



## Economics of Globalisation and European Integration

A Joint Master Degree

### WORKING ON YOUR DISSERTATION

#### Recommendations to students

You have been attributed a subject and a supervisor for your dissertation. We hope you will start working on your dissertation soon. This note provides information on what we expect from your work, what is a good dissertation, how to organise your work, and other important aspects.

#### What is the dissertation work?

There are four main possibilities for a dissertation:

- It may be empirical work, with an original empirical part.  
Usually, empirical work implies making econometric analysis on a database. There are other possibilities, however. For example, you may calibrate a model using other methods than econometrics, or make new simulations of an existing model.
- It may be a new theoretical development, contributing to econometric theory.  
Then, you will have to carefully choose the assumptions your theoretical work starts from, derive their consequences and interpret the results. Your theoretical analysis will often be an original variant of an existing model.
- It may be a 'meta-empirical' study.  
A 'meta-empirical' study implies collecting a large enough and representative sample of empirical papers published on the same question. Then, a database is produced, collecting all the characteristics of each study, in comparable form: main results, characteristics of the databases used, econometric methods, temporal or geographical coverage, etc. Last, econometric analysis is used for studying the impact of characteristics on the main results.
- It may be a thorough critical survey of the literature (empirical and/or theoretical).  
A critical survey implies starting from a well-defined theoretical or empirical question, collecting at least the main references available on this question, thoroughly presenting the main ideas developed in these papers, the links, similarities and contradictions between papers, and last giving a well justified point of view of your own.

In every case, the dissertation must be an original work with a clear analytical content. Original work means that your work adds something new to the existing literature, for example estimating an existing model on a new database, or proposing a new empirical approach for testing a hypothesis on an existing database. A clear analytical content implies that your study makes explicit reference to economic analysis and economic theories. For example, in an empirical study, you must describe the economic foundations of your empirical analysis.

A very good dissertation may, after some improvements, lead to publication in an average quality scientific journal.

The length of the dissertation should be kept within well-defined limits (8000 to 12000 words): quality before quantity. A dissertation exceeding the 12000 words limit may be penalised.

## The importance of the dissertation

The dissertation accounts for 15 ECTS. It is marked by your supervisor and by a reader chosen by the Exam Board. The dissertation mark is a weighted average of the grades given by the supervisor and the reader. The supervisor and the reader are from different partner universities.

Please note that 15 ECTS are 25% of the 60 ECTS attributed to the program. This means that the dissertation is of major importance (the most important courses account for 6 ECTS). You cannot graduate from the program if you fail the dissertation. When you apply for a job, you may have to use your dissertation to prove your ability to carry out good quality analytical work. A good dissertation is all the more important for a student who plans to do PhD research and aims for an academic career.

Since EGEE is a one year program, a weight of 25% implies that you are expected to work between 2.5 and 3 months full-time on your dissertation.

## Attribution of subjects and supervisors

The choice of subject, the title of the dissertation, and the choice of your supervisor are decided by the Joint Studies Board. This choice tries to follow your preferences as closely as possible. It is made under the constraints that any supervisor cannot supervise too large a number of students and that the distribution of the supervision tasks over the institutions involved in the program must not be too unequal.

The attribution process is the following one:

- You receive a list of all the dissertation subjects proposed by supervisors from all the partner universities, with, for each subject, the name and address of the supervisor. The subjects are broadly defined by a title.
- You have to send a list of three subjects to [Hubert Jayet](#), ranked in decreasing preference order. This list must not include three subjects from the same supervisor or institution. It must be sent before the deadline, approximately two weeks after the date you received the list. The two weeks period may be used for getting in touch with potential supervisors in order to get more information on the subject they propose. Failure to meet the deadline implies that you will be arbitrarily attributed a subject and a supervisor.
- You can propose a subject by yourself. We will look at the validity of your subject: it must fit in one of the four types of dissertation listed above and the field of study must be in economics of globalisation, international economics, or economics of integration. If your subject is approved, we will look for a supervisor. The subject(s) you propose must be included in the list of subjects you send to Hubert Jayet.
- Shortly after the deadline (less than one week), you will be informed of the final choice: dissertation title and name of the supervisor.

Changes in subject and/or supervisor are possible, but must be exceptional. If, for any reason, you want to change subject and/or supervisor, you must submit your request by sending a motivated letter to Hubert Jayet, and the local coordinator of the university where you are enrolled. If possible, your demand must also include the opinion of your supervisor on the proposed change. A change cannot be effective before acceptance by the Joint Studies Board.

