

## GUIDELINES ON EXAMINATIONS

# MPHIL IN HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE AND MEDICINE

These guidelines are an *addition* to the 'Guide for Examiners and Assessors for the Degree of MPhil by Advanced Study and MRes' (available at <https://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/information-examiners>). This document focuses on issues *not* covered by the Memorandum, and explains *how* the Department of History and Philosophy of Science implements the Memorandum with respect to the MPhil in History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine.

### 1. Examiners and assessors

From October 2016 MPhil courses that are assessed by submission of coursework and a dissertation will fall within a revised MPhil Degree framework under which candidates are assessed as a cohort, with a Board of Examiners appointed to assess all candidates. This MPhil will be known internally as MPhil by Advanced Study.

The Board of Examiners for the MPhil in History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine reports to the HPS Degree Committee. The Board comprises a Senior Examiner, a Moderating External Examiner and as many other examiners as the Degree Committee feels appropriate to ensure robust oversight over the examination process. The HPS Degree Committee decided in October 2016 that there should be 6–7 internal examiners including the Senior Examiner, that the Director of Postgraduate Education should normally act as an examiner and that the Secretary of the Degree Committee would normally act as Secretary of MPhil Examiners' Meetings.

#### *a) Senior Examiner*

The Senior Examiner is appointed annually to act for a year at a time. The Senior Examiner normally changes each year and is someone who has had previous experience as an examiner for this MPhil. They are responsible for overseeing the examination process, including the nomination of examiners and assessors for individual pieces of work. S/he chairs the Examiners' Meetings, liaises with and approves the selection of work for the External Examiner, and provides guidance to and answers any queries raised by other examiners or assessors. The Senior Examiner also assesses individual pieces of work.

The Senior Examiner is required to write a report on the year's examination process. The report is received and discussed along with the External Examiner's Report at the first Degree Committee meeting of the following academic year. Reports of Senior Examiners and External Examiners are posted on the Department's website, with the exception of any passages that the Degree Committee agrees are confidential because they refer directly to specific individuals.

#### *b) Examiners*

The Senior Examiner is assisted by 5–6 other examiners, who are appointed to act for a year at a time but may be reappointed annually for a period of up to three years.

*c) External Examiners* are normally appointed for three years, on a one-year-at-a-time basis; they may exceptionally be reappointed for a fourth year after which they may not be reappointed until a period equal to the last term of service has elapsed, although exceptions may be made in certain circumstances. External Examiners may not hold an office in the University, or a Fellowship or some other office or post in a College, and should not habitually reside within 10 miles of the centre of Cambridge. Former members of staff are not eligible for appointment until at least three years have passed since their departure. The External Examiner answers directly to the Vice-Chancellor, not the HPS Board.

*d) Assessors* will be appointed to assist with the marking of individual essays and dissertations. The examiners will be responsible for nominating assessors and should ensure, when selecting someone who has not assessed for this degree before, that they are paired with an experienced internal assessor, and that they are advised to attend a Training Session on 'Marking Examinable Coursework' held on an as needed basis.

*e) Appointments*

Appointment and reappointment of examiners is by the General Board, on the advice of the HPS Board. The Senior and External Examiners must be appointed by the end of the Easter Term preceding the Examination; the other examiners must be appointed by the end of Michaelmas Term of the exam year. The HPS Degree Committee is responsible for appointing assessors as and when required and may appoint as many as are necessary given the number of students and topics for assessment.

