Department of Economics – Zurich Graduate School of Economics

Rules and Regulations – Fast Track

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Graduate admission office

Track C is a so called fast-track program which is aimed at students who hold an excellent Bachelor’s degree and who are interested in pursuing an academic career.

The Zurich Graduate School of Economics at the University of Zurich offers two different tracks. Track B is a typical structured doctoral program for graduate students who have already completed a Master degree. For further details see the rules and regulations for Track B students. This version of rules and regulations is directed to Track C students. Please note that this is not a legally binding document, but just a summary of the relevant regulations (“Doktoratsordnung PO 2008” and “Promotionsverordnung PVO 2008”) which should be consulted for all legal matters.

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1 Admission to the Zurich Graduate School of Economics

To be admitted, candidates have to submit an application. The application deadline is January 31th. All applications are reviewed by the admission committee. Candidates are pre-selected based on the submitted application documents. The final selection is usually based on an interview with the pre-selected candidates.

A BA or BSc in Economics or an equivalent qualification does not automatically qualify to be admitted for the Zurich Graduate School of Economics.

For admission to Track C, a BA or BSc in Economics and excellent academic performance is required. Applicants from other fields will be considered if their academic performance is outstanding.

Depending on the overall qualification of an applicant, the doctoral committee\(^1\) can name additional requirements that have to be fulfilled either before admission or during the doctoral studies. In the latter case, an applicant who is not able to fulfil these conditions or obligations will be excluded from doctoral studies at the University of Zurich (UZH).

For applicants with appropriate qualification the director of the doctoral committee can decide whether to credit previously performed work as part of the required curricular points.

Anyone who has been rejected from the Faculty of Economics, Business Administration and IT or from a similar PhD program at another University because of failing an exam or a breach of rule will not be admitted.

2 Course work and credit points

Study Achievements are measured according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

Course work is subdivided into so-called modules. Students receive ECTS credits for each module that they have successfully passed. The amount of points corresponds to the required average workload. The precise requirements will be stated in the module description, which is available at the beginning of every term. Points cannot be given exclusively on the basis of attendance.

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\(^1\) The doctoral committee is represented by the directors of the four doctoral programs at the Faculty of Economics, Business Administration and IT.
2.1 Master Modules (first year course work)

Undergraduate modules within the first year contain master modules with a total of 60 ECTS credits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Master Modules</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>ECTS Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Obligatory modules²</td>
<td>first year</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Core elective modules</td>
<td>first year</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>60 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At least 21 credits are taken from core electives within «VWL1-3». The remaining credits can be obtained from core electives within the following fields³:

- «VWL 1-3» (Economics)
- «BWL 1-6» (Business Administration)
- «BF» (Banking and Finance)
- «ME» (Management & Economics)

For all matters concerning the courses on the MA-level the relevant regulations (Studienordnung und Rahmenordnung für den Master of Arts (MA) in Wirtschaftswissenschaften der Universität Zürich) apply and should be consulted for all legal matters.

2.2 Doctoral studies (second year course work)

Having completed the master modules, students start with the doctoral modules in the fall term of the second year. During the second year students take six core modules. The fall-semester modules have to be taken at UZH and passed at the end of the semester (or in the following make-up exam). As to the modules of the spring-semester, the timing is more flexible, even though it is recommended to obtain the credits within one year.

Immediately before the start of the second year, the Zurich Graduate School of Economics offers introductory maths courses. Attendance in these courses is highly recommended but not mandatory.

Graduate modules within the second year contain doctoral modules with a total of 27 ECTS credits. Each module has two parts: lecture (3 points) and practice (1.5 points).

² For a list of all obligatory modules read Appendix A1.4.1 of the DO 2008.
³ For a list of all MA-electives read Appendix A1.4.2 of the DO 2008.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obligatory Modules</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>ECTS Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macroeconomics for Research Students - Part I</td>
<td>fall term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microeconomics for Research Students - Part I</td>
<td>fall term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econometrics for Research Students - Part I</td>
<td>fall term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Macroeconomics for Research Students - Part II</td>
<td>spring term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microeconomics for Research Students - Part II</td>
<td>spring term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Econometrics for Research Students - Part II</td>
<td>spring term – second year</td>
<td>4.5 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Proposal (MA thesis)</td>
<td>second year</td>
<td>30 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>57 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attendance is mandatory for all regular doctoral modules. The student will receive a final grade for each single module. After having successfully finished all core modules, students will be allowed to continue the doctoral program if a Professor has committed to attend the dissertation as a supervisor.

