

PBS Part IB Assessment & Classing Criteria

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PBS Part IB Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria applies to the papers run by the Department of Psychology within Part IB of the Psychological and Behavioural Sciences Tripos: PBS 3 and PBS 4. Papers borrowed from other Triposes have their own marking criteria, so students should check the necessary course sites for information on borrowed papers.

In PBS Part IB students take four papers, which are assessed by a variety of methods as outlined in the course materials. This document contains a section for each assessment method.

For students from another Tripos borrowing papers PBS 3 and PBS 4, it is important to note that the essays produced for that examination are expected to form a coherent narrative that effectively address the question. This mode of assessment may differ from other subjects, where brief notes, outlines, or short answers may be suitable.

Marking Criteria for written examination essays (PBS 3 and PBS 4)

PBS written examination essays are marked using the [Faculty of Biology's marking criteria for Tripos essays](#).

Marking Criteria for written reports (PBS 4)

The marking criteria for each written report will be confirmed through the course materials.

PBS Part IB Classing Criteria

- The classing criteria for PBS Part IB are designed to ensure that all four papers of the examination are weighted equally.
- The Examiners responsible for each paper will award the candidate a mark which determines their class for that paper. Papers from other Triposes have their own marking criteria; for PBS papers the marking criteria as stated above is followed.
- The following Class boundaries are applied to the percentage marks for each paper:

First	(Class I)	100 – 70.00%	Third	(Class III)	49.99 – 40.00%
2:1	(Class II.i)	69.99 – 60.00%	Fail		39.99% or lower
2:2	(Class II.ii)	59.99 – 50.00%			

- The Examiners reserve the right to scale the marks of a paper and this will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with no precedence set based on whether marks were scaled in previous years. Any scaling will be agreed during the meeting of the Examination Board.
- A candidate can achieve any overall class for PBS Part IB through the following two methods. Candidates will be awarded the higher of the two classes achieved through each method.

Either:

- 1) A candidate must attain that target class, or higher, in at least two papers; and also must attain at least the next lower class, in all papers.

As an illustration, to achieve a First, a candidate must receive marks of 60.00 or above (at least a 2:1) in all papers, two of which are 70.00 or above. Similarly, to achieve a 2:1, they must achieve at least 50.00 in all papers, and 60.00 or above in two papers.

Or:

- 2) A candidate must attain an average mark across all four papers that is equal to that target class, or higher. The average mark will be calculated to two decimal places. The mark will not be rounded further.
- Candidates who fail one paper or more will be considered for failing, but the Examiners have discretion.
 - The Examiners reserve the right to adjust the overall class boundaries. Any adjustments will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with no precedence set based on whether adjustments were made in previous years.
 - For the purposes of ranking candidates within each overall class for the Tripos as a whole, each mark is scaled to give a rank mark. The mean of a candidate's rank marks is used to determine their ranking within each class. Discretion will be exercised by the Examiners in considering the class of individual candidates at the boundaries.

What you will graduate with

Full guidance on degree classification can be found on the [CamDATA website](#).

Students entering from October 2020

All undergraduate Tripos students beginning their study in October 2020 and onward will receive an overall degree classification at the end of their final year. For the PBS Tripos, 100% of your final degree classification will be based on work completed in your Part II year. In addition, each part of the Tripos will receive an individually classed result, but your final overall classification will be considered your degree outcome.

Further guidance on how this is calculated and will be reported can be found in the [CamDATA website](#).

Students entering prior to October 2020

No official class is assigned to the overall degree issued by the University of Cambridge. Instead, each Part of a Tripos is self-contained and students obtain separate results for each one: there is no averaging of these to produce a final degree mark. The phrase "a double first" means that a first class was achieved in two sets of examinations corresponding to two different Parts of Triposes. The class obtained in Part II is commonly seen to be the class awarded for the entire degree.

Accreditation by the British Psychological Society (BPS)

To qualify for accreditation by the BPS, candidates for PBS Part IB must pass (i.e. receive a mark of at least 40) both core Psychology papers (PBS 3 and PBS 4).

Candidates will also be required to have passed the two core Psychology papers within PBS Part IA (PBS 1 and PBS 2) and then the research dissertation (PBS 5) in PBS Part II, and must receive a final degree classification of at least a 2:2.

If a candidate does not pass one of the five core papers, they will not qualify for accreditation by the BPS.