

# Kai Zen

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## EDUCATION

### UC Berkeley

Berkeley, CA

*PhD in Economics*

*Jul 2018 – May 2024 (expected)*

- Fields: Labor Economics, Personnel Economics, Public Economics
- References: [David Card \(Chair\)](#), [Sydnee Caldwell](#), [Christopher Walters](#)

### University of New South Wales (UNSW)

Sydney, Australia

*Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Economics (Honors Class 1 and the University Medal)*

*2012 – 2016*

- Majors: Economics, Econometrics, Finance

## EXPERIENCE

### Graduate Student Instructor

Berkeley, CA

*UC Berkeley*

*2019 – 2022*

- ECON 100A Intermediate Microeconomics (3 semesters); ECON 2 Intro to Economics (2 semesters).

### Graduate Student Researcher

Berkeley, CA

*UC Berkeley*

*2019, 2020*

- For Prof. Sydnee Caldwell (Jul 2020 – Dec 2020): exploration of aviation labor market data; cleaned labor market survey data, analyzed respondent characteristics predicting use of different job search methods.
- For Prof. Ulrike Malmendier (May 2019 – Aug 2019): collected, cleaned and built dataset merging politician biographies with archival schools data and geospatial data on land use.

### Policy Analyst

Canberra, Australia

*Department of the Treasury (Australia)*

*Feb 2017 – Jun 2018*

- Responsible for production and analysis of several components of the federal government's primary economic policy documents, created key internal responsibility tracking tool currently used in every production cycle.

### Economics and Finance Intern

Sydney, Australia

*Reserve Bank of Australia*

*Nov 2015 – Jan 2016*

- Analyzed and presented on banks' funding source composition responses to 'Basel III' liquidity regulations.

### Research Analyst (part-time)

Sydney, Australia

*Deloitte Access Economics*

*Jul 2015 – Nov 2015*

- Assisted with data collection and visualization, updating internal resources, literature reviews.

## ACADEMIC PAPERS

### Employer Learning and Screening Heterogeneity (Job market paper)

- Developed, evaluated and explored a novel firm-level metric of hiring quality using a German administrative linked employer-employee dataset. Ran regression analysis relating hiring quality and later career outcomes.

### Information Asymmetry in Job Search (with Michelle Jiang)

- Co-designed and conducted a two-part, survey-based randomized controlled trial (RCT) implemented with the UC Berkeley Career Center to estimate biased perceptions of the labor market and the causal impact of information provision on job search behavior and outcomes.

### How Fixed are Worker Fixed Effects?

- Ran regression analysis decomposing effects of recessions on wages into worker- and employer-specific components.

### The Impact of Selective High Schools on Student Achievement (Honors thesis)

- Applied regression discontinuity methods to quasi-experimentally estimate causal effects of attending academically selective schools on exit exam test scores using Australian administrative data.

## TECHNICAL SKILLS

**Languages:** Python, SQL, Stata, L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X

**Causal Inference:** Experiments (A/B Testing), Quasi-experimental Designs (Difference-in-differences, Regression Discontinuity, Synthetic Control, Instrumental Variables)

## FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

Doctoral Completion Fellowship (2023-24); Institute for Research on Labor and Employment (IRLE) Dissertation Fellowship (2022-23); Center for Equitable Growth/Stone Center on Wealth and Income Inequality Fellowship (2022-23); George Break Prize for Outstanding Performance in Public Finance (2021); Departmental Fellowship (2018-2021)