Preparing for Exams

Sources of academic support
Resources
Practical preparation
Taking the exam
Getting your results
Sources of academic support

• Supervisors
  • Should have strong knowledge of course content
  • May not have sat the exam you are taking (studied elsewhere)
  • Revision supervisions, practice papers etc

• DoS (Undergraduates, MAST & LLM)
  • Knowledge of course structure and marking/classing criteria
  • May not know all the answers to questions on the paper(s) you are sitting, particularly in borrowed papers and later years!
Sources of academic support

• Course coordinator / course director
  • May provide overview / revision lectures
  • Try your supervisors or DoS first for specific questions

• Other students who have taken the paper before or who are working on it now can be really helpful
  • DO remember that course content changes over time
  • Respect their need to prepare for their own papers
Resources: Past papers

- Websites, including Moodle or other restricted space;
- department teaching office, supervisors

- DO check if the paper content has changed – there may be new areas covered and some material may no longer be examined…

- If you have a new paper then a “mock” or “specimen” paper should be available – if not do ask!
Almost all first year undergraduate students at Hughes will have sat a mock paper prior to Tripos. These may have been based on past papers.

Extra practice of past papers is still a good idea.

There are a variety of ways to do this:

- On your own in a quiet environment with a timer set and no notes
- Using your notes, try to pick out the important elements for an answer but don’t worry about the time it takes
- In a group so you can share ideas about the best way to tackle a problem or essay
- Before or during a supervision
Question spotting...

We are trying to test.... a combination of knowledge and understanding of the theory presented in lectures and the ability to apply that knowledge to solve mainly unseen problems.

Questions vary (in content, length and difficulty) from one year to the next.

‘I see all the questions coming up in your history GCSE…’
Resources:

Faculty of Biology

Exams and Marking

Guide For Students:

- Undergrad Exam Information
- Examination Skills
- Faculty Board Guidance on Plagiarism
- Form and Conduct Notices (MVST IA, IB, and 2nd MB)
- Form and Conduct Notices (NST IA, IB, Part II, and Part III)
- Examination Structure and Papers (MVST)
- Marking and Classing Scheme (MVST IA)
- Marking and Classing Scheme (MVST IB)
- Marking and Classing Scheme (BBS)
- 2nd MB/2nd Vet MB Passmarks
- Your Results
- Marks
Resources:
Marking and classing criteria

These tell you what is actually going to be assessed:

• They may be very general:

An answer that shows very clear understanding, displays a high degree of accuracy, thoroughness and perceptiveness, and provides a cogent, well supported, and well structured argument focused on the question, with a significant level of insight and a degree of originality.

• Or very specific:

Very good (at the lower end of the band) to excellent (at the higher end) knowledge of the cuneiform script. Very good to excellent transliterations/normalisations and translations, reflecting correct understanding of the Akkadian. **Good English style.**

At the lower end there may be occasional minor lapses, or **gaps for difficult words/forms.** Solicited notes are fully or almost fully correct, and clear.
Marking and classing criteria

And there may be important notes at the end:

• *Significant repetition....may be penalized.*
• *Reproducing a translation from another source is not acceptable.*
"Education is not the learning of facts, but the training of the mind to think."
-Albert Einstein
Marking and classing criteria

Beware how paper marks are combined:

*In order to achieve any overall class for Part IIA PBS, a candidate must attain that target class, or higher, in at least two papers; and also must attain at least the next lower class, in all papers.*

This means that to get a first a candidate must receive marks of 60 or above (at least an upper second) in all papers, two of which are 70 or above.

Similarly, to achieve an upper second, they must achieve at least 50 in all papers, and 60 or above in two papers.
Resources:
Form and Conduct Notices

Lots or little useful information – you will need to check!

ARC5. Egyptian Language I

• This paper is assessed through two in-class tests of two hours each. The first one will take place at the end of week six of Lent term, while the second will be conducted at the end of week four of Easter term.

• Each test will consist of the transliteration and translation of selections of unseen passages in hieroglyphic Middle Egyptian, appropriate to the expected level of proficiency of the students at the time of each assessment. In addition to the transliteration and translation, the complete grammatical analysis (parsing) of each Egyptian passage will be required.

• The use of sign lists and glossaries or dictionaries is permitted, and copies will be supplied to the students for the purposes of the test by the course coordinator.

• Each test will make up 50% of the total mark awarded for the paper.
Resources: Model Answers

• The availability of these is very variable across subjects. Philosophy is excellent!

