

Dissertation Guidelines for Students

MSc in Econ; MSc EIFE

2015/2016

Objectives 1

Main aim: encourage independent study

Provide students with a number of research skills:

- Design a feasible project allowing for time and resource constraints.
- Develop an adequate methodology.

Objectives 2

- Make optimal use of library resources.
- Access databases, understand their uses and limitations and extract relevant information.
- Work without the need for continuous supervision.

Topic Selection

- MSc EIFE:
 - Topic should relate to the area of your course.
 - Course leader's approval is necessary
(Juan Carlos Gozzi Valdez).

Topic Selection

MSc Economics:

- Look at proposed topics in Dissertation Supervision Spreadsheet.
- Spreadsheet highlights particular topics that “available supervisors” are keen to supervise
- Spreadsheet gives general supervision/research interests of available supervisors
- Spreadsheet will be circulated via email and uploaded to MSc webpage:
 - <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/current/msc/resources/dissertationinformation>
- Talk to potential supervisors
- Or come up with your topic independently.
 - Ideas from option modules

Topic Selection

Advantages of choosing a topic proposed by a supervisor:

- The supervisor has ensured the topic is
 - well-regarded
 - feasible
 - interesting
- You are likely to get particularly good supervision because
 - the supervisor is interested in the topic
 - the supervisor is well equipped to supervise the topic
 - the supervisor will be keen you make the most of their idea / data / model
 - you and the supervisor will both have agreed (committed) to the supervision relationship in advance

Supervisor-Student Matching

- Online form to be submitted to the PG office by midnight on Friday 22nd April 2016 (Academic week 29). You need to input:
 - (i) Proposed dissertation **title**.
 - (ii) Brief (<100 words) **description** of your dissertation idea (“Abstract”).
 - (iii) Suggestion of three suitable **supervisors**, ranked in order of preference.
- If a member of staff agrees to supervise you before this date, you need to (a) rank the staff member as first preference; (b) ensure that the staff member emails Sue Rattigan to confirm.
- When you fill in your online form, only “available supervisors” as shown on the spreadsheet will be available for selection.
- You can choose “First choice”, “Second choice”, “Third choice” supervisors.
- You are not guaranteed to get any of your choices. The only way to guarantee a particular supervisor is to get their agreement to supervise you in advance, and email Sue Rattigan to inform us.

Supervisor-Student Matching

- If you do not obtain agreement from supervisor to supervise you, you will be matched with a supervisor using an algorithm that optimises across all demands and supplies.
- Your three choices are taken into account, but the algorithm often overrides these (e.g. when those supervisors are in excess demand, or when another suitable supervisor has insufficient demand) and chooses a supervisor outside your three choices.
- You are strongly encouraged to speak to potential supervisors in advance. If they have supervision slots left, you and the supervisor can make an agreement.
- The other major advantage of speaking to potential supervisors in advance is to find out more about the projects they are offering to supervise, that might be of interest to you. Or, if you choose to go down the independent route, you can obtain initial reactions of potential supervisors to your ideas.

Supervisor-Student Matching

- Online form will go “live” on **Monday 11th April 2016** (week 28) – you will be informed by email.
- Online form (title, abstract, supervisor choices) to be submitted to the PG office by midnight on **Friday 22nd April 2016** (Academic week 29).
- Supervisors announced by end of Academic week 33 (**Fri 20th May 2016**).

Dissertation Timetable

- After Supervisors are announced - extremely important that you arrange to meet your Supervisor for a meeting as soon as you can.
- **Monday 6th June – Friday 17th June 2016** – Supervisors will arrange for all supervisees to give short presentations of their ideas in 1 hour group session.
- **Monday 27th June 2016 – 3.30pm** – Deadline for submitting Dissertation Proposal by e-submission.
- The Dissertation Proposal will be marked and returned to you at a meeting with your supervisor by **Monday 11th July 2016.**

Dissertation Timetable 2

- By **11th July 2016**, you should have in place:
 - A research question
 - A preliminary literature survey
 - The data, or at least knowledge of where to get the data
 - A theoretical framework (maybe not the details of the model)
- July and early part of August researching and writing dissertation!
- During August, you can expect your supervisor to read **one draft version of the dissertation and give you comments**, in person or via email:
 - Ensure that the dissertation is as complete as possible when you send it
 - Do not leave it too late! (no later than end-August, preferably earlier).
- **Wednesday 14th September 2016** – Dissertation submission deadline for MSc in Economics and MSc in Economics and International Financial Economics students.

Dissertation Support

- You should NOT expect assistance from other members of staff.

In addition to other sources of related help from University and via the Economics Department, the following are provided during the dissertation research period:

- Short course on academic writing
 - Week beginning 23rd May 2016.
 - Three hours of lectures, plus workshops.
 - Not compulsory, but strongly recommended.
 - Details to follow via email.
- Software/econometric/macro/micro support
 - 1 on 1 meetings with experienced PhD students during July/August.
 - Online sign-up.
 - Only there to help with “technical” questions: don’t expect help with interpretation of your output or model selection. They are not there to write your dissertation!
 - Details to follow via email.

Other Matters

- Word Limit, Format and Submission – see Dissertation Guidelines for Students:
<http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/current/msc/resources/dissertationinformation>
- Ethical scrutiny – see Dissertation Guidelines for Students

Deadlines & Extensions 1

TWO deadlines:

- **Wednesday 14th September 2016:** students who have passed their examinations at the first attempt and are not taking any exams in September.
- **Wednesday 15th March 2017:** students doing exams (resits/first attempt) in September.

Deadlines & Extensions 2

Students with one/two resits in Sept: can meet the September deadline (subject to approval by the Exam Board) at their own risk.

You must inform Sue Rattigan in the Postgraduate Office that you intend to do so by **Monday 29th August 2016**.

Deadlines & Extensions 3

September Deadline is an absolute one

Extension only granted on medical grounds or other extenuating circumstances, and then extension is given until March 2017 deadline.

The **period affected** should be a **substantial** part of the dissertation period.

Complete an **extension** application form along with the evidence, for approval.

Assessment

- At least two examiners will assess the dissertation (see Handbook for criteria).
- No feedback until after the Exam Board meets – in November.
- A pass list will then be published on the MSc Noticeboard and your marks will be released. Examiners' comments on the dissertation will also be provided.
- Additional details: 'Dissertation Guidelines' in the MSc Handbook.

Recap: Calendar of Events

- Academic Week 28: **Monday 11/04/16** online form for proposed title of dissertation and three proposed supervisors will go “live” – you will be informed by email.
- Academic Week 29: **Friday 22/04/16** submission of the online form.
- Academic Week 33: **Friday 20/05/16** MSc Dissertation supervisors announced.
- Academic Weeks 36-37: **Monday 6th – Friday 17th June 2016** student presentations.
- Academic Week 39: **Monday 27/06/16** Submit dissertation proposal by e-submission.
- Dissertation submission deadlines: **Wednesday 14th September 2016** and **Wednesday 15th March 2017**.