



**ASHOKA**  
UNIVERSITY

# **MA Economics**

## Academic Information

For the batch of 2019-21 and beyond  
(as at 23 August 2020)

# I. Introduction

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Masters in Economics is a two-year, four-semester degree. Students study eight compulsory courses and at least nine electives (or its equivalent). The program begins with a preparatory two-week math camp that reviews and introduces the principal mathematical concepts and techniques commonly used in economics. In the first year of the program, students grow deep roots in the foundations of modern economics as they are provided with a rigorous introduction to microeconomics, macroeconomics, math, quantitative techniques, statistics and econometrics. This rigorous training prepares them for the more research-focussed and specialised elective courses that they have to choose from in the second year. The goal of these elective courses is to allow students to develop an appreciation of the current research frontier and to be able to apply these advanced methods to economic problems.

The courses across the two years are:

First year:

- Before Semester 1 begins: Math Camp (2 credits)
- Semester 1: Microeconomics 1, Macroeconomics 1, Statistics for Economics, Quantitative Techniques.
- Semester 2: Microeconomics 2, Macroeconomics 2, Econometrics 1, and an elective (to be announced).

Second year:

- Take at least eight electives over the two semesters in the second year. These electives may include the 'Independent Study in Economics' course in the third semester and the 'MA Dissertation' in the fourth semester. The prerequisite for enrolling in MA Dissertation is a letter grade of B or above in Independent Study in Economics. Students eligible for MA Dissertation may choose not to do the dissertation and take another elective instead.

All courses (except the Math Camp) are for 4 credits. The exact list of elective courses offered in any semester will be announced closer to the date. Amongst others, students can expect elective courses in the following areas: Advanced Game Theory, Asymmetric Information Models, Monetary Economics, Advanced Macroeconomics, Behavioral Economics, Decision Theory, Economic and Social Networks, Experimental Economics, Health Economics, Economics of Discrimination, Economics of Agricultural Transformation, Economics of Education, History of Economic Thought, Industrial Organization, International Economics, Public Economics, Political Economy, Time Series Analysis.

## II. Graduation Requirements

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To complete the MA Economics degree, you must meet the following requirements:

- Pass the seven compulsory MA Economics courses: Microeconomics 1 and 2, Macroeconomics 1 and 2, Statistics for Economics, Quantitative Techniques, and Econometrics I;
  - If a student fails a compulsory course, in the first or the second semester, they are strongly encouraged to appear for a re-examination which will be held at the beginning of the next semester. On passing the re-examination, the student will get a D-. Passing the re-examination guarantees that the student's MA degree requirements are met.
  - If a student fails the re-examination, then they must sit for the course again.
  - Students are allowed to retake a compulsory course even when they have passed the course in the first attempt. The transcript will show all course attempts, but grades from only the final course attempt will count towards the CGPA. The grade obtained in the earlier attempt will be cancelled. The format of the transcript will be prepared by the OAA in due course of time.
  - If a student, who has failed a compulsory course, decides to skip the re-examination and directly re-take the course, they should note three points. First, they would be able to do so only after a year. All interim transcripts will report F grade for the said course. Second, the department does not guarantee that the compulsory course would not clash with any other courses in the semester timetable. Third, if the student fails again, it will put the student's graduation plan at risk. The instructor of the course may change, which may make the course harder for the student.
- Pass at least nine (9) elective courses. If you fail an elective course, you may take additional electives to fulfil the graduation criteria. However grades of all courses that have been taken for credit will be included in the transcripts and factored in calculating your CGPA;
- pay all fees that are due; and
- have no disciplinary actions pending against you.

In all, you will have 4 years to complete the degree.

### III. Assessments

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The structure of examinations and grounds for assessment in any course is determined by the faculty member teaching it and, therefore, may differ from one course to the other. There are many forms of assessed assignments at Ashoka. These include (but are not limited to) essays, projects, problem sets, term papers, on-line discussion forum contributions, oral presentations, quizzes, midterms and final exam. You must interact with the faculty and find out if they have specific expectations regarding examinations or assignments for their courses. Typically, the final grade for the course is arrived at through a weighted average of the various assignments given.

Students are awarded a letter grade based on their performance in a course. Except when a student fails a compulsory course, there are no provisions for a student to improve their grades in any course. The grading scheme below is used for all courses at Ashoka University at large. Your CGPA is determined by taking an average of the GPA quality points from each course you have taken.

Letter Grade	GPA Quality Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D+	1.3
D	1.0
D-	0.7
F	0.0

## IV. Structure of Courses

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Taught courses at Ashoka typically run for 13 weeks and in each week there are four meeting hours. Of these, three are spent in lectures, and one in attending discussion sections or office hours. Some courses may be offered over a shorter duration but any such course will involve at least 52 contact hours, with 39 of them devoted to lectures.

A typical Ashoka class consists not merely of lectures by the professor; it usually involves substantial student participation too. You are expected to do all the work assigned for that day's class as required by the instructor. This will require careful preparation and skilled time management in the days before each class.