Changes in title may be accepted, provided they do not imply a change of subject and are accepted by the supervisor. You must submit this change to Hubert Jayet and the local coordinator of the university where you are enrolled, and provide evidence that the supervisor agrees with the proposed change.

## Timing and deadlines

As a first stage of your dissertation work, you will have to prepare a brief presenting your subject, the work you expect to carry out, the datasets you expect to use and a preliminary list of references. During a lecture-free week in the second term (the exact date will be confirmed at a later stage), you will have time available for finalizing the preparation of your dissertation brief. (Students of the Academic Writing course will get feedback on their dissertation briefs by the teacher of this course.) You have to send your dissertation brief at the latest by **16 March 2019** to your supervisor and to Hubert Jayet.

The dissertation itself can be submitted on two occasions.

- For final graduation at the July Exam Board. In that case, the deadline for submission is **31 May 2019**. This deadline may be slightly postponed (one or two weeks) upon request. The request must be sent to Zuzana Kreckova, Hubert Jayet and your local coordinator early enough.
- For final graduation at the October Exam Board. In that case, the deadline for submission is **30 September 2019**. This deadline cannot be postponed.

If you miss the deadline for the July Exam Board, you always have the right to submit your dissertation for the October Exam Board.

Failure to submit the dissertation by 30 September 2019 leads to a zero mark for the dissertation. In that case, you have to submit the dissertation, as for the second time, within a period of two years, and then at the latest by 30 September 2021. (“As for the second time” means your dissertation will be considered as a “resit” examination). Exceptions to this rule are possible only if they are motivated by exceptional circumstances (usually health problems); the decision is taken by the Exam Board, after consultation of the dissertation supervisor.

If you want to ask the Exam Board to have a chance to submit your dissertation later on “as for the first time”, you have to send an official request to the Exam Board, justifying the change in the date of submission and indicating when you expect the dissertation will be submitted. The official request should be sent to Hubert Jayet and your local coordinator.

## **Organising your work**

Usually, the subject proposed by your supervisor is only broadly defined. Your first task will be to narrow your subject. With the help of your supervisor, you will have to determine the type of work you want to carry out; to define the main scientific questions you will try to answer, either theoretically or empirically, or to determine the scope of your meta-analysis or your literature review; to collect the main references of the scientific literature you will be using.

For an applied work, you must determine which data sets you will use, and, with the help of your supervisor, how you can access them. For a theoretical work, you will have to choose the basic characteristics of the model you will be working on.

All this preliminary work will naturally lead you to the preparation of your brief, which is at the same time the result of your investigation and the roadmap for the work which follows. At the end of the second term, you should know clearly what you will be doing and how.

You have to work regularly. Too many students, under the pressure of lectures and examinations, delay working on their dissertation and start only after the end of the third term, between July and September. You must know that starting in July is almost never a good strategy. You will probably not have enough time for dissertation work: you need approximately three months of full-time work, and it is unlikely that between July and September you will devote all your time to work on your dissertation. Moreover, unexpected problems in data accessibility, data collection, software availability, production of data bases, etc. are bound to occur, and it will be difficult to solve them during the holiday period.

Therefore, the best strategy is to organise your dissertation work so as to be able to work without too much stress during the July-September period. This means that, even when you are under the pressure of lectures and examinations, you have to commit yourself to work regularly on your dissertation, for example by devoting at least half a day per week to your dissertation.

Of course, these problems are all the more important when you plan to submit for graduation at the July Exam Board. In that case, from December to May, you have to devote about 15 hours per week to your dissertation.

## **Contacts with your supervisor**

As soon as you know your subject and the identity of your supervisor, you have to get in touch with him or her. The first type of information you can expect from your supervisor is information helping you to narrow your subject, to define your research question, to build your bibliography and to find the data you will be working on.

The function of the supervisor is to guide you and to help you during the whole dissertation work. The supervisor provides you with information needed to start working on the subject. He or she mentions basic sources and makes suggestions on how you can find further material; this will help you when you review the literature on your topic. For an applied work, the supervisor helps you to find the relevant datasets and to choose the appropriate econometric methods (or other type of methods you need for an applied work). Do not expect that your supervisor points out *all* references or datasets, especially if these are easy to find. The supervisor comments your choices, your results and the first drafts of your dissertation.

It is not your supervisor who does the research and writes your dissertation: that is *your work*. Your supervisor will accompany you, help you get started, provide guidance, suggest ways to solve difficulties, and comment on your drafts.

