

Master's Program

Educational Mission

The general mission of the Graduate School of Economics is to develop scholars and professionals who can contribute to the society as just and ethical global citizens (“The Ritsumeikan Charter”) with high levels of academic knowledge and analytical skills in economics.

1. Economic Theory and Policy Course

This course provides a master program based on the topics from the core curricula to the applied subjects of economics in order to produce economic researchers and highly-specialized professionals who can analyze economic problems and provide appropriate policy solutions to the problems.

2. Regional Economy and Management Research Course

This course focuses on regional economic analysis methods and develops regional policy making and management abilities based on fundamental economic theories. The course aims to cultivate highly-specialized professionals in both the public and private sector who can propose policies capable of ensuring the sustainable development of local areas confronted with enormous difficulties.

3. Tax and Financial Affairs Course

To cultivate specialists in accounting, taxation and corporate finance, this course offers a master program focusing primarily on the boundary area related to law and business management as well as economics. Providing academic support for the acquisition of additional higher qualifications, the course develops professional accountants with high-quality skills who can meet the needs of the times.

4. Master's Program in Economic Development (MPED)

Conducted entirely in English, this program is designed to provide international students with a sound understanding, appreciation of current issues, and skills in economics, with a major focus on economic development in developing countries. Using its international environment, the program also offers to Japanese students wishing to cooperate with other countries and play active roles on the global stage the opportunity to develop high communicative competence in English. The aim of MPED is to produce international professionals with highly-specialized skills in global business and policy enforcement.

Diploma Policy

As described above, the purpose of the Graduate School is to train first-rate researchers and highly skilled professionals equipped with a high level of expertise in economics and its application as well as communication skills they can employ on the global stage. The Graduate School has clearly defined capabilities (educational goals) students must attain to complete the Master's Program, as will be stated below. Students are granted the degree of master (economics) once they obtain the capabilities and meet the requirements established by the Graduate School for degree completion. At that point, they are considered to have reached the educational goals we have identified.

(1) Educational goals common to the courses

(capabilities, skills, expertise, etc., students are required to attain in order to obtain the degree)

- (i) Acquire knowledge of fundamental theories of economics and their application required to pursue higher-level theoretical studies.
- (ii) Acquire the capabilities to apply economics theories in order to analyze the present-day economic system and phenomena observed within their historical developments, and to propose policies to solve problems.
- (iii) Acquire a high level of global communication capability and general-purpose skills required of first-rate professionals.

(2) Educational goals for individual courses

(i) Economic Theory and Policy Course

Acquire a thorough understanding of the range of economics theories used on the global stage, gain the basic skills needed for theoretical analysis, and acquire globally competitive capabilities required of highly skilled professionals to think logically, solve problems, and propose policies.

(ii) Regional Economy and Management Research Course

Acquire a diverse array of specialist knowledge for devising regional economy and management plans based on fundamental economic theories, gain the skills required to elucidate various regional economic issues and acquire the ability develop appropriate policies based on field survey analyses.

(iii) Tax and Financial Affairs Course

Acquire accounting, tax, and corporate finance expertise that, from an economics point of view, straddles the boundary between law and business administration, as well as capabilities required of highly skilled professionals to meet the needs of the times.

(iv) Master's Program in Economic Development (MPED)

Acquire high-level global communication skills as well as a thorough understanding of the fundamental theories of economics and their application in order to work as a highly skilled, global-level professional, such as a researcher who can conduct higher-level theoretical and empirical analyses.

(3) Criteria for evaluation of theses and other achievements

In order to ensure objectivity and transparency, the Graduate School Master's Program has established criteria for the evaluation of theses and other achievements. Theses presented by students are evaluated according to the following criteria.

(i) Academic significance of the research theme; (ii) Appropriateness of the research methodology; (iii) Systematicity and consistency of the structure of thesis or other achievement; (iv) Appropriateness in dealing with previous studies; and (v) Clarity and consistency of the developed argument.

Curriculum Policy

In order to reach the educational goals we have identified, the Master's Program offers four courses under the following curriculum policy guidelines.

