

MPLS Divisional Board

Approved at the Week 6 meeting of the Biological Sciences Steering Committee of Hilary Term 2019 for submission to MPLS Division in Hilary Term 2019.

Title of Programme/ Name of Regulation

Preliminary Examination in Biology

Brief note about nature of change: FPE Biology will replace FPE Biological Sciences

Location of change

In *Examination Regulations 2018* <http://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/examregs/2018-19/peinbiolscie/administratorview/>

Effective date

For students starting from MT 2019, for first examination from 2019–20.

Detail of change

Replace FPE Biological Sciences with FPE Biology

A

^{1.1}The subjects of the Preliminary Examination in Biology, the examination, the syllabus, and the number of papers shall be as prescribed by regulation from time to time by the Mathematical, Physical and Life Sciences Board.

B

- ^{1.2}1. The First Year Biology Handbook shall be published not later than the beginning of Michaelmas Full Term before the examination in the following Trinity Term. This Handbook shall set out the syllabus for the written papers, further details of the assignments required for the Preliminary Examination in Biology, and the expectations of class attendance for research skills training.

- ^{1.3}2. Candidates will be required to offer three papers, as follows:
 - ^{1.4}Paper 1: Foundations of Biology: multiple-choice (75 minutes)
 - ^{1.5}Paper 2: Foundations of Biology: essay paper (3 hours)
 - ^{1.6}Paper 3: Research Skills (3 hours)
- ^{1.7}In paper 1, candidates will be required to answer multiple choice questions designed to test their knowledge and understanding of core topics in Biology.
- ^{1.8}In paper 2, candidates will be required to write four essays from a set of optional titles designed to test knowledge, understanding and synthesis of core topics in Biology.
- ^{1.9}In paper 3, candidates will be required to answer questions designed to test critical understanding of research skills.
- ^{1.10}The syllabus for the three papers will cover three biological themes: (a) How to build a phenotype; (b) Diversity of Life; and (c) Ecology and Evolution.
- ^{1.11}3. All candidates will be required to complete a course of research skills training, including laboratory exercises, field work, and quantitative analysis. This requirement includes submission of a set of four compulsory practical write-ups handed in during the first year. Marks awarded for write-ups contribute to the total mark awarded for Paper 3.
- ^{1.12}4. Candidates shall be deemed to have passed the Preliminary examination if they have satisfied the Examiners in all three papers detailed in clause 2, subject to the additional condition detailed in clause 3, either at a single examination, or at two examinations, as set out in clause 5.
- ^{1.13}5. A candidate who fails in any one of the papers listed in clause 2 must re-sit that paper at one, and only one, subsequent examination. A candidate who fails two or more papers listed in clause 2 must re-sit all three papers at one, and only one, subsequent examination.
- ^{1.14}6. Examiners may award a distinction to candidates of special merit who have passed all three papers set out in clause 2 at a single examination.
- ^{1.15}7. The Examiners will not provide calculators, but will permit the use of any handheld calculator subject to the conditions set out under the heading 'Use of calculators in examinations' in the *Regulations for the Conduct of University Examinations*.

Explanatory Notes

A new Biology degree with the first cohort starting in 2019, will replace the current Biological Sciences course.