1. A Brief Overview of the Course:

The course is intended to develop a rigorous understanding of core economic models and analysis, together with an ability to apply the analysis in a variety of contexts. The first semester focuses on developing and using models of supply and demand and on the underlying foundations of producer behaviour. The second semester examines the macroeconomy—economy-wide issues such as growth, inflation and unemployment.

Relevant mathematical techniques (e.g. solving linear equation systems, logs, basic calculus, maximization) are developed and applied to economic contexts as an integral part of the course.

Learning-by-doing, through problem solving and project work, is an important ingredient of the course, with regular on-line tests to reinforce an active approach to learning.

The course is primarily aimed at students who intend (or want to keep open the option) to progress to further study of economics in their 2nd year. Other students are welcome, but may find Economic Principles and Applications (EP&A) a more suitable alternative.

No previous study of economics is required, however students who have not previously studied economics may find it useful to take (or more informally follow) EP&A alongside Economics1A (see section 7).

A background in mathematics beyond GCSE level is required. Students with a weaker maths background will need to be prepared to work at developing their maths skills (see section 7).

2. Broad aims and intended learning outcomes

The Broad Aims of Economics 1A

- To provide each student with a sufficient understanding of basic economic theory and reasoning so that she or he can think independently and coherently about economic arguments, for example as to whether an article or leader in the Economist or Financial Times, or in some other broadsheet, makes economic sense.
• To prepare students for further study in economics (e.g. at second year and eventually Honours level) by providing a sound grounding in economic principles together with intellectual and other skills, in line with the broad aims of the Economics Honours programme as a whole.

• To provide, in conjunction with Economics 2, a broad overview of mainstream economics and a sound and rigorous understanding of key economic principles, which are valuable for students intending to specialise in other related disciplines such as: Business Studies, Politics, Economic History, Social Policy, Geography and Sociology.

• To foster the development of key intellectual, practical and transferable skills, which are valuable during university, in a wide-range of careers and life more generally:

Intended Learning Outcomes:

A. Knowledge and understanding: Students will have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate knowledge and understanding in the following areas:

A1. Core economic concepts (e.g. opportunity cost, incentives, strategic thinking, marginal considerations, expectations and surprises).

A2. Core principles and models of microeconomics (concerning e.g. decision and choice, production and exchange, interdependency and markets, risk and information, economic welfare) and macroeconomics (concerning the aggregate consequences of individual decisions e.g. output, employment, growth, business cycles, money, inflation, and exchange rates).

A3. Applications of core economic theory and reasoning to applied topics and policy issues.

A4. Key mathematical and statistical/econometric techniques. The ability to understand applications of these techniques and to use them as problem solving tools or for data analysis.

A5. Major modern developments in economic analysis, with a deeper understanding and appreciation of on-going research activity in some more specialised areas.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies

A1 and A2 are developed progressively through lectures, small-group tutorials, on-line learning (via Learn), learning-by-doing through working through problem sets and guided independent study. Additional support is provided by a Help Desk staffed by selected final year students.

A3 and A5 are also developed in the course. Regular class contact is supplemented by more informal, student-driven, office hours.

A4 is developed as an integral part of the course. The core courses in years 1 and 2 have an innovative structure, in that rather than being taught and assessed in a separate module on quantitative techniques, these key techniques are developed and applied in a variety of micro- and macro-economic contexts, reinforcing understanding of the techniques and their usefulness in economic analysis. Additional support for learning is provided by on-line learning tools (via Learn) and a drop in ‘maths econ base’ staffed by maths honours students.

Independent study, both to broaden knowledge and understanding and to learn-by-doing, is important throughout the course. Co-operative learning, with fellow students, is also encouraged.

Assessment:

Knowledge and understanding is tested by a mix of multiple choice and written examinations, essays, and problem sets. There will also be an opportunity to earn a small number of “bonus” points by participating in the optional Economics 1A Reading Group (see below). Examinations vary in format depending on the knowledge and understanding being tested. Some employ traditional essays (often with a model-based analytical core), others place more emphasis on problem-solving.

B. Skills and abilities in Research and Enquiry

Students will have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills and abilities relating to the process of research and enquiry including:

B1. The ability to identify, define and analyse theoretical and applied economic problems and identify or devise approaches to investigate and solve these problems.

1 The broad aims and intended learning outcomes of the Honours programme are set out and discussed in the Economics Honours Handbook. There is a link to the Economics Honours Handbook on the Economics 1A Learn site. If you intend to study for a single or joint Honours degree in Economics, you are strongly encouraged to take a look at these aims and outcomes and the Honours Handbook more generally.
B2. The ability to search for, evaluate and use information to develop their knowledge and understanding of economic and social phenomena and the methods and techniques used to analyse these.

B3. The ability to critically assess existing understanding of economic and social issues, the limitations of that understanding and the limitations of their own knowledge and understanding of those issues.

B4. The ability to question the principles, methods, standards and boundaries of economic knowledge.

B5. The ability to understand economic, legal, and environmental issues in the use of information.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies:
Skills and abilities relating to research and enquiry are central to the mastery of economics and are emphasized and developed progressively throughout the course. While all teaching/learning modes play an important role in developing these capabilities, they are particularly emphasised in: small-group classes and tutorials; feedback and guidance on exercises and essays; seminars and project work; discussions in informal lectures; guidance for independent study, e.g. dissertation supervision; and student-driven office-hour consultations. Exercises, essays, and other assignments, throughout the course, develop these capabilities by challenging students to apply, adapt, question and extend knowledge and understanding in novel contexts. The course structure enables students to develop an appreciation of differing approaches to analysing economic phenomena ranging from more literary and discursive modes to more technical and formal modes.

Assessment
All forms of assessment (outlined above) place great emphasis on research and enquiry. Examinations (including multiple choice exams) are designed to test the ability to analyse economic problems and evaluate understanding of economic phenomena, by challenging students to adapt and apply their knowledge and understanding, rather than rewarding memorization and regurgitation. Essays also emphasize skills and abilities relating to research and enquiry.

C. Skills and abilities in Personal and Intellectual Autonomy
Students will have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills and abilities relating to personal and intellectual autonomy including:

C1. The ability to be independent learners who take responsibility for their own learning, and are committed to continuous reflection, self-evaluation and self-improvement.

C2. The ability to make decisions on the basis of rigorous and independent thought, taking into account ethical and professional issues.

C3. The ability to work towards personal goals in an independent manner.

C4. The ability to collaborate and debate effectively to test, modify and strengthen their own views.

Teaching/learning methods and strategies:
Skills and abilities relating to personal and intellectual autonomy are emphasized and developed throughout the course. They are encouraged and reinforced by feedback on course-work essays and guided exercises. Learning opportunities, such as the Help Desk and office hours, require the use of independent action and initiative. Core economics principles and concepts (e.g. opportunity cost, incentives, strategic thinking, marginal considerations, expectations and surprises) are transferable to most decision contexts and foster C2. Interaction in seminars and small-group classes and cooperative learning, develop C4.

Assessment
This group of skills plays an important part in all forms of assessment. C1-C3 is emphasized, in particular, in essays.

D. Skills and abilities in Communication
Students will have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills and abilities in communication including:

D1. The ability to make effective use of oral, written and visual means to critique, create and communicate understanding.

D2. The ability to further their own learning through effective use of feedback.

D3. The ability to use communication as a tool for collaborating and relating to others.

D4. The ability to communicate relevant information succinctly and precisely.

D5. The ability to communicate both qualitative and quantitative reasoning
**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**
D1 and D2 are encouraged and reinforced by feedback on course-work essays and guided exercises. The study of Economics emphasises succinct communication through the use of formal modelling and abstraction. The emphasis on these increases throughout the course. Learning opportunities, such as the Help Desk and office hours, develop communications and interpersonal skills. Interaction in seminars and small-group classes, cooperative learning, and regular day-to-day contacts (such as obtaining information and advice from busy lecturing, service or administrative staff) develop D3. Both the diverse set of phenomena and the range of modes of analysis embodied in the course enable students to develop an ability to understand communicate both qualitative and quantitative reasoning.

