

Probabilistic Modelling and Reasoning

— Exam Info —

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Probabilistic Modelling and Reasoning (INFR11134)
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When and where?

- ▶ Exam timetable information is here:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/timetabling-examinations/exams/exam-diets>

- ▶ For PMR, the info (as on Nov 18) is as follows:

- ▶ Date: Friday, 19th December 2025
- ▶ Time: 2:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- ▶ Main venue: Nucleus KB - B.01 - Alder Lecture Theatre (For students with special arrangements, please check your personalised timetable.)

Please double check with your personalised timetable closer to the exam date!

One A4 page of notes is permitted

- ▶ Format: NOTES PERMITTED, CALCULATORS NOT PERMITTED examination. You may consult up to one A4 page (2 sides) of notes.
- ▶ Can contain whatever notes you desire, written or printed on one or both sides of the paper.
- ▶ Magnifying devices to enlarge the contents of the sheets for viewing are not permitted.
- ▶ Adjusted for students with learning profiles (see <https://informatics.ed.ac.uk/taught-students/all-students/your-studies/assessment-coursework-exams-feedback>)

Examinable material

See course website:

- ▶ the material on the slides
- ▶ the material in the tutorials
- ▶ the material in the self-study exercises
- ▶ the reading material listed under “required”

unless marked as optional or not examinable

Exam format

- ▶ All questions will be compulsory.
- ▶ 5 questions, covering all topics (roughly one question per topic)
- ▶ Each question gives 10 marks.
- ▶ Sub-questions will have different number of marks. Take note of this when allocating your time to questions.
- ▶ Sub-questions with more marks require you to do more.
- ▶ Remember the Common Marking Scheme

<https://web.inf.ed.ac.uk/infweb/student-services/ito/students/common-marking-scheme>

≥ 70 is excellent $\Rightarrow$ You do not need to be able to solve everything for an A.

Past exams

- ▶ Past exam copies are available at <https://exampapers.ed.ac.uk/>
- ▶ Search for *probabilistic modelling and reasoning*
- ▶ Collection goes back to 2004/2005
- ▶ Questions in past papers that are on topics not covered in this year's PMR are not relevant.
- ▶ Some exercises are (slightly modified) past exam questions. Make sure to solve them!
- ▶ Notation may be different in past exams.

How to prepare?

- ▶ My focus is on assessing how well you understand the material and how well you can use it to solve problems, not how well you can memorise formulae.
- ▶ You do have the A4 notes page that you can use for things that you can't remember by heart.
- ▶ But don't assume that you can write everything on it.
- ▶ I provide rare formulae in the exam paper.
- ▶ My motivation for the A4 notes page is to help you spend time on understanding and practising the content rather than on memorising little details.

How to prepare

- ▶ Reserve a sufficient amount of time. Make a plan; plan for rest periods too.
- ▶ Prioritise if you have to (you do not need to get everything right for an A).
- ▶ Be honest with yourself about whether you understand something or not.
- ▶ Don't overfit (on the exercises or slides).
- ▶ Work through the lecture slides; rewatch some recordings; work through the exercises; repeat.
- ▶ Do you understand everything in the “Notes”?
- ▶ Can you explain the material to someone else?
- ▶ T-approach: – Can you explain the big picture? | Can you take deep dives and explain details?

Exam technique

- ▶ Hopefully you have figured out good exam technique during your previous studies already.
- ▶ People have different strategies:
 - ▶ Some skim the exam first so that they have an idea which questions they can answer well. Then they do them first.
 - ▶ Some go through linearly, doing one question at a time.
- ▶ If you get stuck somewhere, consider moving on, and coming back to the question if you have time.
- ▶ Don't forget any low-hanging fruits.

How to answer exam questions

- ▶ Read the questions carefully.
- ▶ If in doubt, better give more detailed answers.
- ▶ Don't provide several conflicting answers and expect the marker to choose the correct one. We wouldn't give any points in that situation.
- ▶ Don't brain-dump everything that you think is related to the question. Answer the question asked.
- ▶ For math formulae and diagrams, make sure that all quantities are well defined (if not already defined in the question, or standard notation that we used in the lecture)
- ▶ Write legibly—we can only give marks for things we can read.

Tips on staying well during the exam season

- ▶ Sleep enough; you consolidate the studied material during sleep
- ▶ Take breaks during the study sessions
- ▶ Move during the breaks, and at the end of the study day
- ▶ Don't think caffeine is the answer to everything
- ▶ Look after yourself