



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH
School of Economics

PhD in Economics
Writing up Year Guide
2015/2016

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1. Introduction

This guide offers some guidance that may be useful for your writing up year / submission period of the doctoral programme in Economics of the University of Edinburgh. In particular, about the submission and examination process.

More general information is contained in the regular PhD handbook, In addition, important information is provided by the College in the following document that you may need to consult from time to time.

A Code of Practice for Supervisors and Research Students

This handbook does not supersede and should be read in conjunction with the [Postgraduate Research Assessment Regulations](http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/academic/services/regulations/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf), copies of which are available at www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/academic/services/regulations/pgr_assessmentregulations.pdf

Or from the College of Humanities & Social Science Postgraduate Office
(57-58 George Square)

2. The School of Economics

The School currently consists of approximately 50 academic staff members and about 35 PhD students.

The Head of Economics is [Dr Simon Clark](#).

The PhD Directors are [Professor Tim Worrall](#) and [Professor Andy Snell](#).

The Placement Officer is Professor Ed Hopkins.

The Postgraduate Administrator is [Husnara Islam](#).

Your Postgraduate Secretary is [Fiona Ross](#).

The Postgraduate Office:

Room G5, 30 Buccleuch Place

Email: EconPGR.enquiries@ed.ac.uk

Telephone: 0131 651 1764/0131 651 5184

Office Hours are: Monday – Friday 10:00-12:00 & 14:00-16:00

3. General information about the writing up year.

The prescribed period of study for the PhD in economics is three years. The fourth year is known as the submission period or writing up year. It is possible to submit your thesis up to three months before the end of the third year without needing College approval, or at any point during the submission period. You do not have to wait until the end of the fourth year. You must submit your thesis by the end of the writing up year unless you have sought and been granted an extension of studies.

Students in the submission period do not pay a tuition fee. Fees consist of a matriculation fee (£110) and an annual continuation fee (£600).

The change in fee status reflects the view that your research is completed in your prescribed three years of study and that the fourth year is a period where you are simply writing-up your research, and that this can be done without tuition from a supervisor or supervisory team.

This view probably does not reflect reality, at least in economics, where the fourth year is often the most intensive period of research. Despite the change in tuition fee status, you can expect that your supervisors will supervise you in the writing up period in much the same way they have done in the previous three years. Do remember though that this is our convention in the School of Economics. Officially, your entitlement to tuition has actually ended.

4. Funding

Normally, we will support you with a Research and Teaching Studentship in your fourth year. This is offered at research council rates in return for 180 hours of teaching. However, this studentship is conditional on satisfactory reports from your supervisors and satisfactory completion of teaching duties from the previous years.

5. The Thesis

The regulations require that your thesis represents a coherent body of work and that the thesis and your viva examination demonstrate that you are capable of pursuing original research making a significant contribution to knowledge or understanding in economics. That you can relate your research to the general body of knowledge in your area of research, and present the results of the research in a critical and scholarly way.

In summary the requirement for the thesis is that it:

- is your own work*
- makes an original and significant contribution to knowledge in the field of study
- contains material suitable for wider dissemination
- shows adequate knowledge of the field of study and of the relevant literature
- demonstrates critical judgement of your own work and that of other scholars in the field
- presents a coherent body of work.

* It is possible to include joint work in your thesis but this has to be clearly acknowledged within the thesis in order that the examiner can assess your contribution and with a clear statement of whatever is joint work on the declarations page.

It is also required that the thesis:

- is satisfactory in literary presentation
- includes full and adequate references
- presents a coherent structure
- makes clear the intentions of the work, its background, methods and conclusions
- is understandable to a scholar in the same field.

As a guide, it is expected that the thesis consists of three chapters and an introduction. The chapters should represent research that might be developed for article publication. It is normally expected that one or a combination of chapters might form a “job-market” paper.

It should not be more than 100,000 words in length. The word count of the thesis includes the main text, preface material, footnotes and references but does not include material in the appendices, bibliography, abstract or lay summary. There is no minimum word count.

