

PBS Part II Assessment & Classing Criteria

PBS Part II students will be assessed by written examination for a total of three papers, and the research dissertation.

Marking Criteria for exam scripts

Papers borrowed from other Triposes have their own marking criteria, so students should check the necessary course websites for information on borrowed papers. The marking criteria for PBS exam scripts are as follows:

First	<p>Work which is excellent both in the range and command of the material covered and the argument and analysis. Work that is excellent in its understanding of the subject; has engaged closely with the question; has shown some originality and treated the evidence critically; closely applies relevant material from an appropriate range of sources; and is well-planned and complete.</p> <p>A first class mark may be awarded on more than one criterion: there may be a great deal of relevant information, displaying substantial knowledge and understanding; the arguments and presentation may be stylish; the approach may be original, critical or unorthodox. An upper first would be an outstanding performance, <i>meeting all, or virtually all</i>, of these criteria. A low first would meet at least <i>some</i> of these criteria.</p>
Upper Second	<p>Work that shows a good broad-based knowledge and understanding of the topic and the lecture material; a good application of the relevant material; is presented in an organised way; and is clearly argued and focused on the set question.</p> <p>Answers at the top end of this class would often include relevant content beyond the taught material and would include some attempt to treat the evidence critically and to synthesise arguments. Answers at the lower end of this class would be competent, accurate in reproducing lecture material and show evidence of reading of the principal sources of published work on the subject.</p>
Lower Second	<p>Work that overall shows a reasonable competence in the understanding and presentation of the relevant material.</p> <p>Answers at the top end of this class would show competent understanding of the basic lecture material or reasonable organisation and focus; an answer at the lower end would show gaps in understanding and coverage together with poor organisation and focus.</p> <p>Certain types of uneven work would fall into this class; work that shows detailed factually-correct material that does not relate a broad knowledge of</p>

	the topic to the specific question asked; competent understanding of the basic lecture material but lacks reasonable organisation and focus; clear organisation and some insight but with serious omissions of factual knowledge.
Third	<p>At the upper end of the class, work that <i>only</i> shows competent knowledge of the basic, core material.</p> <p>At the lower end of the class, work that shows some knowledge of the material but with serious deficiencies in understanding, coverage and organisation. This will include work that is unduly brief or largely misses the point of the question.</p>
Fail	Work that is irrelevant, shows a considerable degree of ignorance or is short and superficial.

Marking Criteria for PBS 5

Marking criteria for PBS 5, the Research Dissertation, can be found in the PBS 5 Paper Guide.

Classing Criteria

The Part II PBS examination contains a variety of different subjects, which use different criteria and marking schemes, and produce marks of different distributions.

- The classing criteria for PBS 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.
- The following Class boundaries are applied to marks:

Class I	70
Class II.i	60
Class II.ii	50
Class III	40
Fail	<40
- A candidate's overall class for Part II PBS will be determined using their average mark across all four papers.
- Candidates who fail one paper or more will be considered for failing but examiners have discretion.

What you will graduate with

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.