



IN-PERSON EXAMS GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES

MICHAELMAS TERM 2020

In-person exams guide for candidates in Michaelmas Term 2020

Last updated: Friday 21 August 2020

Introduction

The University is arranging around forty in-person exam papers in Michaelmas Term 2020 for students to sit exams postponed from Trinity Term due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

This guide sets out the safety measures being put in place and provides practical information on how in-person exams will work in Michaelmas Term. If you've experienced in-person exams at Oxford before, the day may feel a little different, so please prepare in advance by reading through each section below and using the checklist at the end of the guide.

If you will be sitting online open-book exams instead of or in addition to in-person exams, please see this separate [Open-book exams guide](#).

1. About in-person exams this term

In Michaelmas Term 2020, the majority of in-person exams will take place at the Examination Schools (as well as a small number at local departmental venues such as the Medical Sciences Teaching Centre) from September to November 2020.

The limited number of in-person exams are only when the content makes this format strictly necessary or where there is a professional body requirement. Each sitting is being planned with extreme care and attention to detail, to ensure the examination space conforms with national guidance and University policy on matters such as cleaning standards, social distancing, face mask coverings, etc.

Why is my exam being held in person?

In-person exams allow assessment to be conducted under invigilation when it is required for professional body accreditation purposes or because the paper content needs to be examined without access to course materials or other sources.

What safety measures is the University putting in place to enable me to sit my exams in person?

Your safety and that of our invigilators, examiners, and exams staff is at the heart of our planning for Michaelmas Term exams. Full risk assessments, based on UK government policy, have been undertaken in conjunction with the University's safety experts, covering every aspect of the exam day. We will maintain your safety and strict social distancing by:

- **Reducing exam room capacity at the Examination Schools to around 30%**, so that candidates are seated two metres apart from each other. In practice, this means we can accommodate a maximum cohort size of around 200 candidates for exams this term (although many exam sessions will be far smaller), compared with a peak of 1100 candidates per session in the building during a usual Trinity Term.

- Requiring candidates and invigilators to wear **face coverings** in line with the [University policy on face coverings](#).
- **Limiting contact** between invigilators, Exam Schools staff and candidates. For example, you will find plenty of extra script booklets on your desk at the start of your exam, so that you do not have to request more from an invigilator.
- **Avoiding the need for large gatherings before and after exams.** You will only be able to bring essential equipment to the Examination Schools as there will be no cloakroom or waiting area in a marquee or the Great Hall. You will queue outside the Examination Schools, two metres apart, along Merton Street and then head straight to your exam room from assigned doors in the Examination Schools quad.
- Having **only one exam sitting per day (reduced from two)** to allow for an enhanced cleaning regime before the next sitting.
- Scheduling a **slightly later start time (10:00 am)** to allow sufficient time for set up and single file entry into the exam room.

2. Exam day: before you arrive

What if I have an emergency or I am ill on the day?

If your circumstances change and you are too unwell or otherwise unable to sit your exam, please contact your College office immediately for further advice (or your department if you do not have a college).

What should I wear to my exam?

The rules on exam attire have been relaxed for Michaelmas Term and you may wear your everyday clothes. If you wish you may wear sub fusc, but please leave your cap at home to limit the number of belongings you bring to the Examination Schools. Sub fusc infringements (e.g. the wrong colour shoes or socks) will not be reported as usual.

If the weather is cooler, you may wear a coat to the Examination Schools, but you will need to place this on the back of your chair when you get to the exam room.

What do I need to bring to my exam and what should I leave at home?

You will not be able to bring handbags, rucksacks, mobile phones, smart watches or similar electronic devices into the Examination Schools; please leave these at home. If you do bring these items, you will be asked to return them to your college or accommodation and you risk being late for the start of your exam.

There will not be the usual cloakroom or storage space for bags and coats in the Examination Schools marquee or entrance hall. This is so that we can restrict large gatherings of candidates in an enclosed space and ensure a clean environment.

You MUST bring:

- Pens/pencils (we will not be able to lend stationery if you forget to bring it)
- University card
- Calculator (If your exam permits one – check with your department if unsure)
NB: spare calculators will not be provided if you forget yours.
- Face covering – all candidates **must** wear a face mask or covering in line with the [University policy on face coverings](#).

In addition, you may wish to bring:

- A **clear** pencil case or small **clear** bag to carry your permitted exam belongings
- Water – this must be in a **clear bottle** with a **spill proof/sports cap** and be **non-sparkling / carbonated**
- Coat, to be placed on the back of your chair whilst in the exam room
- Protective gloves
- Hand sanitiser
- Keys, watch (not a smart watch) and wallet
- Individual timetable (paper copy)
- In-ear ear plugs

Do NOT bring:

- Bags, rucksacks, etc.
- Mobile phones, smart watches, cameras, or similar electronic devices
- Unauthorised material (including revision notes) or equipment relevant to the exam
- Good luck charms and items
- Screw-cap bottles / non-clear bottles / fizzy water (except with prior approval)

Permitted, with a SIGNED LETTER FROM COLLEGE:

- Silent blood testing kits for diabetic students
- Glucose drink (e.g. Lucozade)
- Glucose tablets (e.g. Dextro energy tablets)
- Insulin syringes/supplies
- Asthma inhalers
- Epi-pen
- Over-the-counter and/or prescription medicine
- Small unobtrusive snack (**please note nuts may not be taken into the exam**)
- Medical aids (e.g. wrist splint/support, back support pillow, ice pack)
- Coloured overlays

3. Exam day: arrival

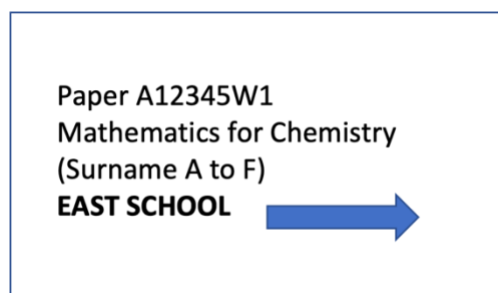
Arrive between 9:30 am and 9:50 am

Exams will begin at 10:00 am. The Examination Schools will be open from 9:30 am and you should arrive before 9:50 am so that there is plenty of time for you to reach your exam room.

