

FACULTY OF PHILOSOPHY

From: The Chair of the Board of Examiners for Part II: Prof Alex Oliver MT 2019, Prof Michael Potter LT and ET 2020

Philosophy Tripos Part II – 2020

DISSERTATION AND EXTENDED ESSAYS – INFORMATION SHEET

The options

Every student in Part II is examined on *five* "units of assessment", and these must cover at least *four* different subject areas.

The default is for students to take four "syllabus papers" (i.e. four papers selected from Papers 1 to 11 inclusive and the papers borrowed from other Faculties) to be examined by traditional three-hour unseen examinations, plus Paper 12, the General Paper, another three-hour unseen examination.

However, *up to two* of these units of assessment can be replaced by assessed work. Students may:

- A) Submit two Extended Essays, in lieu of one syllabus paper, by the end of Lent Term; or
- B) Submit one longer Dissertation, in lieu of sitting the General Paper (Paper 12), by the second Friday of the Easter Term; or
- C) Do both A) and B).

*The guiding principle remains that students must **cover four broad areas of philosophy.***

These three options are set out in more detail below.

- A. *Replace a syllabus paper with Extended Essays.* As in Part IB, you can opt to be examined on the syllabus of one of the syllabus papers by offering two essays in lieu of a three hour unseen examination. So, if you take option A you will sit three syllabus papers from Papers 1 to 11 and the borrowed papers from the Classical Tripos, and also sit Paper 12, each by a traditional three hour examination. And you must also nominate a fourth syllabus paper and submit two essays *on topics from two substantially different parts of the existing syllabus of the chosen paper.* In subsequently sitting Paper 12, you cannot answer on a subject that significantly overlaps with that of either of your submitted essays.
- B. *Replace the General paper with a Dissertation.* You can opt not to take the general paper, Paper 12, but instead write a dissertation. So if you take option B you will sit four syllabus papers, each by a traditional three hour examination. Since that already meets the "four broad areas of philosophy" requirement, *your dissertation can be on any philosophical topic at all*, whether or not it is on the syllabus of any of Papers 1 to 11 or the borrowed papers. There are only two constraints. First, if you are e.g. taking the political philosophy paper and write a dissertation on political philosophy, you are barred from answering an examination question that substantially overlaps with the topic of your dissertation (no recycling of the same material!). Second, if your proposed dissertation topic is rather esoteric, your Director of Studies will need to

check with the Chair of Examiners that the dissertation can indeed be supervised and examined.

- C. *Replace a syllabus paper with two Extended Essays AND replace the General Paper (Paper 12) with a Dissertation.*

If you wish to take this option the rules in A and B above apply for your extended essays and your dissertation. There must also be no overlap between your extended essays and your dissertation. On this option 40% of your Part II result will be comprised of coursework.

Procedural notes

If you mean to do a dissertation or submitted essays, please note the following carefully (**and keep this letter for future reference**):

1. You must submit your proposed dissertation title or essay titles, on the special form provided by the Faculty Office, to the Chair of Examiners, c/o Clare Dickinson, Faculty Office, Faculty of Philosophy, Raised Faculty Building, Sidgwick Avenue, for approval by **12 noon on Friday 22 November 2019, i.e. two weeks before the end of Michaelmas Full Term**, together with a statement of what papers you intend to offer. If you mean to submit extended essays your application must also state which paper you intend the essays to replace. Your two essays must cover substantially different parts of the syllabus of the paper concerned. If a paper lists four or more main topics, then the two titles must come from different main topics. If a paper lists three or fewer topics, then the titles, can, in principle, come from the same topic. In this case, the titles must (at least) come from different sub-topics. (Meeting this constraint is not, however, immediately sufficient for approval; decisions on acceptability will be made on a case-by-case basis.)

Once the Chair of Examiners has approved your title(s), you will receive an email from the Faculty Office confirming that your title(s) has/have been approved. If, however, the Chair of Examiners cannot approve your title(s), for example because there is some ambiguity, you will also receive communication from the Faculty Office asking you to reconsider and resubmit an amended title or titles. Either way, all titles **MUST** be approved before the end of Michaelmas Full Term. In the academic year 2019-2020 this will be **Friday 6 December 2019**.

