

Oxford University Department of Computer Science
Undergraduate Supervisory Committee

Examination Conventions: Finals, Parts A and B, 2018

This document establishes the examining conventions to be used in the following public examinations:

Final Honour School of Computer Science and Philosophy, Parts A and B

Nothing contained in this document supersedes the University's regulations and policy set out in the current *Examination Regulations* and the *Notes for the Guidance of Examiners and Chairmen of Examiners* and the *Notes of Guidance on Examinations and Assessment*.

The Examination Conventions are reviewed by the Supervisory Committee for Computer Science and Philosophy, and approved by the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division, following consideration by the Computer Science Undergraduate Supervisory Committee and the Board of the Faculty of Philosophy.

The Board of Examiners may make minor deviations from these conventions in exceptional circumstances, ideally after reference to the Computer Science Undergraduate Supervisory Committee or to the Proctors.

1 Documentation

Examiners will have access to the following documents. The Chairman of Examiners will ensure that, where appropriate, External Examiners have access to these documents.

1. The current *Examination Regulations*.
2. The booklet, *Notes for the Guidance of Examiners and Chairmen of Examiners*, published by the Proctors' Office.
3. The Educational Policy and Standards Committee's *Notes of Guidance on Examinations and Assessment*.
4. The *Course Handbook*, including the syllabus for each lecture course.
5. The current *Examination Conventions* for Parts A and B in Computer Science.
6. The *examination papers* from the preceding two years.
7. The *Examiners' Reports* on these examinations, including the published tables of *Class Percentage Figures*.
8. The *External Examiners' reports* for the previous two years, together with the responses to these reports made by the Undergraduate Supervisory Committee.

2 Setting the papers

Computer Science papers

Computer Science papers will be set following the standard practice in Computer Science which is detailed in the Examination Conventions: Finals, Parts A and B, 2017 for Computer Science.

Philosophy papers

Philosophy questions are set following the standard practice of the Philosophy Faculty.

3 Marking and checking scripts

Computer Science

Computer Science scripts will be marked and checked following the standard practice in Computer Science as described in the Examination Conventions: Finals, Parts A and B, 2017 for Computer Science.

Computers in Society will be examined via take-home assignment to be completed over the Easter vacation and a presentation to be conducted during Hilary term 2017, week 7.

Philosophy

All Philosophy scripts are marked independently by two examiners and a third examiner in any case where the two examiners cannot resolve a discrepancy between their marks.

In Philosophy the standard of work for the various classes is specified in Annexe A.

4 Moderation and classification

Translation of raw marks into USMs, treatment of medical evidence, and treatment of practicals are as described in the Examination Conventions: Finals, Parts A and B, 2017 for Computer Science.

The Finals examination is based on the aggregate marks from second and third year examinations. The final classification will be based on a weighted mean of the USMs. Computer Science options attract the same weight whether they are taken in the second year or the third year.

OLD REGULATIONS **for candidates taking Part B in 2017-18**

The weights to be assigned to each unit of assessment are as follows:

CS course	2 hours	weight 10
Philosophy course	3 hours	weight 20

Part A

Each candidate takes four Computer Science courses (to include *Models of Computation*) (total weight 40)

Part B

Each candidate takes two, four or six Computer Science subjects and five, four or three Philosophy courses, respectively (total weight 120).

This makes a total weight of 160, so that the weighted mean of the marks is computed by multiplying the marks for individual courses by the weights shown above, adding them all up, and then dividing the total by 160.

The examiners should also calculate an adjusted average USM using a weight of 30 for each Philosophy course so that the weighted mean of the marks is computed by multiplying the marks for individual courses, adding them all up, and then dividing the total by either 210, 200 or 190 depending on whether the candidate has taken five, four or three Philosophy courses, respectively.

NEW REGULATIONS **for candidates taking Part A in 2017-18**

The weights to be assigned to each unit of assessment are as follows:

CS course	2 hours	weight 14
Philosophy course	3 hours	weight 28

Part A

Each candidate takes two Computer Science courses (*Models of Computation and Algorithms*) (total weight 28)

Part B

Each candidate takes four, six or eight Computer Science subjects and five, four or three Philosophy courses, respectively (total weight 196).

This makes a total weight of 224, so that the weighted mean of the marks is computed by multiplying the marks for individual courses by the weights shown above, adding them all up, and then dividing the total by 224.

The examiners should also calculate an adjusted average USM using a weight of 42 for each Philosophy course so that the weighted mean of the marks is computed by multiplying the marks for individual courses, adding them all up, and then dividing the total by either 294, 280 or 266 depending on whether the candidate has taken five, four or three Philosophy courses, respectively.