6. Submission of the Thesis

6.1. Notification of Intention to submit

Two months prior to submitting your thesis you must complete four forms:

- Notification of Intention to Submit
- Thesis Abstract
- Lay Summary
- Access to a Thesis and Publication of Abstract.

These forms can be requested from the School PG office or downloaded from:

www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/forms/student-forms

The Notification of Intention to Submit (NITS) form includes the title of your thesis. The expectation is that the thesis title on the NITS Form will be the final title for the thesis. There are not particular requirements on the title itself. It should be succinct but convey what the thesis does. A good title is desirable because, it'll probably stay on your CV forever.

The NITS form must be co-signed by your principal supervisor to say you have discussed your submission with them.

The submission of the NITS form triggers the process for the nomination and appointment of examiners. It is therefore important this form is handed in two months ahead of submission so that all arrangements are in place for the examination of your thesis by the submission date.

There are also no particular requirements about the Thesis Abstract. The abstract can be of any length but it might provide a complete overview or a sequence of abstracts for each chapter. In that case a maximum of 300 words per chapter seems about right. It'll probably be the first thing your examiner ever reads and for this reason, it may be worth spending some time constructing it. Probably an abstract should contain all or most of the following, possibly in that order:

- What has been done in the previous literature? [circa 40 words]
- What have you done that is distinctive? [circa 40 words]
- What is your methodology /dataset? [circa 50-150 words]
- What have you found out? Be specific. [circa 50-150 words]
- What is the value added of your work [circa 50 words]. Time to be a little bit modest here and excite the reader's interest.

You hold copyright as author of all work submitted for assessment. However, you must grant the University the right to publish the thesis/abstract and/or to authorise its publication for any scholarly purpose with proper acknowledgement of authorship by completing the Access to a Thesis and Publication of Abstract form.

Once you have completed all four forms, you should hand them in to the School Postgraduate Office; these will be copied for your file and sent to the College PG Office on your behalf.

6.2. Regulatory Standards for the Format and Binding of a Thesis

Guidance on formatting and binding of the thesis at the pre-viva stage can be found at:

http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Guidance/Thesis_Binding.pdf

Some of this guidance is reproduced below.

The thesis includes a **Signed Declaration** stating:

- (a) that the thesis has been composed by the student, and
- (b) either that the work is the student's own, or, if the student has been a member of a research group, that the student has made a substantial contribution to the work, such contribution being clearly indicated, and
- (c) that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification except as specified, and
- (d) that any included publications are the student's own work, except where indicated throughout the thesis and summarised and clearly identified on the declarations page of the thesis.

Size and Thickness of Paper: A4 (minimum 70 gsm).

Type or Print: Consistent and clear type of laser print quality should be used for all copies for both text and illustrations.

Layout of Text: 4cm binding margin. 2cm head margin. 2.5cm fore-edge margin. 4cm tail margin. It is recommended that the thesis submitted to the examiners is produced single-sided. In the case of double-sided copy, each chapter must start on a right-facing page. The final, published thesis may be produced in single-sided or double-sided copy. The main text should be in not less than 1.5 spacing (or 18 points leading). Quotations and notes should be in single spacing. Pagination must be continuous throughout and include all plans, tables, and illustrations etc., which are bound in with the text.

Character Size: The size of character used throughout the text, including prefatory material, appendices and displayed matter, should not be less than 2.0 mm for capitals and 1.5 mm for x-height (i.e. the height of lower-case x). Character sizes should be at least 10 points, with body text (text other than headings) not exceeding 12 points.

Character Styles – fonts: Where there is a choice of character style or font, a serif font – for example Times (New Roman) or Palatino - should be used for the main text and a sans serif font – for example Helvetica or Arial - for headings and labelling diagrams, etc.

Word spacing and division: Text should be set to ensure an even spacing between words for any particular line. Word division at the ends of lines (hyphenation) should be avoided if possible.

Title Page: The title page should include the Title of thesis and the Author's name. The foot of the page should state PhD in Economics, University of Edinburgh, 20XX

Abstract and lay summary: An Abstract and lay summary should be included in the thesis after the title page.

Diagrams, Maps, Illustrations, etc: Where possible, to be placed near to the appropriate text.

