

Medical Sciences Divisional Board

Course approved on behalf of Education Committee 30 December 2019

Regulations approved by officers on behalf of Education Committee 4 May 2022

Title of Programme/ Name of Regulation [if general]

Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology and Honour School of Neuroscience

Brief note about nature of change: Major changes to assessment as a result of the introduction of an optional fourth year for the Biomedical Sciences undergraduate programme.

Location of change

<https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=hsocandsystbiol&srchYear=2021&srchTerm=1&year=2019&term=1>

and

<https://examregs.admin.ox.ac.uk/Regulation?code=hschoofneur&srchYear=2021&srchTerm=1&year=2019&term=1>

Effective date

For students starting on course from MT 2021

And

For first examination from 2022-23

Detail of change

1. Replace the current Regulations for the Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology and the current Regulations for the Honour School of Neuroscience with the following:

Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology and Honour School of Neuroscience

A

1. The subject of the Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology is all aspects of the scientific study of the development and functioning of living organisms with particular but not exclusive reference to mammals. The subject of the Honour School of Neuroscience is all aspects of the scientific study of the nervous system.
2. No candidate shall be admitted to examination in either of these schools unless they have either passed or been exempted from the First Public Examination.
3. The examinations in these schools shall be under the supervision of the Medical Sciences Board.
4. The examinations consist of three parts: Part A, Part B and Part C.
5. At the beginning of the third year, candidates must decide whether they wish to enter for the Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology or the Honour School of Neuroscience. Candidates entered for the Honour School of Neuroscience must attempt questions from specific options in the Part B examination, as specified in the regulations for Part B below.
6. No candidate shall be admitted to the Part B examination in either school unless they have completed the Part A examination in the school. No candidate shall be admitted to the Part C examination in either school unless they have completed the Part A and Part B examinations in the school.
7. Part A takes place over Michaelmas term, Hilary term and the early part of Trinity term of the second year. Part B takes place over Trinity term of the second year and all of the third year. Part C takes place over the fourth year.
8. Candidates may be examined *viva voce* in any part of the examination.
9. Candidates for Parts A and B may be examined in one or more of the *Supplementary Subjects*. The *Supplementary Subjects* available in any year will be notified to students annually during Trinity Term. Account shall be taken of a candidate's results in any such subject in the candidate's overall classification.

Candidates awarded a pass in a Supplementary Subject examination may not retake the same Supplementary Subject examination.

B

PART A

1. Candidates will attend lectures and practicals in options selected from a list published to students on the Virtual Learning Environment. The course handbook will specify how many units are assigned to each option, and which options are required to proceed to particular advanced options in Part B. Candidates will be required to study options totalling ten units.

2. Two written papers will be set:

- (i) Paper I: short answer questions
- (ii) Paper II: essay paper

3. If, in Paper II of the Part A Examination, a candidate presents essentially the same information on more than one occasion, then credit will be given in only the first instance.

4. Candidates must complete practical work and submit written reports as specified in instructions provided on the Virtual Learning Environment. The Course Director will provide the examiners with a list of names of candidates who have completed this requirement. For candidates where the Course Director considers that a candidate's attendance or performance is unsatisfactory, the Course Director will provide the examiners with evidence of attendance records and submitted reports. Practical work cannot normally be retaken. Candidates whose attendance or performance is deemed unsatisfactory by the examiners will be liable for an academic penalty in the Part A examination, as set out in the examination conventions.

PART B

1. Part B will be assessed by three timed written examination papers, a project report based on a Research Project, and a Specialist Review.

2. The list of options shall be published to students not later than noon on Friday of Week 6 of Hilary Term of the second year. As candidates for FHS Neuroscience must

answer questions from neuroscience options (see clause 3 below), the neuroscience options will be clearly indicated on the list.

3. The three written papers, Paper 1, Paper 2, and Paper 3, are as specified for the Honour School of Medical Sciences. Candidates for FHS Neuroscience who have taken a Psychology option at Part A must answer questions on three different themes, at least two of which must be from two different neuroscience options. Candidates for FHS Neuroscience who have not taken a Psychology option at Part A must answer questions on three different themes, at least one of which must be from the neuroscience option delivered by the Department of Experimental Psychology; at least one of the remaining questions must be on a theme from one of the other neuroscience options.

4. The Research Project

(i) Form, subject, and approval of the project

Candidates must undertake project work under the supervision of a person approved on behalf of the Biomedical Sciences Steering Committee.

The project shall consist of original experiments and/or data analysis carried out by the candidate alone or in collaboration with others (where such collaboration is, for instance, needed to produce results in the time available). Information on the content, length and format of the Project Report will be provided to students.

Applications for approval of the research project must be made according to the instructions and by the deadlines given on the Virtual Learning Environment. Candidates who have not applied for approval by the specified deadline or who have submitted a Research Project which did not receive approval may be subject to an academic penalty, as set out in the examination conventions.

