

Programme Specification

MSc by Research Economics (full-time)

PFTZECOXXXHS

For students entering in 2027/28

This document sets out key information about your Programme and forms part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

Awarding Institution	University of Reading
Teaching Institution	University of Reading
Length of Programme	MSc by Research Economics (full-time) - 12 months
Accreditation	N/A
Programme Start Dates	September
QAA Subject Benchmarking Group	N/A

Programme information and content

The MSc by Research in Economics is designed to prepare students for doctoral-level research. Students will gain an advanced understanding of state-of-the-art research methodologies and techniques by studying research-oriented modules and complete an extended research project as part of their dissertation. Students will learn from academics at the frontier of their research fields, through a combination of lectures, classes, workshops and independent work, in a vibrant research-focused department. As a Master by Research degree, the programme emphasises independent study, discussions, and presentations over taught instructions.

Programme Learning Outcomes

-MSc by Research Economics (full-time)

During the course of the Programme, you will have the opportunity to develop a range of skills, knowledge and attributes (known as learning outcomes) For this programme, these are:

Learning outcomes	
1	An understanding of what constitutes quality in research.
2	The ability to critically analyse the academic literature about a specific research area, to develop a comprehensive review of the literature and to identify gaps for further research.
3	An understanding of the fundamental theories in the chosen area of research and the ability to identify and critically evaluate the assumptions underlying a particular model or approach.
4	The ability to apply the array of approaches to research for the chosen subject area to think logically and to apply analytical principles to a range of issues in the chosen research area.
5	An understanding of core quantitative research techniques and applications.

You will be expected to engage in learning activities to achieve these Programme learning outcomes. Assessment of your modules will reflect these learning outcomes and test how far you have met the requirements for your degree.

To pass the Programme, you will be required to meet the progression or accreditation and award criteria set out below.

Module information

The programme comprises 180 credits, allocated across a range of compulsory and optional modules as shown below. Compulsory modules are listed.

Compulsory modules

Module	Name	Credits	Level
ECM701	Frontiers of Economic Research	20	M
ECM702	Dissertation	100	M
ECM703	Advances in Causal Inference	20	M

Remaining credits will be made up of optional modules available in the Department of Economics. Up to 20 credits may be replaced by modules from elsewhere in the University from an approved list.

Part-time or flexible modular arrangements

The programme can be taken part-time over two years. In the first year of study, a student will normally be required to complete taught modules totalling no less than 40 credits and no more than 60 credits. In the second year of study, a student will normally be required to complete the taught module and the dissertation. The programme cannot be completed over more than two years.

Placement opportunities

N/A

Study abroad opportunities

N/A

Optional modules

The optional modules available can vary from year to year. An indicative list of the range of optional modules for your programme can be found online in the Course Catalogue. Details of optional modules for each part, including any additional costs associated with the optional modules, will be made available to you prior to the beginning of the Part in which they are to be taken and you will be given an opportunity to express interest in the optional modules that you would like to take. Entry to optional modules will be at the discretion of the University and subject to availability and may be subject to pre-requisites, such as completion of another module. Although the University tries to ensure you are able to take the optional modules in which you have expressed interest this cannot be guaranteed.

Teaching and learning delivery

You will be taught through lectures, tutorials, seminars, workshops and PC classes. Assessment takes a variety of formats; tutorials are assessed by class discussions of assigned readings or take-home exercises which need to be prepared ahead of the tutorial meeting, PC classes are primarily assessed via the submission of applied research projects, lecture material for most modules is assessed via a combination of coursework assignments and end of year examination. You will also be assessed carrying out oral presentations, and group projects.

Elements of your programme will be delivered via digital technology.

The scheduled teaching and learning activity hours and amount of technology enhanced learning activity for your programme will depend upon your module combination. In addition, you will undertake some self-scheduled teaching and learning activities, designed by and/or involving staff, which give some flexibility for you to choose when to complete them. You will also be expected to undertake guided independent study. Information about module study hours including contact hours and the amount of independent study which a student is normally expected to undertake for a module is indicated in the relevant module description.

Accreditation details

N/A

Assessment

The programme will be assessed through a combination of written examinations, coursework (including class tests) and presentations. Further information is contained in the individual module descriptions.

Progression

N/A

Classification

The University's taught postgraduate marks classification is as follows:

Mark Interpretation

70 - 100% Distinction

60 - 69% Merit

50 - 59% Good standard (Pass)

Failing categories:

40 - 49% Work below threshold standard

0 - 39% Unsatisfactory Work

For Master's Degree

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Master's degree:

Award of a Master's degree

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 180 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 120 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%
- (iv) a mark of 50% or more for the Dissertation

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Master's degree, the following **further** conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 180 credits and marks of 70% in at least 90 credits

AND

Where the dissertation is included in the conditions for the award of a Master's degree, a mark of at least 60% in the dissertation

AND

No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 180 credits

OR

an overall average of 58% or more over 180 credits and marks of 60% in at least 90 credits

AND

No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Diploma

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma:

Award of a Postgraduate Diploma

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 120 credits
- (ii) a mark of 50% or more in at least 80 credits
- (iii) no credits with a mark below 40%

In addition to the threshold conditions for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma, the following further conditions must be satisfied for a classification of Distinction or Merit:

Distinction

An overall weighted average of 70% or more over 120 credits

OR

an overall weighted average of 68% or more over 120 credits and marks of 70% in at least

60 credits
AND
No marks below 40%.

Merit

An overall weighted average of 60% or more over 120 credits
OR
an overall average of 58% or more over 120 credits and marks of 60% in at least 60 credits
AND
No marks below 40%.

For Postgraduate Certificate

The following conditions must be satisfied for the award of a Postgraduate Certificate:

Award of a Postgraduate Certificate

- (i) an overall weighted average of 50% or more over 60 credits
- (ii) No credits with a mark below 40%.

Details of the classification method is given in detail in the [Assessment Handbook](#) under:

- Section 19: Awards: Postgraduate Master's, Postgraduate Diploma, Postgraduate Certificate

Please note that there may be a specific version for your year of entry.

Additional costs of the programme

Students are encouraged to discuss the purchase of textbooks or other resources with the module convenor before purchasing. Some books may be available second-hand, which will reduce costs. A range of resources to support your curriculum, including textbooks, electronic resources and computer facilities are available through the library and through both the Department of Economics and the Department of Politics and International Relations.

Printing and photocopying facilities are available on campus at a cost per A4 page of £0.05 (black and white) and £0.30 (colour). Essential costs in this area will be low as most coursework is submitted electronically.

Costs are indicative and may vary according to optional modules chosen and are subject to inflation and other price fluctuations. Estimates were calculated in 2026.

Students may consider purchasing a laptop to help support their learning. Information on recommended device specifications can be found on the [DTS Student Hub](#).

For further information about your Programme please refer to the Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions, which are available at

<http://www.reading.ac.uk/module/>. The Programme Handbook and the relevant module descriptions do not form part of your Terms and Conditions with the University of Reading.

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30 July 2026

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