• Excellent advice on the use of past papers and model answers is given by the Faculty of Mathematics
  
  • [https://www.maths.cam.ac.uk/examples-solutions-part-ia#comment](https://www.maths.cam.ac.uk/examples-solutions-part-ia#comment)
Planning your time

• You may have the whole term in which to revise.
• You may have new lecture courses in the Easter Term to cope with as well as revision.
  • Don’t just “bin” the Easter Term work – it may be essential. If in doubt please ask your DoS.
Staying focussed and motivated

• Everyone has good days and bad days.
• Try working a variety of different spaces to see what works well for you....
• Seminar Room B is available most days for students
• You are welcome to work in the Peter Richards Room if it is available
• Please avoid using laptops etc in the Dining Hall at actual meal times – keeping meal times for eating and talking is a good idea anyway.
And elsewhere:

- [https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk/](https://spacefinder.lib.cam.ac.uk/)

Space finder includes places without Wi-Fi
Timetable

• Create a timetable for your work
• Ensure it includes time for extra curricular activities
• You will probably not succeed in sticking to your timetable 100%
• When you get a bit behind it is tempting to cut out time off. But you need time off revision as much as time revising if you are to achieve your potential.

*If you have been working hard all year you need to be generous to yourself when things get a bit out with your timetable...*
Structured time off...

• Keep exercising, singing or whatever
  • But do be realistic if you are involved in a very time-consuming activity (golf, cricket, putting on a play etc)

• DO still see your friends

• But – consider turning alerts off on your phone and laptop.
Try to get out of Cambridge during the Easter Vacation.
Practical preparation

• Check what you are allowed to take with you:
  • Calculators
    • These may need to be authorised by the department
  • Drawing aids
  • Formulae sheets
  • Specified reference materials

• Bottle of clear water
• No other food or drink or medicines may be taken into the exam room unless applied for in advance
Practical preparation: Your exam dates and times

- These are on your yellow exam confirmation form (ECF)
  - The Tutorial Office will email you when these are in your pigeon holes....
- They are also on Camsis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My Personal Information</th>
<th>Other Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic Information</td>
<td>Advisers (DoS, Tutor, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addresses</td>
<td>Athletic participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email addresses</td>
<td>Awards and bursaries</td>
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<td>Emergency contacts</td>
<td>Cambridge Bursary Scheme</td>
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<td>Internet addresses</td>
<td>Graduation information</td>
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<td>Manage @cam email address</td>
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<td>Publications</td>
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<td>Personal data (gender etc)</td>
<td>Student questionnaires</td>
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<tr>
<td>Phone numbers</td>
<td>Work experience</td>
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<td>Visa Applications</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Examinations</th>
<th>Apply For Things</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination entry rules</td>
<td>Apply for graduate course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examination timetable</td>
<td>Transcripts</td>
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<td>Verification letters</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Degree certificates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When can I see my results?

Select the term for which you would like to view your examination timetable.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Career</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easter Term 2016</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easter Term 2015</td>
<td>University of Cambridge</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

View Exam Timetable
Your examination timetable is listed below.

Please make sure you know where the venue of each examination is and aim to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start time. Your examination candidate number will be sent to you via your College Office.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LWT1</td>
<td>Law Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>19 May 2016 13:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Land law (Exam)</td>
<td>- 16:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LWT1</td>
<td>Law Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>23 May 2016 13:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Law of contract (Exam)</td>
<td>- 16:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LWT1</td>
<td>Law Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>24 May 2016 09:00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criminology, sentencing, and t (Exam)</td>
<td>- 12:00</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date/Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LWT1</td>
<td>Law Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>25 May 2016 13:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criminal procedure and crimina (Exam)</td>
<td>- 16:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Faculty of Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• The timetables are also published
  • http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/all-students-timetable

All students timetable

Class List publication dates
A list of classlist publication dates is made available each May for Easter Term classlists, for Easter Term 2016 the list can be found here. Please contact the Student Registry directly (recordsandexams@admin.cam.ac.uk) for information about Michaelmas and Lent Term classlist publication dates or speak to your department.

Exam timetables
2016-17
• Exam Timetable: Michaelmas Term 2016 (September 2016 examinations)
• Exam Timetable: Michaelmas Term 2016 (October-December 2016 examinations)
• Exam Timetable: Michaelmas Term 2016 and Lent Term 2017 Master of Corporate Law
• Exam Timetable: Lent Term 2017
• Exam Timetable: Lent Term 2017 EMBA Revised
• Exam Timetable: Early Easter Term 2017 (12 April - 12 May)
• Exam Timetable: Early Easter Term 2017 - Engineering Tripos Part IIA and IIB; Computer Science Tripos Part III; Associated M.Phil and M.Res Examinations

• Check the dates and times carefully... mistakes are not unheard of!
Practical preparation

• Where is your exam?
• Check your ECF (Exam Confirmation Form)
• Look up the venue:

http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/exam-sites
Check your route and test it....
And if you are late?

