

UNIVERSITY OF DUBLIN
TRINITY COLLEGE



BUSINESS, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL STUDIES

BUSINESS STUDIES AND A LANGUAGE

SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL POLICY

**PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE, ECONOMICS
AND SOCIOLOGY**

DEGREE PROGRAMMES

**EXAMINATION REGULATIONS AND
CONVENTIONS
INFORMATION BOOKLET**

School of Business

School of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Course Office

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List of Contents

Introduction	1
1. General	3
1.1 Satisfactory completion of year	3
1.1.1 The right to take examinations	3
1.1.2 Freshman and Junior Sophister Years	3
1.1.3 Senior Sophister Year	3
1.2 Registering for and Sitting the Examinations	4
1.3 Excused absences	4
1.4 Inclusion/Exclusion of course work	4
1.5 Exclusion	5
2. Grading Conventions	6
2.1 Individual Papers	6
2.2 Overall grade: General	6
2.3 Overall grade: Freshman years and Junior Sophister	7
2.4 Overall grade: Senior Sophister	7
BESS and Sociology & Social Policy	7
Business Studies and a Language	7
Philosophy, Political Science, Economics & Sociology	8
2.5 Scholarship Examination	8
3. Publication, Recheck, Appeal and Transcript of Results	10
3.1 Retention of scripts	10
3.2 Re-checks and Re-marks	10
3.3 Appeals	10
3.4 Transcripts	11
4. Role of Examiners	12

Introduction

This booklet contains information about the regulations governing examinations, as well as the conventions determining the award of grades in examinations, in the following degree programmes:

Business, Economic and Social Studies (BESS) Programme

Single Honors in Business Studies (Bachelor in Business Studies)

Single Honors in Economics, Political Science and Sociology

Joint Honors in Business and Economics, Business and Political Science, Business and Sociology, Economics and Sociology, Economics and Political Science, Political Science and Sociology

Business Studies and a Language (BSL) Programme

Business Studies and French

Business Studies and German

Business Studies and Russian

Business Studies and Polish

Business Studies and Spanish

Sociology and Social Policy (SSP) Programme

Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology (PPES) Programme

Single Honors in Philosophy, Political Science, Economics, Sociology

Joint Honors in Philosophy and Political Science, Philosophy and Economics, Philosophy and Sociology, Political Science and Economics, Political Science and Sociology, Economics and Sociology

The BESS Programme is governed by the **BESS Course Committee** which includes representatives from each of the four contributing Schools and Departments (Business Studies, Economics, Political Science and Sociology) under the BESS Course Director.

The BSL Programme is governed by the **BSL Course Committee** which includes representatives from the School of Business Studies and the participating language departments under the BSL Course Director.

The Sociology and Social Policy Programme is governed by the **Sociology and Social Policy Course Committee** which includes representatives from the Department of Sociology and the School of Social Work and Social Policy, under the SSP Course Coordinator.

The Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology Programme is governed by the **PPES Course Committee** which includes representatives from the Department of Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology, under the PPES Course Director.

The **BESS Court of Examiners** (which for this purpose includes the BSL Programme, the SSP Programme and the PPES programme) meets twice a year for the purpose of confirming marks and awarding examination grades in the four degree programmes. It comprises all those teaching on the four degree programmes, including staff members from outside the immediate Schools/Departments. In addition, the external examiners attend in the case of degree examinations in the third and fourth years. The role of the Court of Examiners in awarding examination grades is described in more detail below.

Section 1 gives an overview of the rules regarding students' right to rise with their class, regarding students' responsibilities to inform themselves about the dates and locations of exams, and regarding the circumstances in which an absence from an exam can be excused.

Section 2 contains the conventions used by BESS Courts of Examiners when awarding grades to students on the basis of their run of marks across modules. The main purpose of devising these conventions is to ensure that cases that are fundamentally similar are treated similarly, thus avoiding inconsistent treatment across different Courts of Examiners or even in the same Court of Examiners. In addition, the existence of a set of guidelines is designed to facilitate fair and efficient Courts of Examiners meetings by minimising the need for discussion of relatively straightforward cases. As is emphasised at the start of Section 2, the guidelines are conventions that codify the normal practice of the Court of Examiners, but the ultimate decision in each case rests with the Court of Examiners.

Section 3 outlines the procedures for publishing exam results, for rechecking the marks, and for appealing against a decision of the Court of Examiners.

Section 4 outlines some additional responsibilities of examiners.

While every attempt has been made to ensure that the information presented in this booklet is accurate, the final word on all matters herein is the official College Calendar which takes precedence should a contradiction emerge.

