answers will generally not be easily available from existing sources.

However, you are not permitted to communicate the contents of the questions to anyone else, or to ask anyone else any questions, or seek any advice, related to the contents of the paper, via any medium, publicly or privately, during the examination.

You are responsible for submitting your own work. You should not receive any assistance in the process; whether downloading, photographing scripts, or uploading.

Queries during the examination:

It will not be possible to query the content of the exam paper during the exam. If you think that there is an error or mistake in your exam paper then you should state what you consider the error or mistake to be at the start of your answer for that question and, if necessary, you should state how you are interpreting the question. You should then try to complete the paper as best you can.

Legibility: If you are writing by hand, please write legibly, in blue or black pen (not pencil except for diagrams). Illegible scripts, if they are to be considered by the examiners, will be typed at your expense. Please make sure that you retain a copy of your original submission in case you are required submit a second copy.

Timetable

You will receive your individual timetable in Student Self Service in due course, at the latest two weeks before the first exam is scheduled.

Open-Book Exams: Penalties for lateness

Penalties will be applied if you submit your exam response later than expected (including later than specified in agreed alternative arrangements).

If you experience any technical problems on the day, you must contact the support desk immediately at the point of the difficulty.

The penalties for late exam responses are:

Time	Penalty
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Up to 5 minutes and 59 seconds	No penalty
From 6 minutes	Fail mark

Practical work

Submitting your practical work: We will take the marks from our Minerva database. You will be sent a record of your practical marks and will be asked to alert the department of any discrepancies.

In addition, you will be asked to upload your practicals in one zip file to a WebLearn site. Please only include what you have used for signing off, and nothing else. Do not include your name either on the practicals themselves, or in the file name. Everything must be labelled with your candidate number.

The deadline for the submission of your practicals is noon on Friday 28th May.

Assessment of Practical Work: The examiners will determine a mark for the practical work associated with each computer science paper, taking into account the provisional mark assigned by the demonstrator and their own assessment of the work submitted.

Practicals do not contribute to the classification of candidates but each candidate must pass the practical course in order to pass the examination.

Consideration of Mitigating Circumstances

If you believe your performance in assessment has been seriously affected by circumstances related to COVID-19 and/or serious personal circumstances such as acute serious illness, chronic illness (including mental health conditions) bereavement etc. you can submit a Mitigating Circumstances notice to your examiners (MCE) either directly or via your college or your department if you are a non-matriculated student.

You can also use the MCE process to explain to examiners why your exam response for an online open-book exam was submitted late.

Further information can be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/problems-completing-your-assessment>

Results

The final examiners' meeting is scheduled to be held in the middle of July and the examiners hope to be able to publish results shortly thereafter.

Difficulties

Any candidate who encounters difficulties with any of the above should discuss the matter with his or her tutor without delay.

Prof. M. Goldsmith
Chairman of Examiners
Preliminary Examination in Computer Science,
Computer Science & Philosophy and
Mathematics & Computer Science
(Trinity Term 2021)