General Assessment Criteria

Writing and Structure   Assignments must be written in a formal and precise language with an academic structure. This is especially important with questions of a more open-ended nature. Each assignment must be readable on its own. In particular, throughout an entire assignment it should be clear which question is addressed, how it is done, and what the conclusion is.

Econometric Theory   Sections involving econometric theory should ideally include:

(1) A precise definition and interpretation of the model considered and its properties.

(2) A precise description of the estimator used. In particular, a precise account of the assumptions used to derive the estimator must be given.

(3) A precise presentation of the necessary assumptions for consistent estimation and valid inference. This includes a precise presentation of the null and alternative hypotheses, test statistics, decision rules, and (asymptotic) distributions used to test relevant hypotheses.

(4) The theory must be presented in a logical order with a correct and consistent use of notation.

Empirical Analysis   The empirical analysis should ideally include the following elements:

(1) A description of the model selection process.

(2) A presentation and discussion of the relevant empirical results, such that the reader is able to understand and reproduce the steps carried out in the process as well as the conclusions made. The results must be presented in suitably formatted tables and/or figures. Irrelevant information should be left out of the tables/figures.

(3) A discussion of whether the assumptions underlying consistent estimation and valid inference are likely to be satisfied/violated in the present empirical setting. This may include various forms of (mis)specification testing.

(4) A clear conclusion to the main question and a discussion of the limitations of the approach used to reach the stated conclusion. Real-world examples of behavior/phenomena that may fit or invalidate specific model assumptions should be related to the econometric model.