1. General

1.1 Satisfactory completion of year

1.1.1 The right to take examinations

In many modules, grades in assessment and essay work done during the year are incorporated in varying ways into the annual examination mark. In other modules this is not so, but students nonetheless may be required to attend classes and submit assessment work in these modules. A student is deemed *non-satisfactory* in a term when more than a third of required work/attendance in that term is missed. Any student who is deemed *non-satisfactory* in each of the first two terms may be reported to the Senior Lecturer. In accordance with the regulations laid down by the University Council such students may be refused permission to take examinations in that year.

To be allowed to sit the ordinary examinations a student must have paid the relevant College annual fees and must not have been excluded by the Senior Lecturer on the basis of *non-satisfactory* reports from the relevant department. There is no examination fee payable and no notice is required of intention to take an examination (the Scholarship examination is an exception to this).

1.1.2 Freshman and Junior Sophister years

To rise with their class students must pass the Junior Freshman examination, the Senior Freshman examination and obtain an overall II.2 grade or higher in the Junior Sophister examination. Each successful candidate is, according to merit, awarded one of three grades: first class honors, second class honors (with two divisions, first and second) and pass. Where relevant, Junior Sophister results contain the information MP (meaning the candidate may proceed to SS year) or P (meaning the candidate is entitled to a Pass degree, but must take one or more supplemental examinations in order to reach the required standard to proceed to the SS year).

Candidates who are unsuccessful at the annual examinations may, *at the discretion of the BESS Court of Examiners*, be permitted to present themselves at the supplemental examinations (see section 1.3). Candidates who are unsuccessful at the supplemental examinations may, *at the discretion of the BESS Court of Examiners*, be permitted to

repeat the year.

Candidates who have passed the Junior Sophister examination normally may have the ordinary degree of BA (pass) conferred if they do not choose, or have not qualified, to proceed to the Senior Sophister year.

Students are not permitted to repeat a year more than once or repeat more than two separate years.

1.1.3 Senior Sophister year

Candidates who proceed to the Senior Sophister year sit their degree examinations in the Trinity term. A student can sit these examinations only once and there are no supplemental examinations.

Students unavoidably absent from these examinations may apply to the Senior Lecturer to present themselves for the equivalent examinations in the following year. If they are permitted to do so, without having to repeat lectures or course work, they must give notice of their intention of taking the examinations at least three weeks before the end of Hilary teaching term and pay the relevant examination fee.

1.2 Registering modules and sitting the examinations

Full time TCD students must register their final module choices with the Course Office before the end of week 2 of Michaelmas term as otherwise their names will not appear on any examination lists. Students are required to take the annual examinations of all modules for which they are registered unless specially exempted by permission from the Senior Lecturer.

It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that they take sufficient modules to amount to 60 ECTS during an academic year, that their selected modules meet the programme requirements of the particular year of the degree course for which he or she is registered, and that he or she has included any prerequisites for modules he or she wishes to take in subsequent years.

The onus lies on each student to find out the dates of examinations by consulting the relevant website(s). Examination timetables will be arranged by the Examinations Office and will normally be published about three weeks before the commencement of examinations. Students are advised to check on-line (Exams Office website) the week before examinations commence to ensure that no changes have been made to the timetable. *No timetable or reminder will be sent to individual students by any office.*

1.3 Excused absences

A student who through illness, or some other unforeseen and exceptional circumstance, has cause to miss an examination must contact his/her tutor, as well as the Course Office, at the earliest possible opportunity but in any case not later than **three** days after the beginning of the period of absence from the examination in order to have that absence considered as 'excused'. In the case of illness, a medical certificate will be required. Medical certificates must state that the student is unfit to sit the examinations. Students may leave an examination if they are ill provided they go directly to the Student Medical Centre, and if a medical certificate is granted absence from that examination will be excused. Where an examination has been completed, subsequent withdrawal is not permitted and the mark awarded will stand. Medical certificates or other extenuating circumstances will not be accepted in explanation of poor performance.

1.4 Inclusion/Exclusion of course work

Where a student is permitted to present for supplemental examination(s) or to repeat a year off-books (i.e. **fail** followed subsequently by **off-books – exams only**), course work in general is not incorporated in the determination of the student's subsequent result(s). Students must be notified of any exception to this general principle.

Where inclusion of course work in a student's result for the year is the normal procedure for a given module, this will also apply to (i) Senior Sophister students who have been given permission to defer examinations for a year (i.e. *defer exams*); and (ii) Freshman and Junior Sophister students who have been given permission to withdraw from all, or part, of the annual examination and to sit, as a first attempt, a supplemental examination in that year.

