University Testing Service
Information for examiners within University departments

Contact
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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jo. If you would like to know more about the computer marking process, we can arrange an informal chat and demonstration.

To arrange electronic marking of MCQ exams
The examiner should contact Jo Ireland in advance with details of the exam that needs marking. Usually an exam will already have an answer sheet template on the system which will need updating with the exam date details.

Jo will provide a PDF version of the answer sheet by email, which the examiner will need to arrange to have reproduced for the exam.

After the exam
The following steps must be taken before the completed answer sheets are delivered to the Regent Street office:

- Wait until all answer sheets are collected (including those from candidates who sat in college)
- Count answer sheets
- Place completed answer sheets in sealed envelope and label the envelope with the number of answer sheets enclosed
- Provide an expected candidate list in Excel format
- Provide correct answers (preferably by filling in an answer sheet marked Master)

Background and further information

The University Testing Service is run by Cambridge Assessment (the brand name of the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate). There is an agreement in place between Cambridge Assessment and the University of Cambridge that a computer marking service will be provided to University departments with no charge while Senior Management at Cambridge Assessment continues to approve it.

Marks are returned by email within a week of receipt of completed answer sheets. Marks may be returned sooner at the discretion of Cambridge Assessment, however no guarantees can be made as Research Division workload, technology issues and staffing can affect the speed of processing.

Please be aware that busy times of the year are February/March, end of May/beginning of June and November. It would help us to plan if examiners could contact us *at least a month before their exam date*.

Computer marking

A software package called Teleform is used for computer marking. Answer sheets are designed using Teleform for students to fill in. When the completed answer sheets are returned, they are scanned and recognised by their identification block (usually in the top-left or bottom-right corner).

During the verification stage, the software will flag any answers which need a human decision: the verifier will see an image of the answer sheet on the screen and will instruct the software to deal with the answer in a particular way. This might happen if a student has selected too many options or if it is not clear whether an answer has been selected. Thus, if the answer is not flagged, it will not be checked by a human. The advantage of this is that the recognition process is very fast and accurate; the disadvantage is that we cannot check every answer individually.

It is always worth reminding students that it is in their interests to mark their answers clearly and that their papers are computer marked. Mistakes may be erased, but the intended answer should be obvious. We may not see their message in the margin "I mean option A, not option B"! If more than one option is selected (when only one is allowed), that question will be recorded as 'no response'. Candidates should make no other marks on the answer sheet: tampering with the cornerstones or barcode will result in non-recognition.

When the answer sheet data has been extracted, a marking programme written using the correct answers is run to give the marks and total scores.

Preparation

Many examinations have answer sheets which are used from year to year, amended as necessary. At other times, a new sheet may need to be designed.
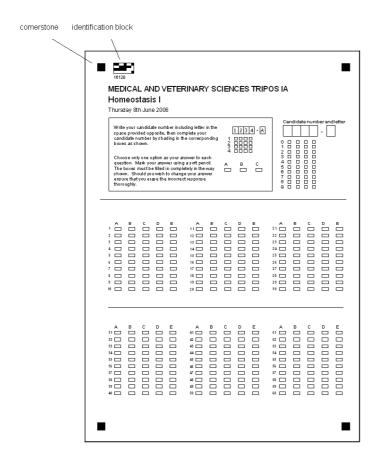
Before work can begin drafting a new form, the following information is needed:

- Date of exam
- Number of questions
- Format of questions, e.g. A-E, True or False
- Information required on sheet, e.g. instructions to candidates, title of exam, etc.
- Marking requirements
- Anticipated number of candidates

Exact details aren't necessary, but a rough idea is very useful. An example paper often helps. A draft TELEform answer sheet can then be produced, which will be forwarded for checking/amendment.

Answer sheets
Once the form is ready for copying, a master copy is sent to University of Cambridge Reprographics for copying. Reprographics then match the answer sheets with the exam papers and distribute them to the exam location (contact Nigel Reynolds, Reprographics Manager for details). If answer sheets must be copied on a photocopier, it is *essential* that the four cornerstones and the identification block are intact, otherwise the form will not be recognised.

Please note that, due to the large numbers of exams now processed, Cambridge Assessment can no longer provide copies of answer sheets other than master copies.

Script return
Completed answer sheets should be delivered to Cambridge Assessment reception at 1, Regent Street **in a sealed envelope, with the exam title and number of scripts marked clearly on the outside**. A candidate list (with absentees identified) **must** be included, so that we can be sure all scripts are accounted for.
Please also include an answer sheet with the correct answers marked MASTER.

If you have candidates sitting the exam in college, please wait until you have all answer sheets and deliver them in one batch. Again, this will ensure all scripts are accounted for.

Results return

The results are usually sent by email in Microsoft Excel format, showing candidate number, responses given, individual item marks and total marks. A deadline for the return of results is agreed before the exam. Further statistical analyses of results can be provided, but these will take longer to produce.

Script collection

Storage at Cambridge Assessment is limited, so we would be grateful if you would collect your answer sheets after processing. Any scripts left with us are stored for six months, after which time they are destroyed confidentially.

New examiners

If another examiner takes over from you, please pass on this document.