Marking Standards and Classing Conventions

1 Marking Standards

All papers are marked out of 100. Marks should be expressed as whole numbers and not as fractions. The range of marks for each class is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Marks</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>100-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>II.i</td>
<td>69-60</td>
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<td>II.ii</td>
<td>59-50</td>
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<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>49-40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fail</td>
<td>39-0</td>
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A solid First Class mark is 70-74 and a high First is 75 and above. As successive External Examiners have urged, examiners are encouraged to use marks in the high 80s and the 90s for truly outstanding work. They are also encouraged to use the full lower range for weaker work.

**Scripts which fall short of first class quality overall** but contain a first-class answer to at least one full question should be signalled by an asterisk following the mark (e.g. 68*). Examiners must note that this is the only purpose which the asterisk serves, and the importance of recording their asterisks in their mark books.

There are only three further ways in which the numerical marks may be qualified:

i) Exiguity (‘short measure’)

Each answer must be marked separately and an individual mark recorded in the comments book. Where one or more essays are so exiguous as to be deficient as essays, this must be signalled by the letter ‘X’ after the mark. A missing answer should be awarded ‘0’ and be included in the averaging of the marks (for example, in a 3-question paper a candidate who scored 66 in two essays but failed to produce a third essay would be awarded 44).

However, exiguity may also manifest itself in more pervasive ways, less amenable to arithmetic formulae. Notes are deficient when an essay is expected. Similarly, an essay, although ostensibly complete, may be so short as to constitute an inadequate answer. In such cases, examiners should assign a mark only to what has actually been presented.

The mark awarded to an individual essay should reflect the short measure and not be based on the indicative quality of the essay, were it complete. The overall mark would then, as usual, be an average of the three questions; no penalty will be imposed by individual examiners.

The frequent appearance of ‘X’ across a range of papers provides evidence of persistent failure to meet the rubric and may be penalised by the Board.

ii) Peculiarities

Some scripts will show very diverse qualities or other peculiarities which should in the Examiner’s opinion be drawn to the attention of the Examining Board. Such scripts should be signalled by an exclamation mark following the mark (e.g. 65!), with a brief explanation given in the comments.

iii) Breaches of Rubric

Where a candidate has infringed the rubric in some other way than by exiguity, this should be signalled by a hash following the mark (e.g. 65#), with an explanatory comment. In Long Essays in both Parts I and II, failure to comply with guidelines on footnoting, bibliography or style may be penalized.
by the examiner; in such cases, this must be stated in the examiner’s comments. In the case of serious breaches this may jeopardize the class awarded. In a written examination, serious breaches of rubric (for example attempts at starred questions when overlapping papers are offered) should result in the disqualification of an answer. The repetition of material or plagiarism should be brought to the attention of the Chair of the Board ahead of the pre-meeting between the Chair and the External Examiners. They will bring a provisional ruling to the Final Examination Board on the question of the academic merit or otherwise of such material, so that the Board can make an academic judgment. Examiners are also asked to use a ‘#’ where candidates exceed the word limit in the Themes and Sources Long Essay, Special Subject Long Essay or Dissertation.

2 Assessment criteria

a) Part I/Part II scripts and Part II Special Subject Long Essays

In assessing individual answers and scripts, Examiners and Assessors are asked to have regard to three principal criteria:

- the extent to which the candidate addressed the question(s) asked;
- the quality of the argument offered;
- the range of knowledge displayed.

Of these the extent to which the candidate addresses the question is most fundamental. This applies to HAP no less than to other Papers. Indirect and tangential answers that appear to have been pre-prepared are no more acceptable on HAP than on other papers.

In building up a profile of each performance Examiners are asked to begin by evaluating work under each of these heads, and should also take account of the quality of the candidate’s presentation, including grammar, punctuation, use of language and spelling. A list of candidates with Specific Learning Difficulties (e.g. dyslexia, dysgraphia and/or dyspraxia) will be circulated. In respect of these candidates, Examiners are requested not to penalise minor spelling or grammatical errors.