Notes, Bibliography and Contents Page: Notes and the bibliography may be typed in single spacing. A consistent policy should be used, inserting the notes at the foot of the page or at the end of each chapter or at the end of the thesis. All separate sections, for example bibliography, list of abbreviations, must be identified on the contents page.

Binding: At this stage soft bound copies are required. Theses may be either soft bound with glued spine, spirally bound or comb bound with black rear cover, clear PVC front cover leaving title page visible; if necessary bound in more than one volume. Where a more substantial binding is advisable, theses should be bound in black, covered solid and with end pages; the spine being rough-cut and glued. In the latter case the spine should be labelled, giving the name of the author and the abbreviation of the degree (PhD in Economics) for which the thesis is being submitted.

Submitting: At least two, soft-bound copies and one electronic copy of each thesis, abstract and lay summary must be submitted to the College Postgraduate Office. If more than two examiners are appointed, then additional copies of the thesis will be required. You will be advised if this is the case. Only the submission sent by the College Office is assessed by the examiners. Please send the electronic copy of the thesis to the School postgraduate office as well.

7. The Examination

The thesis is normally examined by one internal and one external examiner. The examiners read the thesis and each complete an independent report before holding an oral examination (or viva voce). This is submitted to the College Office.

The Viva Voce

It is the internals' responsibility to organise the viva. S/he should liaise with you, the external examiner and the PhD Director to find a mutually convenient date and time. The viva should normally be within three months of the date of your submission.

It is normal that the viva is chaired by a non-examining chair. The non-examining chair is there to ensure the viva is conducted fairly and ensure equity across candidates and to advise on regulations if required. The non-examining chair plays no role in the assessment.

The viva provides an opportunity for everyone, both candidate and examiners, to explore the ideas and arguments in the thesis. You are allowed to bring notes and a copy of your thesis with you.

Typically a viva last around two hours. You can expect that only you, the examiners and the non-examining chair are present at the viva. Supervisors are, in principle, allowed to attend in an observer capacity, but in practice this has never happened in the last several years.

The examiners' recommendations

After the viva the examiners make a final recommendation regarding the evaluation of the thesis and produce a joint report. The recommendation may take several forms, but broadly the options are: to pass the thesis as it is; to require minor corrections; to require substantial changes; to pass the thesis only at the level of MPhil; to fail the thesis.

The recommendations of the examiners are passed to the College examinations committee (that meets about once per month), who make the final decision.

Where changes are requested, the examiners will informally inform you about what is required and you will hear formally from College once the examinations committee has made its decision.

Minor corrections are required within a three month period. More major corrections are given a time scale of between 4 – 12 months.

Normally you will submit your corrected version to the internal examiner for approval. A second viva is usually not required. If approved by the examiner, you will then receive an award confirmation letter from the College Office that you can submit your final bound thesis. Once you have submitted your hardbound copy, you will receive an eligibility to graduate letter from the College Office.

Submitting the final version of your thesis

Information about final submission can be found at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/research-support/publish-research/scholarly-communications/how-to-deposit-theses>

You are required to submit:

- 1) One hard bound copy of the thesis: the final bound thesis should be sewn and bound in strong, waterproof black cloth/bound in black, covered solid. Not more than 6.5cm thick. (If more than 6.5cm thick – two or more volumes - please seek advice on this from the binders). The library gives guidance on the format of lettering on the spine of a bound thesis, showing the preferred layout for the spine of final bound PhD theses.
- 2) An electronic version on CD (or DVD) which includes:
 - a PDF version (for uploading to the Edinburgh Research Archive)
 - the original word processor files, where possible, for digital preservation purposes
 - any supplementary data required for assessment. Datasets should be supported by good accompanying documentation which is appropriate to your subject discipline. The UK Data Archive (UKDA) offers some specialist advice in this area
 - a completed thesis CD (or DVD) cover sleeve on which you should note whether or not you wish to take up the option of restricting access to the electronic version of your thesis for a limited one year period.
- 3) A copy of the Access to Thesis and Publication of Abstract form.

