

# Assessment types and expectations

The following statement outlines the difference between [formative](#) and [summative](#) assessment activities and how you can expect to receive feedback on your performance throughout the course.

## Formative assessment

### Purpose

Formative assessment is a learning experience in its own right, so feedback is provided to identify strengths and weaknesses and provide practical guidance to help you improve your academic performance. Formative assessment activities do not usually count towards the marks for an award.

### Examples

In Part I much of the feedback that you'll receive will be via supervisions and your DoS meetings. Your supervisors will offer constructive feedback on how to improve your work and give you a sense of how you are performing relative to the rest of the cohort. You will also receive full feedback on your performance in the Part IA progress test, in preparation for Tripos exams, as well as receiving feedback on your lab work.

At Part IIA feedback on modules includes interaction with supervisors as well as coursework feedback sessions and feedback from your project leader.

There are no supervisions at Part IIB as this is a Master's-level year, so you are expected to work more independently. However, your project supervisor should give you constructive feedback throughout the year and your module leaders may run surgery sessions to give face-to-face feedback on coursework, in addition to the coursework feedback sheets.

### Expectations

You should receive your coursework, together with a coversheet which details what you have done well and how to improve your work for the future, within the following schedules:

**IIA:** within 15 term-time days (inclusive) of the hand-in deadline (or by Friday of week 1 at the start of the following term, if fewer than 15 days of term remain).

**IIB:** We encourage examiners to aim for the schedule below, although staff handling large modules may require more time.

- by the end of Full Term for work submitted before the end of week 5;
- by the end of week 2 in the following term for work submitted in weeks 6-10;
- by the end of week 4 (Lent), or week 3 (Easter) for work submitted at the start of the following term.

## Summative assessment

### Purpose

Summative assessment measures attainment, understanding or achievement at a particular time and contributes towards the grade that you receive at the end of the year. The University does not regard it as having any intrinsic learning value in its own right, so you will not generally receive feedback beyond being informed of your grades and mark breakdown.

### Examples and expectations

Tripes examinations are a form of summative assessment. We understand that many students would like individual feedback on their exam performance, but Tripes exams are not designed to provide this.

Instead of individual feedback examiners are required to provide cohort-level feedback via cribs (the last five years' worth are available online to students). Examiners are asked to include in the cribs for each question a commentary on the performance of the cohort as well as the model answer. Examiners are also asked to give the cribs to the Teaching Office immediately after the Final Examiners' meeting so that they can be uploaded while the exams are fresh in students' minds. We hope that this will help give you a better understanding of your exam performance.

Cribs are a really important resource for exam preparation and we appreciate that it is very frustrating to spend time puzzling over a crib only to find that it contains a mistake. If you think you've spotted an error in a crib please use the [Fast Feedback](#) link on the Tripes Papers pages to report it so that the Teaching Office can follow up with the relevant Examiner and issue a corrected crib if necessary.

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