• You will not be allowed into the room if you are more than 30 minutes late
• Recently, the invigilators stopped ringing up College tutorial staff if students failed to show up so it is up to you now...
• And if you are going to be more than 30 minutes late to the venue...please turn up to the Tutorial Office immediately
  • You will be penalised 30 mins, but at least you will get to take the exam
Taking a taxi may not be quicker than cycling!
• Remember reading time (if allowed) may start BEFORE the stated exam time so you will want to be there even earlier.
Taking the exam

• Read the guidance at http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/undergraduate-exam-information/practical-instructions
| **Required**        | University ID card  
|                    | Stationery, in a clear plastic bag or clear pencil case  
|                    | Candidate Number  
| **Permitted**      | A non-carbonated drink in a small bottle for consumption provided that no disturbance is caused to other candidates  
|                    | Watch and wallet (subject to inspection by an invigilator.)  
|                    | Note: Smart watches are not allowed in examination rooms  
|                    | Examination confirmation form – personal timetable (subject to inspection by an invigilator)  
| **Disallowed**     | Unauthorised material (including revision notes) or equipment relevant to the exam.  
|                    | Smart watches  
|                    | Wireless earpieces  
|                    | Good Luck charms and items  
|                    | Cigarettes and E-cigarettes  
|                    | Food (unless prior approval granted)  
|                    | Medicines (unless prior approval granted)  
|                    | Mobile phone  
|                    | Coats and bags must be left in the area supplied, either at the back of the room or just outside the room. |
NO CHEATING
If you are unwell or have an accident before an exam

• If you are unwell on the day of an exam please tell the Tutorial Office immediately.

• If you think you might not be well enough to take your exam email your tutor as soon as possible to alert them to the problem.

• Don’t wait until after the exam to see a doctor or nurse – see someone as soon as possible and preferably before the exam starts.

• If you have a longer term condition and your health deteriorates do make sure you update your GP or the College Nurse regularly.
If you become unwell *during* an exam

• Do not struggle on if you are unwell
• Raise your hand and wait for an invigilator
• The invigilator will accompany you out of the room and will then work out what to do next:
  • You may decide to return to the exam hall
  • The invigilator may ask the Duty Tutor to collect you and bring you back to College
    • You might then attempt the rest of the exam after a break if you feel well enough
    • However, if you are not well enough then we will arrange for you to see a GP or nurse and then apply for an Examination Allowance
Further sources of advice

• Student Advice Service
  • http://www.studentadvice.cam.ac.uk/academic/exams/
We’ll help you
explore your options

You are in: Home » Academic » Examinations

During and after the exams

- What should I do if I’m ill just before or during my exams?
- What should I do if something happens in the exams which affects my performance (large amounts of external noise, disturbance in exam room, mistake on the paper etc.)?
- What should I do if there is a mistake on the exam paper?
- What should I do if there are procedural irregularities during the examination?
- What should I do if I am unhappy about my results?
- What should I do if I think my exam performance was affected by extenuating circumstances?
- When will my results be published?
Getting your results: Undergraduates

- When
- On Camsis:
Via the classlist publication date document
http://www.cambridgestudents.cam.ac.uk/your-course/examinations/all-students-timetable

All students timetable

Class List publication dates
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Name of Examination</th>
<th>Publication Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AET0</td>
<td>Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IA</td>
<td>17/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AET1</td>
<td>Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>17/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AET2</td>
<td>Asian and Middle Eastern Studies Tripos, Part II</td>
<td>17/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART0</td>
<td>Architecture Tripos, Part IA</td>
<td>13/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART1</td>
<td>Architecture Tripos, Part IB</td>
<td>13/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART2</td>
<td>Architecture Tripos, Part II</td>
<td>13/06/2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASP1</td>
<td>Preliminary Examination for Part I of the Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic Tripos</td>
<td>18/06/2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your results will become available on your camsis self-service page:

### My results

**Easter Term 1994 – University of Cambridge – Undergraduate**

Below is a list of results for your chosen term.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total Mark / Out Of</th>
<th>Ranking / Out Of</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>Archaeological and Anthropological Tripos, Part I</td>
<td>Class II, division 1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Area</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The development of human society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Humans in biological perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Human societies: the comparative perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AAT1</td>
<td>4A</td>
<td>Being human: an interdisciplinary approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[View Results]
“Applications will only be considered where there is demonstrable evidence of medical or other exceptional extenuating circumstances showing that publication would be likely to seriously endanger their health or well-being.”
Myths

• Gentlemen are entitled to ask for a pint of ale during a Tripos exam

• You can be fined for not wearing a sword

• If you need to fight a crusade you will be award a first class mark for patriotism
  • You may or may not need a white horse, sword and armour...but it’s still not going to work!

• You need a gown to sit an exam
  • The invigilator does need one, but you don’t!
And if the exams don’t go as well as you hoped...
Any questions?

• https://issuu.com/uni_cambridge/docs/university_of_cambridge_guide_to_un