Since you are likely to work at distance from your supervisor, you will need to contact him or her by mail or Skype. This is not really a problem if you are regularly in touch with each other. You may expect that your supervisor replies quickly to your questions (two to three days) and does not wait too long to comment on results or a draft (one week or slightly more, depending upon the extent of the work). Conversely, you should not be silent for too long a period. If you do not get in touch with your supervisor during three months, he or she is likely to conclude you are not doing any work at all and as a result may be inclined not to help you anymore. Being silent (or almost silent) between January and June and starting to ask for help in July only is one of the worse things you can do.

Do not forget that your supervisor has the right to go on holidays, and will very likely do so for some time in July or August. If you are regularly in touch with your supervisor, this period will not be difficult to manage: your supervisor will help you organise your work during the holiday period.

Of course, it may happen that your supervisor does not react to your messages or is not providing the help and guidance you are entitled to. If that is the case, this is what you should do:

- Keep track of all the correspondence you had with your supervisor (mails you sent, mails you received), so as to provide evidence of failure from the supervisor.
- Send a motivated letter to your local coordinator by email, explaining in a detailed way the troubles you experienced with your supervisor (e.g. mails you repeatedly sent without any answer). If, for any reason, you cannot send the letter to the coordinator, send it to Zuzana Kreckova and Hubert Jayet, with copy to the coordinator.
- The local coordinator will get in touch with the Joint Studies Board and try to find a solution. If needed, a change of supervisor may be decided by the Exam Board.

## **Plagiarism**

### ***What is plagiarism?***

There is plagiarism when you are using the work of others in a way their contribution cannot be readily identified. There are many forms of plagiarism, with various degrees of severity. Going from minor forms to major forms, we can distinguish:

- Quoting other documents without appropriately following the standard rules applying to citations. These rules oblige you to make an explicit reference to the source you are using and to put in quotation marks every extract from this source you are including in your document.
- Taking ideas from other documents without making reference to them, even if you reformulate these ideas so that there is no citation.
- Producing a document which, to a large extent, is a compilation of extracts from other documents without any original contribution from you, even if you follow the rules for citation.
- Taking a document from elsewhere with minor changes only, and publishing it as if it were your own contribution.

Scientific knowledge results from a cumulative process, where everyone starts from ideas and results developed by others to build their own contribution. Using the work of others is normal. It is, however, not acceptable to pretend that the work of others is your own, or not to acknowledge that you are indebted to others. This is reprehensible from a moral point of view. Moreover, if everyone were plagiarising, the

best response of everyone would be protection against plagiarism with the result of a much lower diffusion of ideas and a much lower development of scientific knowledge.

### ***Examples of plagiarism***

Let us look at the following example:

In order to answer the dozen of the questions that Fair Trade is provoking we need to have a look into the history of the movement and give the definition of Fair Trade as detailed as possible. Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade organizations (backed by consumers) are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade. The idea of fair trade in its contemporary form has been developing in parallel with the process of globalization.

On the official web site of the World Fair Trade Organisation (see: <http://wfto.com/fair-trade/definition-fair-trade>), we find:

*“Fair Trade is a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. Fair Trade organizations have a clear commitment to Fair Trade as the principal core of their mission. They, backed by consumers, are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.”* They can be recognised by the WFTO logo.

Fair Trade is more than just trading:

- It proves that greater justice in world trade is possible.
- It highlights the need for change in the rules and practice of conventional trade and shows how a successful business can also put people first.
- It is a tangible contribution to the fight against poverty, climate change and economic crisis.

The similarity between the two documents is clear. There is plagiarism because there is no possibility for the reader to identify the extract used by the writer and to know the source. The paragraph should have been written like this:

In order to answer the dozen of the questions that Fair Trade is provoking we need to have a look into the history of the movement and give the definition of Fair Trade as detailed as possible. The World Fair Trade Organisation defines “Fair Trade [as] a trading partnership, based on dialogue, transparency and respect, that seeks greater equity in international trade. It contributes to sustainable development by offering better trading conditions to, and securing the rights of, marginalized producers and workers – especially in the South. [Fair Trade organizations (backed by consumers)] are engaged actively in supporting producers, awareness raising and in campaigning for changes in the rules and practice of conventional international trade.”

(<http://wfto.com/fair-trade/definition-fair-trade>)

The idea of fair trade in its contemporary form has been developing in parallel with the process of globalization.