The following grid offers a more detailed sketch of the performances under each head to be associated with a particular class and mark range. However, it is not intended that Examiners should isolate qualities that meet these requirements and reward them separately; and it is appreciated that different papers eventually awarded the same or similar marks may display very different combinations of qualities. Moreover, as will be plain, there is overlap between the criteria. When Examiners move to the assignment of a single mark overall for a paper, the assessments under each head will often be seen to converge, contributing to a uniform profile.

Nevertheless the degree of unravelling, however artificial an exercise it may appear, is essential both to ensure that the different aspects of an individual performance are given due weight and to enable angular non-uniform profiles to be identified plainly and speedily. Examiners’ and Assessors’ notes of their consideration of work under each of these heads - the raw material for an overall mark - is likely also to aid and expedite discussion in Examiners’ meetings. Examiners are asked to adhere closely to these guidelines in writing their comments.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
<th>Addressing the Question</th>
<th>Quality of Argument</th>
<th>The Range of Knowledge Displayed</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High First</td>
<td>75+</td>
<td>Work which engages closely with the question and addresses its implications in a sophisticated manner. Answers securing marks in this range tend to recognise the hidden complexities of a question, and they may also tackle the subject in an imaginative manner, though this should not be confused with simply a provocative or contentious approach. The structure of the answer will facilitate a clear, coherent unfolding of the writer’s argument, and may display an unusual degree of elegance.</td>
<td>Work which displays a striking command of relevant material and mobilises this knowledge to the best effect to develop a compelling argument. Writing will be clear, authoritative and to the point. The engagement with historiography, where relevant, will display a sophisticated understanding of the significance of historical argument. Work in this class will display a strong command of historical concepts and will impress by the sharpness of its analysis and critical thinking. The work should appear original rather than derivative. Work in this category is also more likely to be original in the sense of putting forward persuasive and well-supported new ideas or making unexpected connections.</td>
<td>Work which displays an unusually secure command of a wide range of knowledge, calling upon contemporary evidence where appropriate as well as the conclusions drawn from it by other writers. It will demonstrate a clear sense of chronological development and historical context. Awareness of argument and interpretation will be held in an appropriate balance with factual information, so that the work is neither too generalising nor too weighed down by detail. The evaluation of evidence is likely to be unusually sharp and to the point. Where appropriate apparent tensions within the evidence considered will be identified and explained or resolved. Work will display a sophisticated awareness of the attitudes of the period, and will avoid reductive explanation.</td>
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| Solid First| 70-74           | Work which engages closely with the question and addresses its implications as well as its 'surface' sense, demonstrating the ability to engage with abstract issues. The structure of the answer will allow a clear, coherent unfolding of the writer’s argument. Descriptive and factual elements will be harnessed effectively to the argument, and their relevance to the issues under discussion made clear.                                                                 | Work which displays the ability to use the knowledge at the writer’s disposal to the very best effect. Linguistically and structurally the writing will be clear, authoritative and to the point. Where relevant writers will be aware of historical debate but will go beyond merely paraphrasing the ideas of others to demonstrate their own conceptual command. In this sense work should be original rather than derivative. It may, more rarely, also be original in the sense of putting forward persuasive and well-supported new ideas or making unexpected connections. | Work which displays an impressively wide range of knowledge, calling upon contemporary evidence where appropriate as well as the conclusions drawn from it by other writers. It will demonstrate a clear sense of chronological development. Awareness of argument and interpretation will be held in an appropriate balance with factual information, so that the work is neither too generalising nor too weighed down by detail. Writers will show the ability to evaluate the information at their disposal; where necessary, they will identify apparent contradiction and resolve them. They will also show an informed
<table>
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<tr>
<th>II.i</th>
<th>60-69</th>
<th>Work within this class can cover a broad range of achievement. It will display understanding of the question and will deploy a range of relevant evidence in answering it. At best it will be analytical, whilst leaving some room for further exploration of the implications of the issues under discussion, or for consideration of the full relevance of the evidence cited.</th>
<th>The work will display the ability to deploy ideas and information to create a sustained argument. The argument will be well-structured rather than emerging piecemeal or amounting merely to a list of points, but it will lack the conceptual grasp and analytical acuity of a first-class answer. Secondary literature will be used appropriately and purposefully, with an adequate awareness of its implications. Expression will be clear and capable, demonstrating a firm conceptual grasp, particularly towards the top end of the range.</th>
<th>The work will display ample knowledge of the subject and will strike a good balance between ideas and information. At its best, it will reveal a high density of knowledge and will deploy it effectively while avoiding anachronism.</th>
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<td>II.ii</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Work which may make some relevant points but is inadequately focused on the specific question under discussion, leaving the reader to draw out the implications of what is being said. The structure of the answer is likely to be dictated by the information available to the writer, rather than by the requirements of the question under consideration. The implications of the question may have been overlooked or misunderstood.</td>
<td>Work in which the ideas and information at the writer's disposal are presented as an end in themselves, so that the argument emerges in a fragmentary or unfocused way, or is explicitly addressed only in the opening and closing paragraphs. There may be a tendency to state ideas rather than analyse them, or the argument may rest on unsupported claims. Linguistically as well as structurally the presentation of ideas may be rather clumsy, with points imperfectly explained. There is likely to be a sense of other people's ideas being repeated uncritically; and at worst the accretion of points may give rise to unreconciled contradictions, or raise issues which are not explored.</td>
<td>Work which displays a degree of knowledge sufficient to address the question only at a relatively generalising level, in which statements are supported by trite or imprecise evidence. There may be frequent indications of imperfect recollection or understanding, such as a tendency to simplify the arguments of other writers or to stumble over factual detail. At the bottom of the scale the imbalance between understanding and data may be marked, or the knowledge deployed may at times seem hackneyed or imprecise.</td>
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<td>III</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Work which makes little sustained attempt to develop an argument in response to the question, or which does so at a superficial level. The presentation of what the writer is able</td>
<td>Work which makes only a rudimentary attempt to develop a sustained argument, with the question treated as a peg upon which to hang any available ideas. Argument is likely to</td>
<td>Work which demonstrates too little knowledge to provide an acceptable argument, or, at worst, to sustain a full length answer. The information adduced may be misremembered</td>
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to remember will, to a very marked extent, take precedence over the development of an argument in response to the question.

