

EXAMINATION ADVICE

Marking and classing guidelines used in the Classical Tripos

These guidelines are intended to help you understand the principles on which marks and grades are assigned in Classical Tripos and Preliminary exams. Since the standards and expectations differ from one year of your course to the next, the guidelines are interpreted flexibly, so as to fit the level of attainment expected at each stage.

TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

<u>Class</u>	<u>Marks</u> <u>Alphabetic</u>	<u>Numerical</u> <u>(out of 100)</u>	<u>Typical features</u>
I	Leading α , including $\alpha\beta$	Normally 70 to 80 Higher marks may be given for exceptional work	Excellent comprehension of the original, with few if any mistakes. Good English style. The quality may range from $\alpha+$, indicating a translation which can scarcely be improved on and reads like an original piece of English, to $\alpha\beta$, indicating that overall quality is First class but there are some weaknesses.
II.1	Leading β^+/β^{++} : β^+ to $\beta\alpha$	60-69	Good comprehension of the original, sound vocabulary and understanding of syntax, and generally good English style. But several mistakes and/or gaps, and sometimes a tendency to paraphrase. Where appropriate, intelligent guesses can make up for deficiencies in vocabulary.
	<u>Possible subdivisions</u>		
Very good II.1	mainly β^{++} often with some α	about 67 to 69	Few basic errors, but occasional imprecision or paraphrase or gaps. Weaknesses may be compensated by signs of α quality.
Mid II.1	β^+ to β^{++}	63-67	Usually consistent II.1 quality. Signs of α quality rarely compensate for weakness.
Low II.1	β^+	60 to 62	Competent translation, but too many errors for comfort. No signs of α quality, but sometimes signs of II.2 quality.
II.2	$\beta\gamma$ to β including $\beta^?+$	50-59	Adequate comprehension of the original, but wavering and/or partial. Some control of vocabulary and syntax, although with not infrequent deficiencies and confusions and perhaps some gaps. Style mostly workmanlike, but may contain weaker patches. There may be a tendency for paraphrase or guesswork to extend over entire sentences or clauses. Often the quality will vary between II.1 and III.
III	Leading γ , $\gamma\beta$ to $\gamma\delta$	40-49	Some comprehension of the original, but distinctly patchy, on account of limited vocabulary and/or misunderstanding of syntax. Often gaps, with little or no attempt to guess, making any sense of style insecure. Script may well be seriously incomplete.
Fail	Leading δ	normally 30-39	Little or no comprehension of the original. Ignorance of even basic vocabulary. Translation often nonsensical. Many gaps. No attempt to guess. So incomplete a script that no judgement can be made of the quality of performance in the paper.

PRELIMS TO PART IA ESSAY PORTFOLIO

Class	Marks Alphabetic	Numerical (out of 100 for each essay)	Typical features
I	Leading α , including $\alpha\beta$	Normally 70-80 Higher marks may be given for exceptional work	Shows most or all of the following characteristics: evidence of wide reading thoroughly understood; intelligent and relevant use of sources; a clarity of expression and structure; frequent signs of the ability to think independently; excellent organisation and presentation covering major points; no irrelevant material.
II.1	Leading β^+/β^{++} ; β^+ to $\beta\alpha$	60-69	Reading interpreted intelligently with clear signs of independent judgement. Well organised and presented with little or no irrelevance; full documentation, correctly presented.
	<u>Possible subdivisions</u>		
Very good II.1	mainly β^{++} often with some α	about 66-69	A thoroughly well-informed, well organised performance without sufficient sign of independence to pass the 1st class boundary.
Mid to Low II.1	β^+ to β^{++}	60-65	Solidly informed and solidly organised.
II.2	$\beta\gamma$ to β including $\beta\gamma^+$	50-59	Lightweight material and analysis, with an incomplete understanding. A sound general sense of relevance, although sometimes wavering and unreflective. May contain errors and/or exhibit confusion and/or give short measure.
III	Leading γ , $\gamma\beta$ to $\gamma\delta$	40-49	Two alternatives: (i) Little evidence of some independent work, but limited in scope and with a sense of relevance that may be limited. Some competence in presentation. Likely to contain errors, exhibit confusion and give short measure. (ii) Seriously underweight essay with evidence nonetheless of work of at least second class standard.
Fail	Leading δ	normally 30-39	Two alternatives: (i) Fails to demonstrate understanding of texts or data. Gross irrelevance. (ii) So short an essay that no judgement can be made on quality.
An essay may combine features indicative of one class with features indicative of another. In such cases, the numerical mark should indicate the average level attained by the essay. Unevenness that is particularly striking may be indicated by cross-marking when giving the alphabetical mark.			