The quotation marks identify the extract. The extract is referenced giving the web address. The bracketed expressions correspond to minor changes needed for an adaptation to the text.

Let us now consider a second example:

In 1968, the expression “Trade not aid” was coined at a UNCTAD conference in Delhi, arguing that achieving trading conditions is preferable to receiving continued foreign aid (Rice 2001). Alternative Trading Organisations (ATOs) started selling the products of people from developing countries to consumers in the North, and thus created so-called 'alternative markets' in which the rules were different from those of the ‘ordinary’ markets (basically that meant that the producers were paid above market price) (Milford, 2004).

In the document referenced as Milford (2004), we find:

The idea of Fair Trade originated in the 1960s as a response to the dissatisfaction of developing countries with their terms of trade. The expression 'Trade not aid' was coined at a UNCTAD conference at this time, arguing that achieving better trading conditions is preferable to receiving continued foreign aid (Rice 2001). Alternative Trading Organisations (ATOs) started selling the products of people from developing countries to consumers in the North, and thus created so-called 'alternative markets' in which the rules were different from those of the 'ordinary' markets, meaning that the producers were paid above market price. Typically, these organisations operated the whole chain, and were responsible for the importing as well as the distribution and sale of the products, often in special 'World shops'. The range of products included handicrafts as well as foodstuffs.

Once again, the dissertation includes an extract from another document. The difference is that the source is referenced (Milford, 2004). However, there are no quotation marks, so that the reader cannot immediately know that some sentences are copied literally from Milford's text. This is again plagiarism, even if it is weaker than in the previous example.

A version without plagiarism would be:

The slogan 'Trade not aid' was launched at a UNCTAD conference held in Delhi in 1968. The argument was "that achieving trading conditions is preferable to receiving continued foreign aid (Rice 2001). Alternative Trading Organisations (ATOs) started selling the products of people from developing countries to consumers in the North, and thus created so-called 'alternative markets' in which the rules were different from those of the 'ordinary' markets, meaning that the producers were paid above market price." (Milford, 2004: 8).

The quoted text, which is now in quotation marks, must be identical to the original one. The source is properly acknowledged, including the page number.

Let us now consider a third example:

*This matters both to producers (so that they can have some certainty for the future) and to fair-trade purchasers, so that suppliers are available even in the rare "boom" years when prices are high and the need for fair trade seems less pressing.* Summarizing the main principles of Fair Trade we are led to the 3 main promises that have to be provided to the producers of mainly agricultural goods in developing countries of "South": - the fair price for their goods will be covering both the cost of production and guarantees for a sustainable living; - the contracts will be concluded on the long term conditions that provide real security; - they will be supported in gaining the knowledge and skills needed to develop their business, increase their sales, and therefore, work their way out of poverty. *The aim of the fair trade movement is to encourage community development and empowerment of growers by guaranteeing minimum prices and conditions through the application, monitoring and enforcement of a fair trade supply agreement and code of conduct (Brown, 1993). Fair trade is thus a compelling example of a mechanism by which human rights can be protected within the economy (McIntosh et al., 1998).* For most people, Fair Trade is usually synonymous with 'fair price'. The minimum price is the central and most contentious criteria of the Fairtrade conditions (the fair price is rather arbitrarily determined – with references to covering the costs of production and basic needs but no adjustment for inflation for the last 15 years) (Ronchi, 2006) . But critics argue that Fair Trade's price guarantees are the equivalent of a subsidy, and that it encourages overproduction and lowers prices for commodities across the board, making matters worse for non-Fair Trade farmers (Belanger, 2007). Like the local and organic movements, Fair Trade ties the quality of the product to the farmer's quality of life and the long-term health of the land. Another objection also relates to the price-setting mechanism. *The use of a price floor in the Fairtrade model is a fundamental interference to the efficient functioning of the free market. By keeping prices high through the Fairtrade price floor mechanism, farmers and producers cannot sell their surplus bumper crop because there are not enough willing buyers at the high price. The result is wasted product that could have been sold if the price has been allowed to be lower, known as a 'dead weight loss' (Nicholls, 2008).* Obviously such a phenomenon as Fair Trade raises a lot of support and critics at the same time. That is why it is important to get to know the distinctions of Fair trade from the common and well known forms of international trade which will allow us then to provide a comparison with free trade. How does it differ? *The underlying understanding in Fair Trade is that the ways in which international, national and local markets are structured has critical implications for people's livelihoods. This means that economic growth in itself is not necessarily sufficient for poverty reduction (Mayoux, 2001). Fair Trade seems to criticize the structures and systems governing market relations which may increase poverty, social injustice and harm the environment.* Fair Trade appeared on the world arena possessing itself as an alternative way to trade, "an alternative approach to conventional international trade" as defined by FINE. This should lead 46to the

conclusion that Fair Trade is an absolutely new and different way to trade and do business. So what would be the specific features of Fair Trade that could become the identifying characteristics for it?

