

This document tries to explain how your Maths (MA101) exam papers have been and will be designed, conducted, corrected and given back to students.

This document is here for two reasons: help you (the students) to understand how we grade your papers, and help us (professors and tutors) to all adopt the same grading process. This will also help the new professors and tutors.

## How to prepare the exam paper?

- For mid-term exams, we try to divide the subpart of the semester into equal parts, and we usually give 5 exercises, each graded from 0 to 20 (0/20 being nothing, to 20/20 being perfect), for a total of 100.
- Quizzes are usually from 0/5 to 5/5.
- The question papers, for exams or quizzes, have to be perfectly clear, without ambiguity or mistake. I suggest to be done with the paper a couple of days before the exam, and be sure to have proofread it twice by the day before.
- Be especially cautious about notation mistakes, and be sure to respect the definitions and to use results seen in class.
- For some exams or quizzes, we can give a small document with main definitions and results saw in Lectures for the last subpart, to give to every students for the exam (and after).

## How to conduct the exams?

- In the exam rooms, students are not allowed to bring anything but their ID card and pen. So no notebooks, no cellphones, no papers except the one we give to the students. And no calculator, except if the instructor-in-charge decides otherwise.
- Small quizzes are usually 10 or 15 minutes long, and they are performed at the end of a lecture. We try to produce two similar question paper, but different enough to reduce cheating between the first batch and the second batch. As far as now, no statistical difference between the first and second batches for all of the 4 quizzes already done.
- The Maths mid-term exams are usually 2h long, and the end-of-the-semester exam is 3h long. Usually students are dispatched in 5 rooms (LT1 to LT5) of 48 students, with one professor in every room, and two invigilators at least.
- Cheating is a delicate issue, to be addressed seriously. During quizzes and exams, professors and invigilators have to be extra cautious, and walking constantly between the rows helps to keep an eye on every students. Extremely severe measures will be taken against any cheating or tentative of cheating.
- For quizzes, as the benches will be crowded, it might help to produce two different sets of questions, and alternate paper 1, paper 2, paper 1 etc when we distribute them to the students. In case of cheating or eye-picking problem, this can be improved to three different sets of questions.

## How to grade the answer scripts?

- Usually, every maths professors is in charged of proposing grading one exercise. This is done to improve uniformity of the grades. It is better to ask every professor to be in charge of one problem for every students, than to be in charge of all problems for some groups.
- We usually have to be quick and efficient on this grading process. The 72h rule is not applied, but we have to be as quick as possible. An Excel sheet (.xlsx) is used to numerically input the grades on our computer, then send them to the instructor-in-charge, in order for him to be able to merge them, produce some statistics, and forward this to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
- This time limit is not a reason to do this job badly. Grading is a rare opportunity to give specific feedback to every student, and we have to be generous on remarks, explanations and advices on the answer scripts. A question corrected with only the mark written in red, and no other form of feedback is useless to the students. Whenever something is wrong or inappropriate, a small remark should say why, or at least a sign of some sort has to signal the mistake.
- I recommend to try as much as possible to read every line, every statements of each question. Even if the final answer is wrong, we should try to highlight every intermediate mistakes in each question.
- After being done with grading one problem, we usually sum up the total grade for it, and write it where the student began this problem, and also on the first page of the answer script. One or two small sentences can be used to give a specific advice, warning, or congratulation message about that problem.

## How to give back the exam papers?

- For quizzes, this can be done in tutorials, by calling students name one-by-one. It is a good opportunity to give a specific remark or advice to each students. In case of absents, I usually give their papers to serious students, and they deal with it by their own.
- For exams, usually we plan two hours, one evening after the end of their classes. In one lecture theater, every maths tutors and lecturers should be presents, in order to answer doubts, questions, and to change the mark in case of any error in the grading process. Every student has to sign to officially agree on his grade, before she/he leave with her/his answer scripts. Any complaints on the grade after signing will not be accepted.

## What feedback do we give to students after?

- For exams, the Dean of Academic Affairs requires a small report. It should cover the following point: general trend of the results, any specific event that might happen during the exams, any case or suspicion of cheating, any peculiar remarks on some students; and last but not the least, this report should contains an histogram and some statistics about the exam grades.
- We try to write a detailed and complete solution for every exams or quizzes. It can be printed and pinned on a notice board, or just uploaded to Moodle.
- We also should continue to write a document summing up the mistakes and confusion seen too many times during every exams. This can be included as remarks in the solution for quizzes.

- Additionally to this, in case of a serious issue, the current lecturer can take some time to quickly inform the students about it during a class.