*f) Meetings*

There are three formal Board of Examiners meetings per year – in December, April and June – where marks are agreed, and three informal meetings in November, January and May where assessors are nominated for individual pieces of work (this may be done by email circulation at the Senior Examiner's discretion); the nominations are then forwarded to the Degree Committee for approval. All examiners are expected to attend all of the formal examiners' meetings. Assessors do not attend any examiners' meetings. If an examiner or External Examiner cannot attend the final Board of Examiners Meeting in June s/he will need to request formal dispensation from the General Board; forms are provided here: <http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/examiners/appointment-examiners-and-assessors/dispensation-non>

*g) Examiners 2024–25*

Senior Examiner: Matt Farr

Examiners: Anna Alexandrova, Rosanna Dent, Nick Hopwood, Tom McClelland, Richard Staley, Charu Singh

External Examiner: Charlotte Sleight (UCL)

Assessors: To be appointed

**2. Arrangements and timetable for examination**

<b>Essay 1 (5,000 words)</b>		
Topics submitted	Essay 1 topics due Once the topics have been submitted, the examiners nominate assessors for Essay 1. Topics, supervisors and assessors are then approved by the Degree Committee.	4 Nov 2024
Work submitted	Essay 1 submitted by noon	18 Nov 2024
Work marked	Essay 1 marked in time for the first examiners' meeting	18 Nov–2 Dec 2024
<b>First Board of Examiners meeting</b>	At this meeting the MPhil examiners agree provisional marks for Essay 1. The External Examiner does not attend this meeting. Minutes of the meeting together with the markbook and copies of assessors' reports are submitted to the Degree Committee immediately after the meeting.	9 Dec 2024
Feedback	After the first Examiners' Meeting the MPhil Manager(s) meet individually with candidates, inform them of the provisional agreed mark for Essay 1, and provide copies of the non-confidential parts of their assessors' reports. Students may consult their supervisors for further interpretation of these reports.	9 Dec 2024
External Examiner	Work is sent to the External Examiner after it has been marked and any moderation is conducted at the April Examiners' Meeting	30 Apr 2025
<b>Essay 2 (8,000 words)</b>		
Topics submitted	Essay 2 topics due Once the topics have been submitted, the examiners nominate assessors for Essay 2. Topics, supervisors and assessors are then approved by the Degree Committee.	9 Dec 2024
Work submitted	Essay 2 submitted by noon	10 Mar 2025
Work marked	Essay 2 marked in time for them to be sent to the External Examiner prior to the Essay Examiner's meeting	10 Mar–2 Apr 2025

External Examiner	Selected work is sent to the External Examiner for moderation prior to the April Examiners' Meeting	30 Apr 2025
<b>Second Board of Examiners meeting</b>	Marks are agreed for each essay and an overall essay mark is determined. The Redhead Prize is awarded for best performance on the Essays. Minutes of the meeting together with the markbook and copies of assessors' reports are submitted to the Degree Committee immediately after the meeting.	30 Apr 2025
Feedback	After the Essay Examiners' Meeting, the MPhil Manager(s) meet individually with candidates; inform them of the provisional agreed mark for Essay 2, and the provisional overall essay class. They also provide copies of the non-confidential parts of their assessors' reports. Students may consult their supervisors for further interpretation of these reports.	30 Apr 2025
Degree Committee approval	Essay marks are approved by the Degree Committee. In cases where a candidate whose combined essay marks constitute a Fail, the committee will decide, following advice of the examiners, whether or not the candidate should be permitted to submit a Dissertation. If the DC permits the candidate to submit a Dissertation, s/he will also be informed that the examiners will probably require an oral examination in addition to written reports.	12 May 2025
<b>Dissertation (12,000 words)</b>		
Topics submitted	Dissertation topics due Once the topics have been submitted, the examiners nominate assessors for the Dissertation. Topics, supervisors and assessors are then approved by the Degree Committee.	28 Feb 2025
Work submitted	Dissertation submitted by noon	27 May 2025
Work marked	Dissertations marked	27 May–13 Jun 2025
External Examiner	Selected work is sent to the External Examiner after it has been marked so any moderation work can be done prior to the Final Examiners' Meeting	20 Jun 2025
<b>Final Board of Examiners meeting</b>	Marks are agreed for each dissertation and an overall mark is determined. The Rausing Prize is awarded for best performance on the Dissertation. Minutes of the meeting together with the markbook and copies of examiners' reports are submitted to the Degree Committee immediately after the meeting.	26 Jun 2025
Feedback	After the Examiners' Meeting, the MPhil Manager(s) meet individually with candidates; inform them of the provisional class for Dissertation and their overall class. They also provide copies of the non-confidential parts of their assessors' reports. Students may consult their supervisors for further interpretation of these reports.	26 Jun 2025
<b>Degrees approved/confirmation of results</b>	Degrees are approved at the final DC meeting of Easter Term. Approval of the Degrees of any candidates with extensions may have to be held over until the first DC meeting of Michaelmas Term.	30 Jun 2025