**Assessment:**
This group of skills plays an important part in all forms of assessment. D1, D2, D4 and D5 are emphasized, in particular, in essays and by written examinations.

**E. Skills and abilities in Personal Effectiveness**
Students will have the opportunity to develop and demonstrate skills and abilities in relation to personal effectiveness such as:

E1. The ability to manage tasks and skills in time-management.
E2. The ability to cope with uncertainty and to adapt to new situations
E3. The ability to adapt to new situations make decisions based on their understanding.
E4. The ability to work effectively with others, capitalising on their different thinking.

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**
The course handbook, and other department and university resources, provides guidance on E1. The time-pressures of student life involve balancing the demands of non-academic and academic pursuits: keeping up-to-date with studies, course-work deadlines (which involve some deadline bunching), exam preparation reinforce these skills through learning-by-doing. In conjunction with the increased emphasis on independent action, time-management skills are more important in later stages of the course. Course-work deadlines, examinations and class presentations are potentially stressful, encouraging students to learn to cope with stress, with guidance and advice on stress-management provided by an extensive network of university and department resources. Teamwork projects and presentations, interaction in seminars and small-group classes, cooperative learning, and regular day-to-day contacts (such as obtaining information and advice from busy lecturing, service or administrative staff) develop E4. Core economics principles and concepts (e.g. opportunity cost, incentives, strategic thinking, marginal considerations, expectations and surprises) are transferable to most decision contexts and hark back to outcomes A1 through A6 (as well as relating to C2).

**Assessment:**
This group of skills plays an important part in all forms of assessment. E1 is emphasized, in particular, in essays.. Examinations (including multiple choice exams) are designed to test E2, by challenging students to adapt and apply their knowledge and understanding, rather than rewarding memorization and regurgitation. The wide variety of assessment modes in use throughout the course encourages adaptability. E3 is emphasized by examination and deadline pressures.

**11 F. Technical/practical skills**
Students will have had the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the following advanced technical and or practical skills and abilities:

F1. General computer IT Literacy
F2. Modelling skills: abstraction, logic, succinctness, quantitative analysis (mathematics and statistics)
F3. Qualitative analysis

**Teaching/learning methods and strategies:**
Extensive use, linked to learning-by-doing, is made of computing and IT resources throughout the programme, including: computer assisted learning; essay presentation; as an information resource; for communication by e-mail.
In analysing economic and social issues, throughout the course, frequent use is made of formal mathematical and statistical models to study the mechanisms at work. Thus students have extensive opportunities to develop the ability to abstract from irrelevant details and focus on the heart of the problem, which is the essence of good modelling in economics. Use of models enables students to develop logical skills and offers them opportunities to develop the succinctness of their analytical arguments. Frequent use of written assessments throughout the course also encourages students to
develop their skills of qualitative or discursive analysis: argumentation, strength of internal logic, sharpness of structure, use of relevant examples etc.

**Assessment:**
Assessment of F1 is primarily through course-work essays. F2 and F3 are assessed both through coursework and examination.

**3. Teaching Arrangements and Other Learning Resources**

There are two lectures a week on Tuesday and Friday from 16.10 to 17.00am in George Square Lecture Theatre and Lecture Theatre 5, Appleton Tower (overflow venue). In addition to lectures, you are expected to attend one weekly tutorial. It is important to appreciate that learning resources are not limited to formal lectures and tutorials. In particular, independent reading and study (including learning-by-doing by working through class exercises and on-line assessments) play an important part in learning. Other valuable learning resources and opportunities include: the Economics 1A Learn site and other internet resources, the Help Desk, and cooperative learning (through working together with classmates). All these resources, including lectures and tutorials require your active participation for you to learn effectively.

**Lectures:**
- Broadly lectures are intended to: guide your thoughts, indicate the scope of the subject, emphasise basic essentials, explain and illustrate difficult points, clarify common misunderstandings, draw attention to different interpretations, stimulate your thinking, and help you to develop a critical interest in the subject.
- Lectures are not intended to tell you all you need to know, nor provide a summary of a textbook. Lectures and reading/study/learning-by-doing are complementary.
- To get the most out of lectures you need to be alert and mentally active. Concentrate on the main points, concepts and ideas rather than detail. Take good notes: this involves taking a critical interest and asking yourself questions, not treating a lecture as a piece of dictation and mindlessly writing down as much as you can.
- Prepare for a lecture by doing the assigned reading/study in advance. Follow up issues, questions and ideas from your notes as soon as possible after the lecture, while your notes still make sense to you.

**Tutorials**
In the First Semester tutorials run in weeks 2-10, while in the Second Semester tutorials will run in 2-6 and 8-10, so each student will have 9 tutorials in each semester.

*Attendance at tutorials is required as an integral part of the course.* Tutors record attendance at each tutorial. *It is the responsibility of students to ensure that their attendance is recorded correctly.* Students are expected to be on time for tutorials. Missing 4 tutorials in a semester will result in a penalty of 3 marks being deducted from the final mark awarded for the course; missing 5 tutorials in a semester will result in a penalty of 4 marks being deducted from the final mark awarded for the course, missing 6 tutorials in a semester will result in a penalty of 5 marks being deducted from the final mark awarded for the course, missing 7 tutorials in a semester will result in a penalty of 6 marks being deducted from the final mark awarded for the course, missing 8 tutorials in a semester will result in a penalty of 7 marks being deducted from the final mark awarded for the course, if you fail to attend 9 tutorials your final mark for the course will be reduced by 9 marks. **In previous years students have failed the course because of penalties incurred through tutorial absences!**

- It is the student’s responsibility to check that their attendance record is correct. To check your attendance record, go to the 'MyGrades' section in Learn, where your class tutor will complete the weekly attendance record each week. A capital letter 'P' indicates present, a capital letter 'O' indicates absent. For example, to check your attendance for week 2 of semester 2, go to the item called 'S2 WK2 Attendance’ in My Grades, if there is a capital ‘P’, you have been recorded as attending that week. If you disagree with the record, you have until 4pm of the Friday following the week of the disputed tutorial to query the register. For example, if you have a tutorial on Wednesday of week 2, you have until 4pm on the Friday of week 3 to challenge the register. This should be by e-mail to Econ1A@ed.ac.uk.
• Please note that if you attend a tutorial other than your assigned one, you will be recorded as absent. In addition the secretary will endeavour to e-mail a warning to any students who have missed two tutorials (copied to your Personal Tutor), but due to lags inherent in the system you should not rely on this as an infallible guide.

The allowance of three missed tutorials per semester before a penalty is incurred is to cover all normal reasons for unavoidable absence such as illness. The only exception to this is chronic illness or similar affecting all or most of a semester. In this case, a student must submit a Medical Certificate or similar evidence to cover the period of absence and this will be taken into consideration in determining whether a penalty for missed tutorials will apply.

Examples of circumstances that might have a significant impact include:
• physical illness or injury;
• mental ill-health or similar illness;
• bereavement or serious illness of a person with whom the student has a close relationship;
• a long-term relationship breakdown, such as a marriage.

Examples of circumstances that are unlikely to be accepted include:
• pressure of academic work;
• employment commitments;
• a short-term, self-certificated illness, such as a common cold.

The University’s Special Circumstances policy can be found here:
http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/AcademicServices/Policies/Special_Circumstances.pdf

Some tutorials are designed to extend the range of material covered in the lectures by giving students an opportunity to discuss the application of economic analysis to a wide variety of practical problems. To get the most out of tutorials you should: prepare for tutorials in advance, and participate actively in (but avoid dominating) the discussion.