Here, the sentences in bold characters come from various documents. There are no quotation marks and, at least in one case, references are missing. Moreover, almost half this text comes from other documents. Even if there were no problems with rules for quoting, this is too much. An original contribution must be more than a series of quotations from other documents.

### ***Penalisation of plagiarism***

We have a very strict policy with respect to plagiarism. All the dissertations are submitted to Turnitin, a software program especially developed for the detection of plagiarism. The output of Turnitin is a report displaying all the similarities found between the document analysed and other sources (journal articles, books, working papers, dissertations, etc.). Every Turnitin report is analysed carefully, so as to check whether the similarities found are effectively plagiarism or not.

If there is a suspicion of plagiarism, the supervisor and the student are informed and are invited to send their observations to the Joint Studies Board, before any decision is made.

Every student who is found guilty of plagiarism is penalised, even for weak forms of plagiarism. Of course, the penalty depends upon the degree of plagiarism: for weak forms of plagiarism, the student will have to resubmit the dissertation after correcting it; for stronger forms of plagiarism, the student will have to submit a new dissertation on a different topic. For the strongest forms, the Exam Board may decide that the student has failed all exams and has to take them again as resits, or that the student is altogether excluded from the program.

### ***Avoiding plagiarism***

The first thing you have to do to avoid plagiarism is simply to do original work, of your own. Every simple compilation of work carried out by others strongly increases the risk of plagiarism. Moreover, it does not correspond to what we consider as a good dissertation.

Of course, carrying out original work is not enough, at least for the simple reason that, even when your contribution is original work, it largely makes use of earlier contributions on the same topic. What you have to do is:

- to identify carefully all the contributions you are using, whatever their origin (journal articles, dissertations, unpublished documents, web sources);
- to list them exhaustively in your bibliography;
- to refer explicitly to each contribution in the text of your dissertation as soon as you are using an idea, a result, a method, a model, ... coming from this contribution.

We encourage you to explain clearly what you are using from the literature and what you consider as your original contribution to the literature. It will help the reader identify what is really your own work. And this is an important criterion for marking your dissertation.

Even a survey of the literature may (and must) be original work. Of course, a survey makes extensive use of existing contributions. But the point of view chosen for making the synthesis, the way you are (i) comparing the contributions you are examining, and (ii) drawing the conclusions this review is leading to, all must be your work. For good examples, you can look at the survey articles published by the *Journal of Economic Literature*.

Last but not least, you have to follow the standard rules for quoting:

- Every extract from any document must be well and integrally identified. Usually, this identification is carried out using quotation marks: “[T]he use of a price floor in the Fairtrade model is a fundamental hindrance to the efficient functioning of the free market. By keeping prices high through the Fairtrade price floor mechanism, farmers and producers cannot sell their surplus bumper crop because there are not enough willing buyers at the high price.” (Nicholls, 2008: 9). You may also put the quoted extract in a separate and indented paragraph, with smaller characters:

[T]he use of a price floor in the Fairtrade model is a fundamental hindrance to the efficient functioning of the free market. By keeping prices high through the Fairtrade price floor mechanism, farmers and producers cannot sell their surplus bumper crop because there are not enough willing buyers at the high price. (Nicholls, 2008: 9).

In most cases, quotation marks are used for short extracts, and indented paragraphs for longer extracts.

- Every citation must be followed by a reference to an entry of the bibliography including all the relevant information needed to access the document. Usually, the reference is a parenthesis including the name(s) of the author(s) followed by the year of publication. You may also put a number in brackets; in that case, your bibliography is numbered and the number following the citation is the number of the corresponding bibliographic entry.
- You are allowed to make small changes to the original extract, omitting a few words or making grammatical changes. But every change must be identified: three parenthesised dots when you omit, changed words in squared brackets.
- A quote must be a small extract of a document, a few sentences only. Long extracts, e.g. a whole page, are not allowed.
- In total, the quotes you make must be a small part of your document and a small part of the documents you quote (as a rule of thumb, less than 5%).

***For more information***

You can look at the following web site: <http://www.plagiarism.org/>.