

**University of Waterloo
Department of Economics**

Guidelines - PHD WRITTEN COMPREHENSIVE EXAMS (PART 1)

Part 1 of the PhD Comprehensive exams consists of three written exams, one in each of the core subject areas of microeconomics, macroeconomics and econometrics. The goal of the exams is to assess whether the core material in economics has been mastered. The following provides details on the Department's process for administering these exams.

1. The exams are scheduled to take place on the first three Tuesdays in June, and if a second attempt is needed, on the first three Tuesdays in August.
2. There will be three examination committees, each responsible for administering one of the exams, micro, macro or econometrics. There will normally be two to three faculty members on each committee.
3. The core curriculum and structure of the exam will be decided and approved by the committee members using the chosen syllabus/curriculum as a guideline and with grading weight explicitly attached to each question.
4. A copy of the exam will be kept by the Department Graduate Office.
5. A syllabus/curriculum outlining what material the students will be responsible for will be given out to the students by May 1. Students will be given the last two years' exams, but not the answer keys.
6. Committee members will schedule office hours for at least two weeks prior to the exams and be available to answer student questions.
7. Each exam will normally be of 3 hours duration and may be closed or open book, as determined by the examination committee. At least one committee member will be available on campus during the exam.
8. The exam will first be graded and ranked independently by all members of the appropriate examination committee. Each committee will then hold a meeting to discuss the grading and arrive at a decision as to whether each student has passed or failed the exam.
9. There will be a meeting in approximately the last week of June for faculty on the examination committees and the Graduate Advisor to discuss the exam results, after which time students will be told their results by the Graduate Advisor.
10. The milestone for Part 1 of the Comprehensive Exam is passed when all three exams have been passed. There is one re-write opportunity for a failed exam. Only the subject(s) that have been failed are rewritten.