Some tutorials will also be based on problem sets. Students are expected to complete the problem sets assigned for a particular tutorial before the tutorial. These problem sets play a very important role:

• Learning actively, by grappling with problems for yourself, is a much more effective way of building up a genuine understanding of the material including relevant mathematical techniques.

• Problem sets contain important material which reinforces pieces of analysis that will have been referred to but, in many cases, not discussed in detail during the lectures, so that it is essential to keep up with the problem sets. You should not expect to be spoon fed with the answers or merely have to replicate a solution that is identical to one that is covered in lectures or a textbook. Problem sets are intended to be challenging and get you to think and develop your own solution, enabling you to develop your understanding.

• When working on problem sets, it can be effective to work together with one or two other classmates (an example of cooperative learning), but note that, for this to be effective, you need to be genuinely working together, and not lazily relying on your team-mates to solve the problem for you.

• Class teachers will outline the solutions to the problem sets and attempt to deal with any difficulties raised by members of the tutorial related either to the problem set or to the relevant analysis in the textbook and the lectures. But note that, since the aim is for you to learn by working at problems for yourself, you should not expect answer guides to be freely available. Problem sets will often contain more questions than can be covered in the time span of the tutorial. This is deliberate – the aim is to provide additional problems which you can work on independently to enhance your understanding.

• In some cases, despite genuine effort, you may get stuck – the problem sets are meant to be challenging. If this happens, it can often be helpful to discuss the problem with a classmate (or use the discussion group feature in Learn – see below), or make use of the Help Desk. If this does not resolve the difficulty, make sure you raise it in the tutorial. Among other things, this can help the tutor to focus the class on problem areas. If you still remain puzzled following the tutorial, don’t let this drop. Get further guidance from the tutor and/or make use of the Help Desk (textbooks and internet resources, such as MathEcon, may also help).
Tutorials also provide an opportunity for you to raise any problems you have understanding the material covered in lectures or reading. If you are having problems, it is important that you act on them by taking advantage of this opportunity – don’t let things slide, if you do they are likely to get worse.

Tutorials will also be used to provide feedback on class examinations and the essay.

**Learn, and other networked learning resources**

Learn: There is a specific Learn site for Economics 1A. You should get into the habit of making regular and frequent use of this resource and will be expected to do so. It will provide you with easy access to, for example:

- An on-line version of this Handbook;
- Course materials, such as lecture handouts, past exam papers, problem sets, and guidance for the essay.
- Week by week guide to topics covered and maths requirements at each stage of the course.
- Direct hyperlinks to course readings available on-line;
- Links to resources for economists available on the intranet;
- Reminders about key events such as deadlines, tutorial arrangements, the Help Desk, and exam information;
- On-line registration for tutorials and classes;
- A “discussion forum”, providing the opportunity to raise questions and issues with other members of the class;
- Links to information about other economics courses and the Honours programme;

We hope you will find this facility useful and welcome feedback and suggestions for improvement. The site can be accessed by matriculated students via MyEd (inside MyEd, Learn is available from the myLearn channel in the ‘courses’ tab). To access the Economics 1A site you need to be properly registered for Economics 1A. If you have problems accessing the Economics 1A Learn site you should consult the staff in the Economics Office. The site can be accessed from any computer (it is not restricted to the Edinburgh University domain) providing you are an authenticated user.

There are a number of other useful learning and self-testing resources available on the internet. This is a rapidly changing and growing area. An excellent source, containing links to a wide variety of material suitable for Economics 1A is the Higher Education Academy Economics Network at [http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/](http://www.economicsnetwork.ac.uk/). Inter alia, this site provides links to sources of interactive tutorials, simulations, and tests, making use of new technology to foster a more active approach to learning. The Higher Education Academy Economics Network also provides a valuable interactive self-teaching guide to more general internet resources for economists, called *Internet Economist*. There is a link to the Economics Network site and a selection of other useful sites on the Economics 1A Learn site.

**Economics Help Desk**

The Help Desk is staffed by selected Senior Honours students from the Economics programme, and provides a valuable source of help and guidance for Economics 1A students (as well as students taking EP&A, IGE and Economics 2). The Help Desk will be available on **Wednesdays and Fridays between 13.05pm and 13.50pm. Please see Learn for the location.**

Please do use the Help Desk. It is there for your benefit.

- All students can potentially benefit from the Help Desk - it is not just intended to provide remedial help for students struggling with the course, but provides a general learning opportunity for all students to enhance their learning and understanding.
- Use the Help Desk regularly, building up your understanding at the time topics are covered in lectures and classes. Avoid leaving things to the last minute and attending the Help Desk in a panic just before an exam or essay deadline.
You are likely to get more from a Help Desk visit if you are organised. Come with a specific question or list of questions.

If you want help understanding something you have read or a class exercise, bring a copy with you, in case there is not a copy available on the Help Desk.

Don’t expect the staff on the Help Desk to do your work for you, their aim is to help you to learn and understand. They are likely to be more helpful if it is clear that you have tried to solve a problem or answer a question for yourself. This may not always mean that you have progressed very far in producing an answer. You should not feel embarrassed to ask for help and advice if this is the case, providing you have genuinely made an effort.

3.5 Maths for Economists & Maths Help Desk

The philosophy of the course is that mathematical techniques (e.g. solving linear equation systems, logs, basic calculus, maximization) are developed and applied to economic contexts as an integral part of the course. However students have a variety of backgrounds in mathematics, and it is expected that those who need to learn/refresh basic techniques or are struggling with new techniques should do this by self learning and by using the Maths exercises on Learn.

Each week, exercises will be posted on Learn, followed after a lag by an answer sheet. If you have difficulty with these, then you should go along to the Maths Help Desk, which will be on Thursdays between 13.05pm and 13.50pm. Please see Learn for the location. You do not need to have attempted the questions first; if you prefer you can just turn up and work through the problems with the people helping.

In addition, if you are having trouble with the mathematical content of the lectures, or the tutorial sheets, then you should bring these problems to Maths Help Desk. The tutorials are not the main place to sort out your difficulties with maths, and tutors have been told to advise students with maths difficulties to go these help sessions.

Cooperative learning

- University education is primarily cooperative rather than competitive. Sharing ideas and views with other students, both within small-group classes such as tutorials and outside the classroom, is a valuable aid to learning. It also helps to develop teamwork skills, which are valued by many employers.
- Ask a classmate for help and advice, if you are struggling to understand a problem or piece of reading, and be willing to provide help to others.
- Make use of the “discussion forum” facility on Learn by asking and answering questions.
- Trying to explain something clearly is often a very good way of enhancing your own understanding of a topic, or may expose and help you to fill gaps in your understanding or knowledge (as many teachers are aware!).
- Sharing ideas on a topic can help you to see things from a variety of perspectives, broadening and deepening your understanding.
- Working through problem sets, or some of the computer-based learning resources outlined above, can often be more enjoyable and effective when done with others – as long as you don’t lazily rely on others doing the work for you.

4. Reading and Library Resources

The main recommended textbooks for the course are:

- Pindyck & Rubinfeld, *Microeconomics, 8th edition* (Pearson)

You are expected to buy your own copy of the main texts. A limited number of copies are held in the Main Library Reading Room, but it would be impractical for the library to hold sufficient multiple copies to service a class of this size. Library resources are more efficiently concentrated on the purchase of
supplementary readings and reading material for essays, which we can’t realistically expect you to buy. We anticipate that these main texts will also be used as the main texts for Economics 2 in 2014-15, enabling you to spread the costs of your investment over 2 years.

*Guide to Mathematics*, which explains the mathematical techniques required for the tutorials and exams, will be available on Learn.

Separate handouts, giving more details of the topics covered and specific recommended reading from the above texts as well as supplementary readings will be issued at the start of each sub-section of the course. One generally valuable source of supplementary readings is *The Economic Review* (a relatively inexpensive magazine targeted at students of introductory economics published by Philip Allan).