2. Your dissertation must be not more than 8000 words, nor (without the permission of the Chair of Examiners) less than 6000 words, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography. Your extended essays must each be not less than 3000 and not more than 4000 words, including footnotes and appendices but excluding bibliography, on a topic falling clearly within the syllabus of the subject paper concerned. Work which is too long may not be read in full by the Examiners.
3. There is no formal limit on the amount of supervision a student may have on a Part II dissertation or extended essays, the decision on how much to provide resting with supervisors. However, a typical, and reasonable, supervising schedule would be as follows:
 - i) a brief initial meeting with the supervisor for orientation, general advice,

guidance on reading;

- ii) two further supervisions for each essay (comments on and discussion of a first draft, with advice for possible improvements; and further comments on a revised draft, for each);
- iii) three or four further supervisions for a dissertation.

The student would then submit the final version without further supervision.

Your work must be typed. Information on presentation of your extended essays or dissertation is attached.

4. Your work must acknowledge all sources of information, including unpublished ideas and suggestions, e.g. from your supervisor.
5. Your work must bear your examination number instead of your name, to prevent the Examiners knowing your identity. The Faculty Office will inform you of your examination number which will be allocated to you electronically by the Student Registry.
6. You must also submit an electronic copy of your extended essays/dissertation. This electronic copy will be submitted to Turnitin, a plagiarism detection system. Further instructions about electronic submission will be sent to you.
7. The Faculty Office will send you cover sheets for your course work: cover sheets for extended essays will be sent to you in the Lent Term and cover sheets for your dissertation will be sent to you at the beginning of the Easter Term. The cover sheets will include your allocated examination number.
8. You must submit two (2) hard copies of each essay, AND an electronic copy of each essay, to the Faculty Office **before the end of Lent Term, i.e. this year by:**

FRIDAY 13 MARCH 2020, 12 NOON

You should send the electronic versions (as a Word document) by email to your supervisor. Your supervisor must then send the electronic version as an email attachment to: phildiss@hermes.cam.ac.uk The email must have as its subject line: Part II Extended Essay, essay title, and the candidate's full name. Electronic copies must be submitted by your supervisor with the following declaration: This essay is based on the drafts that I have supervised and is, to the best of my knowledge, the student's own work.

You must submit two (2) hard copies of your dissertation, AND an electronic copy of your dissertation, to the Faculty Office **by the second Friday of the Easter Term:**

FRIDAY 1 May 2020, 12 NOON

You should send the electronic version (as a Word document) by email to your supervisor. Your supervisor must then send the electronic version as an email attachment to: phildiss@hermes.cam.ac.uk The email must have as its subject line: Part II Dissertation, dissertation title, and the candidate's full name. Electronic copies must be submitted by your supervisor with the following declaration: This dissertation is

based on the drafts that I have supervised and is, to the best of my knowledge, the student's own work.

The extended essays received will be listed outside the Faculty Office at the start of the Easter Term. Dissertations will be listed the week after submission. If you submit work, check that your work is mentioned on the list.

9. The Examiners may interview you about your work, so you may have to stay up or return to Cambridge after Tripos for that purpose.
10. Extended essays and a dissertation carry no more weight than other examination papers. So do not devote disproportionate time and effort to extended essays or a dissertation.
11. If you change your mind and do NOT intend to submit written work you **MUST** do the following **before the deadline for changes to the examinations entry (Friday March 13, 2020)**:
 - a) inform the Tutorial Office of your college that you wish to sit the examination for the corresponding paper;
 - b) inform the Faculty Office of your decision not to hand in any written work.

Failure to do this may prevent you from being able to sit the written examination for the corresponding paper.

12. In exceptional circumstances the Faculty recognises that it may be necessary for a student to change a title after the deadline for submission of extended essay titles/dissertation title. An application for a late change **must** be made to the Faculty Office for approval by the Chair of Examiners, giving reasons, and must be supported by your Director of Studies. In no circumstances will an application for a change of title be granted after Friday 6 March 2020.
13. **Two Important Notes**

1. It should be stressed that approval of titles is not a pure formality. Students who start work on their essays before the titles have been approved do so entirely at their own risk. If in doubt, consult the Chairman of Examiners (via the Faculty Secretary) early about the suitability of titles.

2. In order to change a title, permission must be sought via the Faculty Secretary (Clare Dickinson) from the Chair of Examiners, and the request must be supported by the student's director of studies. The final deadline for making changes to extended essay and dissertation titles is Friday 6 March 2020. These deadlines are absolutely final. Students who submit an essay on a title other than the approved title may be awarded 0 marks, for complete irrelevance.