1.5 Exclusion

Those who fail to appear at an examination and who fail to provide medical or other evidence which can justify an excused absence (see 1. 3 above) will normally be excluded from the BESS Programme (see section 2.2 for other grounds for exclusion).

2. Grading Conventions

The BESS Court of Examiners determines the overall grade awarded to a particular student taking into account whatever other evidence of an academic nature is deemed appropriate. These conventions codify the normal decisions of the Court as to a student's overall grade, given certain combinations of individual paper grades, and will be departed from only in exceptional circumstances. Should the Court of Examiners, in exceptional circumstances, decide to depart from the BESS programme conventions, all students who are deemed to be in equivalent positions will be treated equivalently.

In this section, a mark of 30+ means a mark in the range 30–39 inclusive, 35+ means a mark in the range 35–39 inclusive, 40+ means 40–49 inclusive, 50+ means 50–59 inclusive, 60+ means 60–69 inclusive, and 70+ means 70–100 inclusive.

2.1 Individual papers

Individual examination papers are graded using the following classifications.

I	70 - 100	F1	30 - 39
II.1	60 - 69	F2	< 30
II.2	50 - 59		
III	40 - 49		

It is important to realise that the marks in individual papers are essentially useful symbols for grading and ranking students in a module in a consistent and equitable manner. For example, a mark of 40 means that the examiner is definite that this student should pass and a mark of 38 or lower that the student should fail: if the examiner considers the paper to be marginal, a mark of 39 (which should be regarded as provisional) would be returned and it is then left to the discretion of the Court of Examiners, based on the overall examination performance of the student, to decide whether to raise the mark to 40 or leave it as it is (see section 2.2 (ii) below). Examiners and students alike must accept that these marks, close though they may be in an arithmetic sense, symbolise very different things and will normally have very different consequences for an individual student's overall examination result.

2.2 Overall grade: General

The following conventions apply to all years.

- (i) The overall mark (and associated grade) for a year is the weighted average of all module results, using the ECTS credit rating for the weighting of each module.
- (ii) Students are excluded from the BESS, BSL, SSP and PPES programmes if they pass in two papers or fewer and receive a mark less than 20 in two or more papers. (For example, the following set of marks would lead to exclusion in any of the first three years: 54, 48, 36, 37, 15, 10).
- (iii) A mark of 69/59/49/39/34/29 is raised only when it is crucial and when the arithmetic average (which can be rounded up from 69.5 etc) before the change is 70+/60+/50+/40+/35+/30+. No more than one mark shall be raised in this way.
- (iv) Where a student sits an extra examination paper (i.e. an examination in a module for which the student is not registered), the Court of Examiners will determine the student's grade on the basis of the marks in the modules for which the student was registered.

2.3 Overall grade: Freshman years and Junior Sophister

- (i) In order to pass, a student must pass all modules worth in total 60 credits or pass by compensation. In order to pass by compensation, a student must have an overall arithmetic mean of 40+ and [(pass modules totalling 55 credits and get a mark of 30+ in the failed module) or (pass modules totalling 50 credits and get a mark (or marks) of 35+ in the failed module(s))]. Note that some modules are non-compensatable as below
- (ii) Only students in the Freshman years and Junior Sophister year (subject to (vi) and (vii) below) who do not pass are allowed/required to repeat modules they have failed.
- (iii) The marks of the papers passed in the summer examinations in the Freshman years are considered together with those obtained in the autumn examinations. The standard compensation and exclusion rules apply to this combined set of results.
- (iv) In the case of students who have been given permission to withdraw from or defer all or part of the annual examinations and to sit a supplemental examination in that year, the overall result in the autumn will be graded.

- (v) The overall end of year result for students who pass on the basis of marks achieved at a supplemental exam or exams will be recorded as 'Pass at Supplemental'.

(Within the Business & Language degree course, the following modules are non-compensatable:

French: **FR1050** French Writing Skills 1, **FR2041** French Writing Skills 2

German: **GR1000** German Language 1, **GR2000** German Language 2

Spanish: **SP1019** Spanish Grammar & Syntax 1, **SP2024** Spanish Grammar & Syntax 2

Russian: **RUF104** Russian Language for Beginners, **RUF114** Russian Language for Advanced Speakers, **RUF207** Russian Language 2, **RUF214** Russian Language for Advanced Speakers

Polish: **PLF104** Polish Language for Beginners, **PLF114** Polish Language for Advanced Speakers, **PLF207** Polish Language 2, **PLF214** Polish Language for Advanced Speakers)

Junior Sophister-specific rules

- (vi) In the Junior Sophister year, students must obtain an overall II.2 grade to be allowed to proceed to the Senior Sophister year. This applies to all students, including those who are doing all or a part of the year abroad.
- (vii) Students in the Junior Sophister year need repeat only one paper in the autumn examinations in order to attain an overall II.2, *provided* they only require a mark of 40+ in the paper in question to do so. Otherwise, students must repeat all papers in which they did not achieve at least a mark of 50+ in order to attain an overall II.2 (i.e. May Proceed).

