

# **Dissertation Guidelines for Students**

**MSc in Econ; MSc EIFE**

**2017/2018**

# 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.
- Useful for future career path.

# Objectives 2

- Make optimal use of library resources.
- Access databases, understand their uses and limitations and extract relevant information.
- Bring together ideas and information from across different topics.
- Chance to apply your knowledge to real issues and problems.
- 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  
(Marcus Miller).
- EIFE students should attend the student workshops this term to help develop ideas for a topic.
- Schedule is given at:

[www.warwick.ac.uk/economics/current/msc/resources/timetable/](http://www.warwick.ac.uk/economics/current/msc/resources/timetable/)

# 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 EC959 Moodle page.
- 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 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018 (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 Andrea Wyld 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 Andrea Wyld 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 9<sup>th</sup> April 2018** (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 20<sup>th</sup> April 2018** (Academic week 29).
- Supervisors announced by end of Academic week 33 (**Fri 18<sup>th</sup> May 2018**).

# Dissertation Timetable

- After Supervisors are announced - extremely important that you arrange to meet your Supervisor for a meeting as soon as you can.
- **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> June – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018** – Supervisors will arrange for all supervisees to give short presentations of their ideas in 1 hour group session.
- **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2018 – 3.30pm** – Deadline for submitting Dissertation Proposal by e-submission.
- The Dissertation Proposal will be marked and feedback given by your supervisor by **Monday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2018.**

# Dissertation Timetable 2

- By **23<sup>rd</sup> July 2018**, 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 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018** – 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.
- Research Methods lectures on Wednesdays 5 – 7pm in weeks 19 – 24, and Thursday 3 – 5pm in week 34
- Library dissertation training sessions next term
- Short course on academic writing
  - Week beginning 21st May 2018.
  - Three hours of lectures, plus workshops.
  - Not compulsory, but strongly recommended.
  - Details to follow via email.
- Micro, Macro, Econometrics and Time Series 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 online submission – see Dissertation Guidelines for Students
- Dissertations will be checked through Turnitin plagiarism software
  - Online tutorial: <http://plato.warwick.ac.uk/>
- Ethical scrutiny
  - <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/current/shared/ethics>

# Deadlines & Extensions 1

## TWO deadlines:

- **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018:**  
Students who have passed their examinations at the first attempt and are not taking any exams in September.
- **Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019:**  
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, and subject to supervisor approval if two resits) at their own risk.

You must inform Andrea Wyld in the Postgraduate Office that you intend to do so by **Monday 27<sup>th</sup> August 2018.**