EXAMINATION ADVICE

ESSAY PAPERS

<u>Class</u>	<u>Marks</u> <u>Alphabetic</u>	<u>Numerical</u> <u>(out of</u> <u>100)</u>	<u>Typical features</u>	<u>Level</u>
I	Leading α	Normally 70 to 80	Clear evidence of independent thought, a capacity for critical judgement, and an ability to make connections. Clear evidence of ability to analyse material, to argue or make a complex point coherently. Range and precision of knowledge of primary material impressive. Excellent organisation and presentation covering key points and avoiding irrelevance.	70-74: incisive & thoughtful 75-80: original & challenging
II.1	β^{+} to $\beta^{++}/\beta\alpha$	60-69	Some evidence of independent thought, a capacity for critical judgement, and an ability to make connections. Some evidence of ability to analyse material, to argue or make a complex point coherently. Range and precision of knowledge of primary material good. Solid organisation and presentation covering key points and largely avoiding irrelevance.	60-64: good basic coverage 65-69: resourceful use of material
II.2	$\gamma\beta/\beta$ to β (including $\beta^{?+}$)	50-59	Exercise of thought and judgement mostly competent but dependent and limited in scope, and may exhibit some confusion. Straightforward treatment of material, with limited ability in analysis and argument. Mostly sound level of knowledge, covering some basic points. Adequate presentation of material, with a sound general sense of relevance, though perhaps wavering and unreflective.	50-54: coverage thin and without penetration 55-59: some good passages
III	$\gamma\delta/\gamma$ to $\gamma^{++}/\gamma\beta$	40-49	Evidence of comprehension, but also signs of confusion. Evidence of knowledge, but not well supported by detail and severely limited in scope or deficient in argument. Some competence in presentation, but sense of relevance may be limited.	40-44: lacking direction 45-49: makes some points
F	Leading δ (and below)	39 and below	Little sign of comprehension. Information erroneous and may be seriously incomplete. Deficient presentation and/or argument and/or sense of relevance.	Below 20 hardly any evidence of study 20-29: gross inaccuracy 30-39: very thin

These guidelines focus on features typical of examination scripts at different levels of attainment. Please note:

- *Not every script of a particular standard will necessarily exhibit all the features typically associated with performance at that level.*
- *Candidates' performances may often be uneven, exhibiting features characteristic of more than one class (variation may occur within a single answer or as between answers to different questions). In such cases examiners will balance stronger and weaker elements to determine the overall mark on the paper.*
- *Thus for example: a wide-ranging script evidencing plenty of independence and ability to make connections but also some confusion, irrelevance and weakness in analysis might be judged II.1 overall; similarly a seriously incomplete script showing evidence nonetheless of knowledge and abilities typical of at least second class standard would probably be judged deserving of a III.*

PROSE AND VERSE COMPOSITION

<u>Mark</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Marks</u> <u>Alphabetic</u>	<u>Numerical</u> <u>(out of 100)</u>	<u>Typical features</u>
<i>GL</i>	I	α range including $\alpha\beta$	70 or above	<p>Prose. Wide and apt vocabulary. Ability to handle a range of constructions, and to reflect the style of a particular author or genre. Few or no errors of syntax or word-formation.</p> <p>Verse. Vocabulary and style apt for the genre. Few or no syntactical or metrical errors.</p> <p>The quality may range from α^+ (a composition which reads like a piece of authentic Greek or Latin) to $\alpha\beta$ (the overall quality is First class but there are some weaknesses associated with the II.1 class).</p>
<i>GL</i>	high II.1	generally $\beta\alpha$ to β^{++}	65-69	<p>Prose. A generally accurate and stylish composition, showing apt vocabulary and ability to handle constructions.</p> <p>Verse. Generally apt vocabulary and style and competent handling of metre.</p> <p>The composition may fail to achieve a First class mark for one or more reasons: because it is rather limited in vocabulary, or it contains several errors of syntax or word-formation or metre, or some stylistic infelicities.</p>
<i>gl</i>	low II.1 and II.2	generally β^+ to $\beta\gamma$	50-64	<p>The minimum requirement is that the composition shows, in prose, an adequate vocabulary and ability to use the basic constructions; in verse, a knowledge of basic vocabulary and metre. The composition will remain intelligible as simple Greek or Latin, despite the less than perfect command of the language. At the upper end of the range it will show, in prose, a good sense of style and a fairly wide and apt vocabulary; in verse, generally apt vocabulary and style and competent handling of metre. But it fails to qualify for <i>GL</i>, because it is marred by too many errors or stylistic infelicities. At the lower end it will show a general competence</p>
	III and Fail	γ range and below	49 and below	<p>The composition may reveal elements of sound vocabulary and some knowledge of basic constructions or of metre (if not it will fall below a 3rd), but these are likely to be overshadowed by errors and confusions. The composition may be partly or largely unintelligible as Greek or Latin.</p>

Note: In Greek Composition papers ‘Credit will be given for a knowledge of the general principles of Greek accentuation’. The application of that knowledge may help the composition to achieve a high classification or may compensate for weaknesses which would otherwise cause it to deserve a lower classification.