take the form of bald assertions, which may themselves be trite or hackneyed, and which are not developed into a coherent line of thought. Structurally and linguistically the presentation may be muddled or unclear.

or vague, or may reveal actual misunderstanding. The views of other writers may be distorted

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<th>Fail</th>
<th>39↓</th>
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Work which makes no sustained attempt to develop an argument in response to the question. The presentation of what the writer is able to remember will not amount to an argument in response to the question.

Work which makes no attempt to develop a sustained argument. Any argument is likely to take the form of unsupported assertions. Structurally and linguistically the presentation is likely to be muddled, unclear and otherwise deficient.

Work which demonstrates knowledge that is so deficient, vague, distorted or inaccurate, as to provide no basis for an acceptable argument.

b) Part I: Themes and Sources Long Essays

Long Essay question papers will normally contain about fifteen questions, which are usually divided into specific questions and broad topics. Students are required to answer one question specified in the paper for their option, from either section A) Essay questions, or section B) Topics. Section A contains specific, targeted questions whose wording may not be altered. Section B outlines broad topics within which a student could devise a more precise title, in consultation with the teacher of the option, who must formally approve the final title.

The purpose of the Long Essay is to engage with the overall problems or approaches addressed by an individual option, to test student understanding of them and to allow students to express their own interests within the framework of their particular option.