Where copyright restrictions allow, supplementary reading material will be made available online via Learn. Other supplementary reading, including copies of the main texts can mostly be found in the Reserve Collection located at the rear of the ground floor of the Main Library. The economics collection is located at RR (Economics), but note that some economics books are also in sections other than Economics (e.g. Business Studies). To make full use of the Reserve Collection you should consult the Reserve Collection catalogue. Note that the Reserve Collection also contains a collection of books and other material on study skills (see section 5 below).

The main economics collection is housed on the fourth floor of the Main Library. Recent acquisitions are shelved using the Library of Congress classification system, with Economics at HB-HD. Older stock is catalogued using the Dewey decimal system at .33 onwards. Books can be located by using the library catalogue, available on the Library’s website “Library Online” at [http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk](http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk). In addition to the catalogue, Library Online provides a great deal of other useful information on library and information resources. More specific information about resources for economists can be found by following the link on the Economics 1A Learn site.

**Other useful textbooks include:**

**Introductory economics texts** - these texts are at a lower level than is aimed for by Economics 1A, but provide useful introductory or background reading for students with no or limited prior experience of studying economics

- Begg, S. Fischer and R. Dornbusch *Economics*,
- J. Sloman *Economics*,
- J. Stiglitz and J Drifill *Economics*,

**Intermediate economics texts** – these texts are at a similar level to the main recommended texts, and provide useful alternative sources if you find the coverage in the main texts hard to understand.

- D. Bernheim and M. Whinston *Microeconomics*
- J. Perloff *Microeconomics: Theory and Applications with Calculus*
- O. J. Blanchard *Macroeconomics*
- M. Burda & C. Wyplosz *Macroeconomics: A European Text*

**Maths for economists texts** – these texts provide a more comprehensive and detailed coverage of relevant mathematical techniques than standard economics texts, as well as useful examples and exercises.

**Introductory (useful for students with a weak maths background)**

- J. Soper *Mathematics for Economics and Business* (includes the MathEcon CAL programme on CD)
- I. Jacques *Mathematics for Economics and Business*
More advanced (useful for students with a good maths background, who want a stronger and more rigorous grounding in relevant maths techniques)

A Chiang  
Fundamental methods of Mathematical Economics

K. Sydsaeter and P. Hammond  
Essential Mathematics for Economic Analysis

5. Study Skills and Expectations

In addition to regular attendance at lectures and tutorials, you should expect to undertake approximately 9 hours of “efficient” study per week for Economics 1A, making a total of 12 hours per week in all. The efficiency of time spent working is important, a low level of concentration or being easily distracted increase the number of hours that you need to put in. Merely being in the Library does not mean you are working, if, for example, you are gossiping with friends or daydreaming the time away.

Developing good study habits and skills is an important ingredient for success in Economics 1A and university studies generally, as well as helping to develop valuable life and career related skills. Investing some time and effort in improving your study skills can have a high rate of return. You will need to practice effective time management to keep on top of your studies, while leaving time to enjoy the many and varied opportunities open to you at University. This can be especially important for a course like Economics 1A, since it is cumulative, in the sense that much of the material covered later in the course builds on material and the general mode of reasoning covered earlier. You should aim to make sure you understand things at the time they are covered in lectures and tutorials. Gradually building up your understanding of the material over the course of the year is much more effective than trying to learn up hazily understood topics just prior to an exam.

Students taking Economics 1A come from different academic backgrounds and with different interests and career intentions. This is reflected in the broad aims of the course, outlined in section 2 above. The course is intended to be valuable and challenging for many people with different goals and backgrounds. This diversity of students in the class can itself add to learning by, for example, encouraging you to see things from different perspectives. Your background, in terms of previous study of economics and maths, links in important ways to study and study skills.

- If you have not studied economics before, the early stages of the course may seem hard-going. It can take a bit of time to get used to the language of economics and the reasoning processes (such as abstract models) used in economic analysis. It is important for you to work hard at this in the early stage of the course. Don’t let things slide. If you find you are struggling to learn the language or understand the reasoning process use your initiative to make use of the learning resources available – ask questions in tutorials, use the Help Desk, IT learning tools or consider taking or informally following EP&A (see section 7 below).

- If you have studied economics before, the temptation can be to think you know it all. This is rarely the case. Economics 1A follows a different structure and aims for a deeper and more rigorous understanding than economics courses available at secondary school. If you think you know it all and can take an easy ride by skipping lectures, tutorials and independent study, you are likely to find yourself struggling as the course progresses and do poorly in assessment. Instead you should capitalise on your advantages, building on your prior understanding of the language and reasoning process of economics, to progress to a deeper and more rigorous understanding.

- If your maths background is weak and, more particularly, if you are maths-averse, you may struggle with and find it tempting to skip over understanding relevant mathematical techniques. It is important to avoid this temptation if you want to perform successfully in Economics 1A and in later years’ study of economics. If you are struggling with the problem sets, you should aim to devote more not less time to them. You should also make use of the various learning resources available (in addition to those included in the first bullet point above, these include MathEcon). Note that classmates, who have a stronger maths background than you, can also be a valuable source of help.

- If your maths background is strong, you should beware of the dangers of thinking that the maths is “trivial” and you know it all. Good mathematicians can sometimes struggle at applying mathematical techniques in varied economic contexts (similar problems are often encountered in
physics and engineering). Plenty of practice, though solving problem sets, is the best way of overcoming this problem.

In addition to the brief pointers given in this hand out, there are a variety of sources of advice and guidance on study skills. These cover such topics as: time management; getting the most out of lectures, classes and tutorials; note-taking; reading effectively; essay writing; and preparing for and taking exams. You are strongly encouraged to make use of some or all of the resources listed below.

- Study skills sessions for first year students. These mostly take place early in the academic year (with some later sessions relating to exams). See http://www.tla.ed.ac.uk/services/effect-learn/advice.htm for further information.
- Your tutor is a valuable source of advice, particularly for study skills that are more specific to economics.
- In addition to EUSA's study skills pamphlet, the Main Library contains a large selection of study skills books and other material. Most guides are also relatively cheap to purchase (especially in comparison to economics texts!). Some excellent general guides are:

  - Danny Saunders (ed.) *The Complete Student Handbook*
  - Sue Drew & Rosie Bingham *The Student Skills Guide*
  - Rob Barnes *Successful Study for Degrees*
  - Derek Rowntree *Learn How to Study*
  - Andy Northedge *The Good Study Guide*

6. Assessment

Assessment comprises: three MCQ-based exams (two mid-term in each semester and one in December); an essay in semester 2; and a final exam in April/May.

Class exams

There will be two mid-semester exams in each semester and one in December, which will take place in the examination period at the end of semester 1 (i.e. weeks 12 and 13). The mid-semester exams have a multiple choice format, and the December exam has both an MCQ and a written component. The timetabling for the December exam is determined by Registry, and will be announced as soon as it is available. Note that the First Semester is 13 weeks in length and the exam may be scheduled at the end of the 13th week.

Note that the ‘raw scores’ from multiple choice tests may be adjusted to reflect the degree of difficulty of the test, so that the results relate appropriately to the learning descriptors attached to the University marking scale (see below).

Essay

Essay topics will be announced early in the 2nd semester and the essay will be due for submission in week 7 of the teaching period in the 2nd semester. The essay should be type-written (word-processed), single sided, double spaced and not more than 1,500 words in length, and submitted by the stated deadline. Essays are to be stapled and are not to be placed in plastic sleeves or folders. All essays must have a completed “declaration of own work” cover sheet attached to the front. A copy of the cover sheet can be printed off from Learn. Further information about essay writing and referencing will be available on Learn.

