

Dissertation Guidelines for Students

MSc in Econ; MSc EIFE

2018/2019

Objectives

Main aims: develop research skills and encourage independent study

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

Skills

- Work without the need for continuous supervision and be confident about independent learning.
- Improve your academic writing skills and learn how to communicate complex ideas in your writing.
- Practice your presentation skills.
- Develop the confidence to be innovative and creative during the research process.
- The research skills you develop during the dissertation will be useful for your future career path.

Topic Selection

MSc Economics:

- Look at Dissertation Supervision Spreadsheet.
- Spreadsheet gives the list of staff who are available to supervise this year.
- 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.
 - e.g. using ideas from option modules

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.

Supervisor-Student Matching

- Obtain the agreement of an available supervisor.
- If a member of staff agrees to supervise you, you then need to submit the online form to the PG office by **Friday 15th March 2019** (Academic week 24: the last day of spring term). You need to input:
 - Proposed dissertation **title**.
 - Brief (<100 words) **description** of your dissertation idea (“Abstract”).
 - Your agreed supervisor.
- When you fill in your online form, only “available supervisors” as shown on the spreadsheet will be available for selection.

Supervisor-Student Matching

- For those who do not obtain the agreement of a supervisor.
- You will be asked to sign up for a supervisor manually on Tabula in the Easter vacation from the pool of supervisors with spaces left after the stage 1 matching process.
- Slots will be filled on a first-come first-served basis and you will be notified of the date and time for doing this.
- Then submit the online form to the PG office by **Friday 19th April 2019** (Academic week 29).
- You are strongly encouraged to speak to potential supervisors in advance and make an agreement.
- The other major advantage of speaking to potential supervisors is to obtain initial reactions of potential supervisors to your ideas.

Dissertation Timetable

- Supervisors confirmed on Tabula by end of Academic week 33 (**Fri 17th May 2019**).
- After Supervisors are announced - extremely important that you arrange to meet your Supervisor for a meeting as soon as you can.
- **Monday 3th June – Friday 14th June 2019** – Supervisors will arrange for all supervisees to give short presentations of their ideas in a 1 hour group session.
- **Monday 24th June 2019 – 3.30pm** – Deadline for submitting Dissertation Proposal by e-submission.
- The Dissertation Proposal will be marked and feedback given by your supervisor by **Monday 8th July 2019**.

Dissertation Timetable 2

- By about a fortnight after you receive feedback (e.g. as a guideline, by **22nd July 2019**), you should have revised your ideas to incorporate any feedback and 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!

Dissertation Timetable 3

- 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 11th September 2019** – Dissertation submission deadline.

Dissertation Support

- You should NOT expect assistance from other members of staff.
- Research Methods lectures on Wednesdays 5 – 7pm in weeks 19 – 24
- Library dissertation training session next term
- Short course on academic writing in week beginning 20th May 2019
- Micro, Macro, Econometrics and Time Series support
 - 1 on 1 meetings with experienced PhD students in the summer (“helpdesks”).
 - 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!

Other Matters

- Word Limit, format and online submission – see Dissertation Guidelines for Students
- Dissertations will be checked through plagiarism software
 - Online tutorial: <https://moodle.warwick.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=24642>
 - Don't directly reproduce your proposal
 - Don't include sections from a piece of work you have submitted previously
(note: IB9JE Forecasting Economic and Financial Time Series project can't be used)
 - Make sure you understand how to reference your work (see MSc Handbook)
- Ethical scrutiny <https://warwick.ac.uk/economics/current/shared/ethics>

Deadlines

TWO deadlines:

- **Wednesday 11th September 2019** Students who have passed their examinations at the first attempt and are not taking any exams in September.
- **Wednesday 12th March 2020**
Students doing exams (resits/first attempt) in September.

Students with one or two resits in Sept

- can meet the September deadline (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 28th August 2019**.

Extensions

September deadline is an absolute one

Extension only granted on medical grounds or other mitigating circumstances.