### 3. Form and standard of the examination

The scheme of examination for the one-year course of study in History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine for the degree of Master of Philosophy shall be in two parts consisting of:

1. Two essays, the first of not more than 5,000 words and the second of not more than 8,000 words. The two essays must cover a range of topics and, taken together, must show evidence of a broad knowledge of History and Philosophy of Science and Medicine. They are not required to present original research to pass.
2. A dissertation, of not more than 12,000 words. In order to pass, the dissertation must be clearly written, take account of previously published work on the subject, and represent a contribution to learning. It must show evidence of independent research.

### Subject areas

Each piece of work should be on a topic approved by the Degree Committee and within one of the ten subject areas. It is normally expected that no more than one essay shall be submitted in any one of these areas, but with permission from the Degree Committee, both essays may be submitted in the same subject area. Once a topic and subject area have been approved by the Degree Committee, permission must be sought to change them. The supervisor must support the request, noting any need for change in assessors. The dissertation can be written in the same area as one of the essays, but the dissertation and essay must address different questions, and the dissertation must show evidence of a substantial new research effort. Any use of the essay in the dissertation has to be appropriately referenced, just like any other primary or secondary source, as if the essay had a different author.

1. Ancient, medieval and early modern sciences
2. Ancient, medieval and early modern medicine
3. Sciences in the age of empire, c. 1750–1900
4. Modern medicine and biomedical sciences
5. Modern sciences
6. Metaphysics, epistemology and the sciences
7. Ethics and politics of medicine and the sciences
8. Philosophy of the physical sciences
9. Philosophy of biology and the life sciences
10. Philosophy of social and cognitive sciences

### Submission of work

The essays and dissertation must have numbered pages and include footnotes, a bibliography and any appendices. Candidates are required to submit their examined work electronically via Moodle, where it is screened by Turnitin, which detects matches between the submitted work and other electronic sources. For all pieces of coursework, candidates are required to include a title page on which they declare the exact word length, the title and the name of the supervisor. They must also confirm that the work has not been submitted before, and that they have read and obeyed the University's plagiarism guidelines.

### 4. Criteria for passing the MPhil

Candidates are required to pass in both parts of the examination separately – i.e. the essays and the dissertation – except in the following special circumstances:

(a) a candidate whose failure in the essays is *marginal* (considered to be a mark of 58–59) shall be allowed to submit a dissertation, and a *high performance* in the dissertation may be taken into account by the Degree Committee in determining their recommendation to the Student Registry;

(b) where a candidate's failure in the dissertation is *marginal* (considered to be a mark of 58–59), a *high performance* in the essays may be taken into consideration by the Degree Committee in determining their recommendation to the Student Registry. There is no provision for submitting a revised dissertation.

The essays together account for 50% of the overall mark: Essay 1 is 40% of the essay mark and Essay 2 is 60%. The dissertation accounts for the remaining 50% of the overall mark.

On the basis of the mark scheme adopted by the NST combined with guidelines laid down by the Student Registry concerning the award of 'Distinction', the HPS Degree Committee has determined the following mark scheme for the MPhil:

80 and above	Starred Distinction
70–79	Distinction
65–69	High Performance
60–64	Pass
59 and below	Fail

A mark of 70 in the MPhil is normally necessary and often sufficient for continuation as a PhD student in the Department (in addition to a satisfactory research proposal and a willing supervisor). A candidate who applies to continue as a PhD student but does not meet this condition will be required to submit a statement to the Degree Committee, which will also ask for a report to be prepared by a potential supervisor or supervisors for consideration by the DC. A mark of 75 and over can significantly aid a candidate in gaining funding for doctoral research.