You may want to discuss with your supervisor or PG Director whether you wish to restrict access to your thesis on the Edinburgh research archive. Further advice is available from the Scholarly Communications Team in the Library.

8. Graduation

When you have received your Award letter from the College Office, you are then eligible to graduate during the next graduation diet.

Please note, there is a deadline for registering to graduate - usually 21 days before the first graduation day of the graduation diet. There is no registration fee for graduation (regardless of whether you will be attending or not). If you do not register in time, you will automatically be registered to 'graduate in absentia' (not attending the ceremony).

There is no option to defer graduation or to graduate at an alternative ceremony unless the student can demonstrate unforeseen and significant extenuating circumstances which prevents their attendance at the allocated ceremony. Extenuating circumstances may include students with serious illness, clashes with religious observance, or other comparable serious and unavoidable difficulties. Exceptional circumstances do not include work commitments, holidays, visa issues, the unavailability of guests or similar. Deferral of graduation is at the discretion of Student Administration and may be sought by emailing us prior to the application deadline.

Dates of the forthcoming graduations are:

- 24th November 2015, 3pm, Usher Hall
- TBA

We will normally arrange a dinner for all students graduating on the evening before the graduation ceremony. Please keep this in mind when making your arrangements because we want to be able to celebrate your graduation.

Further information about the graduations can be found on the Academic Registry 'Graduations' pages at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/graduations/>

If you have any questions about Graduations please contact the Graduations team: graduations@ed.ac.uk

9. Placement

The placement officer (Professor Ed Hopkins) will help those who will be looking for academic jobs (lecturers, assistant professors, postdocs, etc.) during their submission period. For the job market you will need a job market paper, a CV, a website and three referees. The placement office will offer advice on how to prepare a CV, job market paper and website, running practice interviews and job talks and so on.

Job-market candidates are listed on the School web pages at:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/economics/people/jobmarketcandidates>

“The job market” consists of three events run by the Spanish Economic Association (December), the American Economic Association (January) and the Royal Economic Society (January). Dates for this year’s events are:

- SEA: 10-12 December, Girona: http://www.asesec.org/simposio/mt_engl.htm
- AEA: 3-5 January, San Francisco: https://www.aeaweb.org/Annual_Meeting/index.php
- RES: 8-9 January, London: <http://www.res.org.uk/view/postgraduateJob.html>

In order to take part in these three events you need a job market paper by September – October. Typically deadlines for submission are September, October and November for these three events respectively.

Recruiters may attend multiple events and many recruiters from the UK and Europe attend the AEA meetings. Recruiters include central banks, international organisations as well as universities.

In order to facilitate the job market process, the AEA meetings use the website: www.aeaweb.org/joe

and the SEA and RES use the website: www.econjobmarket.org

In addition to these job-market events, jobs in the UK and jobs elsewhere are advertised on a fairly regular basis throughout the year and you might want to consider looking at some or all of the following websites. Most offer the facility to receive targeted e-mails and to upload your cv.

jobs.ac.uk: Is the main UK academic jobs website (not just economics). www.jobs.ac.uk

Inomics: listing jobs in economics at all levels in the UK & Europe including post-docs.

www.inomics.com/top/jobs

Econ-Jobs: Listing jobs in academia, the private sector, government and international organizations.

www.econ-jobs.com

JobsInAcademia: an international academic job board for all academic jobs (not just economics).

www.jobsinacademia.net

Economist Jobs: Economist Jobs is a specialist site for jobs in economics (mainly UK) and carries all the latest economics jobs across a range of sectors, locations and experience.

www.economistjobs.com

AcademicKeys: An international job website. Not specifically economics but you will find economic jobs posted there. www.academickeys.com

Economics Research Network: Part of Social Science Research Network, it has jobs announcements.

www.ssrn.com/update/ern/ernjob/ern_job.html

GlobalAcademyJobs: Specialise in vacancies in the academic and research sector (not just economics), at every stage of the academic career path. globalacademyjobs.com

Akadeus: Focussed on Business School Jobs worldwide but does have some economics jobs posted.

www.akadeus.com

If your referees are willing, you may ask them to share their references with the placement officer.