(1) Curriculum policies common to the courses

First-year students learn major subjects, including core subjects for individual courses, in a systematic and efficient manner in order to gain advanced expertise in each field as well as general-purpose skills required of experts (ability to describe, produce a thesis, and collect and analyze data and information). Lectures carefully selected to help students master the general-purpose skills. Students are required to take all the compulsory core subjects as well as several elective subjects in order to complete the program. The elective subjects taught by various teachers allow the students to learn across different courses. This gives students greater flexibility and discretion in deciding which subjects they want to take along with the major subjects.

In order to gain more advanced expertise and develop research abilities, both first-year and second-year students of the Master's Course are required to attend a seminar. Second-year students choose and study a theme under a supervisor approved by the Graduate School to prepare a degree thesis which must meet the criteria established by the Graduate School. In striving to conduct objective evaluations and help students keep pace and produce high-quality theses, as part of the program, the Graduate School requires its students to give presentations at open seminars held by the Graduate School.

(2) Curriculum policies for individual courses

Together with the curriculum policies common to all courses, the following curriculum has been established for individual courses which aim at achieving educational goals of their own.

(i) Economic Theory and Policy Course

This course provides students with advanced knowledge of economics and broad academic expertise. It is intended to help students develop capabilities to analyze various economic phenomena from a unique perspective, evaluate the effectiveness of economic policies, and formulate them themselves.

This course, which is included in the curriculum to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, designates fundamental subjects of economics—introduction to social science, microeconomic theory, and macroeconomic theory—as core subjects. By selecting this course to make these subjects mandatory, students can surely and efficiently acquire technical knowledge and have the opportunity to learn a broad range of subjects.

(ii) Regional Economy and Management Research Course

This course cultivates specialists capable of effective regional management who can analyze regional economics from various angles and develop and implement economic policies that aim for sustainable development of local areas. By understanding the unique histories and cultural backgrounds of regional economies, students become experts at developing regional economic policies.

In order to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, students will engage in PBL (Project Based Learning) such as field work and practical surveys while learning about the various fields necessary for understanding regional economics and cultivate their ability to discover actual problems and develop corresponding policies.

(iii) Tax and Financial Affairs Course

This course prepares students to become accounting, tax, and corporate finance experts who can meet the needs of the times. It aims at helping students become highly skilled professionals by providing them with tax expertise—including international taxation—as well as the ability to conduct theoretical analyses of various tax systems.

This course, which is included in the curriculum to achieve the above-mentioned objectives, designates tax laws and tax systems as core subjects. By selecting this course to make these subjects mandatory, students can acquire advanced knowledge in a systematic way as well as problem-solving abilities required of tax experts. As part of the curriculum, the course also includes topics that correspond to the new Certified Public Tax Accountant Act, helping students obtain the qualification.

(iv) Master's Program in Economic Development (MPED)

This course is designed to train researchers and global professionals with advanced global communication skills and a high level of expertise, capable of cooperating with various other countries, including developing countries, and being widely active in international community development. The course welcomes competent foreign students from many countries around the world, especially from Asia. All lectures, seminars, and thesis guidance communications between instructors and students are conducted in English.

This course designates microeconomics, macroeconomics, and econometrics as core subjects. By making these subjects mandatory, students can acquire a high level of expertise as well as the advanced skills required for the analysis of phenomena observed in the global economy in the fields of international finance, economic development, international trade, environmental policy, public policy, infrastructure policy, and international cooperation projects.

Admission Policy

The Graduate School of Economics is committed to educating researchers and professionals with special knowledge of economics and high-level international communication skills. The Master's Program offers four different courses to meet the diverse needs from students about the research areas and specialist fields; (1) Economic Theory and Policy Course, (2) Regional Economy and Management Research Course, (3) Tax and Financial Affairs Course, where these three courses are taught in Japanese, and (4) Master's Program in Economic Development (MPED), which is taught in English. The Graduate School of Economics seeks applicants who have qualification as follows in order to achieve the educational goals. Researchers with original perspectives, graduate students pursuing professional careers, and individuals who apply the results of their study in the Graduate School of Economics to their own work. The students admitted to the Master's programs are expected to have at least an undergraduate level of knowledge in economics and related areas, as well as sufficient Japanese or English communication skills to perform research.