## 5. Marking criteria

### Mark 80+: *STARRED DISTINCTION*

An outstanding and memorable performance in which all the qualities deemed to constitute first-class work are present in a remarkable degree. The work should be well researched and substantially original, bearing in mind that originality has many dimensions: it may reside, for instance, in the thesis defended; or in the way a known thesis is presented and defended. Such work might well form the basis for publication. Potential for outstanding PhD work.

### Mark 70–79: *DISTINCTION*

Work which is of high calibre both in the range and in the command of the material and in the argument and analysis that it brings to bear. The examiners would expect some elements of originality – which may consist in putting together material in novel ways – although originality alone would not guarantee marks in this range. Work in this class will generally meet the following criteria: the argument may be sophisticated, incisive or demonstrate excellence in composition and clarity; there may be a wealth of relevant information, showing exceptional knowledge and understanding of the issues involved; the approach may be unorthodox in the best sense, suggesting new and worthwhile ways of considering material, and distinctive in character and scholarly voice. The submitted work may display evidence of extensive research imaginatively and convincingly deployed.

**70–74:** A solid performance which meets some of the criteria for distinction but not necessarily all. Shows potential for PhD work.

**75–79:** A very strong and original performance which clearly meets most of the criteria for distinction. Clear potential for good PhD work.

### MARK 65–69: *HIGH PERFORMANCE*

Clearly proficient with a proper coverage of relevant material, and reasonably well-presented. Work in this category may be solid but unimaginative. Ambition of work is clearly visible but may not be carried through sufficiently. The analysis and argument are generally good. There is some evidence of good engagement with existing literature. It displays critical thinking, some sophistication in analysis, and a good deal of relevant knowledge. It is sufficiently clear and well-organised.

### Mark 60–64: *PASS*

Work which is basically competent, and, in the case of dissertations, reasonably independent. Interesting and provocative ideas may not be carried through fully convincingly. The main thesis may be vague, too general, too unambitious or else over-ambitious. There may be gaps in the bibliography, deficiencies in the overall structure, weaknesses of analysis and argument, or lack of clarity.

### Mark 0–59: *FAIL*

**57–59 (Marginal Fail):** Work in this category represents serious effort, but fails to meet MPhil standards in some important way: the depth and breadth of research, the quality of argumentation, or clarity, organisation and literary presentation.

**50–56 (Clear Fail):** Work in this category contains something of value, but has significant deficiencies in more than one important respect: the depth and breadth of research, the quality of argumentation, or clarity, organisation and literary presentation.

**0–49 (Low Fail):** Work in this category is significantly inadequate in the quality and quantity of content, and only contains material that is derivative, irrelevant, inaccurate, incoherent or superficial.

## **6. The examination process**

Each essay and dissertation is read by at least two senior members or associates of the Department, neither of whom will have supervised the work being marked. Both will submit independent reports consisting of a confidential and non-confidential portion. Both portions are considered at the Board of Examiners Meetings and thus by the Degree Committee. The non-confidential portion will be made available to the candidate. All work is marked anonymously.

Two assessors are appointed to mark each piece of work. Normally, a different pair of assessors will be nominated to examine each piece of a student's work and normally no assessor may examine more than one essay and the dissertation of any individual student. Under normal circumstances, for each piece of work submitted, a member of core staff will be one of the internal assessors. The supervisor is disqualified from marking work s/he has supervised. The Senior Examiner and the other examiners may and usually will act as assessors of individual pieces of work.

Once submitted, work is sent to the assessors for marking, together with report forms and a letter that provides guidance on how to mark, details of deadlines and a link to these guidelines.

For each piece of work to be marked, the assessors are requested to submit an independent report, individual marks and (where possible) an agreed mark, prior to the relevant Board of Examiners meeting.

Assessors are asked to complete the report forms on SharePoint. Report forms are designed to divide comments into those that the student can see, and will profit from, and those that are confidential. The comments that the student will see should not include explicit marks, classifications, remarks about a student's ability to continue with further graduate research, or remarks about publishability. Students will be given the open comments and the agreed mark, but not the names of the assessors or the individual marks. Further guidance on how to prepare the report can be found later in this document.