It provides the opportunity for the student to show how far she or he has grasped the general issues raised by the option and is able to analyse them in terms of a particular historical problem.

All Long Essays should engage with primary sources and with relevant secondary sources, as defined by the relevant option in materials provided in the classes and indicated as available for further research. Some Long Essay questions invite very close study of a set of primary sources, while others ask candidates to engage with sources in answering a more broadly thematic question; this diversity is intended by the paper (which covers 'themes and sources') and examiners should take into account the nature of the question answered in assessing each Long Essay.

There are multiple ways in which a Long Essay may excel: it may do so through an especially astute interpretation of a significant set of primary sources, quality of understanding being the main concern, but range and quantity of sources addressed sometimes being a significant additional achievement; it may do so by constructing an especially sophisticated, focused and clear thematic argument, engaging with primary sources in order to develop that argument; or it may blend the two. It should be emphasised that archival research is not necessary in order to do well in the long essay, as it is recognised that not all candidates have the opportunity to undertake this.

In all cases an outstanding Long Essay will show alertness to methodological and historiographical issues, and read as a coherent whole, not as a mere collation of sources. In the context of this diversity of possible approaches Long Essays should be assessed in terms of the following three criteria, with their application and the balance among them differing according to the nature of the question asked:
i) understanding, analysis and interpretation of primary sources;
ii) development of a coherent and substantial argument which illuminates a significant thematic question;
iii) effectiveness and style of writing and quality of presentation: all matters of presentation should follow the Faculty Style Guide available online.

Few Long Essays will satisfy all criteria equally, but patterns characteristic of each class of degree may be identified in broad terms. Examiners should assess candidates against all three criteria in their comments books. The final mark will be a balance among them.

Failure to comply with guidelines on footnoting, bibliography or style may be penalized by the examiner; in such cases, this must be stated in the examiner’s comments. In the case of serious breaches this may jeopardize the class awarded. Candidates should refer to the History Faculty Style Guide.

Note regarding Options xi (Politics of memory in the two German states after 1945) and xii (World War II and its legacy in France):

These are historical papers also designed to teach the use of either German or French by making it a practical necessity for study, in that the sources provided and much (though not all) of the secondary material are only available in German or French. It would be most unlikely that a candidate could do a good Long Essay without reading and using a considerable amount of German or French material. On the other hand, there is no intention of rewarding or penalizing students purely for the greater or lesser quantity of German/French-language material they have used: the criteria for marking will be the same as in English-language options - the qualities of the essay as a piece of historical writing.

Class I (Marks 100-70): The writer has analysed the question, understood its larger historical context, and developed a cogent and relevant argument engaging with primary sources: either the thematic issues or the sources may be foregrounded depending on the nature of the question and the approach adopted, but both will be present and well integrated. First-class work will display understanding of the provenance, context, and meaning of sources and the relationship among them and a thorough knowledge of the relevant secondary material. It may, but need not, identify and engage with primary sources beyond those provided in the course materials; this is one way to excel among a range of others. The narrative will serve an overall argument stated clearly in the introduction and conclusion, developed systematically in the course of the Long Essay, and held before the reader throughout. Work of the highest quality will also be aware of its limitations and of questions left unanswered. The writing will be lucid and persuasive; it may well be elegant. The presentation will be good, with references to source materials and other authorities and a bibliography of relevant materials and secondary works consulted, according to the Faculty Style Guide.

Class II.i (marks 69-60): Work within this class can cover a broad range of achievement. It may show many of the qualities of a first class Long Essay, but in less sustained form. It will display a good to high level of competence. The subject will be situated within its context and there will be a fair understanding of the state of knowledge and debate. The work will have an overall structure. Only the better candidates in this class are likely to reflect on the limitations of their own work. The writing will be clear and presentation will generally be good.