Where to go

Please queue two metres apart **along the barriers on Merton Street**, leading up to the Examination Schools quad gates, using the signage along the route to help you maintain social distancing. It will not be possible to enter via the main entrance on the High Street. The quad gates will open at 9:30 am, at which point you can enter in single file via that entrance.

In the quad, there will be signs informing you which exam room you will need to go to and how to get to those rooms. Rooms will be split by exam paper and surname and you will see signs similar to the example below:



If you have an approved alternative exam arrangement - If you will be sitting in a room other than the main exam room, because you have an approved alternative exam arrangement for e.g. extra writing time or use of a computer, **please use the left-hand door once in the quad**; you will then find further details on exact room once inside the building.

You should then proceed directly to that room, following the directions provided and maintaining a two-metre distance from other students. On the way to that room further signs will allow you to check which desk you will be sat at. Please do not wait in any corridors or other areas.

4. Exam day: a note on toilet visits

Toilet facilities will be set up according to the same social distancing rules as all other areas of the Examination Schools. Please expect to queue to use the toilet at the Examination Schools, especially in the time before your exam. Arrive in plenty of time to use the toilet (from 9:30 am) and make sure you go before you leave your college or accommodation.

A number of toilet facilities on the ground floor, first floor and main staircases will be open for use by exam candidates before, during and after exams. **The basement toilets will be closed** to candidates, to allow for sufficient circulation and social distancing. Please follow the signs in the corridors and from your exam room to the nearest toilets, remain two metres apart from other candidates and make use of the hand sanitisation stations provided.

5. Exam day: in the exam room

- Do not turn over your exam paper until you are instructed to do so.
- Please remain seated at all times. Whilst sat at your desk remain silent.
- Please place your University card with the photo facing upwards beside the desk number on your table.
- Listen carefully to any announcements from the invigilators.

Whilst the exam is underway

- Please do not leave your seat without the permission of an invigilator – raise your hand if you want to get the attention of an invigilator.
- **If you wish to use the toilet** during your exam, please raise your hand to get the attention of an invigilator and gesture towards the door. If the invigilator indicates that you may leave the room, please follow the signs to the nearest toilet and then return to your desk as soon as possible. If there are several candidates who wish to use the toilet at the same time, the invigilator may indicate for you to wait for a few minutes before leaving the exam room.
- All candidates **must** wear a face mask or covering in line with the [University policy on face coverings](#).

6. Exam day: when your exam has ended

At the end of your exam you'll be asked to remain in your seat until an invigilator indicates that you can leave. You must leave your completed examination on the desk and leave, taking all your belongings with you. You must not remove any items that you did not bring in with you.

You will be asked to file out, two metres apart from other candidates, row by row. This may take more time than usual so please be patient and wait quietly; do not talk to any other candidates.

Please leave the building immediately; do not wait in the corridors or in the quad.

You may use the nearest toilet on your way out of the building but note that the queues are likely to be long; it may be far quicker to head back to your college or accommodation to use the facilities there.

7. Your wellbeing during exams

Navigating exams can be difficult, but the University is committed to supporting you as you engage with the process. Your particular exam-related issues and challenges may be the same as those of your peers or they may be different. But whatever it is that makes the exam experience difficult for you, we would like to support you to address the challenges of exams as effectively as you can, so that you can feel proud of yourself and positive about how you approached the process.

You can find advice on the University's Exam Wellbeing page:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/revision>.

The page has been developed together with the Counselling Service, and in line with [Wellbeing at Oxford](#) the University's campaign focused on student mental health and wellbeing.

CHECKLIST: BEFORE YOU SET OUT TO THE EXAM SCHOOLS

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| Remember your exam starts at 10:00 am and you need to be there at least ten minutes before. Examination Schools quad gates open at 9:30 am. | |
| Check you know your candidate number or have this written on a small piece of paper to bring to the exam (it is also included on your individual timetable, available through Student Self Service). | |
| Leave handbags, rucksacks, mobile phones, smart watches, cameras and other electronic devices behind: there is nowhere to leave belongings not allowed in exam room. | |
| If you choose to wear sub fusc, leave your cap at home. | |
| You <u>must</u> bring: your University card; pens and pencils; a calculator if required; face covering in line with the University policy on face coverings . | |
| If you wish, you may also bring: coat; small clear plastic bag or pencil case to carry exam essentials; paper copy of exam timetable; spill-proof water bottle (still water only); keys; wallet; watch (not a smart watch); hand sanitiser; protective gloves; in-ear plugs; other items with appropriate permission (e.g. medications or medical aids). | |
| Go to the toilet before you leave for your exam. It's likely there will be queues to use the toilet, especially before the exam. | |

Getting help

If, after reading this guide, you have questions about your forthcoming exams, please contact your college office in the first instance (or your department, if you are on a non-matriculated course).