The average USM is then rounded to the nearest integer, with fractions of exactly half a mark being rounded up, and a degree class assigned according to the following table:

First class	Average USM at least 70, or adjusted average USM of 70 and an average USM on Computer Science papers of 60. The candidate shows excellent skills in reasoning, deductive logic and problem-solving. He/she demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the material, and is able to use it innovatively in unfamiliar contexts.
Upper second class	Average USM at least 60 The candidate shows good or very good skills in reasoning, deductive logic and problem-solving. He/she demonstrates a good or very good knowledge of much of the material.
Lower second class	Average USM at least 50

	The candidate shows adequate basic skills in reasoning, deductive logic and problem-solving. He/she demonstrates a sound knowledge of much of the material.
Third class	Average USM at least 40 The candidate shows reasonable understanding of at least part of the basic material and some skills in reasoning, deductive logic and problem-solving.
Pass degree	Average USM at least 30 The candidate shows some limited grasp of basic material demonstrated by the equivalent of an average of one meaningful attempt at a question on each unit of study. A stronger performance on some papers may compensate for a weaker performance on others.
Fail	Average USM less than 30 The candidate shows little evidence of competence in the topics examined; the work is likely to show major misunderstanding and confusion, coupled with inaccurate calculations; the answers to questions attempted are likely to be fragmentary only.

Students who do not obtain at least an upper second will not be allowed to progress to the fourth year.

Treatment of practicals

Computer Science practicals will be treated in accordance with standard practice in Computer Science which is detailed in the Examination Conventions: Finals, Parts A and B, 2017 for Computer Science.

5 Late submission or failure to submit coursework

Under the provisions permitted by the regulations, late submission of coursework (i.e. project reports) where there are no extenuating circumstances may result in the following penalties:

Lateness (where the deadline is Monday at 12 noon)	Cumulative penalty
Up to 4 hours i.e. up to Monday 4pm	1%
4 - 24 hours i.e. up to Tues 12 noon	10%
24 – 48 hours i.e. up to Weds 12 noon	20%
48 – 72 hours i.e. up to Thurs 12 noon	30%
72 – 96 hours i.e. up to Fri 12 noon	40%
96 – 101 hours i.e. up to Fri 5pm	50%
More than 14 calendar days after the notice of non-submission	Fail

6 Penalties for over-length work and departure from approved titles

Where a candidate submits a dissertation (or other piece of written coursework) which exceeds the word limit prescribed by the relevant regulation, the examiners, if they agree to proceed with the examination of the work, may reduce the mark by up to one class (i.e. from a 1st to a 2:1, or its equivalent).

7 Communication with candidates

The Chairman of Examiners should write to candidates, reminding them of the general form and procedure for the examination. Notices to candidates from recent years are commended as examples to follow.

8 After the examination

It will be helpful if Examiners will ensure that:

- Full Marking Schemes are deposited (after the examination is complete) in the Examiners' files, kept in the Departmental Office.
- LaTeX source files for the papers (incorporating any corrections) are kept for the electronic archive.

9 External Examiner

The External Examiner for the following degree, for 2017-18, will be Professor Susan Eisenbach, Professor of Computer Science, Imperial College London.

Final Honour School of Computer Science and Philosophy, Parts A and B

Annexe A:

Philosophy Marking Conventions

Examination performance

These marking conventions will be used by Philosophy examiners and assessors in marking work in philosophy for the Honour Schools. They apply for use in the academic year 2017-18 and will be reviewed each subsequent year.

Criteria for examination essay work

The following conventions will be used for marking essay work in timed written examinations. The conventions use positive criteria (marked by "+") and negative criteria (marked by "-") in order to assign marks.

First class: 100 to 70

Upper: 84+

Exceptional answer displaying originality, outstanding analytical and argumentative skills, superior command of the facts and arguments relevant to the question, excellent organisation, and lucid and precise expression.

Middle: 81, 78

Excellent answer offering high-level analysis, independent and rigorous argument, skilled handling of the facts and arguments relevant to the question, transparent organisation, and lucid and precise expression.

Lower: 75, 72

Strong answer displaying a high standard of analysis and argument, a thorough command of the facts and/or arguments relevant to the question, transparent organisation and clear language.

Upper second (2.1): 69 to 60

Upper: 69 to 65

- + Effective analysis and argumentation, thorough command of evidence, clarity of expression, transparent organisation of material.
- Occasional imprecision in argumentation or expression; or lack of depth; or minor omissions; or lapses in focus.

Lower: 60-64

- + Well-structured answer offering a generally accurate analysis of central arguments and themes, and a well-reasoned conclusion.
- Occasional lapses in argumentation; writing may be somewhat pedestrian or unclear or imprecise; some omissions or infelicity in organisation of material.