Class II.ii (marks 59-50): Some Long Essays in this class will display all the weaknesses of low II.i work, generally in more pronounced form. Others will have a major flaw which prevents a higher mark. Too limited a selection of primary sources may have been used, or those used not studied with adequate time and attention, so that much space is filled with ‘background’. Alternatively, much study of sources may be flawed by inability to relate the topic to a wider thematic context, which may be sketched vaguely and then forgotten while the writer plunges into detail. Treatment of the primary sources may show failures of understanding or lack of curiosity. The sources may be only a scattering, possibly quoted or paraphrased at length, and may relate to the subject in a variety of unconnected ways. Alternatively, they may be extensive but summarised.
without discrimination, simply in order to get them in. In either case the Long Essay will be structured by the information available rather than by the need to answer a clearly-formulated question. The structure is, therefore, likely to be clumsy and either episodic, perhaps with several brief but barely-connected chapters, or dominated by breathless narrative. Any overall argument will at best be stated at the beginning and end, or possibly left for the reader to divine. Large issues may go unexplored. The capacity for brief summary or self-criticism is likely to be slight. The style may be unclear, repetitious and ungainly. Factual errors, non sequiturs, self-contradictions and obvious gaps in knowledge are likely. Presentation may be careful and even pedantic, but in other cases the typing may be poor, the footnotes sporadic and unstandardised and the bibliography ill-organised and incomplete.

**Class III (marks 49-40):** A Long Essay in this category will meet the requirements of length and presentation but have nothing of interest to say, or say it remarkably badly. This could be due to failure to examine the obviously indispensable documentation or inability to understand the question and construct a suitable argument in response to it. Either case might be compounded by ignorance of the general area of study and the literature about it. The Long Essay might consist of undigested primary or secondary material presented in an unstructured form and with virtually no relation to an argument. Chronology might be non-existent or the argument transparently unsustainable. A Long Essay of this quality might show signs of haste or inadequate command of written English. Although these faults could co-exist with excellent presentation, there would be a strong chance of error, disorder and a lack of references and bibliography.

**c) Part II: Dissertations**

The chief criteria by which a dissertation may be assessed are by reference to topic, sources and treatment:

- An appropriate topic
- Situation of the topic within its larger historical context
- Situation of the topic in current knowledge and debate
- Identification and study of primary sources
- Contribution to the subject from primary sources or by reconsideration of existing accounts.
- Understanding, analysis and interpretation of sources
- Organisation of argument and narrative
- Capacity to summarise findings
- Awareness of limits of knowledge
- Style of writing
- Quality of presentation

Few dissertations will satisfy all criteria equally, but patterns characteristic of each class of degree may be identified in broad terms. The final mark will be a balance among them.

**Class I (Marks 100-70)**

The topic can be treated effectively within the word limit and with material reasonably available from a brief period of research (two to three months). The writer has conceptualised the topic and situated it within its larger historical context, which is explained only to the extent needed to understand the dissertation's contribution. The state of knowledge of the subject is indicated and the inquiry is related to it, without merely paraphrasing the ideas of others. Primary sources have been identified with imagination - in the very best dissertations, probably with real flair - and have been studied assiduously, possibly using linguistic or other special skills. All successful dissertations must use some primary sources. Normally these will enable a dissertation to make its distinctive contribution to the subject, perhaps by means of a case-study or the elucidation of an event or episode. But some works will merit first-class marks more for their reconsideration of an argument, a situation, a sequence of events, or a social phenomenon. First-class work will display understanding of the provenance, context,
and meaning of sources and the relationship among them and a thorough knowledge of the relevant secondary material. It will demonstrate a clear sense of chronological development and the narrative passages will show brevity and vigour, but it will not be excessively weighed down with detail. Rather, the narrative will serve an overall argument stated clearly in the introduction and conclusion, developed systematically in the course of the dissertation, and held before the reader throughout. Work of the highest quality will also be aware of its limitations and of questions left unanswered. The writing will be lucid and persuasive; it may well be elegant. The presentation will be immaculate, with references to source materials and other authorities in standard form, necessary tables and statistical graphs, perhaps illustrations where appropriate, and a full bibliography of relevant materials and secondary works consulted, organised to the best convenience of the reader. The very best dissertations have in the past been virtually of publishable quality.