Extensions to coursework deadlines will normally only be granted in cases of illness or other extenuating circumstances. If you wish to apply for an extension, your first point of contact should be the Course Secretary (Econ1A@ed.ac.uk) in the Economics Office (note that tutors cannot grant extensions). Requests for an extension to the deadline must be received prior to the coursework deadline.

Unless an extension has been approved, a penalty of 5 marks per working day for late submissions will be imposed (up to a maximum of 5 days, after which a mark of zero will be recorded for the essay). For example, an essay with a mark of 65 which is less than 24 hours late will be given a final mark of 60.
Students will be notified on the Learn site when their marks and feedback forms for the class-work essay are available for collection. Further details and guidance on preparing and writing essays will be provided with the lists of essay topics via Learn.

Any queries concerning marks for any of the above assessment components must be made within a week of receiving the mark. Marks awarded are not open to negotiation; however, queries concerning content and how this content was appraised may be raised with the Course Coordinator within 7 days of their release.

Final exam in April/May

The final exam will be a 3 hour exam held in the April/May examination period.

The format of the final exam is as follows. There will be three sections:

- Section 1 will comprise multiple choice questions, (similar to on-line assessment questions) covering material from semesters 1 and 2.

- Section 2 will comprise problem-based questions, similar to those contained in the tutorial problem-sets. Questions will be related to material from semesters 1 and 2, and candidates will be required to answer all questions from this section (i.e. will not have a choice of questions).

- Section 3 will comprise a choice of four short-essay style questions, related to material from semesters 1 and 2. Candidates will be required to answer one question from this section.

Since Economics 1A was a new course in 2004 only the 2004 and later past papers are available via Learn by following the link for “Course Materials”. On-line assessments, the class exam, and tutorial problem sets provide you with an extensive sample of questions to help you prepare for the degree exam.

Optional Reading Group

Approximately once per month during term time, there will be a meeting of the Economics 1A Reading Group. The reading group offers a discussion forum for students who wish to learn more economics than is contained in the core course material. These meetings are entirely optional, and will involve quite a bit of reading, so we only expect a small number of students to attend.

Meetings will generally take place from 6pm to 8pm on a weekday at a location to be announced by email. The topics covered will vary, but the readings will typically consist of three to six articles from a source written at the level of the Journal of Economic Perspectives (the JEP itself will be a frequent source of material). Participating students must submit a one-page response paper by email prior to the meeting in order to attend (details about submitting a response paper will follow in due course). Students who submit a response paper and who also participate in the group discussion will be eligible for a bonus of up to one per cent per meeting on their final grade (bonuses may still be given if the writing is poor or the participation is half-hearted, but they will be less than one per cent). Since we expect to have five to eight meetings over the course of the year, the maximum bonus that can be earned is five to eight per cent.

Note that visiting semester 1 students who attend the reading club will be given bonuses which work out to carry equivalent grade weights to the one per cent bonuses given to full-year students.

Note also that bonus points will only be applied for students who are able to pass the course independent of the bonus (e.g. a student who earns a 3% bonus but has a final grade before bonuses of 38% does not get 41% and does not pass the course—that student gets a 38% final grade and fails).

Lastly, note that final grades are capped at 100% (so, e.g., a student who gets a 7% bonus and who has a final grade before bonuses of 94% gets a final grade of 100% rather than 101%).
Final mark for Economics 1A

The final mark for Economics 1A will thus comprise:

- October class exam (multiple choice): 10%
- December class exam (multiple choice & written): 20%
- February class exam (multiple choice): 10%
- Essay (Semester 2): 10%
- Degree Exam (May diet): 50%

- Tutorial attendance: Penalties will be assessed as follows:
  - 3 marks deducted for 4 missed tutorials,
  - 4 marks deducted for 5 missed tutorials,
  - 5 marks deducted for 6 missed tutorials,
  - 6 marks deducted for 7 missed tutorials,
  - 7 marks deducted for 8 missed tutorials,
  - 9 marks deducted for 9 missed tutorials.

Resit Exam (August diet): 100%

Resit exam

There will be a resit exam in August for those who fail in May (i.e. have a final mark <40 in May). The resit exam will have the same three section format as the May final exam. The mark awarded at resit stage is based 100% on the resit exam mark (i.e. does not take account of marks for other assessment components or any penalties incurred).

Final mark for Economics 1A (VV1)

- October class exam (multiple choice): 35%
- December class exam (multiple choice & written): 65%

Tutorial attendance: Penalties will be assessed for visiting students as follows:

- 6 marks deducted for 4 missed tutorials,
- 8 marks deducted for 5 missed tutorials,
- 10 marks deducted for 6 missed tutorials,
- 12 marks deducted for 7 missed tutorials,
- 14 marks deducted for 8 missed tutorials,
- 18 marks deducted for 9 missed tutorials.
### The Marking Scale:

All marks reported utilise the University Extended Common Marking scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Brief Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>Outstanding: Outstanding work, which demonstrates an exceptional understanding and insight. Marks in this range are rarely awarded for ‘judgemental’ assessment (e.g. an essay or essay-style exam answer). They are more likely to be awarded for ‘non-judgemental’ assessment, e.g. (a maths problem), but still rare.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>80-89</td>
<td>Highly Excellent: Excellent: Work which demonstrates authoritative understanding. It may be exceptionally rich in independent insight, sophistication, relevant information, or understanding of the issues involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>70-80</td>
<td>Excellent: Work which demonstrates excellent understanding by showing evidence of independent insight, sophistication, relevant information, or understanding of the issues involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>Very Good: Work showing evidence of good and broad-based engagement with and understanding of the relevant material, organised in a clear and logical form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>Good: Work which, though competent, is lacking in focus, organisation or breadth of understanding. Such work may appear ‘routine’ – merely restating lecture material or limited reading, with little evidence of independent thought.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>Satisfactory: Work which shows some evidence of learning, but with some serious misunderstanding and/or limited ability to select material. It may be too short, or make omissions and/or include irrelevant material.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Falls short of the standard expected for a pass: Work which shows some limited awareness of the problem at hand, but is deficient in knowledge of relevant material, understanding of the question set, or the presentation of clear and rational arguments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>Clear Fail: Work showing little or no evidence of learning or understanding of the question and an inability to formulate and communicate ideas. Answers characterised by irrelevance, brevity and/or superficiality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>10-19</td>
<td>Bad Fail: Almost no material of value to the question asked. Answers almost completely irrelevant and virtually no evidence that any course material has been properly understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>0-9</td>
<td>Very Bad Fail Marks in this range are generally given for an exam where the candidate did not attempt an answer to a question or the attempt had negligible content.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ‘raw scores’ from the multiple choice class exams may be adjusted to reflect the degree of difficulty of the test, so that the outcome is appropriate in terms of the common marking scale and level descriptors outlined above. Note that adjustments, like share prices, may go down as well as up. The adjustments made are guided by the expectation that the distribution of marks will normally fit approximately to the following pattern:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>% with grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>30-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>25-40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>5-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAIL</td>
<td>2-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUMULATIVE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+B</td>
<td>37-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+B+C</td>
<td>65-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A+B+C+D</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIAN</td>
<td>55-60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3rd Year Exchange Programme

It is also worth noting that selection for 3rd year study-abroad programmes is based primarily on performance in Economics 1A. You will need to do well in Economics 1A if you want to be eligible for a study-abroad programme. Even if you don’t have ambitions to study abroad or consider yourself to be a prize contender, a good Economics 1A performance still has a big pay off – it lays the foundations for the later years’ study of Economics, a good degree, and of course looks good on your CV.

7. Broadening Your Background in Economics and Mathematics – some complementary courses

Economics

While Economics 1A is intended to be accessible to students who have not previously studied economics, if you are in this group, or your background in economics is weak, you may find the learning curve fairly steep and challenging at times. If you are in this position, you are encouraged to formally take or more informally follow some or all of the complementary course Economic Principles and Applications.