Lower second (2.2): 59 to 50

Upper: 59 to 55

- + Adequate, if somewhat basic, analysis and understanding of key concepts and arguments.
- Significantly lacking in scope, depth or precision; flat or pedestrian representation of thoughts and arguments; important inaccuracies or omissions; some lapses in argumentation.

Lower: 50-54

- + Answer showing a basic grasp of relevant material and arguments, and a fair attempt to arrive at a reasoned conclusion.
- Serious inaccuracies or omissions; significant lapses in argumentation (e.g. nonsequiturs, misuse of concepts or evidence); failure to digest material; minor irrelevance.

Third: 49 to 40

Upper: 49 to 45

- + Limited answer to the question; constructs a rudimentary argument; some evidence of relevant study.
- Superficial or incomplete treatment; some gaps or mistakes in understanding of key concepts and arguments; poor focus and organisation; some irrelevance.

Lower: 40-44

- + Significant elements of a basic and relevant answer.
- Muddled argumentation, very superficial discussion with poor focus, significant misunderstanding of key concepts and arguments; considerable irrelevance; seriously incomplete answer.

Pass: 39 to 30

- + Limited attempt to address question showing a rudimentary grasp of some relevant information.
- Very incomplete, brief, or poorly organised answer; fundamental misunderstanding of key arguments or ideas; large portions of discussion irrelevant or tangential.

Fail: 0 to 29

Upper: 15-29

- + Some slight evidence of a proper attempt to answer question; glimpse of relevant material.
- Extremely limited and inadequate answer, for instance in note form; discussion mostly irrelevant.

Lower 0-14:

- Completely or almost completely irrelevant or ignorant answer. Nothing or almost nothing written.

The class boundaries and class descriptors for all classes remain the same across all Honour Schools involving Philosophy.

Criteria for work in extended essays or theses

The following conventions will be used for marking submitted written work, such as extended essays or theses. The conventions use positive criteria (marked by “+”) and negative criteria (marked by “-”) in order to assign marks.

First class: 100 to 70

Upper: 84+

Exceptional work displaying originality, outstanding analytical and argumentative skills, superior command of a wide range of facts and arguments relevant to the question, excellent organisation and presentation, lucid and precise expression.

Middle: 81, 78

Excellent work offering high-level analysis, independent and rigorous argument, critical understanding of a wide range of relevant material, transparent organisation and presentation, lucid and precise expression.

Lower: 75, 72

Strong work displaying a high standard of analysis and argument, critical insight, and a thorough command of the relevant material; transparent organisation and presentation; clear and precise expression.

Upper second (2.1): 69 to 60

Upper: 69 to 65

- + Effective analysis and argumentation, demonstrating thorough command of relevant material; transparent organisation and presentation of material; clarity of expression.
- Occasional imprecision in argumentation or expression; or lack of depth; or minor omissions; or lapses in focus.

Lower: 60-64

- + Clearly structured and generally coherent discussion, offering a mostly accurate analysis of central arguments and themes, and a justified conclusion.
- Occasional lapses in argumentation; writing may be somewhat pedestrian or showing unclarity or imprecision of expression; some omissions or infelicity in organisation of material and/or presentation (e.g. missing or incomplete references, misquotations or misattributions).

Lower second (2.2): 59 to 50

Upper: 59 to 55

- + Adequate, if somewhat basic, analysis and understanding of key concepts and arguments; generally cogent and well-structured treatment of topic.
- Lacking in scope, depth or precision; pat or pedestrian representation of thoughts and arguments; important inaccuracies or omissions; some lapses in argumentation and/or presentation.

Lower: 50-54

- + Discussion showing a reasonable grasp of basic material and arguments, and a fair attempt to arrive at a reasoned conclusion.
- Significant inaccuracies or omissions; major lapses in argumentation (e.g. nonsequiturs, misuse of concepts or evidence affecting overall conclusions); failure to digest material; minor irrelevance; sloppy presentation.

Third: 49 to 40

Upper: 49 to 45

- + Limited treatment of topic showing some familiarity with relevant material and arguments; recognisable structure.
- Superficial or incomplete treatment; gaps or mistakes in understanding of key concepts and arguments; poor focus and organisation; some irrelevance; poor presentation.

Lower: 40-44

- + Significant elements of a basic and relevant answer showing some structure.
- Muddled argumentation, very superficial discussion with poor focus, significant misunderstanding of key concepts and arguments; considerable irrelevance; incomplete answer; substandard presentation.

Pass: 39 to 30

- + Limited attempt to address question showing a basic grasp of some relevant material.
- Seriously incomplete answer; fundamental misunderstanding of key arguments or ideas; significant portions of discussion irrelevant or tangential; basic failures of organisation and presentation.

Fail: 0 to 29

Upper: 15-29

- + Very limited attempt to answer question; some use of relevant material.
- Wholly inadequate answer, discussion largely irrelevant; unacceptably poor organisation and/or presentation.

