

Guide for Internship Supervisors and Examiners

Potential supervisors are encouraged to contact the Course Administrator with details of potential projects. The nature of these projects can be quite diverse, as long as computational modelling/analysis of biological systems forms a central part of the project. Potential supervisors are encouraged to give a seminar to the students about their work.

We typically require no more than a 1/2 page description of the project and try to keep administration to a minimum.

We do however require several commitments from supervisors:

1. Supervisors are expected to provide the students with all the resources required to complete the project. (Students will however have access to a computer server based in the Mathematics Department.)
2. We recommend at least weekly meetings to ensure that the student is making suitable progress on the project.
3. Co-supervision of the project, e.g. with senior postdocs in a group, is allowed.
4. Internship project reports will be marked independently by two assessors: the project supervisor and an examiner. Each assessor will write a short (usually 1/2 to 1 page) report on the project, commenting where appropriate on the following elements:
 - Scientific approach to problem
 - Results
 - Overall quality of explanation
 - Style and presentation

An overall grade should be provided according to the University-wide MPhil marking scheme:

- 75% and over for a distinction
- 65-74% for strong reports
- 60-64% for satisfactory reports
- A mark of under 60% therefore indicates a fail

If the discrepancy between two assessors' marks is less than 10%, the two marks will be averaged. Otherwise, the two assessors will be asked to discuss the reports, and possibly adjust their marks. If no agreement can be reached, another assessor will be asked to adjudicate. Please note that reports will be made available to students after marking.

Please note: The University and Department will not agree to sign 'non-disclosure' agreements (NDAs) with organisations for MPhil internships projects, as an NDA may negatively impact upon the work that students are able to submit for examination and can lead to delays both in organising and starting projects as well as the submission of reports.

Assessment

Students will be assessed in two ways:

1. A written report of the project (worth 2.5 modules)

2. An oral presentation (worth 0.5 modules)

Written report

The exact nature of this report will vary according to the internship, but it should take the format of a dissertation, normally with the following structure:

- Chapter 1 - introduction/aims/literature review
- Chapter 2 - the work (possibly broken down into more than one chapter).
- Chapter 3 - conclusions / future work
- References
- Appendices - for any extra material (e.g. code snippets, detailed derivations) that can be included for future reference, rather than necessarily to be read by the examiner.

The report should be no more than 15,000 words; as a guide it should be no more than around 36 pages of text (at 500 words/page, but that assumes no figures). This word limit excludes the bibliography and appendix and includes everything else, including the figure legends and glossary. Please note this is an *upper* word limit - writing a short, clear report is better than a long report padded with text to reach the upper word limit. Students must write the word count on the front page of the report.

Examples of reports from previous years are available on Moodle or from the Course Administrator.

Oral presentation

Presentation files (PPT/PDF/Keynote) are submitted to Moodle and uploaded to a group laptop that is used for all presentations; students are not normally permitted to use their own laptops for presentations. Each talk is expected to last 20-25 minutes, with five minutes for questions. Students are expected to keep to time, as there are many presentations in each day. If any students go over 25 minutes, they will be asked to stop immediately. We strongly advise that students arrange to give several practice talks (e.g. to colleagues, or host lab) as experience has shown that people who practice give better talks. Students are also encouraged to attend the talks of their colleagues.

Presentations are given in person, unless pandemic regulations require them to be made remotely (if allowed by the Faculty of Mathematics) via Zoom.

Key dates and contacts for 2021-22

The key dates for students are:

- Project start: 16 May 2022
- Report submission: 10 August 2022, 16:00 BST
- Presentation submission: 15 August 2022, 16:00 BST
- Presentations: 17-19 August 2022 (times TBC)

Project supervisors and examiners will receive reports for grading on 11th August; evaluations are required by 16th August 2022. If necessary, project supervisors and examiners should be available to discuss their evaluations 17th August 2022.

Please email the Course Administrator compbiomphil@maths.cam.ac.uk with any queries regarding internships.