Economic Principles and Applications (EP&A) is intended to provide a broad introduction to the basic principles of economic analysis, and illustrate the usefulness of these principles in a varied range of applications. In contrast to Economics 1A, EP&A relies primarily on words, diagrams and numerical illustrations. The use of formal mathematics is limited and basic. The first semester of EP&A focuses on basic principles, covering: the microeconomic analysis of the behaviour of individuals and firms, the operation of markets, and government intervention in markets through taxes and regulation; and the macroeconomic analysis of the behaviour of economy-wide measures such as output, unemployment, money, interest rates, inflation and exchange rates. The second semester develops and uses these principles in a variety of, primarily applied, contexts. The contexts covered will vary from year to year. A typical year might include 5 contexts drawn from: development economics; the economics of transition; globalization; macroeconomic policy; the history of economic thought; the economics of the environment; bargaining and game theory; and financial markets. The recommended textbook for EP&A is: Sloman, Essentials of Economics. Lectures take place on Tuesdays and Fridays from 16.10 to 17.00 in Lecture Theatre 5, Appleton Tower.

There are a variety of ways in which you can make use of EP&A to broaden your background in Economics:

- You can be formally registered for and take the full-year 40 credit course EP&A alongside Economics 1A.
- You can be formally registered for and take the first semester 20 credit course Economic Principles (i.e. the first half of EP&A).
- If you have a “B” grade or better in Economics A level or Higher Still, you can be formally registered for the second semester 20 credit course Economic Applications (i.e. the second half of EP&A).
- You can more informally follow some or all of EP&A without being formally registered for the course. This more informal approach leaves more scope, within the normal 120 credit first year curriculum, to take advantage of the wide variety of non-economics courses on offer, but will involve an additional work-load if you are really to benefit. The pay off to this additional work is a broader and richer grounding in basic economics, which should enhance your performance in Economics 1A and later years study of economics. If you choose to adopt this more informal approach to following EP&A, without being formally registered, you may attend EP&A lectures but are not entitled to attend EP&A tutorials or submit formally assessed work for EP&A. Note that since you are not formally registered for EP&A, you will not automatically be given access to the EP&A Learn site. You are, however, encouraged to make use of the learning materials (including regular online assessments) available on this site and should visit the Economics Office (31 Bucchleuch Place, Room 1.11) to make the necessary arrangements.
Mathematics

In the relatively simple models encountered in introductory economics courses words and diagrams may seem to be enough. At times it may even seem (especially to the more maths averse) that introducing maths makes things more complicated rather than easier. Once you start to progress beyond simple introductory models and try to allow for richer and more complex behaviour and inter-relationships, the limitations of words and diagrams soon become apparent.

Mathematical techniques are an important tool of modern economic analysis. Effective use of these techniques enables economists to:

- develop concise representations of complex phenomena in economic models;
- carry out a rigorous analysis e.g. by analysing precisely how a model responds to shocks or changes in behavioural assumptions;
- represent economic behaviour in a form that lends itself to statistical testing.

The usefulness, as well as the limitations, of mathematical tools becomes more apparent as you progress beyond introductory economics to consider richer and more complex aspects of economic behaviour. While a number of the more interesting issues in economics have to do with basic model design (e.g. how to represent complex phenomena so that analysis is tractable) and the interpretation of a model’s results, to get to the stage of addressing these interesting issues requires a good understanding of relevant mathematical techniques.

Economics 1A provides a basic foundation in relevant techniques. The primary emphasis is on learning-by-doing through applying basic techniques in a variety of economic contexts. These techniques are used and developed further in later stages of the Economics Honours programme. If you intend to progress to Economics Honours, working hard to build a strong foundation in relevant maths skills is an important basis for future success. This can be particularly important if you are relatively maths averse – you should attempt to work hard at your maths skills to overcome this weakness and avoid giving in to the all too natural temptation to skip maths wherever possible.

A valuable way of enhancing your maths skills and gaining a more solid grounding in relevant mathematical techniques is to take advantage of the wide variety of maths modules on offer from the School of Mathematics. The most appropriate modules depend on your background and aspirations. Of particular note are: Mathematical Methods 0 (Foundations) aimed at students with a weak maths background, and Mathematical Methods 1 (Foundations) aimed at students with a stronger maths background e.g. grade B or better at A level or CSYS Maths. For further details about these and other maths modules consult the School of Mathematics website at http://www.maths.ed.ac.uk

MathEcon, provides another valuable learning tool for enhancing your basic maths skills, particularly if your maths background is weak. MathEcon can be obtained in CD format along with the useful textbook by Jean Soper Mathematics for Economics and Business (Blackwell). MathEcon is available in all public labs within the University.

8. Illness, Personal Problems and Special Needs

If illness or personal problems/circumstances interfere with your studies, class attendance, assignment deadlines or exams, you should make sure you inform your Personal Tutor as soon as possible, and arrange to discuss the situation with him/her. If attendance at tutorials or classes is affected, you should also ensure that relevant instructors and the course secretary are informed (either directly by you or by your Personal Tutor).

For illness (or other medical condition), a medical certificate is required if:

- you suffer from a medical condition which significantly affects your performance during the course of the year (e.g. a broken arm)
- you are absent through illness for more than seven consecutive days
- you are ill close to or during the degree exam or re-sit, which results either in your missing the exam or adversely affects your performance
- any other illness or medical condition which you consider to have significantly affected your performance and wish to draw to the attention of the Exam Board.
For personal problems/circumstances, certification may not always be appropriate or possible, but, where possible, should be provided for circumstances similar to those listed for illness above.

Information relating to illness or personal problems/circumstances should be sent to the Economics Office. Please ensure that any communications clearly identify the course (Economics 1A) and yourself, by giving your full name and matriculation number. Don’t rely on a doctor’s handwriting this is often difficult to read!

Unless there are exceptional circumstances which justify the delay, all relevant evidence and information concerning medical or personal circumstances needs to be submitted to the Economics office at least one week before the meeting of the Non Honours Exam Board. Since the Exam Board meets on the Friday of the final week of the Summer Examination period, the deadline is the preceding Friday. You are strongly encouraged to submit relevant evidence and information well before this, since this greatly facilitates the administration of the Exam Board meetings as well as allowing time to advise you if further documentation seems called for.

If you have Special Educational Needs the primary person to discuss this with is your Personal Tutor. She or he will be able to put you in touch with relevant university bodies as well as pass relevant information on to lecturing and administrative staff. Since such information does not always get through in a timely fashion, it may be helpful (particularly if your needs concern teaching arrangements) to discuss your needs with your tutor, class instructor, or the Course Coordinator at the start of the course. See section 8.1 below for further related information.

Students with disabilities

The University of Edinburgh is committed to a policy of equal opportunities for disabled staff and students and aims to create an environment which enables people with disabilities to participate fully in the mainstream of University life. The Management School and Economics welcomes disabled students (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all our courses accessible. Although teaching practice within the School reflects a variety of approaches adopted by individual staff members, meeting the particular needs of disabled students is prioritised within this diversity of approach.

The School encourages students with disabilities to discuss, in confidence, any appropriate requirements or adjustments with an appropriate member of staff and to do this as early as possible so that your needs may be considered and responded to.

This process will involve meeting an Advisor from University’s Disability Office, which can be arranged at any time by direct contact with the Disability Office. An Adviser will be happy to meet you and can discuss possible adjustments and specific examination arrangements with you, assist you with an application for Disabled Students’ Allowance, give you information about available technology and personal assistance such as note takers, proof readers or dyslexia tutors, and prepare a Learning Profile for your School which outlines recommended adjustments. You will be expected to provide the Disability Office with evidence of disability - either a letter from your GP or specialist, or evidence of specific learning difficulty. For dyslexia or dyspraxia this evidence must be a recent Chartered Educational Psychologist’s assessment. If you do not have this, the Disability Office can put you in touch with an independent Educational Psychologist.