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>

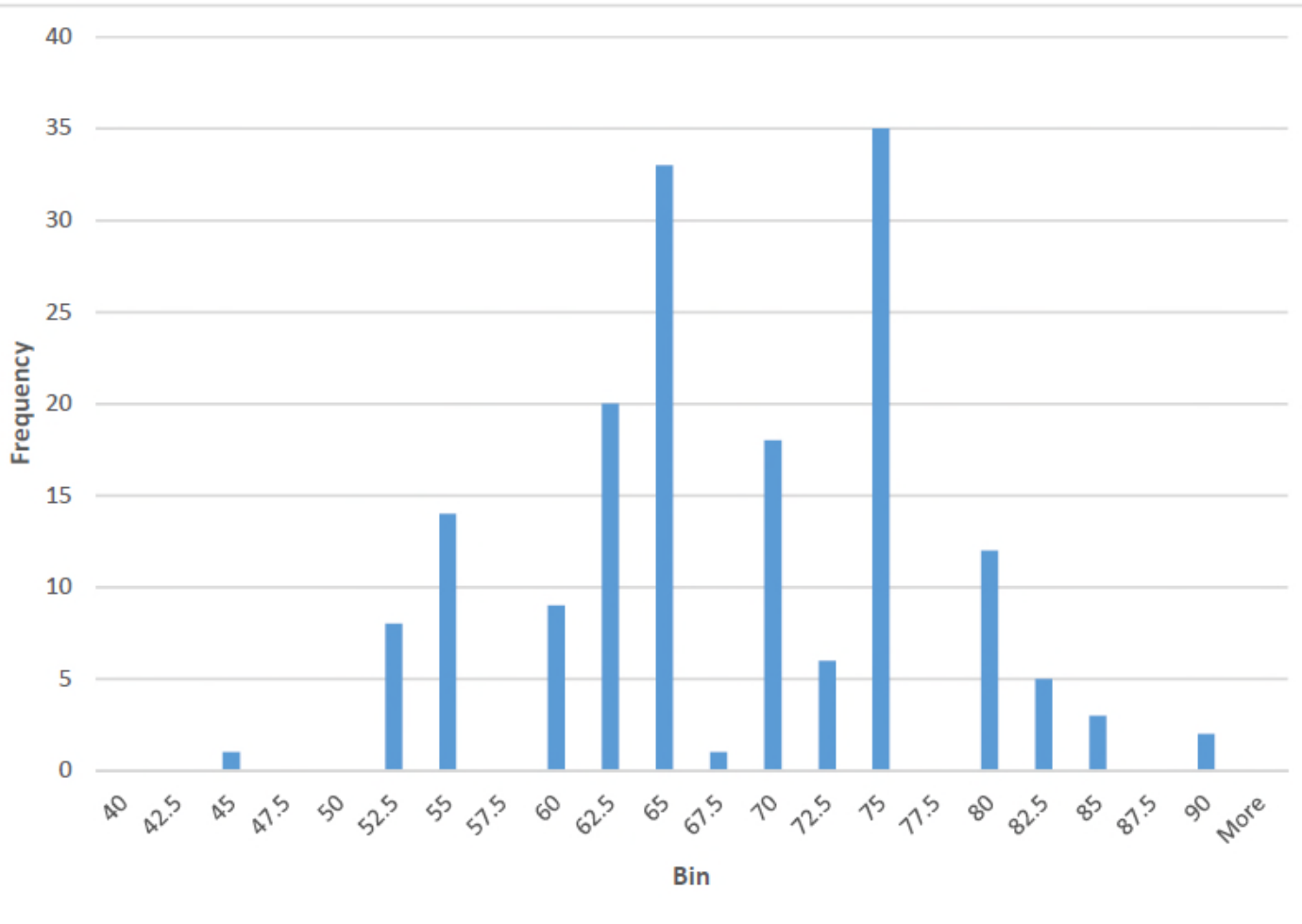
Marks

What is a good dissertation mark?

Class	Scale	Mark
Distinction	Excellent	100
	Excellent	94
	High	88
	Mid	82
	Mid	78
	Low	74
Merit	High	68
	Mid	65
	Low	62
Pass	High	58
	Mid	55
	Low	52

Class	Scale	Mark
Fail	High	48
	Mid	45
	Mid	42
	Fail	38
	Fail	32
	Low	25
	Low	12
	Zero	0

Dissertation marks 2017/18



Feedback Mark

Mean	67.15
Standard Error	0.66
Median	65
Mode	74
Std Dev	8.58

Recap: Calendar of events

- Week 24: **Friday 15th March 2019** deadline for those with an agreed supervision arrangement to submit the online form for proposed dissertation title
- Week 29: **Friday 19th April 2019** deadline for submission of the online form for students signing up for a supervisor on Tabula.
- Week 33: **Friday 17th May 2019** MSc Dissertation supervisors published in Tabula.
- Weeks 36-37: **Monday 3rd – Friday 14th June 2019** student presentations.
- Week 39: **Monday 24th June 2019** Submit dissertation proposal.
- Dissertation submission deadlines: **Wednesday 11th September 2019** and **Wednesday 11th March 2020**.