PART II THESIS

Class	Marks Alphabetic	Numerical (out of 100)	Typical features
I	Leading α , including $\alpha\beta$	Normally 70 to 80 Higher marks may be given for exceptional work	A performance which would include some or all of the following characteristics: - Evidence of wide and intellectually demanding reading, analysed in depth and thoroughly understood; original thought, often expressed with sophistication and elegance, and often manifesting itself in the ability to ask new and significant questions about texts or collections of material; first-hand research showing technical and/or methodological sophistication; excellent organisation, argument and presentation covering all major points, no irrelevant material.
II.1	Leading β^+/β^{++} : β^+ to $\beta\alpha$	60-69	Wide reading, interpreted intelligently with clear signs of independent thought and judgement. Well organised and argued, well presented with little or no irrelevance; full documentation, correctly presented.
	<u>Possible subdivisions</u>		
Very good II.1	mainly β^{++} often with some α	about 67 to 69	Two alternatives: (i) uneven performance with originality or sophistication earning α marks but the argumentation not of a consistent level or the presentation good enough to pass the 1st class boundary; (ii) a thoroughly well-informed, well organised performance without sufficient sign of originality to pass the 1st class boundary.
Mid II.1	β^+ to β^{++}	63-67	As the two very good II.1 alternatives, but weaker: either some α quality detected, but within a more uneven performance; or solidly informed, solidly organised, without α quality.
Low II.1	β^+	60 to 62	Just enough material and ability to organise, argue and present it to merit a II.1 (cf. general criteria for II.1 and II.2).
II.2	$\beta\gamma$ to β including $\beta^?+$	50-59	Relatively lightweight material and analysis, with a competent but dependent or incomplete understanding and with adequate presentation and referencing. A sound general sense of relevance, although sometimes wavering and unreflective. May contain errors and/or exhibit confusion and/or give short measure.
III	Leading γ , $\gamma\beta$ to $\gamma\delta$	40-49	Two alternatives: (i) Evidence of independent work, but limited in scope and with a sense of relevance that may be limited. Some competence in presentation, but referencing may be deficient or absent. Likely to contain errors, exhibit confusion and give short measure. (ii) Seriously underweight thesis with evidence nonetheless of work of at least second class standard.
Fail	Leading δ	normally 30-39	Two alternatives: (i) Fails to demonstrate independent work or ability to ask serious questions of texts or data. Gross irrelevance. (ii) So underweight a thesis that no judgement can be made on quality.

CRITICAL DISCUSSION

<u>Class</u>	<u>Marks</u> <u>Alphabetic</u>	<u>Numerical</u> <u>(100)</u>	<u>Typical features</u>	<u>Level</u>
I	Leading α	Normally 70 to 80	Shows a detailed knowledge and understanding of the passage and keeps the focus of the discussion on the passage at hand but can indicate where and how such a discussion might be relevant for work as a whole. Can conduct a coherent and persuasive argument for the way or ways in which to read the passage and what the value of reading in a particular way might be. Can discuss detailed syntactical and linguistic issues accurately and in a way which makes them relevant to the wider discussion of the passage.	70-74: incisive & thoughtful 75-80: original & challenging
II.1	β^+ to $\beta^{++}/\beta\alpha$	60-69	Shows a good understanding of the passage and can contextualise it relevantly. Can argue for a particular reading, but, where relevant, shows some awareness that this might not be the only way of approaching the passage. Clear evidence of a good understanding of the passage in the original and an awareness of its key linguistic features as they relate to the interpretation of the passage.	60-64: good basic coverage 65-69: resourceful use of material
II.2	$\gamma\beta/\beta$ to β (including $\beta?+$)	50-59	Shows a fair understanding of the passage and some understanding of the work as a whole – although perhaps more from a reading of it in translation than the original. May display a tendency to use the passage as a stepping stone to a discussion of the text as a whole although still some reasonable attempt is made to engage with the passage. Some ability to perceive and discuss points closely related to the language of the passage..	50-54: coverage thin and without penetration 55-59: some good passages
III	$\gamma\delta/\gamma$ to $\gamma^{++}/\gamma\beta$	40-49	Shows a poor or faulty understanding of the passage with some evidence of patches of incomprehension of the original. Has some knowledge of the text as a whole but is insufficiently able to engage with the passage at hand.	40-44: lacking direction 45-49: makes some points
F	Leading δ (and below)	39 and below	Shows no knowledge of the text and little or no understanding of the passage in the original.; answers which show no familiarity with the text from which the passage is taken a mark below 20.	Below 20 hardly any evidence of study 20-29: gross inaccuracy 30-39: very thin

