

## **Historical Tripos Parts I & II: Marking Standards and Classing Conventions** **(with modifications for 2021 highlighted)**

### **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:

Class	Marks
I	70-100
II.i	60-69
II.ii	50-59
III	40-49
Fail	0-39

Examiners are expected to use the mark range 80+ for outstanding work and the full lower range for weaker work.

Numerical marks may be qualified by the use of the following symbols:

- \* A script falling short of first class quality *overall*, but containing a first-class answer to at least one full question.
- X One or more of the answers was exiguous or too short/insufficient to constitute a full answer to the question. 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.
- ! An indicator of a peculiarity about the paper (perhaps extreme diversity in quality of answers, for example) which is being drawn to the attention of the Board.
- # A breach of rubric, e.g. exceeding the word limit or failing to comply with guidelines on footnoting, bibliography or style in the Long Essay, or failing to follow the rubric about choice of questions on a written paper. A serious breach of rubric in a written examination may jeopardize the class awarded, as it could result in the disqualification of an answer or, for infringement of the word-count, deduction of marks.
- R A revised mark: where the two original marks vary by seven or more (and in no other cases), examiners will reconsider the script with the aim of adjusting marks to reduce the divergence.
- † An adjudicating mark, awarded by the External Examiner in cases where the two original markers are unable to resolve a divergence.

These symbols will appear in the markbook presented to the Board of Examiners, but only the asterisk and the indicator of exiguity will be included in the markbook held on file in Colleges. No symbols appear on the official University transcript.

### **2. Assessment criteria**

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

In assessing individual answers and scripts, examiners 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.

Examiners' 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 Board of Examiners' meetings.

**Examiners are asked to adhere closely to these guidelines in writing their comments.**

**Modification for 2021: Students submitting Special Subject long essays may choose to include an impact statement with their work.** This should detail how the pandemic and lockdown has negatively affected research, e.g. by limiting access to study materials or archives. These statements should **not** refer to personal circumstances or health issues. Examiners will be asked to take account of the impact of this disruption in evaluating the essay.

Examiners of scripts will also be asked not to penalise students for failing to refer to material which they may not have been able to access due to remote working and library constraints.

<b>Class</b>	<b>Numerical Range</b>	<b>Addressing the Question</b>	<b>Quality of Argument</b>	<b>The Range of Knowledge Displayed</b>
<b>High I</b>	80+	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	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	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

		elegance.	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.	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.
I	70-79	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 awareness of the attitudes of the period.
<b>II.i</b>	60-69	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.	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	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.

			its implications. Expression will be clear and capable, demonstrating a firm conceptual grasp, particularly towards the top end of the range.	
<b>II.ii</b>	50-59	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.	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.	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.
<b>III</b>	40-49	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 to remember will, to a very marked extent, take precedence over the development of an argument in response to the question.	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 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.	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 or vague, or may reveal actual misunderstanding. The views of other writers may be distorted.
<b>Marginal Fail</b>	<b>30-39</b>	Work in which the majority of what is discussed is of limited relevance for the question, but which may show a skeletal grasp of	Work in which the assertions are poorly supported and the argument unclear, but which may exhibit a limited, but	Work which demonstrates deficient, vague, distorted or inaccurate knowledge throughout, but which may show a grasp of

		its significance.	undeveloped, structure.	some relevant evidence.
<b>Clear Fail</b>	<b>20-29</b>	Work in which most of the material presented is entirely irrelevant to the question, consisting in a presentation of what the writer is able to remember.	Work lacking in any clear argument structure, or in which there is a minimal attempt to arrange evidence in order to answer the question.	Work lacking in engagement with appropriate evidence, but which may contain just one or two relevant pieces of evidence
<b>Serious Fail</b>	<b>1-19</b>	Work in which there is no attempt at all to engage with the question. Towards the lower end of the scale, work where the answer is also extremely brief.	Work which is limited to listing unsupported points in a random and disorganised sequence, and where any evidence present is not connected to the question.	Work which fails to engage with relevant historical evidence at all, or in which all evidence given is factually incorrect
<b>Outright Fail</b>	<b>0</b>	No work offered.	No work offered.	No work offered.

### **b) Part I: Themes and Sources Long Essays [no modification for 2021]**

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.