## V. Attendance

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We insist on regular attendance and active participation in classes. Each course instructor will announce his or her own attendance policy.

You may drop or withdraw from a course in any semester, subject to certain deadlines and conditions or permissions. You may withdraw from a course at any time in the first 2 weeks of a semester. However, to drop a course in weeks 3-4, you will need permission from the Dean of Academic Affairs. If you wish to withdraw from a course in weeks 5-8, then you will require the Dean's permission and your transcript will show a 'W' for such a course. If you withdraw in week 9 or later, your transcript will show 'W' with F (Fail notation) or X (Exceptional circumstances notation).

## VI. Academic Advisor

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Each student in the Masters Programme is assigned an academic advisor. The advisor shall serve as your mentor. You are expected to meet the advisor at least once a month with updates about progress and future plans. Very often, the advisor may ask you to perform a particular task or address a particular issue. It is your responsibility to make sure that you follow up on the matter. At the beginning of every semester, your study plan must be ratified by your advisor.

## VII. Master's Dissertation

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You have the option of writing a Master's Dissertation in your second year in the program. The thesis is equivalent to two elective courses. To exercise this option, you must find a thesis advisor willing to supervise your thesis (note that your thesis advisor may be different from your academic advisor). This process needs to start early. If you wish to write a Master's thesis in your second year, you need to finalise a thesis advisor and a broad area of your dissertation topic by the summer between your first and second year, and submit the dissertation form to the Coordinator for the MA Economics programme by the specified deadline.

Your advisor for the MA Dissertation should be either a *permanent* faculty from Ashoka's Economics department or a *permanent* faculty from any other department of Ashoka. In case of the latter, you must also find a co-advisor who is a permanent faculty at the Economics department, Ashoka University.

If you intend to do the Master's Dissertation, then you should register for the Independent Study in Economics (ISE henceforth) course in your third semester of study. There will be a compulsory evaluation of your progress at the end of the third semester by your advisor. This evaluation will be based on the minimum expectation of work in ISE. The minimum expectation consists of a problem statement, a survey of relevant literature, and a proposal for work to be done in the next (fourth) semester. If you earn a letter grade of B or above in ISE, you will be eligible to register for the MA Dissertation course in the fourth semester. However, an eligible student may choose not to continue their dissertation after the end of the third/ before the beginning of the fourth semester. If you do not earn a letter grade less than B, you will not be eligible to register for MA Dissertation course and you will have to discontinue the dissertation. In either case, the ISE will be counted as one of your electives.

## VIII. The Ashoka Liberal Arts Audits

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Starting from your second semester, you have the option of auditing 3000 level or 4000 level undergraduate courses offered by any department including Economics. The only below-3000 level course you may audit is the MAT 103: Real Analysis course offered by the Department of Mathematics. You may also audit any MA Economics elective subject to the instructor's approval. Your grades in these courses will not count towards your CGPA but will be reported on your transcript. *Any plan to audit a course has to be discussed with and approved by the MA Coordinator.* Please note that the course instructor has the final say about whether you are permitted to audit a course.

## **IX. Plagiarism, Cheating and Grades**

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It is mandatory for students to follow the prescribed code of conduct for any form of academic assessment, and display utmost integrity through the process. The programme views plagiarism and violation of academic integrity with utmost seriousness and any instance of these will attract severe penalty.

Plagiarism is the use of another's original work, such as articles, reports and presentation materials (in full or part), or codes, formulas and ideas, without acknowledging or seeking permission where necessary from the author or source. Accordingly, verbatim reproduction of sentences in part or full without acknowledgement or permission to do so is considered plagiarism. We encourage you to explore [plagiarism.org](http://plagiarism.org), an excellent website that can help understand plagiarism and also do a first-level self-check.

Any violation of academic integrity will be reported to the Office of Academic Affairs (OAA) where a confidential record of all such instances are kept. The penalty for the violation of academic integrity is determined by the instructor concerned. If a student admits to violation, but disagrees with the penalty, the matter will be escalated to the Head of the Department to review the penalty, and then to the Dean of Academic Affairs (DAA) if necessary. If a student does not admit to violation, then the OAA will escalate the matter to the Plagiarism Committee. First time violations lead to a mandatory training about academic integrity, regardless of the penalty imposed. Cases of repeated violation will be forwarded to the DAA, who may consider further measure – in consultation with the Plagiarism Committee and the student's faculty mentor/ academic advisor.

Course instructors, Teaching Fellows and invigilators are charged with communicating ways of preventing the violations mentioned above to students in the context of their particular class. Instructors are responsible for specifying the level of interaction, exchanges of ideas and discussions allowed for each group or individual assignment.

## **X. Feedback**

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In order to stay finely tuned to student experience in the Masters programme, the University seeks regular feedback on academics. It is mandatory for students to submit their feedback on academic courses every term. Grades for a course will only be published once the feedback has been received from the cohort.