



OXFORD MASTERS IN MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES 2026

First Notice to Candidates

This circular contains information about:

- the format of papers in Part C/OMMS;
- classification conventions and marking schemes;
- the use of calculators;
- dissertations.

The full regulations for the MSc in Mathematical Sciences examinations are contained in the Examination Decrees and Regulations. Full particulars about the syllabus and other information can be found in the [MSc in Mathematical Sciences Course Handbook](#) and the [synopses of lecture courses](#) for Part C 2025-26.

The timetable for the examination will be set by the Examination Schools and made available to you here:

www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/timetables

Timetabling is an extremely complicated process and once the timetable is published it cannot be changed. If you are unable to take a paper at the stipulated time for a religious or other compelling reason, you should ask your college to make the appropriate application on your behalf. Please do not ask the Examiners as they are powerless in such matters.

Candidates offering a mini-project will receive a separate notice relating to arrangements for submission.

A second notice will be sent out later with information about practical arrangements in the Examination Schools, including candidate numbers, handing in of scripts and other such matters.

Professor Emmanuel Breuillard

MSc Mathematical Sciences Chair of Examiners

Mathematical Institute

February 2026

2026 MSc in Mathematical Sciences (OMMS)

The formal procedures determining the conduct of University examinations are established and enforced by the Proctors.

The examiners are nominated by the Nominating Committee in the Mathematical Institute and these nominations are submitted for approval by the Vice-Chancellor and the Proctors. Formally, examiners are independent of the Department and of those who lecture courses. However, for written papers in Mathematics, examiners are expected to consult with course lecturers in the process of setting questions. It must be stressed that to preserve the independence of the examiners, candidates are not allowed to make contact directly about matters relating to the content or marking of papers. Any communication must be via the Senior Tutor of your college, who will, if he or she deems the matter of importance, contact the Proctors. The Proctors in turn communicate with the Chairman of Examiners.

The MSc in Mathematical Sciences examination conventions are available online at:

<https://courses.maths.ox.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=65653>

These conventions are a guide to the examiners and candidates but the regulations set out in the Examination Regulations have precedence. The examiners normally adhere to the published examination conventions, subject to the guidance of the appointed external examiners, and other bodies such as the Mathematics Teaching Committee, the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Division, the University's Education Committee and the Proctors.

Format of Assessments

Mathematics Unit Papers: C1.1–C8.7

Each unit paper in Part C will be one hour and 45 minutes in duration and consist of three questions, each marked out of 25. Candidates may submit answers to as many questions as they wish, but only the best two answers will count for the total mark.

Mathematics Mini-Projects: C2.3, C2.6, C3.9, C4.7, C5.4, C6.5

USM marks will be assigned to mini-projects with the same meaning as regards class boundaries as in the Mathematics papers. Candidates offering a mini-project will be sent a separate notice with further information.

Physics Paper: C7.1 Theoretical Physics (double unit)

The C7.1 paper is assessed by the Physics department. This paper is known as C6 Theoretical Physics in the Physics department. Candidates are advised to consult the Physics website for a copy of the Physics formula sheet available to candidates in this examination. This course is assessed by an examination of 3 hours duration. There are 8 questions on the examination paper each worth 25 marks, and the rubric states "You should submit answers to four questions".

Statistics Papers: SC1-SC11

These courses are single units. Each is examined by a one hour and 45-minute paper, with three questions. The rubric states that “You may submit answers to as many questions as you wish but only the best two will count for the total mark”.

Computer Science Papers

Candidates are advised to consult the [Computer Science Course Handbook](#) for further details regarding any Computer Science papers being taken as approved subjects. The USMs for these units are awarded by the Computer Science Examiners. Candidates entering for these options will be sent a copy of the notice from the Computer Science Examiners.

CCD Dissertation on Mathematical Topics (double unit)

USM marks will be assigned to dissertations with the same meaning as regards class boundaries as in the Mathematics papers. In arriving at these marks, the relative weights attached to content, mathematics and presentation will be 25%, 50% and 25%, respectively. Further information on the dissertations is included below.

COD Dissertation on the History of Mathematics (double unit)

USM marks will be assigned to dissertations with the same meaning as regards class boundaries as in the Mathematics papers. In arriving at these marks, the relative weights attached to content, and style and presentation will be 75% and 25%, respectively. Further information on the dissertations is included below.

Classification Conventions and Marking Schemes

Please see sections 10–12 of the examination conventions, which are available at:

<https://courses.maths.ox.ac.uk/mod/book/view.php?id=65653>

Calculators

The use of calculators is generally not permitted for written papers in this examination, although it may be permitted for certain exceptional papers.

