



**To: All Candidates for Preliminary Examinations in Materials Science  
2025/26**

**From: Professor Jonathan Yates, Chair of Moderators, 2026**

**Subject: Prelims Examinations – Trinity 2026**

**Date: Thursday, 19 March 2026**

**cc: Director of Undergraduate Studies, Tutorial Fellows**

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### **Information on the Prelims Examination 2025-26**

I am writing with information about the arrangements for your forthcoming examinations and to provide you with a copy of the Examination Conventions for 2026.

### **Moderators**

In Prelims, the examiners are called “Moderators”. The Moderators in 2025/26 are: Professor Martin Castell, Dr Chiheb Ben Mahmoud, Professor Angus Wilkinson, and Professor Jonathan Yates (Chair).

Candidates are reminded that in order to preserve the independence of the Moderators, you are not allowed to contact them directly about matters relating to the content of the exams or the marking of papers. Any communication must be via your college, who will, if the matter is deemed of importance, contact the Proctors. The Proctors in turn communicate with the Chair of Examiners.

### **Contact Information**

If you have any queries about the Examinations or anything related to the Examinations, for example illness or personal issues, please don't hesitate to seek further advice from your college office or tutor, or from the Department's Education Support Team:  
[undergraduate.studies@materials.ox.ac.uk](mailto:undergraduate.studies@materials.ox.ac.uk).

### **Examination Conventions**

The appropriate Examination Conventions for your degree course are enclosed. Please ensure you read the Conventions thoroughly.

Exam Conventions are the formal record of the specific assessment standards for the course or courses to which they apply, and set out how examined work will be marked and how the marks are determined. The Conventions also set out the process through which marks will be used to arrive at an overall outcome.

### **Exam Timetable**

The Examination Timetable will be published in due course on the [Oxford Students website](#) and you will receive an individual timetable in the 'My Exams' section of Student Self-Service. Please note that changes may be made after the timetable is first published and you will receive notification of any changes. The latest information on Trinity Term exams is on the [examinations and assessments page](#).

### **Sub Fusc and Academic Dress**

You are reminded that you are required to wear Sub Fusc and Academic Dress to all examinations. Further information about in person examinations may be found at <https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/exams/guidance>.

### **University Card**

You are required to take your University Card to the examinations as a means of identification.

### **Use of Calculators**

The only types of calculators that may be used in Materials Science examinations are from the following series:

CASIO fx-83  
CASIO fx-85  
SHARP EL-531

Candidates are required to clear any user-entered data or programmes from memories immediately before the exam begins. The invigilators may inspect any calculator during the course of an exam.

Candidates are **not permitted** calculators in the Mathematics for Materials Science examination.

### **Exam Papers**

Section 2 of the Conventions sets out the rubric and format of each paper.

Questions will be sub-divided into sections with the breakdown of marks that the examiners expect to give to each part of each question indicated.

The Moderators would like to remind you that there is no strict rule about how many questions are set on each lecture course in the Preliminary examination papers. As a result, (i)

you should not assume that a question will be set on every lecture course and (ii) some questions may require knowledge from more than one lecture course.

**NOTE: Each question is to be started on a new page.**

Past papers can be found on [SOLO](#).

### **Covering Sheets**

The rubric on each paper indicates a prescribed number of answers required (e.g. "candidates are required to submit answers to no more than (x) questions"). You will be asked to indicate on a covering sheet which questions, up to the prescribed number, you are submitting for marking. Section 3.5 of the Conventions details the procedures followed by the examiners in cases where candidates have not completed the covering sheet or have departed from the rubric.

### **Paper Errors**

Although great care is taken when setting the exam papers, occasionally an error does remain. **If you think that there is an error or mistake** in your exam paper then you should make a note of this at the top of the relevant answer and clearly state the assumptions you have used in answering the question. You should then try to complete the paper as best you can. It will not be possible to query the content of the exam paper during the exam.

### **Mitigating Circumstances**

If you believe your performance in assessment has been seriously affected by acute illness or personal circumstances you can submit a mitigating circumstances notice to the Examiners (MCE) to let them know, and to allow them to consider whether your outcome for affected papers or outcome overall should be adjusted. Candidates who believe their performance may have been impacted by a problem before or during an assessment should read the guidance on [this page](#).

### **Results**

The Examiners expect that results will be available to view on [Student Self Service](#) in mid-July. You will be advised by email when the results become available. This email will provide a hyperlink for you to access your results through Student Self Service using your single sign-on credentials.

### **Further Advice**

Further exam guidance, including advice on exam wellbeing, and what to do if you have problems completing your assessment, is on the [Exams and Assessments page](#) of the University website.