Students have approximately six weeks to produce each piece of work. Assessors are asked to be realistic about what is achievable in this period of time.

The time frame for marking is usually about 10 days. Once assessors have arrived at their independent mark and exchanged report forms, they should attempt to agree a joint mark with the other assessor who is marking the work. Assessors should not try to arrive at a joint mark until both have drafted their independent reports with suggested marks. Where there is a discrepancy in the individual marks, assessors are encouraged to discuss the work and, if possible, to agree upon a mark.

Once a joint mark has been agreed – or if it has become apparent that this is not possible – the report form should be completed on SharePoint. Assessors are asked to indicate on the form any work which they think should be seen by the External Examiner.

## **7. Oral examination**

If the student was awarded a marginal fail (considered to be a mark of 58–59) on his/her essays, or if the agreed mark for the dissertation is a fail, the examiners are required to arrange for the student to have an oral examination. The oral examination may relate to the dissertation and/or any other part of the MPhil course. An assessor may contact the Senior Examiner to request an oral examination, irrespective of mark, of any student, for the purposes of clarifying questions concerning sources, the relationship of a dissertation to essays, etc. Assessors may assist with any oral examination that is required for a candidate whose work they have marked, but at least one examiner must be involved.

The oral examination will normally be held within three weeks of the date of submission of dissertations, so that the reports may be considered by the final DC meeting of Easter Term. In order to conform to this timetable, the Senior Examiner will need to inform candidates of the requirement of the oral examination as soon as is practicable.

## **8. External Examiner**

The External Examiner is invited to conduct his/her responsibilities as s/he thinks fit and is invited to discuss with other examiners, in particular the Senior Examiner, how best s/he may fulfil the function of monitoring the examination procedure. It is expected that the External Examiner will perform an adjudicatory function for certain Essays and Dissertations in addition to the moderating function that is his/her sole and principal prerogative.

Subject to the way in which the External Examiner decides to discharge his/her duties, once work has been marked by two assessors s/he may be sent a selection of work that has received particularly high marks, particularly low marks, work in which there is a marked discrepancy between the two internal examiners, work that has no agreed mark, work where the initial marks cross significant class boundaries and the agreed mark is in the lower boundary, and any other anomalous work. If the External Examiner wishes, s/he may also be sent a sample of average work for calibration purposes.

The External Examiner is provided with a table of all available internal marks and agreed marks and the reports of all candidates and has a general invitation to read any piece of work.

The External Examiner is asked to make notes on the work s/he has read. In cases of disagreement, the External Examiner's mark should be treated as a proposed resolution of the internal marks.

Except under exceptional circumstances, the External Examiner will be present at the second Board of Examiners meeting in April and the final Board of Examiners meeting in June, but does not attend the first Board of Examiners meeting.

All External Examiners are required to submit a written report to the Vice-Chancellor at the conclusion of their involvement with the examination, and may comment on any aspect of the examination, including the fairness of the assessment and the standards of the students for the part of the examination with which they are concerned. The University attaches great importance to the feedback given by External Examiners. The reports are forwarded to the Degree Committee for a response and are usually discussed at the next meeting of the Degree Committee in October of the new academic year. In addition the General Board Education Committee scrutinizes all Examiners' reports and will ask Education and Student Policy to follow up any matters of concern with the Degree Committee.

<http://www.student-registry.admin.cam.ac.uk/examinations-further-guidance-staff/examiners/appointment-examiners-and-assessors/external-examiners>

## **9. The supervisor**

MPhil coursework is supervised by senior members and associates of the Department. The Degree Committee will not normally approve the appointment of one individual supervisor for more than two pieces of work prepared for the MPhil (normally an essay and the dissertation as they may be in related areas). Students are in general encouraged to work with as wide a range of supervisors within the Department as is feasible. Once a supervisor has been approved by the Degree Committee permission must be sought for any change.