Calculators will not be permitted on the Mathematics papers, except for C5.12 and C6.2. Nor are they permitted for any Statistics or Philosophy examinations. Calculators are not permitted for any Computer Science examinations except Computational Game Theory (A15684W1) and Probabilistic Model Checking (A12090H1). For the Physics paper C7.1, candidates should check with the Physics Department regarding whether calculators are allowed.

Candidates’ attention is drawn to the type of calculator which is now permitted for the Mathematics papers stated above. Only calculators on the list below may be taken into the examination hall.

Basic scientific calculators which have features such as exp and log, but which are non-programmable, will be allowed. For these papers **any** of the following may be permitted

Casio fx-83 series,

Casio fx-85 series,
Sharp EL-531 series.

Candidates should note that no calculators will be made available in the examination room.

Statistical Tables will not be required this year for any of the Statistics papers.

Dissertations

Submission of Electronic Copy

- Candidates must submit an electronic version of their dissertation via [Inspira](#) by **12 noon on Tuesday 28th April**. We do not need a hard-copy version of your dissertation.
- You will be asked to upload both .pdf and .tex versions of the work to Inspira. Any submissions missing a .tex version will not be accepted for marking.
- Please give the file you are submitting your **candidate number** as its name. You should not include any identifying information other than your candidate number.
- Please note that it is essential that your dissertation is submitted on time.
- Your dissertation will be screened by Turnitin for plagiarism; further information about this may be found in the attached notice. You will be asked to confirm that you have read the notice and that you agree to your work being screened and used as described in the notice.
- Information on technical support with Inspira, including what to do if you are unable to submit due to technical issues, is available via: <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/submission>

Declaration of Authorship

On submission, you will be asked to complete a section declaring your authorship.

Plagiarism and AI

Candidates are reminded of the importance of avoiding any suspicion of plagiarism. For further guidance, please see:

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism>

The Mathematical Institute's policy on the use of generative AI in summatively assessed work is available via: <https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/members/students/departamental-and-university-regulations>. The policy outlines the permissible use of AI. Students are asked to complete a Declaration of AI use at the point of submission. The AI policy provides an example of how this declaration should be completed.

Late Submission of or Failure to Submit Coursework

The Examination Regulations stipulate specific dates for submission of coursework to the examiners, this includes the OMMS dissertations, mini-projects and any coursework you need to complete if you take a course taught by another department. Rules governing late submission and any consequent penalties are

set out in full in the Examination Regulations (Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations, Part 14).

If you will be prevented by illness or other urgent cause from submitting your coursework on time, you should contact your college office or college advisor as soon as possible. Your college is able to submit an application for an extension of time to the Proctors on your behalf.

The scale of penalties agreed by the board of examiners in relation to late submissions of assessed coursework, where permission to submit late has not been granted by the Proctors, is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Late Submission Tariff

Lateness	Penalty
Up to 4 hours	1%
4–24 hours	10%
24–48 hours	20%
48–72 hours	30%
72 hours– 14 days	35%
More than 14 days late	Fail

Note: The penalty will be a percentage reduction of the maximum total mark available for the work. For example, if a 10% penalty is applied to an assessment given a USM out of 100 then 10 marks would be deducted. The final mark awarded after application of the penalty cannot be below 0.

Failure to submit a required element of assessment, without an accepted reason, will result in the failure of that assessment and a mark of 0. In this case, the mark for any resit of the assessment will be capped at 50 and you would be ineligible for a merit or distinction overall. Such a resit is available on one occasion only to candidates who initially fail the whole MSc course.

Dissertation Word Limit Penalties

There is a word limit for dissertations of 7,500 words. Students are asked to self-certify the word length of their project by stating the total number of words within their submitted work, and students must submit their dissertation in both .pdf and .tex file formats. The examiners will use TeXcount to conduct word count checks on a randomly selected subsection of work.

There is a strict page limit of 50 pages. Assessors are instructed to stop reading once this limit is reached, and any material beyond the 50-page mark will not be assessed. The length of a typical dissertation is 25-30 pages. This page count includes all the dissertation content except program code.

The examiners will penalise overlong dissertations in line with Table 2 below.

Table 2. Word Count Penalty

Word count	Penalty
7501-8000	1%
8001-8500	5%
8501-9000	10%
9001-9500	20%
9501-10000	30%
10001-10500	40%
10501+	50%

Rules governing the word count of dissertations are set out in full in the Exam Conventions.