10. Students on a Tier 4 Visa

As a Tier 4 student, the University of Edinburgh is the sponsor of your UK visa. The University has a number of legal responsibilities, including monitoring your attendance on your programme and reporting to the Home Office where:

- you suspend your studies, transfer or withdraw from a course, or complete your studies significantly early;
- you fail to register/enrol at the start of your course or at the two additional registration sessions each year and there is no explanation;
- you are repeatedly absent or are absent for an extended period and are excluded from the programme due to non-attendance. This includes missing Tier 4 census points without due reason. The University must maintain a record of your attendance and the Home Office can ask to see this or request information about it at any time;

Engagement for students in their writing up year is monitored through discussions with supervisors and their submission and the examination process.

As a student with a Tier 4 visa sponsored by the University of Edinburgh, the terms of your visa require you to, (amongst others):

- Ensure you have a correct and valid visa for studying at the University of Edinburgh, which, if a Tier 4 visa, requires that it is a visa sponsored by the University of Edinburgh;

- Make sure that your contact details, including your address and contact numbers are up to date in your student record.
- Make satisfactory progress on your chosen programme of studies.
- Observe the general conditions of a Tier 4 General student visa in the UK, including studying on the programme for which your visa was issued, not overstaying the validity of your visa and complying with the work restrictions of the visa.

Please note that any email relating to your Tier 4 sponsorship, including census dates and times will be sent to your University email address - you should therefore check this regularly.

During the examination process, students should be aware of the following points relating to allowed for paid work:

- Students in their writing up year must maintain contact with their supervisor and the School office.
- Students in the examination process can work full time between submission and the viva.
- Should you have corrections, you must return to working 20 hours per week. The only circumstance where a student may work more than 20 hours while working on corrections is if they secure full-time employment and move to a Tier 2 visa.
- During an interruption of studies, students on a Tier 4 visa are not permitted to work.
- Students on approved annual leave are permitted to work full time.

Further details on the terms and conditions of your Tier 4 visa can be found in the “Downloads” section at www.ed.ac.uk/immigration

Information or advice about your Tier 4 immigration status can be obtained by contacting the International Student Advisory Service, located at the International Office, 33 Buccleuch Place, Edinburgh EH8 9JS

Email: immigration@ed.ac.uk

11. Concessions

Students should also note that, depending on individual circumstances, there may be implications for their visa or council tax status should they undertake an interruption or extension of studies. You are advised to investigate this further prior to any application for interruption or extension.

Extension of Study

If there have been exceptional circumstances which have prevented the student to submit by the end of their fourth year an application for extension can be made and may be approved by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. When extensions are approved students are required to pay additional fees.

Circumstances in which it might be appropriate to grant an Extension include, amongst others:

- Where progress has been hampered by unforeseen difficulties with facilities or equipment and hence completion of the thesis has been delayed
- Where progress has been hampered by unforeseen difficulties in obtaining or analysing data

The supporting documentation must include a plan for project completion and thesis submission and clear evidence for expecting completion within the period of the requested extension. Extending students have to pay a continuation fee on top of the matriculation fee but they do not pay an annual research fee. In exceptional circumstances, College Postgraduate Studies Committees may extend a student's maximum period of registration by up to two years.

The committee may not consider requests for extensions based solely on the need for more time to complete.

Candidates may, with their supervisors' support, seek permission from the College Postgraduate Studies Committee to reduce their period of study and to submit their theses up to 12 months early.

Interruption of Study (IoS)

If a student is unable to work on their research for reasons of health, domestic or other legitimate circumstances, an interruption of studies (suspension) may be sought through the supervisor. It is the student's responsibility to inform supervisors of any such situation as quickly as possible.

A retrospective interruption cannot be granted, therefore applications should be, whenever possible, made in advance.

Requests must be supported in writing by both the supervisor and the PhD Director and must include relevant supporting documentation (e.g. medical certificate, counsellor's note, letter from employer etc.)