2.4 Overall grade: Senior Sophister

Only one attempt at the Senior Sophister examination is permitted.

BESS and Sociology & Social Policy

- (i) In order to pass, a student must pass all modules worth in total 60 credits or pass by compensation. In order to pass by compensation, a student must have an overall arithmetic mean of 40+ and (pass modules totalling 45 credits and get a mark of 30+ in the failed module)].

BSL

(ii) In order to pass, a student must pass all modules worth in total 60 credits or pass by compensation. In order to pass by compensation, a student must have an overall arithmetic mean of 40+ and pass modules totalling 40 or more credits and get a mark of 30+ in the failed modules. Note, however, that some modules are non-compensatable.

Non-compensatable modules are as follows:

FR4051 French Business Communication (Oral and Aural);

FR4052 Case Study

GR4001 German Business Communication IV (b)(Rhetoric);

GR4013 Case Study

SP4023 Spanish Business Communication IV (a)(Writing Skills, including Translation);

SP4022 Case Study

RUS207 Russian Business Communication IV (Oral and Writing Skills including Translation);

RUS907 Case Study Project

PLS207 Polish Business Communication IV (Oral and Writing Skills including Translation);

PLS907 Case Study Project

PPES

(iii) In order to pass, a student must pass all modules worth in total 60 credits or pass by aggregation. In order to pass by aggregation, a student must (have an overall arithmetic mean of 40+) and (pass modules totalling at least 40 credits) and (have a maximum of 10 credits with a grade of less than 30+)

2.5 Scholarship Examination

Candidates are examined in four papers drawn from the modules of their course up to the end of Michaelmas term of the Senior Freshman year. The scope of each paper is described in the examination section of the relevant Course website. The general structure of the Scholarship examination in each degree programme is described below. From the academic year 2013-14 onwards, recommendations for scholarship will be based on the arithmetic

average achieved across all four papers, subject to all four papers being passed. A necessary but not sufficient condition for recommendation for scholarship will be achieving a mark of 70+ in at least half of the four papers.

Business, Economic and Social Studies

The examination consists of four 2¼ hour papers, where candidates will be asked to choose any four papers from the list as follows:

Business I and II

Economics I and II

Political Science I and II

Sociology I and II

Quantitative Methods

All papers carry equal weight.

Business Studies and a Language

The examination consists of four 2¼ hour papers (or equivalent) as follows:

Business I and II

Language I (Language, Fluency inc. Oral)

Language II (Business Environment)

All papers carry equal weight.

Sociology and Social Policy

The examination consists of four 2¼ hour papers as follows:

Sociology I and II

Social Policy I and II

All papers carry equal weight.

Philosophy, Political Science, Economics and Sociology

The examination consists of four 2¼ hour papers. Candidates must take at least one paper from each of the three disciplines they pursue in their Senior Freshman year.

Philosophy I and II

Political Science I and II

Economics I and II

Sociology I and II

Quantitative Methods

All papers carry equal weight.

3. Recheck, Appeal and Transcript of Results

3.1 Retention of Scripts

Examination scripts shall be held by examiners, or departmental offices for a period of 13 months. This period of 13 months begins on the day of publication of the relevant examination results. Scripts cannot be released to students, but students may read their own scripts in the presence of the relevant examiner.

3.2 Re-checks and Re-marks

Students are entitled to discuss their performance with examiners after examination results have been published. If a mark is revised, the Director/Coordinator of the programme (BESS, BSL, BBS, PPES, Sociology & Social Policy) should be notified of the mark change. The Director/Co-ordinator will, by reference to the BESS Programme conventions, amend the overall grade as appropriate and, where necessary, inform the tutor, Head(s) of Department, Director of Undergraduate Teaching and Learning of the School, and the Senior Lecturer.

Having discussed their performance with the examiner(s) and ascertained that the mark in question was correctly calculated, students may ask that their results be re-considered if they have reason to believe

- (a) that the examination paper contained questions on modules which were not part of the module prescribed for the examination, or
- (b) that bias was shown by an examiner in marking the script.