# 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 2019 deadline.

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

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



# Assessment and Feedback

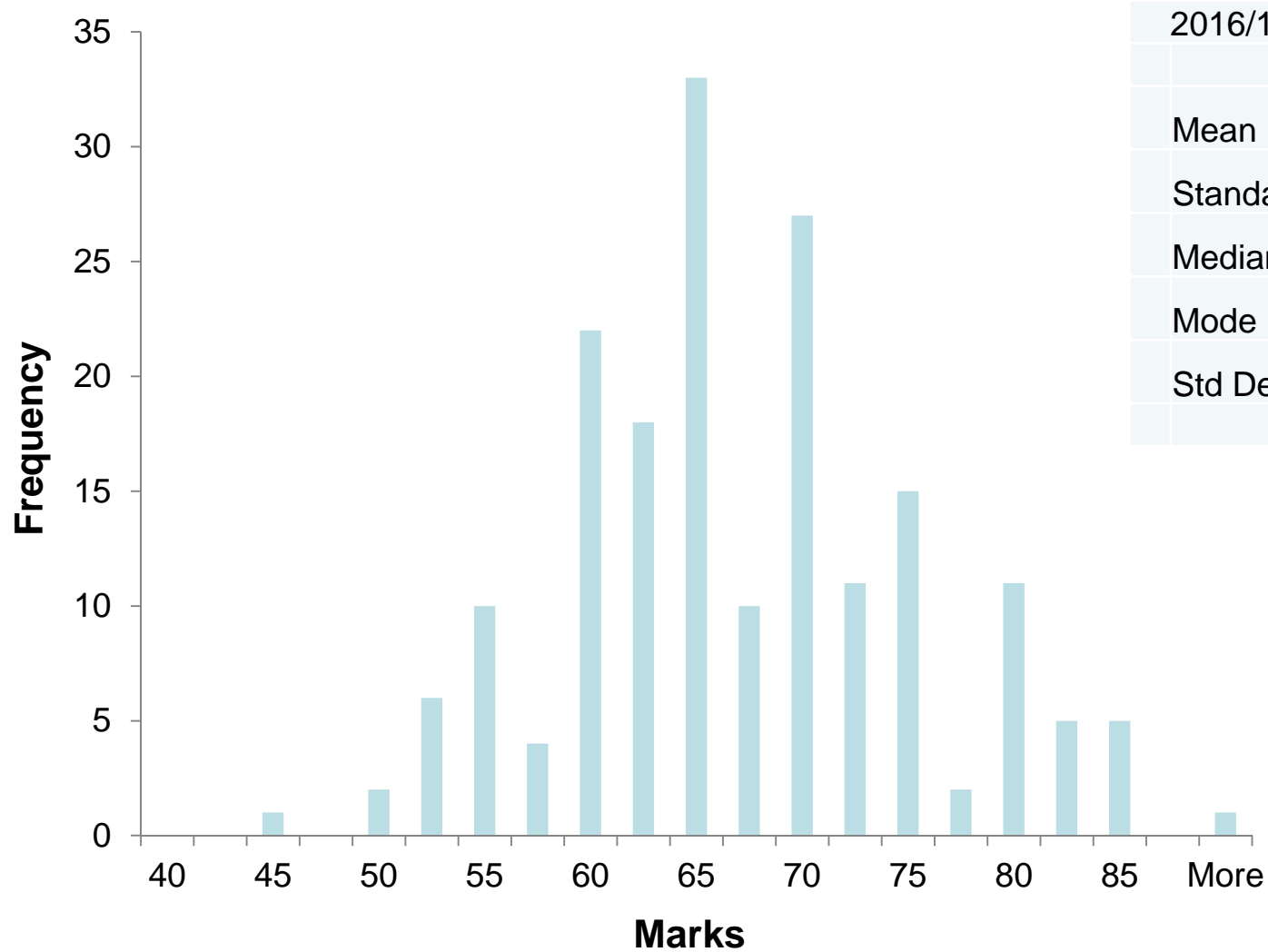
- At least two examiners will assess the dissertation (see Handbook for criteria).
- No feedback until after the Exam Board meets in November.
- Your marks will be released in Tabula. Comments on the dissertation will also be provided.
- For examples of good dissertations/proposals and what feedback is provided please visit:
  - <https://warwick.ac.uk/economics/current/msc/resources/dissertation/examples>

# Assessment and Feedback

- This year, marks for the proposal and dissertation will use a 20-point marking scale:

Class	Scale	Mark	Class	Scale	Mark
Distinction	Excellent	100	Fail	High	48
	Excellent	94		Mid	45
	High	88		Mid	42
	Mid	82		Fail	38
	Mid	78		Fail	32
	Low	74		Low	25
Merit	High	68		Low	12
	Mid	65		Zero	0
	Low	62			
Pass	High	58			
	Mid	55			
	Low	52			

# Assessment and Feedback



2016/17 Dissertation Marks

Mean	66.3
Standard Error	0.62
Median	65
Mode	65
Std Dev	8.4

# Recap: Calendar of Events

- Academic Week 28: **Monday 9/04/18** online form for proposed title of dissertation and three proposed supervisors will go “live” – you will be informed by email.
- Academic Week 29: **Friday 20/04/18** submission of the online form.
- Academic Week 33: **Friday 18/05/18** MSc Dissertation supervisors announced.
- Academic Weeks 36-37: **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> – Friday 15<sup>th</sup> June 2018** student presentations.
- Academic Week 39: **Monday 25/06/18** Submit dissertation proposal by e-submission.
- Dissertation submission deadlines: **Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2018 and Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**