Lower 0-14:

- Completely or almost completely irrelevant or ignorant answer. A very short piece of work, providing no or negligible evidence of study.

The class boundaries and class descriptors for all classes remain the same across all Honour Schools involving Philosophy.

Criteria for translation work (in ancient philosophy papers)

These criteria are used for marking translation elements of those ancient philosophy papers where students render a passage into English (currently: papers 130-135). Resourceful use of English will be rewarded, as will accuracy in detail, effectiveness, and faithfulness in conveying the sense of the original; incorrect and unduly clumsy English will be penalised. Candidates are liable to be penalised severely for errors in detail as well as for errors which suggest ignorance of the context (if the passage has one) and essential drift of the passage.

First class: 85 to 70 (NB: marks above 85 are not awarded for translation work)

Upper: 80-85:

Outstanding and memorable, showing all first class qualities to a remarkable degree. Sense and register of the passage admirably handled. The odd failing may be allowed.

Lower: 70-79:

A candidate has got the passage mostly right, with only minor errors or very few errors; deals intelligently with difficulties; handles the stylistic variations of the passage well.

Upper second (2.1): 69 to 60

A candidate has grasped the general sense and drift of the passage well, though with a number of errors; appears to have a good grasp of the context of the passage, if it has one.

Lower second (2.2): 59 to 50

A candidate has essentially grasped the drift of the passage (and of the context, if there is one), but has made more, or more serious, errors than in a II.1 script.

Third: 49 to 40

A candidate shows only a shaky grasp of what is happening in the passage and has made a number of grave mistakes, but has shown some knowledge and understanding of the language and of the context (where applicable) of the passage.

Pass: 39 to 30

Very poor quality work, showing little knowledge of the language or of the context and content of the passage, but enough to justify the award of a pass mark.

Fail: 0 to 29

20-29: displays seriously deficient knowledge of the ancient language, and little or no knowledge or understanding of grammar, syntax, and vocabulary, and/or familiarity with set texts. Translations into English entirely discontinuous and/or nonsensical, displaying little or no grasp either of the language or of the meaning of the passage(s), and with little or no sensible attempt at guesswork.

10-19: work which suffers from the above shortcomings to a more extreme degree.

5-9: a seriously incomplete script, comprising no more than a few responses and/or making no real effort to make sense of the passage.

1-4: a blank script or a response which entirely fails to make sense of the passage.

Criteria for commentary work

These criteria apply for questions where candidates undertake commentary on a passage

First class: 85 to 70 (NB: marks above 85 are not awarded for translation work)*Upper: 80 to 100:*

+ a commentary displaying in-depth knowledge of the passage, excellent analysis and criticism of the argument(s), distinction(s), or concept(s) found in the passage, a lucid and concise account of the relation of the passage to the wider context, or/and the whole work, or/and the author's general thought, or/and some problem in modern philosophy.

Lower: 79 to 70

+ a commentary showing a good understanding of the immediate and wider context of the passage, lucid and concise analysis of the ideas and/or arguments involved, and clear and precise language.

Upper second (2.1): 69 to 60*Upper: 69 to 65*

+ a commentary displaying a good understanding of the context and a clear and concise analysis of arguments, distinctions and/or concepts in the passage.

- limited command of some aspects of the passage, or context; minor lapses in the analysis of the argument, occasional unclarity in expression or use of concepts.

Lower: 64 to 60

+ a generally clear and satisfactory commentary, offering a mostly correct specification of the argumentative context and a reasonable analysis of the argument, distinction(s), or/and concepts of the passage.

- some lapses in argumentation and/or invoking evidence from the passage; some inaccuracy in identification of context; somewhat pedestrian, unclear, or imprecise expression.

Lower second (2.2): 59 to 50

+ a competent if basic commentary showing familiarity with the passage and its context; mostly clear and relevant analysis of passage; some attempt to offer a critical perspective.

- gives an incomplete account of the context of the passage; significant inaccuracies or gaps in analysing or criticising the argument of the passage; marred by lapses in concision, relevance, and lucidity of expression.

Third: 49 to 40

+ a commentary that contains evidence of some knowledge of relevant facts and analytical skill.

- generally weak, with confused or little specification of the context, or discussion and criticism of the argument of the passage; some irrelevance; muddled and unclear language. This class does qualify for an Honours degree.

Pass: 39 to 30

+ some attempt to specify the argumentative context or/and content of the passage; occasionally relevant material.

- extremely limited and inadequate commentary; comments largely (but not entirely) irrelevant.

Fail: 29 to 0

Completely, or almost completely, irrelevant or ignorant commentary; nothing, or almost nothing, written.

NB: Candidates should note that one of the commonest reasons for commentaries receiving poor marks is irrelevance.