

Examinations

January

By **Friday 21st October** you must hand in your completed draft examination and marking scheme (together with either your UG resit and/or PGT coursework assessment and marking scheme) to Jennie Ball-Foster in LF.21 (Student Support Office). Please provide the name of your moderator.

Where feasible, the moderator must be an independent member of staff and not amongst those with whom you share teaching on the course unit.

Setting of Examinations

In light of Faculty's serious concerns about the high level of errors being reported during examination sessions, it is vital that exam setters liaise to ensure that their exam papers and marking schemes are checked thoroughly for any possible typographical errors, including spelling, programming or coding text, phrasing and grammar.

Where there are multiple setters of an examination paper, the course unit leader must take responsibility for checking the exam in particular ensuring consistency of referencing and labelling; as well as the spread of questions to avoid any repetition.

When setting your examination, please aim to obtain a mean mark of **60%** and a standard deviation **15%**.

MCQ Policy

It is current University practice that sections of examination papers featuring MCQs (where printed on paper) be collected in after the examination, and not published. Nevertheless, for obvious security reasons, MCQs must be changed every year, just like any other questions, in order to prevent the leakage of information likely to be useful to candidates. Basic changes should go without saying: wording of the questions and responses, values of numerical parameters and---most obviously of all---order of responses. In addition, however, exam setters are expected to build up a bank of questions from which a non-predictable selection may be made each time the exam is run. As recent experience shows, these concerns are not purely theoretical: it has to be assumed that information about multiple choice examinations will escape, even when question papers are supposed to be collected in.

Negative marking policy

Negative marking is the practice of subtracting marks for incorrectly answered parts of questions. It is often employed in conjunction with multiple-choice questions, where candidates could expect to obtain a significant non-zero mark by guessing. The preferred policy of the School is not to use negative marking, unless its absence would result in serious distortions in the overall mark. Small numbers of marks obtained by guessing the answers to a few questions do not constitute a serious distortion, and anyway scarcely justify the extra effort of implementing negative marking schemes. Recent experience has shown that negative marking generates complaints by students. If you do decide to use negative marking on your examination---for example if there is a significant multiple-choice component---then the scheme should be made clear to candidates on the examination paper. If this cannot be done succinctly, then it almost certainly requires simplification anyway.

Showing working

Questions involving numerical or other symbolic calculations frequently have short answers, and the marking scheme may require candidates to justify those answers, for example by showing their working. In that case, the examination paper should contain the explicit instruction "Show your working" or some appropriate reformulation thereof. Of course, candidates are expected to understand that the onus is generally on them to convince the examiner that they have mastered the material. However, students who simply write correct answers---particularly to short or undemanding questions---may, in the absence of such an instruction, legitimately complain when they are not awarded full marks.

Online Policy

It is current University policy that all online assessment for course units must be undertaken in Blackboard.

Examination Papers

Please note that the Exams Office have confirmed that, to facilitate our use of Times New Roman for mathematical style questions, they have agreed that all our examinations can be prepared using the Times New Roman size 12 font for text and Courier New size 11 font for programming text.

A sample of an exam has been provided to help you with the University's official layout.

If examination questions are too long to appear on the same page, please clearly label the split (i.e. Question X continues on the following page) and (Question X continues from the previous page). Put "PTO" at the end of every odd numbered page. Ensure that there is a reasonable space between the end of one question set and the start of another.

Do not prepare any examination questions or answers on any part of the Unix network.

Guidance about assessments is provided at the following link:-

<http://studentnet.cs.manchester.ac.uk/assessment/stafffaq.php>

We encourage a scheme with 20 marks per question. Where two or more teaching staff set questions, please make sure the mark weighting makes sense when the questions are combined into a single exam paper.

All marks should be rounded up.

Exams marks do not have to add up to the percentage contributing to the final module mark, but students should be aware what percentage weighting the exam has, so please check that it is correct in your course unit's syllabus. A weighted sum of the exam percentage score and coursework percentage score are used to get the final percentage mark for the course unit.

Cover Sheets

Please keep Jennie advised of the specific information for the cover sheet for your particular examinations/resits so that cover sheets can be prepared. The information should include a rubric, which clearly states specific guidelines for that exam:

- (a) which questions are compulsory;
- (b) whether separate answer books are required for each question/section answered;
- (c) how many questions have to be answered (in each section);
- (d) please indicate if an exam is open book - whether calculators are allowed etc.;
- (e) specific requirements, for example graph paper is appended;
- (f) colour appendices (which the School organises) need to be clearly referenced on the front page).
- (g) if an examination is online, this must be clearly labelled

Marking Scheme

1. A marking scheme contains, for each question, a model answer (or several) **plus** an explanation of which part gets how many marks **or** which errors lead to the subtraction of how many marks.
2. The marking scheme is used by (a) the markers, (b) the internal moderator, and (c) the external examiner, and (d) seen by the student in case they request to see exam scripts. Hence it must be **readable** for other people.

The marking scheme must be detailed, in order that the moderator or external examiner is able to double mark a script with a good likelihood of obtaining the same mark. The ideal would be to specify where each individual mark is to be awarded. If this is not felt to be possible, e.g. for an essay type question, a description or example of different levels of partial marks should be given.

The marking scheme should also give an external examiner the opportunity to see how much work is required for each question. This does not preclude refining or modifying the scheme within the constraints of the marking allocation on the question paper when marking.

The marking scheme should also indicate which parts of questions are bookwork and which are problem-solving or analysis. For the latter, please provide some indication of how similar the questions are to ones the students have seen before.

Completion of Examination

When the paper has been typed, please provide a printed copy and an electronic copy to Jennie (either as a pdf or word document).

Please do not send any assessments or marking schemes via email.

Upon receipt of the examination, resit examination and marking schemes, the moderator will be asked to proof read and approve the content/standard of the questions as usual and you will be advised of any edits/changes required to be made to the papers and/or marking schemes.

You and your moderator will be asked to sign off the various stages of setting, moderating, checking and revision on the pro-forma cover sheet as usual.

Please ensure that Jennie has the final copy of the examination and marking scheme/model answer to be forwarded to the External Examiners for their consideration and comments. (Note we do not send resit assessments to the Externals.)

Resits

When preparing the Undergraduate Sem 1 examination please would you also prepare a resit examination and marking scheme and arrange that everything is moderated together by the same moderator. **Deadline for UG resits for Semester 1 examinations is 21st October.**

The Postgraduate Examination Boards will confirm which units will require resit examination or coursework. Staff will be asked to provide completed and moderated resit assessments by **Friday 21st July 2017.**

Please note that the School has a policy that no examination papers from January or June should be re-used in the production of resit examination papers.