

EXAMINATION CONVENTIONS: DIPLOMA IN APPLIED STATISTICS

For Diploma candidates the overall assessment is based on:

1. Paper (i) Principles of Statistical Analysis
2. Paper (ii) Further Statistical Methodology
3. Assessed Practical Work

The guidelines are 75 hours of lectures or equivalent work for each of (1) and (2), with 1 question per 8–10 hours work.

The assessed practical work (3) will be made up of two practical assignments in Michaelmas Term, two practical assignments in Hilary Term, and a week-long Practical Assessment in Trinity Term. Each of the Michaelmas and Hilary Term assignments contributes 12.5% to the overall assessed practical mark and the week-long Trinity Term practical 50%. You will be told if there are any changes to these guidelines. Interim marks given for the practical assignments in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms are provisional and may be subject to further moderation.

Candidates can pass, pass with distinction, or fail. In order to pass, a candidate must achieve an average of at least 40% on (1) and (2), weighted in the proportion 3:2, and an overall average of at least 50% on (1), (2) and (3), weighted in the proportion 3:2:3. An overall average of 70%, weighted in the proportion 3:2:3, is required for a distinction.

Distinction candidates will show excellence over a wide range of topics. Passing candidates will at least show good or very good work over a reasonable range of topics. These descriptions are of overall performance: weaker performance in part of the overall assessment can be compensated for, if the overall performance merits it.

The examination rubric on Paper (i) will state that 'All questions should be attempted.' The examination rubric on Paper (ii) will state that 'Credit will be given for answers to a maximum of 5 questions, at least 2 of which must be on the core topics.'

MSc/Diploma in Applied Statistics qualitative descriptors

Distinction The candidate shows excellent skills in modelling, reasoning and problem-solving. He/she demonstrates an excellent knowledge of the material, and is able to use it innovatively in unfamiliar contexts.

Pass The candidate shows good or very good skills in modelling, reasoning and problem-solving. He/she demonstrates a good or very good knowledge of much of the material.

Fail The examiners consider that the candidate is not worthy of an MSc/Diploma. There is little evidence of competence in the topics examined; the work is likely to show major misunderstanding and confusion, coupled with inaccurate calculations. The candidate either leaves without a degree or may retake the examination the following year.

(If a candidate fails the MSc but nevertheless shows sufficient merit to pass the Diploma, the candidate has the option of retaking the examination the following year or of being issued with a diploma.)

Double marking

For the examination papers, there is a precise model solution and marking scheme approved by the examiners for every question. Answers will be double-blind marked by the examiners or assessors. Each dissertation will also be marked independently by two examiners or assessors (neither of who will be the dissertation supervisor).

Reconciliation procedures

When the two marks for a dissertation show minor discrepancies, the two marks will be averaged. In the other cases, there will be a discussion between the two examiners or assessors concerned, after which it will normally be possible for a mark to be agreed. In any exceptional cases a third examiner or assessor will normally read the dissertation before the Examiners agree a mark. The same procedure applies to the marking of examination questions.

Scaling

If the marks on part of the assessment appear not to be in line with the qualitative descriptions of a distinction and a pass, then this will be taken into account and candidates' marks may be moderated accordingly.

Late or non-submission of coursework

Under the provisions permitted by the Examination Regulations, late submission of coursework (i.e. practical reports and dissertations) will normally result in the following penalties.

Where permission for late submission has been granted by the Proctors, no penalty will be imposed.

Where permission for late submission has not been granted by the Proctors, but the Proctors have given leave for the candidate to remain in the examination, the Examiners may impose a penalty not exceeding the credit available for that piece of work. The Examiners should take into account such factors as:

1. the evidence forwarded to them by the Proctors and (insofar as the following matters are not dealt with by such evidence)
2. the degree of advantage gained by the extra time made available to the candidate relative to the time that was available to complete coursework by the original deadline
3. the weight to be attached to the reason given, if any, for late submission.

Where the candidate is not permitted by the Proctors to remain in the examination he or she will be deemed to have failed the examination as a whole.

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