Please note that once your Learning Profile has been prepared by the Disability Office it will be used by the School to determine the adjustments applied to each course that you have registered for. This allows adjustments to be communicated directly to Course Organisers and eliminates any need for you to discuss the same issues with multiple members of staff.

The Management School and Economics will keep the needs of disabled students under regular review, and welcomes feedback from students as to the suitability of our provision of teaching and learning services to meet their particular needs.
For general information on the University’s support for disabled students and preparation of a Learning Profile please contact the Student Disability Service:

Student Disability Office
The University of Edinburgh
Third Floor, The Main Library Building
George Square,
Edinburgh, EH8 9LT.
Telephone: 0131 650 6828
E-mail: disability.service@ed.ac.uk

For information on how the adjustments are implemented within the School of Economics, or to provide feedback on the suitability of our provisions, please contact the:

Coordinator of Adjustments
Dr Tatiana Kornienko
School of Economics
2.08, 31 Buccleuch Place
Tel: 0131 651-3759
Email: Economics.Adjustments@ed.ac.uk

There are a number of other staff with whom you might usefully discuss your requirements as this might have an impact on your course preferences. Key points in the academic year when such a discussion might take place are, for example, with your Director of Studies at the beginning of the academic year, or with a Course Organiser at the time of course registration. In all cases, the School recommends that you have these discussions as early as possible.

9. Information Sources, Personnel and Contact Details

- **The Economics 1A Learn site** is the main source of information. As well as standard course materials, such as on-line assessments, reading lists, handouts, essay topics etc., the Learn site will also feature information and reminders about tutorials, reminders when deadlines are looming, and links to various other sources of information. You should get into the habit of checking the Economics 1A Learn site frequently.

- As e-mail is now the formal means of communication by the University with its students, important notices and reminders are also sent out by **e-mail**. You should try to check your e-mail at least once a day.

The Economics Office, located at 30 Buccleuch Place in Room G1, and is the administrative centre of the school. For most questions relating to the administration of Economics 1A, the Course Secretary in the Economics Office should be your first port of call. If the office staff are unable to answer your query directly, they should be able to point you in the direction of someone who can. Since the office is busy (there are around 1,000 students studying economics at Edinburgh) please avoid troubling them unnecessarily by checking other sources of information (e.g. the Learn site, or this handbook and other course handouts) first. The normal opening hours of the office are 10.00-12.00 and 14.00-16.00 on weekdays. The office’s telephone number is 0131-650-8361 between the hours of 9.30-11.00 and 14.00-16.00 only and email address is Economics@ed.ac.uk

The Course Organizer (Sean Brocklebank) has general responsibility for Economics 1A. Problems or questions concerning Economics 1A, that cannot be resolved by the Course Secretary, your Personal Tutor, or course instructors will be passed on to the Course Coordinator.
How to contact members of the teaching staff: Most full-time members of the teaching staff have office hours (or other appointment arrangements) displayed on or near their office doors. Appointments to see staff can be made at the Economics Office. Please avoid casually knocking on office doors or phoning at other times as this can be very disruptive, even if it is only to make an appointment. Email is a less disruptive and generally more effective form of communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Room No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head of Economics</td>
<td>Simon Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Simon.Clark@ed.ac.uk">Simon.Clark@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chairman of the Exam Board</td>
<td>Mike Elsby</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Mike.Elsby@ed.ac.uk">Mike.Elsby@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Organizer</td>
<td>Sean Brocklebank</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Sean.Bocklebank@ed.ac.uk">Sean.Bocklebank@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Course Secretary</td>
<td>Dawn McManus</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Econ1A@ed.ac.uk">Econ1A@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Lecturers</td>
<td>Simon Clark</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Simon.Clark@ed.ac.uk">Simon.Clark@ed.ac.uk</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sean Brocklebank</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jan Grobovsek</td>
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<td>4.09</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

10. Computer Resources and Computer Literacy

Computer Labs

The University has open access computer labs in the Main Library, High School Yards, Appleton Tower, and many more. Please follow the link below for further details of locations and opening times.

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/services/computing/desktop-personal/open-access/locations/central-area/central-area

The labs also tend to be busy close to project/essay deadlines, so avoid periods of peak usage by practicing good time-management and completing work on your projects well before deadlines.

For insomniacs, or students with pressing deadlines and poor time-management skills, a 24 hr access lab is available in the Greenfield Suite and Hugh Robson Building. An open access lab is also available at Holland House in the Pollock Halls of Residence.

Email and the Internet

Email is now the formal means of communication by the University with its students and is used extensively by the Economics Office staff, Personal Tutors’ and Course Instructors. If you do not check your email regularly you may miss some important news. All students have a university email address and you should get into the habit of checking your email regularly (e.g. at least once a day).

When you join the University you will be given a University of Edinburgh (UoE) e-mail account and address which will be used for a variety of essential communications. You must access and manage this account regularly as the University will send you vital information from time to time, for example on exam arrangements or changed class times or locations, and will assume that you have opened and acted on these communications. Failure to do so will not be an acceptable excuse or ground for appeal.

If you already have a web-based e-mail account and think that you are unlikely to check your UoE e-mail account, it is your responsibility to set up a forward on the UoE account to ensure that all official University communications are received. There are on-screen instructions if you wish to do so:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services/services/computing/comms-and-collab/email/webmail/forwarding

If one or more of your courses use Learn e-mail, you will need to ensure that you either check both the Learn e-mail account and the UoE e-mail account in order to be sure you receive urgent and critical items of e-mail, or alternatively you could set up forwards on the Learn accounts to your UoE e-mail account so that you only have one place to check for important e-mail. Information about forwarding Learn mail can be found at:

http://ondemand.blackboard.com/students.htm

The Internet: The internet is a rich source of data and information on economics, most aspects of university administration. Economics maintains its own website (http://www.econ.ed.ac.uk). Among other things, this site includes a brief history of economics at Edinburgh, news, staff details and research interests, a set of links to other internet sites of use to economists, and general course information. The economics Learn sites also contain a wide range of more detailed course-specific
and general information. Learn can be accessed from anywhere via the internet, providing you are registered for the appropriate course or programme. More general university information can be obtained by following the links available on the main Edinburgh University website (http://www.ed.ac.uk). Internet Economist, which can be accessed from the Higher Education Academy’s Economics Network website at http://www.economics.ltsn.ac.uk/ provides a new interactive guide to and training tool for internet resources for economists, as well as more general skills such as efficient internet searching.

Edinburgh University Information Services (IS)

In addition to running the open access labs, IS provides computing support services for staff and students. IS produces an extensive range of documentation, ranging from beginners guides to word-processing, through using equation editors, to advanced guides to programming. The Learning and Resource Centre on the 2nd floor of the Main Library provides a variety of facilities for self-teaching computing and IT skills. The IS also runs a range of computing classes for undergraduates covering both introductory and more advanced aspects of word-processing, spreadsheets, email, and the internet. For further information on these classes you should consult the IS website or visit the IS reception centre. The website address is: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/information-services (or you can get there by following the links from the University home page).

11. Quality Assurance, Feedback, and Complaints and Grievances

Evaluative feedback on courses plays an important part in ‘quality control’. Such feedback incorporates a number of different perspectives: the students on the course, course instructors, the wider university, the economics profession, employers of our graduates. Student feedback is important and taken seriously. You should, however, appreciate that courses are not (and should not be) driven solely by the expressed (short-term) interests of students. It can be helpful to bear this in mind when asked to provide feedback on a course. Among other things, this can help to make the process of feedback more productive.