Supervisors, if also examiners, do not participate in the discussion of marks of their students. Supervisors who are members of the HPS Degree Committee may vote on the award of degrees.

## 10. Guidelines for composing non-confidential reports on coursework

Reports are drafted principally for the Board of Examiners meetings (and thence the Degree Committee) and the addressee of each Report is the Senior Examiner. They are only secondarily for the eyes of the candidates themselves. However, as they are the only feedback that students receive on the final version of their submitted work, the comments in the reports should convey an accurate and balanced sense of the quality of the work. The following specific points should be noted:

- Comments should indicate clearly the merits as well as the demerits of the work, although critical points will often require more space to express.
- There should not be a mismatch between the tenor of the comments and the proposed mark or class of mark.
- Comments should evaluate the work, not merely summarise what the student has done. A lengthy non-evaluative summary is not normally necessary.
- It is particularly useful to candidates if the reports on their early essays indicate general ways in which they can improve their work.
- For the sake of consistency, the non-confidential part of the report should normally be between 200 and 500 words. Comments should be sufficiently detailed to give the student and the co-assessor a good sense of how specific aspects of the work have been judged.
- Sloppiness in spelling, grammar and style (especially when making critical comments on similar sloppiness in the submitted work) should be avoided.
- Comments should consider the work involved in researching and preparing the content of the essay, as well as the results of that research.

Assessors may find it helpful to consider the following questions when drafting their reports:

1. What is the main achievement of this work? Is there an original contribution? If so, what is it?
2. Does the candidate show a good understanding of relevant material? Is the content of the work informative and insightful?
3. Does the candidate advance effective arguments contributing towards well-articulated conclusions?
4. Has the candidate used a sufficient number and range of appropriate sources? Are they effectively used and properly credited and cited?
5. Does the work have a clear and effective structure? Is the writing clear, grammatical, and free of typographical and other errors? Is the style of the references and footnotes clear and consistent?
6. Please distinguish between any comments on how to improve this work and comments that offer advice for future work.

## 11. Plagiarism

Examiners and assessors are asked to familiarise themselves with the Department's and the University's guidelines on plagiarism which can be found on <https://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/students/plagiarism> and <http://www.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/>.

Candidates are required to upload examined work to Moodle, where it is checked by Turnitin UK. If Turnitin detects matches between submitted work and another source that is higher than 20%, the Senior Examiner will review the resulting originality report to judge whether the matches are innocent, or appropriately referenced (which does not constitute plagiarism) or whether there has been excessive uncited use of material from other sources (which may be considered poor academic practice or plagiarism depending on the extent and context of the matches). At this point, the Senior Examiner may ask the External Examiner for a further opinion and the work may also be referred to the University Proctors for further investigation. In such cases the Turnitin originality report may be used as evidence. If any plagiarism is found, marks may be deducted to take account of poor scholarship and any plagiarized sections and in the worst case scenario the degree may be withheld. A written record of the procedures followed in any individual case will be kept by the Senior Examiner.

Turnitin is only one method of checking the originality of submitted work and examiners and assessors may initiate other investigative procedures (e.g. searching Google) if they have unresolved queries about the originality of work, regardless of whether or not Turnitin has substantiated any concerns. If an 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.plagiarism.admin.cam.ac.uk/information-staff/procedures-and-policy-investigating-plagiarism>.

Assessors are asked, in the first instance, **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.

If unacknowledged work is revealed, assessors may then be asked to attempt to determine its full extent, excise the unacknowledged material and mark the work that remains, taking into account the poor scholarship. In some cases this process may be expected to leave a document that does not meet the basic requirements of the exam.

## **12. Examiners' Meetings, Degree Committee Meetings and approval of MPhil degree**

The recommendations of the MPhil assessors are submitted together with mark sheets, independent reports and minutes of Board of Examiners meetings, to the next meeting of the Degree Committee. Where the appropriate conditions of achievement are met, the Degree Committee awards students the MPhil degree at the final meeting of the academic year in late June/early July. The names of all those who have voted on the award of degrees is recorded in the Degree Committee minutes. It is the convention that supervisors, assessors and examiners who are members of the HPS Degree Committee may vote on the award of degrees.