Circumstances in which it might be appropriate to grant an IoS include, amongst others:

- Medical and health problems
- Personal and family problems
- Bereavement
- Financial problems beyond the student's control

- Problems experienced because of failure of university equipment or lack of access to equipment for good reasons that are out with the control of the student
- Problems experienced because of deficiencies in the provision of supervision or facilities
- Undertaking distinct time-limited specialized training that would be beneficial to the students project or generic skills training

Interruptions are not appropriate, and should not be sought:

- Where the student is able to work on the thesis but is not progressing at the expected rate
- Where the reasons are foreseeable and could be managed in other ways
- To permit students to take extended annual/holiday leave
- To extend the period available to the student to complete their thesis.

In all cases an application for IoS should be made as quickly as is practicable.

12. Academic Misconduct

It is an offence for any student to make use of unfair means in any University assessment, to assist a student to make use of such unfair means, to do anything prejudicial to the good conduct of the assessment, or to impersonate another student or allow another person to impersonate him or her in an assessment. Any student found to have cheated or attempted to cheat in an assessment may be deemed to have failed that assessment and disciplinary action may be taken.

Academic misconduct includes plagiarism, the invention or falsification of data, evidence, references, experimental results or other material contributing to any student's assessed work or for a student knowingly to make use of such material.

It is also an offense to use your own previously submitted work from another course or programme at this or any other university. This material submitted as part of an masters dissertation cannot be used as part of your PhD thesis.

Cases of academic misconduct are punishable under the University's Code of Student Conduct. If you are in any doubt about what constitutes academic misconduct, then you should seek guidance from your supervisor or the School Director of Postgraduate Research.

Cases of academic misconduct are first referred to the School PGR Director who acts as the School Academic Misconduct Officer for PGR students. The PGR Director will investigate the case and where misconduct is due to poor scholarship (a genuine misunderstanding of proper conduct rather than a deliberate intention to cheat) will deal with the matter at a School level. Serious cases are directly referred to the College Academic Misconduct Officer.

For guidance on plagiarism and how to avoid it, please see

- [University's general plagiarism guidance](#)
- [Is it Plagiarism?](#)
- [Academic Integrity](#)

If you are in any doubt about whether what you are doing constitutes plagiarism, you are urged to consult your supervisor.

13. Health, Personal Possessions, Safety, and Security

- *Smoking policy:* Please note that smoking is not allowed in University buildings, nor is it acceptable to smoke at the basement entrance. This policy is also applicable to e-cigarettes.
- *Personal Possessions:* Students' personal possessions are **not** covered by the University's insurance policy. Please be sensible about security issues, leaving the doors of empty offices and flats locked, and leaving street doors locked in the evenings and at weekends. If you do leave your own computer or other valuables in your office, it is at your own risk. If items do go missing please inform Security and the School office.
- *Health & Safety:* All students are requested to familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety regulations. Guidance information and publications produced by the Health and Safety Department which are relevant to general health and safety and occupational hygiene issues are available from the [website](#)
- *Fire:* If the fire alarm rings students should leave the building by the nearest exit and assemble at the front of the building (the fire alarm system is checked on Tuesdays at 10am). Guidance on general fire safety within the University is available from the [website](#).
- *Security:* We would like to draw your attention to the following information available from the [University Health and Safety website](#) with regards to lone working during out of office hours

14. Useful Links

Forms and Guidance

- Student Forms (NITS, Access to Thesis, etc.): www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/forms/student-forms
- Thesis Submission Guidelines: www.ed.ac.uk/academic-services/students/postgraduate-research/thesis-submission
- Regulatory Standards for the Format and Binding of a Thesis: www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Guidance/Thesis_Binding.pdf
- Assessment Regulations for Research Degrees: www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Regulations/PGR_AssessmentRegulations.pdf
- Theses Database: www.ed.ac.uk/information-services/library-museum-gallery/finding-resources/theses

General

- Registry: www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/
- The Advice Place: www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/advice/
- Student Counselling Services: www.student-counselling.ed.ac.uk/
- Edinburgh University Students' Association: www.eusa.ed.ac.uk
- Student Services: www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/student-services
- Disability Office: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-disability-service
- International Office: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/international-office/
- Careers Office: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/careers