Candidates are expected to comply with Faculty guidelines on footnoting, bibliography or style, as set out in the [History Faculty Style Guide](#). Breaches will be recorded by examiners and may lead to deduction of marks or, where there is suspicion of academic misconduct, further investigation.

*Note regarding Option xii (Fighting for Algeria, Fighting for France, 1945-1962):*

This historical paper is also designed to teach the use of 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 French. It would be most unlikely that a candidate could do a good Long Essay without reading and using a considerable amount of French material. On the other hand, there is no intention of rewarding or penalizing students purely for the greater or lesser quantity of 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 70-100): 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 60-69): 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 50-59): 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 40-49): 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.

**Modification for 2021: Students submitting dissertations may choose to include an impact statement with their work.** This should detail how the pandemic and lockdown has negatively affected research, e.g. by limiting access to study materials or archives. These statements should **not** refer to personal circumstances or health issues. Examiners will be asked to take account of the impact of this disruption in evaluating the dissertation.

### Class I (Marks 70-100)

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. High First marks (above 80) are to be awarded to outstanding dissertations of publishable or near publishable standard.

#### Class II.i (marks 60-69)

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 50-59)

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 40-49)

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**

**The following mitigating measures will be applied to classing in 2021:**

- **The weakest paper will be excluded from the calculation of the class.** In History Part I, students will therefore be classified on 10 out of 12 marks. In History Part II, students will be classified on 8 out of 10 marks. The weakest paper will be identified as the one which impacts most unfavourably on classing, regardless of whether it is a long essay, dissertation, or exam script. It will make no difference whether the paper has been set by History, or another Faculty or Department. The marks for the paper discounted for classification purposes will nevertheless appear on each student's transcript.
- **Cohort Equity.** Examination boards are required to ensure cohort equity, namely that class distribution for this year's cohort of students will be no less favourable than the average class distribution for the last three years before the pandemic. This procedure will take place after students have been classed according to the conventions described below.

### **a) Part I (modified for 2021)**

The paper with the weakest marks will be discounted for classing purposes. In converting the remaining ten marks into a class, 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 be 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.

**2021: Automatic Progression:** All second year students who take all of their required assessments will automatically progress to the next year of the Tripos, except where academic misconduct is found. Students who have been unable to take all of the required assessments must present a case to EAMC to allow them to proceed.

## **b) Part II: (modified for 2021)**

The paper with the weakest marks will be discounted for classing purposes. In converting the remaining eight marks into a class, 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:** four first class marks out of eight will indicate a first class result, whilst three 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 seven of the marks should be first class; an exceptionally high aggregate (comparable with that achieved by other starred First candidates) is also required.

**Upper Second:** Four or more marks in the Upper Second Class (60-69) will indicate an Upper Second Class result; three may indicate discussion; a candidate attaining two or fewer marks in the Upper Second Class shall not 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 five or more marks in the Third Class or two papers with agreed Thirds, but not falling under the rules governing failure.

Failure: as above.

**c) Part II: seven-paper (two-year) candidates** [*not applicable in 2021*]: by special arrangement the Prelim to Part II 2019-20 cohort will take Part II as if they were one-year candidates.

**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 relating to a) disability and b) illness or grave cause. They are used to:

- i) notify Examiners of candidates with Specific Learning Difficulties. Examiners are asked not to penalise minor spelling or grammatical errors;
- ii) inform Examiners about candidates suffering from illness or other grave cause who are in danger of failing or underperforming.

The Chair will receive a report notifying them of candidates with SpLDs which they should use to inform examiners before the commencement of marking. Apart from not penalising spelling and grammatical errors, examiners are expected to mark the work in the same way as other candidates and in accordance with the relevant marking scheme and classing criteria.

However, the Chair will **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 Examination Access and Mitigation Committee (EAMC) if an application is made for the student by their College. This 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, the Examination Board will treat the candidate in the same way as other candidates and then their case may be referred to the EAMC by their College as needed. The Committee may grant the relevant examination allowance or refer the matter to the Chair of Examiners for further review after the Class List has been issued.

**Note for 2021:** Candidates who consider that their performance in examinations or coursework has been adversely affected by the pandemic in acute and exceptional ways will be able to apply for examination allowances via EAMC in the usual way. They should consult with their college Directors of Studies and Tutors about this process. Further information can be found here: <https://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/mitigation>