Class II.i (marks 69-60)
Work within this class can cover a broad range of achievement. It may show many of the qualities of a first class dissertation, but in less sustained form. It will display a high level of competence. The topic will have been chosen carefully to permit the study of primary sources and will be manageable within the time and space available. The subject will be situated within its context and there will be a fair understanding of the state of knowledge and debate. Primary sources may have been examined with industry, although sometimes a single body of sources will have been studied or there may be identifiable gaps in the material which could have been filled. The elucidation of primary sources will almost always constitute the dissertation's main contribution. The work will have an overall structure, with a satisfactory introduction and conclusion. The better candidates in this class are likely to reflect on the limitations of their own work. The writing will be clear and presentation will generally be good, with references to the main authorities and the most relevant bibliography (although the bibliography will not be expected to be exhaustive).

Class II.ii (marks 59-50)
Some dissertations in this class will display all the weaknesses of low II.i work, generally in more pronounced form. Other dissertations will have a major flaw which prevents a higher mark. The topic may be too ambitious to handle in the space available or so familiar that there is little scope for an interesting contribution. The primary sources may have proved disappointing or not to have been studied with adequate time and attention, so that much space is filled with 'background'. Alternatively, much primary research may be flawed by inability to relate the topic to a wider historical and historiographical context, which may be sketched vaguely and then forgotten while the writer plunges into detail. Treatment of the primary sources may show failures of understanding or lack of curiosity. The sources may be only a scattering, possibly quoted or paraphrased at length, and may relate to the subject in a variety of unconnected ways. Alternatively, they may be extensive but summarised without discrimination, simply in order to get them in. In either case the dissertation will be structured by the information available rather than by the need to answer a clearly-formulated question. The structure is, therefore, likely to be clumsy and either episodic, perhaps with several brief but barely-connected chapters, or dominated by breathless narrative. Any overall argument will at best be stated at the beginning and end, or possibly left for the reader to divine. Large issues may go unexplored. The capacity for brief summary or self-criticism is likely to be slight. The style may be unclear, repetitious and ungainly. Factual errors, non sequiturs, self-contradictions and obvious gaps in knowledge are likely. Presentation may be careful and even pedantic, but in other cases the typing may be poor, the footnotes sporadic and unstandardised and the bibliography ill-organised and incomplete.

Class III (marks 49-40)
The few dissertations likely to fall into this category should probably have been abandoned long before. One reason for disaster might be a topic which did not permit any serious study of primary sources. Another could be failure to examine the obviously indispensable documentation. Either case might be compounded by ignorance of the general area of study and the literature about it. The result might be a dissertation
which met the requirements of length and presentation but had nothing of interest to say.

Alternatively, a dissertation might show major misunderstanding of the subject or the sources. It might consist of undigested primary or secondary material presented in an unstructured form and with virtually no relation to an argument. Chronology might be non-existent or the argument transparently unsustainable. A Dissertation of this quality might show signs of haste or inadequate command of written English. Although these faults could co-exist with excellent presentation, there would be a strong chance of error, disorder and a lack of references and bibliography.

d) Part II: Special Subject Gobbets Paper

A gobbet answer is designed to test ability to provide a close and precise commentary on a short excerpt from one of the source documents studied in the course. Each question involves writing an answer to three passages so a candidate will have about 20 minutes for each response. The name and date of source and, if applicable, the ‘author(s)’ will be provided on the exam script. Candidates should first look at the context of the date and topics it forms a part of, and analyse the nature of the source. They should look at the ‘author(s)’ and possible audience. Candidates should analyse the source as something to zoom out of to a wider theme, and think of what is not said as well as what is said or represented. Candidates may cross-reference other sources they have studied, noting if they say something different. Thus, an answer should place the extract within its context, and within the broader historical themes and debates of the Special Subject. The answer should be written as a proper paragraph with a final sentence summing up what has been said. The answer should not be a series of point form statements about the gobbet.