Since 2011 MPhil degrees have been awarded by the HPS Degree Committee. After the July meeting recommendations are entered on CamSIS for each student and award letters are generated by the Secretary of the Degree Committee. Where results are not straightforward, the Secretary of the Degree Committee will communicate the recommendation along with the reasons for the recommendation to the Student Registry. Where there has been a delay to the submission date of the Dissertation, confirmation of the Degree may have to be postponed until the next Degree Committee meeting in October of the new academic year.

## **13. Late submission of coursework**

Candidates are required to submit each essay and the dissertation on Moodle before 12noon on the day of the deadline. The Senior Examiner will advise the Examiners' Meeting of any late submissions and, unless there are exceptional circumstances, this will normally entail the cumulative loss of marks for each day's lateness beyond the published deadline: i.e. within one day, one mark will be deducted; within two days, two additional marks will be deducted (making three marks in total); within three days, an additional three marks will be deducted (making six marks in total), etc. The Department adheres strictly to the rule that permission to submit essays or dissertations late will only be granted by the Degree Committee (or by the Degree Committee's chair taking chair's action) if a formal request is received from the candidate's College, with medical or similar reasons given in documentary form. Where an extension is granted, the deadline is noon on the new date.

## **14. Imposing word limits**

The word limit is 5,000 for Essay 1, 8,000 for Essay 2 and 12,000 for the dissertation. This includes footnotes but excludes the bibliography.

Figures may be included in the work and should contribute to the argument. They should be captioned only so as to specify the source; such captions are excluded from the word count. Formulae may be used where appropriate and are also excluded from the word count.

In order to ensure the equitable enforcement of the word limits, candidates are required to state the word count when they submit their work. Upon submission the Administrator receiving the work will have delegated responsibility from the Senior Examiner to inspect each piece of work to ensure that the word limit has been respected. If it has not, the work will be returned to the candidate who will be asked to revise it so that it does conform to the word limit. Given that the inspection will take place at the time of the deadline, the rule governing penalties for late submission will be applied (i.e., if the revised work is submitted within one day, one mark will be deducted; within two days, two marks will be deducted, etc.).

## **15. Exceptions and permissions**

### *Policy on data, editions, translations and bibliographies*

An essay or dissertation should be self-contained, including or citing all information needed for an examiner to follow its argument.

The word limit normally includes text and footnotes but not the bibliography. However, in certain cases permission may be obtained for materials relevant to the argument of the essay or dissertation to be submitted for the information of the examiners in the form of an appendix, with such materials *excluded* from the word count. Materials falling into this category may include primary source materials (texts and images) that are not readily accessible, transcriptions, translations, questionnaire responses, statistical tables, formal proofs, technical descriptions of objects, analytical bibliographies and other data produced by the candidate that they wish to make accessible.

Conversely, material contributing to the word count should normally consist of the candidate's own discussion and analysis of such materials. Exceptionally, when a critical edition or translation, a formal proof, an analytical bibliography, or a technical description of objects and their provenances is based on substantial original scholarship and cannot be easily separated from the argument of an essay or dissertation, permission may be obtained for it to be *included* within the body of the essay or dissertation, hence contributing to the word count. No more than one third of an essay or dissertation should consist of such material.

Applications for such permissions should be sought, in consultation with the supervisor, from the MPhil/Part III Senior Examiner via the MPhil Managers.

### *Exam allowances*

An exam allowance can be applied for in rare circumstances where a candidate has been unable to take all or part of their exam or has failed because of serious or unforeseen circumstances. Applications should be made as soon as the candidate knows they have a problem and should be submitted by the College Tutor, using the correct form.

<http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/graduate-exam-information/after-examination/examination-allowances-graduate>

Applications for such permissions should be sought, in consultation with the supervisor and graduate tutor, at the time at which the problem arises and prior to submission of the essay or dissertation in question. Exam allowances cannot change a mark but can allow a candidate who would otherwise fail to obtain their degree.