Class Representatives

Each tutorial elects one person in their group to act as a class representative during the 1st tutorial in semester 1. After this date, the names and email addresses of class representatives can be found on the Learn site. Acting as a representative can be a rewarding activity: taking an active interest in course and curriculum design and teaching and study methods can help improve your understanding of economics as well as develop broader skills. All students are encouraged to channel ideas and suggestions for Economics 1A through their class representative. Class representatives can meet as and when needed. The Course Coordinator can be contacted to help arrange meetings. Informal meetings are normally arranged in advance of full SSLC meetings to allow for a preliminary discussion of issues and potential agenda items for the SSLC.

Class representatives select four of their number to act as representatives on the Staff Student Liaison Committee.

The Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC).

The full SSLC comprises representatives from Economic Principles & Applications, Economics 2, and Junior and Senior Honours, as well as Economics 1A. It is convened by the Head of Economics, and normally attended by a selection of members of the teaching staff relevant to agenda items. The full SSLC meets at least once a term, with more frequent meetings (or sub-meetings involving representatives from particular classes or years) as the need arises. The SSLC provides an important forum for communication between staff and students about all aspects of teaching (though direct personal criticism is better dealt with elsewhere - see the sub-section below on complaints and grievances). The meetings generally achieve an open, frank and wide-ranging exchange of ideas that help improve the quality of economics teaching at Edinburgh. Issues that might arise include: proposals for curriculum changes, new courses or changes to assessment or teaching methods; problems with accessing readings in the library, or computing resources, or with the timing of courses and assignments.

Course questionnaires

Online course questionnaires are administered near the end of each main teaching period (a link to the online survey will be posted on Learn). The questionnaire itself has a multiple choice format, but additional written comments to amplify your responses are strongly encouraged. The questionnaire
responses (together with a report from instructors) are reviewed in detail by the Academic Audit Committee (which includes four student representatives, one from each year of the programme), as well as being reviewed by the SSLC and the Economics staff meeting.

Feedback on feedback

The minutes of the SSLC and Academic Audit Committee meetings, together with a regular newsletter on teaching developments, are available via Learn.

Complaints and grievances

While we would hope that you never have cause to put the information contained in this sub-section into use, you should be aware that there are standard procedures for dealing with complaints or grievances. The school’s procedures follow the University Student Complaints Procedure. Documentation on the University’s procedure is available on University's website at: http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-academic-services/student-complaint-procedure/complaint-procedure or can be obtained in print from the various offices of The Advice Place.

In summary terms, if you have a complaint or grievance, then, if you feel able to do so, you should start by approaching the individual concerned (e.g. a tutor or lecturer) directly. If you feel unable to do this, or you are dissatisfied with the response obtained, the next stage is to contact the Course Coordinator. If your complaint remains unresolved, you should then contact the Head of Economics. After this stage the procedure becomes more formal, and you should consult the documentation referred to above.

You should note that the University has some separate procedures to deal with particular types of complaint such as harassment, examination appeals and disciplinary matters. Documentation on these procedures can be obtained on the University website or from the Advice Place.

12. Beyond Economics 1A

**Economics 2** progresses beyond Economics 1A. The first semester of the Economics 2 will focus on the economics of risk, information and strategic behaviour, while the second semester will highlight the economics of time and growth. As with Economics 1A, relevant mathematical techniques (e.g. probability, mathematical expectations, exponential growth, basic dynamics) will be introduced alongside the associated economic analysis. The teaching, learning and assessment formats will be similar to Economics 1A, with two lectures a week plus weekly tutorials. Economics 1A and 2 in conjunction provide a deeper, more rigorous and well-rounded coverage of key economic principles than Economics 1A alone.

**Issues in Global Economics** is in year 2 of the Economics programme. Two key issues are addressed, topics in international macroeconomics, and the global economics of climate change. The teaching format is 2 lectures per week as well as tutorials.

**Entry into Economics Honours** normally requires a mark of 50% or more in Economics 2 (at the first sitting). In addition students should have passed an appropriate set of Non-Honours courses to satisfy the normal curriculum, as specified in the University Calendar, for the particular degree programme they intend to follow.

**Economics Honours** can be studied either as a single honours degree or as a joint degree together with Accounting, Arabic, Business Studies, Chinese, Economic History, Environmental Studies, Geography, Law, Management Science, Mathematics, Philosophy, Politics, Social Policy, Sociology, and Statistics. The various Honours curricula consist of a mix of compulsory and option courses. The compulsory courses aim to provide students with a good grounding in the core areas of economics, extending and developing the work of Economics 1A and 2. The menu of option courses covers a broad spectrum ranging from options with a more literary, descriptive and/or institutional, applied focus (for example History of Economic Thought), through ‘middle of the road’ options (such as Natural Resources and Environmental Economics, Development Economics) to more technically oriented options (notably Econometrics). All Honours students are also required to write a dissertation. For further information on Economics Honours consult the Economics website (particularly the Honours Handbook, which can be accessed from Learn).

**Careers** followed by economics graduates are many and varied. An economics degree does not tie you down narrowly to pursuing a career as a professional economist. The skills acquired on economics courses, along with other extra-curricular activities, are highly regarded by a wide variety
of employers. While financial services and related occupations have consistently been the modal employment category for economics graduates in recent years, the first destinations of recent graduates have also included: further study for graduate degrees or diplomas, media research, computer consultancy, various business management careers, lecturing/teaching, the government economic service, professional rugby, teaching English in Japan, and crewing in a round the world yacht race.

Career planning is a process which you can start at any stage of your university career – the sooner the better. In addition to the skills acquired through the study of economics, your time at university provides the opportunity for a rich variety of activities and experiences through your involvement in extra-curricular activities, part time employment and your use of vacations. These can also play an important part in skill development and the selection process for employment and postgraduate courses. Your involvement in these activities is not planned for you, in the same way as your undergraduate curriculum. You are responsible for the way in which you use your time at university. This is one reason why it is important to start career planning early - before it is too late to participate in the valuable opportunities that the university has to offer.

The University Careers Service website (http://www.careers.ed.ac.uk/) provides extensive guidance on career planning. This includes a section targeted at pre-final year students, an on-line career planning programme, and advice on vacation employment and internships. You are strongly encouraged to make use of this site and familiarise yourself with the facilities available in the Careers Service office located at Third Floor, Main Library Building, George Square.

Extra-curricular activities

In addition to academic coursework, the University of Edinburgh offers a wide variety of opportunities for extra-curricular activities. You are strongly encouraged to make use of these opportunities. They can play a big part in enhancing your learning and employability as well as the enjoyment you derive from university life, but remember that heavy involvement in extra-curricular activities needs to go hand-in-hand with good time-management skills. A comprehensive list of extra-curricular activities is well beyond the scope of this course Handbook, the opportunities listed below are illustrative of extra curricular activities linked closely to Economics:

- The school (sometimes in conjunction with the Economics Society) arranges a number of ad hoc talks by economists in the public and private sectors. These talks provide an opportunity to gain insight into economics in action from leading practitioners, as well as providing insight into public and private sector career paths for economists.

- The Economics Society provides a forum for social events and talks by outside speakers, and a wide variety of other activities (See www.econ-soc.co.uk for more information). There are a number of other societies with close links to economics and economics-related careers, notably the Trading and Investment Club. This club has attracted sponsorship from a number of major financial institutions, enabling it to set up its own investment fund. Other club activities include basic training in financial trading and analysis, and a series of talks on finance topics by staff from leading financial institutions. See http://www.eutic.org/ for more information. Other active student societies, such as AIESEC, perform a similar role in more general areas of business.

- EUSA, as well as various individual student societies, offer skills training sessions, covering such skills as: assertiveness; communication; leadership; presentation; team building and group work.

- More information on student societies in general, including links to the specific societies mentioned, can be found at www.eusa.ed.ac.uk/societies

- IS provides a wide range of computer classes for undergraduates, as well as facilities for self-teaching (see section 10).

- Vacation employment can provide valuable experience and learning opportunities (as well as much needed income). Thinking strategically about vacation employment, linked to career planning, can be useful.