

MSc in Computer Science

Hilary Term examination 2012

NOTICE TO CANDIDATES

Sixteen courses are scheduled for examination at the end of Hilary Term, 2012. This notice gives information about what to hand in and when, advice on practical work, advice on how much time to spend on each assignment, the sit down exam, and general hints on the content of the examination. Attached to this circular you will find details of the marking system used to assess your examined work.

Please note that you will be required to complete a formal examination entry form for your Hilary Term topics. You will receive this form in the next couple of weeks through your college, and will be required to return it to the Exam Schools by Friday of week 7 at the latest.

Written Exam

The following courses will be examined by a sit down exam which will take place early in week 0 of Trinity Term, the actual day and time to be determined:

- Compilers
- Knowledge Representation & Reasoning
- Machine Learning

Exams will take place at the Examination Schools, High Street, Oxford. You will have three hours to complete each exam.

You will be required to wear academic dress with *subfusc* clothing at these exams, which comprises of the following:

- *For women* A dark skirt or trousers, a white blouse, black tie, black stockings and shoes, and, if desired, a dark coat
- *For men* A dark suit and socks, black shoes, a white bow tie and plain white shirt and collar

Assignment

The other courses will be examined by a take-home assignment. The assignments for each of the courses given this term will be available on **Friday of week 8 (9th March)** except:

- Concurrency
- Computational Complexity
- Automata Logic & Games
- Quantum Computer Science
- Theory of Data & Knowledge Bases

which will be available on **Monday of week 8 (5th March)**.

You should collect your assignments from Wendy Adams in Room 112 after 12 noon on the appropriate day.

The assignment must be handed in, in an envelope and clearly marked with your candidate number, to the Examination Schools, High St, by noon sharp on the following date:

Hand-in: 12 noon, Tuesday 3rd April, 2012

Schedule A

Concurrency
Concurrent Programming
Introduction to Specification

Schedule B

Computational Complexity
Reasoning about Information Update

Schedule C

Automata Logic & Games
Database Systems Implementation
Information Retrieval
Program Analysis
Quantum Computer Science
Requirements
Software Verification
Theory of Data & Knowledge Bases

Practicals

Your practical work should be handed in to Wendy Adams (room 112) at the Department of Computer Science **between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. on Wednesday 18th April 2012. Please note that the absolute deadline is 2.00 p.m. that day.** The work should be submitted in one bundle in a single envelope addressed to the Chairman of Examiners, MSc in Computer Science and must be marked clearly on the outside with your name and candidate number.

The attached 'Declaration form for practical work' also needs to be completed and submitted. Please note that you have to sign the declaration stating that the work you are submitting is all your own, except for marks and comments by demonstrators and other material clearly indicated.

Please also note that each separate report of practical work should be conspicuously labelled with your candidate number **only**, and **not** with your name or college.

All practical work must be signed off by a demonstrator before you submit it.

Guidelines for assignments

An assignment will normally take the form of a tutorial sheet containing about four questions on the course, and will contain bookwork questions and new exercises. Assignments should each take 2/3 days for topics under Schedules A and B, and 3/4 days for topics under Schedule C. You may, however, need an extra day for background reading. You should aim to spend no more than two to three days on each assignment, excluding preparatory reading.

1. Although the assignments may be carried out while you are resident in Oxford, some may be prepared over the Vacation period. Students who wish to complete their assignments away from Oxford should make sure that they have access to a computer.
2. Your answer to an assignment should not normally exceed 20 pages, (10 pages would be more typical). Write on one side of the paper only, and use standard A4. Write legibly and allow time to polish answers. Illegible and poorly laid out answers will be penalised more severely than in a standard 3-hour written exam. Typewritten or word-processed answers are acceptable, provided the mathematical notation is clear, but do not waste your precious time in presenting your answers in Word format or in LaTeX-ing your answers (unless you are accomplished at this).
3. You should aim to do significantly more than half of each assignment. If you complete less than half of an assignment, you should still hand it in. Even if you fail in that subject, the work will earn you credit in the overall assessment as long as it reaches the minimum standard. Furthermore, your work may suggest remedial action to your supervisor.
4. If prior to submitting your exam entry form you think you will have trouble with completing all the assignments, consider dropping one of them altogether; discuss this with your supervisor. If you do decide to drop one assignment you must make sure you advise Wendy Adams. **However, you cannot withdraw once you have submitted the exam entry form.** If you fail to submit an

assignment for one of the topics listed on your Exam entry form, the Examination Schools will notify the Proctors that you have failed to submit an assignment. As a result, the Proctors may deem you to have failed the entire course!

5. The regulations state that you must achieve a “minimum standard” in at least 28 units of assignments. The examiners will interpret a minimum standard as being 30 USMs.
6. If problems arise, please consult your supervisor (or the Director of the MSc course) in the first instance. Supervisors will not be able to help you answer the assignments, but they may be able to help you with your reading and your planning. If you have difficulty contacting your supervisor you should contact Wendy Adams. You should not make direct contact with either the lecturer concerned or the examiners.
7. When submitting your assignments you will have to complete a Declaration Form attesting that they are your own work, except where indicated. Failure to correctly acknowledge your sources is plagiarism, which is treated as a very serious disciplinary offence. The consequences of copying can never be remedied. Please consult (a) the University web site regarding plagiarism (<http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/epsc/plagiarism/index.shtml>), and (b) your supervisor if you are worried about possible suspicion of irregularity in examination procedures.

You should not show your assignment to, or discuss it with, any other student. You should not ask or seek to look at anybody else's work.

If you use material from any other source such as textbooks, lecture notes or the web then you should reference it explicitly at the relevant point. Your supervisor can give you guidance on proper referencing, or for more guidance see <http://library.leeds.ac.uk/info/200232/referencing>

You will not receive any credit for simply copying information verbatim because that displays very little understanding. The assessors will be more impressed if you synthesise information from a number of sources (properly cited, of course), and combine it with your own ideas.

8. Please remember that you need to obtain an overall pass in your practicals to be able to pass the MSc in Computer Science. See the Course Handbook for details.

Results

It is anticipated that a list of those candidates who have satisfied the examiners will be posted at the end of the corridor from room 112.

Tuesday 24th April, 2012

Dr H Nickau
Chairman of Examiners
MSc in Computer Science

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Copy: Supervisors