These guidelines focus on features typical of examination scripts at different levels of attainment. Please note:

- *Not every script of a particular standard will necessarily exhibit all the features typically associated with performance at that level.*
- *Candidates' performances may often be uneven, exhibiting features characteristic of more than one class (variation may occur within a single answer or as between answers to different questions). In such cases examiners will balance stronger and weaker elements to determine the overall mark on the paper.*
- *Thus for example: a wide-ranging script evidencing plenty of independence and ability to make connections but also some confusion, irrelevance and weakness in analysis might be judged II.I overall; similarly a seriously incomplete script showing evidence nonetheless of knowledge and abilities typical of at least second class standard would probably be judged deserving of a III.*

Reuse of material between examination scripts, essays and theses

This note applies to *all* the examination papers, including O papers, that may be taken by a candidate in a given year and to *all* the assessed essays and theses that may be written by a candidate in a given year (i.e. the Preliminary Examination to Part IA, Part IA, Part IB and Part II of the Classical Tripos, and the MPhil). It is the policy of the Faculty Board that material used in any one written paper, essay or thesis must not be used again in a form that amounts to straightforward repetition (whether verbatim or in close paraphrase); i.e., without appropriate effort being made to adapt the material to the requirements of the particular question. Repetition of this kind will be penalised by examiners.

The potential problem of significant reuse of material by candidates is tackled from two different directions. In setting papers and agreeing to assessed essay or thesis titles, Boards of Examiners check very carefully to ensure that there is no unacceptable overlap between questions within and across examination papers. The Faculty Board also scrutinizes candidates' Part II thesis proposals and titles to make sure there is no unacceptable overlap with papers being taken. Candidates' MPhil essay titles and thesis proposals and titles are similarly checked by the MPhil examiners and the Degree Committee to avoid the risk of unacceptable overlap with other essays or theses being proposed. Where it seems appropriate, the candidate will either be advised to change the proposed essay or thesis title, or be issued with a written warning, alerting him or her to the danger of possible overlap.

Despite these safeguards, it may occasionally prove difficult for an examination candidate, having made a particular choice of examination questions, essay topics or thesis topic, to avoid using similar ideas in two or more pieces of work. Under these circumstances, the candidate should make every effort to present these ideas in ways which are relevant to the particular occasion, tailoring the formulation carefully in each case so as to make it contribute effectively to the overall argument.

It should be pointed out that, in recent years, the safeguards detailed above have generally proved effective so that reuse of material has hardly ever resulted in any significant difficulty.

Plagiarism and Other Unfair Means

The formal position, as established by the University, is as follows. The use of unfair means in examinations and other pieces of assessed work is treated with the utmost seriousness by the University. Any suspicion that a candidate may have cheated in an examination room or used improper means, including plagiarism (on which, see below), in an essay, dissertation or project work will be reported to the Senior Proctor (the chief disciplinary officer). If misconduct is suspected, then the Senior Proctor may advise that the evidence should be referred to the University Advocate with a view to the case being brought before the Court of Discipline in accordance with Statute B, VI (Discipline and the University Courts). The powers of the Court of Discipline extend to depriving a student of membership of the University.

In practical terms, the Faculty is aware that plagiarism (which may briefly be defined as taking the ideas or writing of another person and using them as one's own) need not be intentional or malicious; also that many undergraduates are initially unclear as to what constitutes fair and unfair use of the ideas of others.

EXAMINATION ADVICE

The problem of plagiarism relates to all types of written work, including essays written for term-time supervisions. In fact, it is through writing of supervision essays that most undergraduates quickly come to appreciate the extent to which earlier work in a particular field should be explicitly acknowledged. Supervisors will routinely advise their pupils whether they are giving adequate recognition to the ideas formulated by other scholars which are being reported in their essays. On common sense grounds, it is clearly safer to be over-scrupulous in attributing other writers' ideas than to be too sparing in making acknowledgements. The experience of attending lectures and reading academic books and articles will also help to demonstrate in detail how established scholars acknowledge the contribution of their predecessors in the field.

The possibility of plagiarism should be borne in mind particularly when writing a dissertation. You will be expected to have a solid grasp of existing publications relevant to the dissertation topic, but the work that you submit must be your own, except where the contributions of others are acknowledged. It is crucially important to maintain a clear distinction between your own ideas and views derived from published literature or presented by others in seminars. If you present as your own ideas those which are in fact drawn from the work of others, you run the risk of being penalised by the examiners, as well as being disciplined by the University.

Should you require further advice, consult initially your Supervisor or Director of Studies. The Academic Secretary for Undergraduate Affairs is also available for consultation.

There are University websites giving further information about the issue of plagiarism.

For postgraduates:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/gradstud/current/submitting/plagiarism.html>

For undergraduates:

<http://www.admin.cam.ac.uk/offices/exams/students/plagiarism.pdf>