### 2.3 Further course work

After having passed the core courses in the second year, students start taking topic or specialization courses in their third year. Students will have the opportunity to work on their dissertation projects along with attending the third year program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Elective Courses and Research Proposal</th>
<th>ECTS Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Seminars or Advanced Doctoral Courses</td>
<td>12 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>12 credits</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, students have the opportunity to present the results of their own research in several specialized seminar series. Finally, there are several weekly seminars with guest speakers. Students are supposed to fulfill the following requirements during the third phase:

At least four courses are taken from a list of (advanced) doctoral courses. Forthcoming advanced doctoral courses will be communicated at the beginning of each term through the website [www.econ.uzh.ch/dpe](http://www.econ.uzh.ch/dpe). Students who successfully pass the course will receive 3 ECTS credits.

### 2.4 Master of Science

Students which have successfully completed their research proposal and the required master modules as stated under section 2.1 will be awarded a Master’s degree according to paragraph 16 of PO 2008.

### 2.5 Teaching

Students can obtain a maximum of 3 ECTS credits for teaching. These points will be credited as interdisciplinary qualification within the Core Elective Courses and graded with “pass”. Students will have to inform the program coordinator if they want credits for their teaching activities.
2.6 External courses

Please contact the program coordinator in order to receive ECTS credits for external courses.

2.7 Study Center Gerzensee

Students have the option of substituting a certain amount of ECTS credits by credits obtained in the Swiss Program for Doctoral Students in Economics at the Study Center of Gerzensee. To compensate a second-semester core course of the Zurich Graduate School of Economics (Microeconomics for Research Students Part II, Macroeconomics for Research Students Part II, Econometrics for Research Students Part II), students will have to accomplish all four parts of the corresponding course at Gerzensee. In addition, students can choose from a variety of optional courses that the Study Center provides. Please note that the admission procedure to the Gerzensee program is separate from that of the Zurich Graduate School of Economics, and that admission into one of these programs does not guarantee acceptance to the other.

3 Research proposal and thesis

3.1 Thesis

The main part of the doctoral studies is the completion of a thesis. The doctoral thesis can either be monographic or an accumulation of published research papers, though the latter form is much more common.

All professors of the Faculty of Economics, Business Administration and IT can function as a supervisor. The supervisor recommends one or more qualified persons that can act as a co-advisor. Based on this recommendation, the doctoral committee names at least one co-advisor.

3.2 Research proposal

The research proposal is a paper that documents the student’s ability to carry out economic research in an early stage of the Ph.D. studies, usually around the beginning of the second year. The precise format should be clarified with the advisor. The research proposal must not necessarily contain a plan for the entire dissertation; usually, a promising draft of a single paper will also be accepted. After the research proposal has been completed, students have to contact the program coordinator in order to receive the corresponding 30 ECTS credits.

3.3 Completion and thesis defense

The doctoral thesis is evaluated and graded by the supervisor and co-advisor in two separate reports. The final grade for the doctoral thesis is the average of these two grades and the student can only pass if both individual grades are 4.0 or higher.
There will be a public thesis defense consisting of
- 30 minutes of thesis presentation to the supervisor and co-advisor
- 30 minutes of public discussion
The supervisor and co-advisor will determine the final grade for the thesis defense.
The final grade of the doctoral degree will be a weighted average based on grades obtained for
- thesis defense weight: 1
- doctoral thesis (monograph or cumulative thesis) weight: 3

Deadlines and schedules
Please check the [website of Office of the Dean](#) for the exact dates.

### 3.4 Publication

The dissertation must be published within two years from the date of the graduation conference. In order to ensure that all formalities are met, candidates must obtain copy approval from the Office of the Dean.

Please check the [website of Office of the Dean](#) for further details.

### 4 General Grading Rules

a. Grades are based on the Zurich University scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 4.0</td>
<td>fail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.0 and 4.25</td>
<td>pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5 and 4.75</td>
<td>satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 and 5.25</td>
<td>good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5 and 5.75</td>
<td>very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>excellent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. This grading scheme will be adopted for
   - all first-year courses (core courses)
   - Doctoral Thesis
   - Thesis Defence

c. Regulation for repeat examinations for doctoral courses is as following:
   If a candidate has failed an obligatory course, he or she has one more opportunity to obtain the required credits. Failing twice leads to exclusion from the Doctoral Program in Economics. The latter applies to non-obligatory courses, too. We therefore strongly recommend that students do not repeat a failed non-obligatory course.

d. The final grade of the doctoral degree will be a weighted average based on grades obtained for the thesis defence (weight 1) and the monographic thesis or the three essays of the doctoral thesis (weight 3).