3 Classing Conventions

a) Part I

Candidates will normally have twelve examination marks. In converting these marks into classes, the principal criterion is the number of marks which the candidate has achieved in each class. In each case, the pattern of marks will be considered, as described below. In discussed cases, consideration will also be given to the aggregate mark. However, the candidate’s mean or average mark will not of itself determine the class. The emphasis placed on the candidate’s profile of marks ensures that a broad spread of achievement is taken into account; at the same time, it avoids the distorting effect of exceptionally high or low marks and the levelling effect of a classing system based on averages.

First Class: Normally, six or more marks in the First Class (70+) will indicate a First Class result; five marks in the First Class may indicate that the candidate be discussed for a First Class result. For the purposes of classification, the examiners will also pay attention to the pattern of those marks which are below the First class, a Lower Second reducing a First Class mark a class, and a Third reducing two First Class marks in the first instance and one Upper Second thereafter. In the case of a script with both Lower Second and Third Class marks, then the reduction of any First Class marks by Lower Second Class marks shall be done first before applying any reduction warranted by the Third Class marks. In such cases the weaker script(s) may be reconsidered by an External Examiner. For the award of a starred First at least nine of the marks should be First Class; an exceptionally high aggregate is also required.

Upper Second: Similarly, seven or more marks in the Upper Second Class (60-69) will normally indicate an Upper Second Class result; six such marks may indicate discussion; a candidate attaining five or fewer marks in the Upper Second Class shall not normally be discussed for an Upper Second Class result. For the purposes of classification, the examiners will also pay attention to the pattern of those marks which are below an Upper Second, as described above. Again, in such cases the weaker script(s) may be reconsidered by an External Examiner.
Lower Second: Similarly, a majority of marks in the Lower Second Class (50-59) creates a prima facie case for a Lower Second Class result, but all candidates with a significant number of Third Class marks will be discussed, unless a Third Class result is indisputable.

Third Class: Below the Lower Second Class, arrays of marks are likely to be more disparate, it is more difficult to apply the principle of a preponderating class of marks, and aggregates will necessarily weigh more heavily. A Third Class will normally be awarded to candidates presenting with six or more marks in the Third Class or two papers with agreed Thirds, but not falling under the rules governing failure.

Failure: Candidates with an agreed fail on one paper will normally drop one class. Agreed failure on two papers indicates failure in the examination as a whole. Any anomalous scripts (e.g. with very uneven marks, or where an Examiner has indicated exigency or breach of a rubric) will be discussed.

b) Part II: five-paper (one-year) candidates

These candidates will normally have ten examination marks. In converting these marks into classes, the principal criterion is the number of marks which the candidate has achieved in each class. In each case, the pattern of marks will be considered, as described below. In discussed cases, consideration will also be given to the aggregate mark. However, the candidate's mean or average mark will not of itself determine the class. The emphasis placed on the candidate's profile of marks ensures that a broad spread of achievement is taken into account; at the same time, it avoids the distorting effect of exceptionally high or low marks and the levelling effect of a classing system based on averages.

First Class: Normally, five or more marks in the First Class (70+) will indicate a First Class result; four marks in the First Class may indicate that the candidate be discussed for a First Class result. For the purposes of classification, the examiners will also pay attention to the pattern of those marks which are below the First Class, a Lower Second reducing a First Class mark a class, and a Third reducing two First class marks in the first instance and one Upper Second thereafter. In the case of a script with both Lower Second and Third Class marks, then the reduction of any First Class marks by Lower Second Class marks shall be done first before applying any reduction warranted by the Third Class marks. In such cases the weaker script(s) may be reconsidered by an External Examiner. For the award of a starred First, at least eight of the marks should be First Class; an exceptionally high aggregate is also required.

