



**Economic
and Social
Research Council**



Multinational Enterprises and Taxation

ESRC DTP Joint Studentship

Loughborough University and Aston University

The Midlands Graduate School is an accredited Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Doctoral Training Partnership (DTP). One of 14 such partnerships in the UK, the Midlands Graduate School is a collaboration between the University of Warwick, Aston University, University of Birmingham, University of Leicester, Loughborough University and the University of Nottingham.

We are now inviting applications for an ESRC Doctoral Joint Studentship between Loughborough University (where the student will be registered) and Aston University to commence in October 2020. Both institutions boast thriving research communities.

Research Project

This PhD project is motivated by the widespread concern that “aggressive tax planning” by multinationals (e.g. profit shifting between countries through transfer pricing) leads to the erosion of national tax bases and public spending levels.

Existing studies in Economics and International Business often assume that governments compete in taxes/subsidies for physical capital (or FDI). However, increasingly, governments are competing to be the location where multinationals choose to report profits that are generated throughout their global supply chains. Thus, the prize is now tax revenue rather than physical investment.

This PhD will use both empirical and theoretical methods to investigate the new tax competitions for reported profits and how they differ from traditional tax competitions for FDI. We will consider important, policy-relevant questions. For example:

- How do a firm’s characteristics influence the likelihood that it will engage in “aggressive tax planning”?
- How is a firm’s decision over the location of its production and HQ affected by new forms of tax competition?
- Are policies aimed at tackling “aggressive tax planning” (e.g. the OECD’s recent proposal for a global minimum corporate tax rate) likely to do more harm than good?
- Given the market power of large MNEs, how might tax rules be shaped by firm-policymaker negotiations and lobbying?

This PhD addresses a very hot topic both inside and outside academia. It will have excellent potential for publication and launching a research career.

Supervisors

Dr Ben Ferrett (Loughborough); Dr Agelos Delis (Aston); and Prof Chris Jones (Aston).

The supervisory team combines expertise in relevant fields (tax competition, international economics and international business) and research methods (applied game theory and applied econometrics).

Entry Criteria

Candidates should possess at least a 2:1 honours degree. Additionally, the ideal candidate would hold an MSc that covered elements of international economics/business, game theory and applied econometrics.

Candidates with an approved master's degree should have an average programme mark of 65% or above in order to meet Loughborough University's PhD admission requirements. Candidates without an approved master's degree that meets the ESRC's training requirements must undertake the MSc in Social Science Research (Business and Management Studies) at Loughborough University before proceeding to PhD study.

Application Process

To apply, please complete the Joint Studentship application form [available online here](#). Then email it with your CV and a covering letter to Denise Wade at d.j.wade@lboro.ac.uk. Shortlisted applicants will also be required to provide two references.

Application deadline: Friday 6 March 2020

Midlands Graduate School ESRC DTP

Our ESRC studentships cover fees and maintenance stipend and extensive support for research training, as well as research activity support grants. Support is available only to successful applicants who fulfil eligibility criteria. To check your eligibility, visit:

www.mgsdtp.ac.uk/studentships/eligibility/.

Informal enquiries prior to application can be directed to the lead supervisor, Dr Ben Ferrett, at b.e.ferrett@lboro.ac.uk.