The Senior Examiner will receive a report notifying them of any candidates with specific learning difficulties. Candidates suffering from illness or other grave cause will be dealt with by the Applications Committee.

## **16. Problems, queries, complaints and appeals**

Candidates are expected to exhaust informal routes wherever possible, and to use the correct procedure for the matter they wish to complain about. Queries should be directed through an appropriate third party, e.g., College Tutor, MPhil Managers or Secretary of the Degree Committee. Candidates may not make direct contact with an examiner, including the Senior Examiner.

*Academic judgment*

The University's complaint and appeal procedures do not cover complaints that relate to matters of academic judgment. The procedures cannot interfere with the operation of academic judgment. This position corresponds to that adopted by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA Rule 3.2).

Academic judgment has been defined as a judgment made about a matter where only the opinion of an academic will suffice. It therefore includes, but is not restricted to, decisions about academic standards attained, marks and grades to be assigned, and degrees/degree classifications to be awarded, etc.

*Complaints*

At the earliest stages, a complaint may be resolved with the support, involvement or intervention of a College officer or a member of University staff. Candidates wishing to make a complaint, or to appeal against a decision already made, are therefore encouraged, in the first instance to consult and seek the advice of their Graduate Tutor (since the College assumes pastoral and other responsibilities), a University Teaching Officer, the Departmental Administrator or the Head of Department.

Where a candidate has cause to complain about circumstances relating to the conduct of their MPhil examination they must contact the Student Registry in writing. The Student Registry will then consult the Degree Committee, which may consult the examiners.

*Examination Review*

The following are the only grounds on which an Examination Review can be made:

- a) that there existed material circumstances relating directly to the examination (excluding circumstances relating to the candidate's course of research or course of study) of which the examiners were not aware;
- b) that 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) that there is demonstrable evidence of prejudice, bias or inadequate assessment in the examination process.

For further information see: <http://www.studentcomplaints.admin.cam.ac.uk/>

**17. Feedback to students**

During the course of their studies, students receive feedback in person from their supervisors, and from the Course Manager, as well as from termly online supervision reports. The first essay is examined prior to the end of Michaelmas Term in order to provide students with early feedback on their performance so they can gauge the level of achievement which the course requires; and so they have reliable pointers as to future applications for the PhD, whose deadlines are often early in the academic year. Essay 2 is examined at the end of Lent Term and feedback is given on this together with a provisional overall mark for the essay component of the course is available shortly afterwards.

After each Board of Examiners meeting, the MPhil Manager(s) meet with students, reports the provisional agreed mark and provides copies of the non-confidential parts of the reports. The marks are subject to moderation up until the final Board of Examiners meeting, and require approval at the final Degree Committee meeting of the year in late June/early July. At the end of the course the Department provides students with an informal transcript with details of each of their individual marks. Formal transcripts can be downloaded from CamSIS.

### **18. Prizes**

At the second Board of Examiners meeting, the student whose essays comprise the best overall performance on the essay part of the course is awarded the Jennifer Redhead Prize: £100. The student is also invited to attend the Rausing Supper.

At the third Board of Examiners meeting, the student whose dissertation comprises, in the view of the examiners, the best performance is awarded the Rausing Prize: £100.

Candidates with approved extensions whose work is not assessed in time for the second or third meeting of the Board of Examiners will not normally be considered for prizes.

### **19. Retaining work**

The Department will retain copies of dissertations and essays and may make them available to future candidates unless the student makes a written request to the contrary to the Secretary of the Degree Committee.

### **20. Fees and expenses**

Each examiner and assessor who is not an officer of the University of Cambridge will receive a fee. Teaching officers of the University are **not** eligible to receive a fee or expenses (with the exception of Associate Lecturers who do not receive a stipend).

The External Examiner is paid fees and expenses, including the cost of overnight accommodation where appropriate.

To claim their fee, each examiner and assessor should submit one claim form for the course at the end of the academic year.