Upper Second: Six or more marks in the Upper Second Class (60-69) will normally indicate an Upper Second Class result; five such marks may indicate discussion; a candidate attaining four or fewer marks in the Upper Second Class shall not normally be awarded an Upper Second Class. In all cases the pattern of the other marks will be taken into account.

Lower Second: Similarly, a majority of marks in the Lower Second Class (50-59) creates a prima facie case for a Lower Second Class result, but all candidates with a significant number of Third Class marks will be discussed, unless a Third Class result is indisputable.

Third Class: Below the Lower Second Class, arrays of marks are likely to be more disparate, it is more difficult to apply the principle of a preponderating class of marks, and aggregates will necessarily weigh more heavily. A Third Class will normally be awarded to candidates presenting with six or more marks in the Third Class or two papers with agreed Thirds, but not falling under the rules governing failure.

Failure: Candidates with an agreed fail on one paper will normally drop one class. Agreed failure on two papers indicates failure in the examination as a whole. Any
anomalous scripts (e.g. with very uneven marks, or where an Examiner has indicated exiguity or breach of a rubric) will be discussed.

c) Part II: seven-paper (two-year) candidates
The same principles and procedures are extrapolated for the small number of candidates in this category:

First Class: Seven first class marks out of fourteen will normally indicate a first class result, whilst six may suggest discussion (with Lower Second and Third Class marks reducing First Class marks as above). For the award of a starred first, at least eleven of the marks should be first class; an exceptionally high aggregate is also required.

Upper Second: Eight or more marks in the Upper Second Class (60-69 will normally indicate an Upper Second Class result; seven may indicate discussion; a candidate attaining six or fewer marks in the Upper Second Class shall not normally be awarded an Upper Second Class. In all cases the pattern of the other marks will be taken into account.

Lower Second: Similarly, a majority of marks in the Lower Second Class (50-59) creates a prima facie case for a Lower Second Class result, but all candidates with a significant number of Third Class marks will be discussed, unless a Third Class result is indisputable.

Third Class: Below the Lower Second Class, arrays of marks are likely to be more disparate, it is more difficult to apply the principle of a preponderating class of marks, and aggregates will necessarily weigh more heavily. A Third Class will normally be awarded to candidates presenting with eight or more marks in the Third Class or three papers with agreed Thirds, but not falling under the rules governing failure.

Failure: as above.

d) Preliminary to Part II (two-year) candidates
The Preliminary to Part II examination is not classed: the Examiners will approve a list of successful candidates. In order to appear on this list, three papers must be offered, including Paper 1.

A candidate with an agreed failure or who is absent for one or more papers will not appear on the list of successful candidates.

e) Parts I & II: candidates for whom Examination Warnings have been received
(The following advice is taken from the University Board of Examinations Examiners’ Guide.)

There are two types of Examination Warnings:

i) those used to notify Examiners of candidates with Specific Learning Difficulties, in which case Examiners are requested not to penalise minor spelling or grammatical errors;

ii) candidates suffering from illness or other grave cause who are in danger of failing or underperforming as a consequence.

Examiners do not receive a list of Warnings issued for candidates on the basis of illness or grave cause. Instead, these Warnings, together with the supporting evidence, will be referred to the Applications Committee. This primarily affects those students who have only taken part of the examination and who would otherwise be declared to have deserved honours by the Examiners or where the overall class is misrepresentative. In both instances, these candidates will initially be treated in the same way as other candidates although their case may be referred to the Applications Committee who may either grant the relevant examination allowance or refer the matter to the Chair of Examiners for further review after the Class List has been issued.

(This version approved by Faculty Board 22 November 2016.)