Through their tutor, students may appeal to the Senior Lecturer. In submitting their case, students should state under which of (a) or (b) above the request is being made.

3.3 Appeals

Students may appeal a decision of the Court of Examiners. The grounds for appeal must fall under one or more of the following categories: (i) the case of the appellant is not adequately covered by the ordinary regulations of the College, (ii) the regulations of the College were not properly applied in the appellant's case, or (iii) the appeal is ad misericordiam.

Appeals in the first instance must be made to the Pro-Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Humanity & Social Sciences, i.e. the Director of the BESS Programme.

As the Appeal Committee meets to hear these appeals within one week of the publication of results, it is imperative that students, or authorised and adequately briefed deputies, are present to obtain and consider results as soon as they become available.

Appeals should be made via electronic form by a student's tutor or, if the tutor is unavailable to act, by the Senior Tutor. (See Calendar for further details regarding the College's Academic Appeals procedures.)

3.4 Transcripts

Transcripts of grades received, both by individual module and overall, can be obtained from the Course Office, either during a student's time in College and/or on completion of the degree.

Transcripts will include the set of grades that permit students to rise with their year and the set of grades that form the basis of the award of the degree. The transcript will make explicit whether or not one or two sittings were required (supplemental in a paper for which there was an excused absence is not a separate sitting) and whether or not a year is repeated. The grades achieved on the second sitting will be indicated clearly. Where more than one sitting was required the overall grade will always be recorded as a pass/fail.

The Scholarship Examination is an exception to the above. This examination will not be reflected on the student transcript unless the student has obtained Scholarship, in which case such information, if requested, shall appear (by way of asterisk and explanation) below the grades for Senior Freshman year.

4. Role of Examiners

Apart from the duties described above, examiners have a number of other important responsibilities in relation to examination procedures. The main ones are as follows.

- (i) Where a test/essay/project counts towards the final mark, this fact must be made known to students before the end of the second week of the teaching module in question. The extent to which it is taken into account, the arrangements should students have legitimate reasons to be excused from doing the relevant work at the appropriate time, and the penalties that attach to non-submission or unexcused late submission of such work should all be made clear to the students as early as possible, and not later than the end of the second week of the teaching module in question. Students required to submit essays, assignments or other projects counting towards their final or end-of-year result must be given advance notice of how (e.g. the appropriateness, or otherwise, of electronic submission), where and to whom the work is to be submitted. Following the due submission date, and as soon as practicably possible, a list of names of students from whom work has been received should be published on the departmental noticeboard and/or emailed to all students registered as taking the relevant module. Beyond these requirements, it is not the examiner's responsibility to follow up on missing (i.e. non-submitted) coursework.
- (ii) Tests/essays/projects should be handed back to students as quickly as the marking process will allow, and only in very exceptional circumstances should the gap between submission and return of work ever exceed six weeks.
- (iii) The examination paper must be a fair and reasonable reflection of the module content. Guidelines concerning the broad format of the paper and the type of question to be set must be provided to students, as early as possible and certainly not later than the end of the second week in the Trinity teaching term.
- (iv) Examiners or competent deputies must be present at examinations during the first fifteen minutes of an examination so that difficulties arising from examination papers may be resolved expeditiously. If examiners are unable to be present at the examination, they must be readily contactable by telephone.
- (v) Where more than one internal examiner is involved in a paper, the mark recorded must be agreed by *all* examiners concerned. In the case of a paper being graded by an

- external examiner (applies normally only in Sophister years), the judgement of the latter is communicated to the relevant examiner(s) and is normally accepted as final.
- (vi) A second opinion on scripts for which a borderline fail is being proposed is, where practicable, advised. In the case of the Sophister years this would normally be provided by the external examiner.
 - (vii) Examiners must return **numerical** results to the relevant Department and these are then forwarded to the Course Office, usually to reach that office at least four working days before the meeting of the Court of Examiners. Marks agreed with the external examiner must where possible be submitted not later than the morning prior to the relevant Court of Examiners' meeting.
 - (viii) Marks of 69/59/49/39/34/29 returned by examiners are taken to indicate that the examiners are willing to have the mark adjusted by the Court of Examiners in the light of the candidate's performance in all papers, in particular the arithmetic average achieved (see sections 2.1 and 2.2 above).
 - (ix) Where practicable, all cases where a student is likely to be excluded from the Programme are drawn to the attention of tutors by the Course Office prior to the meeting of the Court of Examiners.
 - (x) Examiners or adequately briefed deputies must attend examiners' meetings.