

# FINAL HONOUR SCHOOL OF HISTORY AND ECONOMICS EXAMINERS' REPORT 2018

## Part I

### A. Statistics

All candidates

Class	No					%				
	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
I	4	5	1	4	2	28.6	33.3	12.5	30.8	18.2
II.1	10	10	6	8	8	71.4	66.7	75	61.5	72.7
II.2	-	-	1	1	1	-	-	12.5	7.7	9.1
III	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

All candidates, divided by male and female

Class	Number										Percentage (%) of gender									
	2018		2017		2016		2015		2014		2018		2017		2016		2015		2014	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
I	2	2	5	0	1	0	4	0	2	0	28.6	28.6	41.7	0	14.3	0	36.4	0	22.2	0
II.1	5	5	7	3	5	1	6	2	6	2	71.4	71.4	58.3	100	71.4	100	54.5	100	66.7	100
II.2	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14.3	-	9.1	-	11.7	-
III	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

## EXAMINING METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The classification conventions and marking criteria are circulated to all candidates before the exams, and are also available on WebLearn. Step-marking in History papers was extended to scripts and submitted work in marks above 72 and below 59.

## Part II

### A. GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE EXAMINATION

The examining process in this relatively small Joint School was quite straightforward. The examiners considered three FAP cases. All three submissions, albeit very different in kind, were judged serious (level 3) at the initial meeting of Profs Parrott and Keller, and then by the full HECON Board. The case for discounting papers was considered for two candidates, but in neither case was the candidate close enough to the 2i/I borderline for this to have produced a different classification, and so with considerable sympathy for the seriousness of their problems, it was decided to take no action. In one case the FAP related entirely to circumstances in the third-year Hilary term when the candidate was working on their thesis. The markers had divided over whether this was top 2i or first-class quality, it was decided that a re-read of the thesis would be appropriate, and this was raised to the first class, but without altering the overall classification.

In a School of 14 candidates there were 4 Firsts and 10 2:1s, one of the Firsts classified by the 'Alternative Route'. The percentage of First class degrees was slightly lower than last year, but at 28.5% is respectable, and both 2017 and 2018 represent a considerable increase on the percentages of firsts in most previous years (apart from 2015). There were no candidates classified 2:2 or below. The highest First achieved a creditable overall average of 72.75%, and gained some exceptionally high marks on their economics papers (85, 84). It is perhaps a matter for reflection this year that many of the candidates demonstrated strong performance in History OR Economics papers, but comparatively rarely in both.

## **B. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES AND BREAKDOWN OF THE RESULTS BY GENDER**

In a very encouraging development, not only were the number of candidates taking HECON exactly equal (7 and 7 men and women), but so were the outcomes – 2 men and 2 women were awarded firsts, and 5 each gained 2i's. The parity between numbers of male and female candidates is unprecedented in recent years, and men have consistently and by a large margin outperformed women in the first class: last year all five Firsts were awarded to men. It might be worth looking for any other factors that make this a distinctive year group or performance. It is certainly to be hoped that such a balanced intake and performance might be repeated in future.

## **C. COMMENTS ON PAPERS AND INDIVIDUAL QUESTIONS**

A discussion of the individual papers is provided in the reports for the History Main School and for Philosophy, Politics and Economics. In reviewing the paper marks for History and Economics the examiners noted again that some of the technical papers in Economics produced far wider spreads of marks than the History papers. This year 'Quantitative Economics' saw a particularly wide range of marks from 40% to 84%. The Board though was satisfied that no overall classification over the full eight course marks was unduly affected by a single mark on a technical paper. Overall there was an encouraging level of proximity between first and second markers in both History and Economics papers.

## **D. FURTHER COMMENTS ON THE EXAMINATION PROCESS**

The Board is, as always, indebted to Andrea Hopkins and to Isabelle and Alex in the History Faculty Office for their efficient administrative support, thereby reducing the burdens falling on academic staff to a minimum. The handling of this small school could easily fall through the cracks in the concern to manage the Main School, and we are very grateful for the care and attention we received.

Prof D. Parrott (Chair)

Dr C. Bowdler

Prof E. J. Garnett

Prof R.G. Keller

Prof O. Zimmer

Prof J. Wright (External Examiner for History)

Professor G. de Fraja (External Examiner for Economics)

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30 October 2018