(ii) Application to change title of project

If required, candidates may apply to change the title of their project through the Faculty of Physiological Sciences Undergraduate Studies Office on one occasion and no later than noon on Friday of Week 4 of Hilary term in the third year.

(iii) Submission of the Project Report

Project Reports must be uploaded to the University approved online submission system not later than noon on the Friday of Week 8 of Hilary Term of the third year.

In exceptional cases, where through unforeseen circumstances a research project produces no useable results (i.e. not even negative or ambiguous results), the candidate may apply through their college to the Course Director, or a deputy, for permission to submit a concise review of the scientific context and the aims of the work that was attempted, in place of the normal Project Report. Such an application must be accompanied by supporting evidence from the supervisor of the project. The concise review to be submitted in such circumstances should be comparable in length to the Report of a successful research project. The examiners will be advised that substantive results could not be produced.

The examiners shall be provided with a written report from each supervisor indicating the extent of the input made by the candidate to the outcome of the project and also any unforeseen difficulties associated with the project (e.g. unexpected technical issues or problems in the availability of materials, equipment, or literature or other published data).

Project Reports previously submitted for the Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology or the Honour School of Neuroscience may be resubmitted. No Project Report will be accepted if it has already been submitted, wholly or substantially, for another Honour School or degree of this University or for a degree of any other institution.

(iv) Oral assessment of project-based written work

Each candidate shall make a brief oral presentation of their project to a group of two examiners (or examiners and assessors appointed to ensure an adequate representation of expertise) and shall be expected to answer questions on the project.

5. The Specialist Review

(i) Form and subject of the specialist review

Information on the content, length and format of the specialist review will be published on the Virtual Learning Environment.

(ii) Approval

Every candidate must submit a completed specialist review approval form by the deadline and according to the instructions on the Virtual Learning Environment.

(iii) Application to change title of specialist review

If required, candidates may apply to change the title of their review through the Faculty of Physiological Sciences Undergraduate Studies Office on one occasion and no later than noon on Friday of Week 8 of Hilary Term of the third year.

(iv) Submission

Specialist reviews must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform not later than noon on the Friday of Week 0 of the Trinity Term of the third year.

6. If, in the assessment for Part B, a candidate presents essentially the same information on more than one occasion, credit will be given in only the first instance.

PART C

1. Part C will be assessed by an Extended research project and a review article.

2. Extended research project

(i) Timing

The project will be carried out over a period of 23 weeks in the fourth year, specifically over an extended Michaelmas term, Hilary term and the first three weeks of Trinity term.

(ii) Form, subject, and approval

Candidates must undertake project work under the supervision of a person approved on behalf of the Biomedical Sciences Steering Committee. The extended research project report must be no more than 8000 words. Detailed information on the content, length and format of the extended research project will be provided on the Virtual Learning Environment.

Applications for approval of project title and supervisor must be made in accordance with the instructions and by the deadlines given on the Virtual Learning Environment. Candidates who have not applied for approval by the specified deadline or who have submitted a Research Project which

did not receive approval may be subject to an academic penalty, as set out in the examination conventions.

(iii) **Application to change title of project**

If required, candidates may apply to change the title of their project through the Faculty of Physiological Sciences Undergraduate Studies Office on one occasion and no later than noon on Friday of Week 4 of Hilary term of the fourth year.

(iv) **Submission**

Project Reports must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform not later than noon on the Thursday of Week 5 of the Trinity Term of the fourth year.

The examiners shall be provided with a written report from each supervisor indicating the extent of the input made by the candidate to the outcome of the project and also any unforeseen difficulties associated with the project (e.g. unexpected technical issues or problems in the availability of materials, equipment, or literature or other published data).

(v) **Oral assessment of Extended research project**

Each candidate shall make a brief oral presentation of their project to a group of two examiners (or examiners and assessors appointed to ensure an adequate representation of expertise), and shall be expected to answer questions on the project.

3. Review article

(i) Form and subject of the article

Information on the content, length and format of the review article will be provided on the Virtual Learning Environment.

(ii) Registration

Each candidate must submit a completed submitted essay registration form by the deadline and according to the instructions in the course handbook.

(iii) Application to change title of the submitted essay

If required, candidates may apply to change the title of their essay through the Faculty of Physiological Sciences Undergraduate Studies Office on one occasion and no later than noon on Friday of Week 8 of Hilary Term of the fourth year.

(v) Submission

The essay must be uploaded to the University approved online assessment platform not later than noon on the Friday of Week 0 of Trinity Term of the fourth year.

4. If, in the assessment for Part C, a candidate presents essentially the same information on more than one occasion, credit will be given in only the first instance.

Explanatory Notes

The Biomedical Sciences programme has been extended by an optional fourth year to become an Integrated Masters programme. The Examination Regulations for the Honour School of Cell and Systems Biology and the Examination Regulations for the Honour School of Neuroscience have been combined, and the regulations for the fourth year of the course (Part C of the Examination) have been added.