

Guidance for dissertations

Supervision arrangements

Once projects and supervisors are determined it is important that you work to make good progress on your Dissertation in order to submit it by the deadline at the end of Trinity Term. You can expect to have up to 1 hour contact time per week with your supervisor to discuss your Dissertation. We strongly recommend discussing the draft of your dissertation with your supervisor, a reasonable time in advance of submission.

Your supervisor will read and provide feedback on the final draft of your dissertation (provided that it is submitted to them in good time - at least a week before the submission deadline).

Submitting your dissertation for assessment

For information on deadlines for submitting work, please refer to the Course Calendar.

The dissertation will be written during Trinity Term on a topic chosen in consultation with the supervisor. Dissertations should be no more than 40 pages long and should contain material which, although not necessarily original research, cannot be found elsewhere. Credit will be given for the mathematical and financial content, as well as for the quality of the presentation and the clarity of the writing.

Typesetting: you are STRONGLY ADVISED to use LaTeX. More information on the format of your dissertation and example templates can be found on the following page:
<https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/members/students/postgraduate-courses/msc-mcf/examination-and-assessment-new>

Credit will be given for the mathematical and financial content, as well as the clarity of the writing. Dissertations will be independently marked by two examiners/assessors. Each proposes a USM and a range within which they would be content for the USM to lie. The examiners will reconcile these marks to arrive at a final mark, consulting further with the initial markers as necessary.

Dissertations should be submitted online via Inspira by the deadline.

You must submit one electronic file. Any subsidiary programming or other files must be included, as an appendix, within this single file. If you are unsure as to how to do this please contact mathcompfin@maths.ox.ac.uk for further advice. (Occasionally these instructions may vary. In such cases full details will be given to students at the time.)

Please ensure that you give your candidate number on your assignment and no other identifying information - i.e. do not put your name, college, etc.

Please ensure the document is named as your candidate number (e.g. 245678.pdf)

In the extremely unlikely event that there does seem to be some technical problem and you are concerned that your work has not been submitted please email it immediately to mathcompfin@maths.ox.ac.uk with a copy of the Declaration of Authorship to attest that it is your own work, except where indicated. NB: You only fill in this form if you are submitting it via email. In exceptional cases where a candidate is unable to submit work electronically, he or she must apply to

the Supervisory Committee for permission to submit the work in paper form to the Examiners, c/o the Academic Administrator, Mathematical Institute. Such applications must reach the Mathematical Institute not less than two weeks before the deadline for submitting the work.

It is vital that you submit your work by the deadline, as any late submission, even one minute late, must be reported to the Proctors. If you experience a medical emergency or other catastrophe which threatens to prevent you from submitting on time please contact mathcompfin@maths.ox.ac.uk and your College Office as soon as circumstances allow to explain the situation.

Criteria for USMS

90-100: Marks in this band indicate remarkable ability and extraordinary insights; the presentation and clarity of exposition of the work are exceptional. Dissertations in this band will be worthy of publication and will contain novel results, the project goes far beyond the material of the lecture course.

80-89: marks in this band are excellent, showing thorough knowledge and understanding of the topic and including the candidate's own original insights and interpretations. Presentation is very good. The project goes beyond the material of the lecture course.

70-79: Dissertations and projects in this band are very good, well thought-out pieces of work with no major deficiencies, and with no significant deficiencies in presentation or clarity of exposition. They will show a thorough understanding of the topic.

60-69: Dissertations and projects in this band may be good pieces of work with few deficiencies in content or presentation, but not significantly extending the material covered in the course; or they may have novel elements but also suffer from deficiencies in content, understanding, structure or presentation that prevent them from being of distinction level.

50-59: Dissertations and projects in this band are of acceptable quality but have weaknesses in content, understanding, structure or presentation.

40-49: Dissertations and projects in this band are not of acceptable quality and have significant weaknesses in content, understanding, structure or presentation. A major revision might raise the work to above a pass level.

0-39: This band indicates unacceptably poor work, showing extremely limited understanding of the topic covered and/or unacceptably poor presentation.

Assessment of dissertations

Please see section 5.3 of the course handbook for details of how the dissertations will be assessed.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work or ideas as your own, with or without their consent, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. All published and unpublished material, whether in manuscript, printed or electronic form, is covered under this definition.

Plagiarism may be intentional or reckless, or unintentional. Under the regulations for examinations, intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence. Please see the University's guidance on plagiarism <http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/plagiarism> for further information.

All submitted projects and dissertations will be screened by Turnitin soft-ware which will compare them to a wide range of material (both published and unpublished) and to the work of other candidates. The examiners will be notified of the extent of any textual matches discovered by Turnitin, and will consider, for instance, whether any text that a candidate has copied from elsewhere is properly identified and the source duly acknowledged. Any suspected cases of plagiarism will be forwarded to the Proctors and may result in a direct fail.

<https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/members/students/postgraduate-courses/msc-mcf/examination-and-assessment-new>