

Evaluation rubric for master's thesis – Oulu Business School

13.8.2015

Evaluation area	Description	5	4	3	2	1
1. Research task						
1.1 Introduction to research topic and motivation for research	The ability to lead the reader into to the topic area and to present the significance of the topic.	The topic is introduced to the reader in a coherent and interesting manner. The significance of the thesis is justified well both from the perspective of scientific research and practice.		The topic area of the thesis is presented and justified well.		The topic area is described in an unclear manner. The justification of topic selection is left wanting.
1.2 The aim of study and research question	Description of the aim of the thesis, definition and challenges of the research topic and determination of research questions	The aim of the thesis is justified and defined in a manner that shows in-depth understanding of the topic area. The research question is scientifically meaningful and challenging and provides direction for writing. The various parts of a complex research questions are in coherent relation with each other.		A clear goal has been set for the thesis. Research question(s) is coherent and clearly defined. The student has required some assistance in defining the aim of the thesis and research question.		An aim has been set for the thesis but the justification for the aim is insufficient. Definition of research questions is insufficient or unstructured. Clear definitions are missing. The aim was not successfully defined independently.
2. Theory section						
2.1 Formation of the theoretical or conceptual framework	The extent and thoroughness of the review of existing scientific knowledge and command of terminology	Theoretical or conceptual framework is clearly linked with the topic studied and appropriately defined. It comprehensively discusses literature relevant to the topic and also clearly defines the key concept related to the research topic.		Theoretical or conceptual framework is linked with the research topic. Literature related to the research topic has been discussed reasonably well. Key concepts are recognised.		Theoretical or conceptual framework has been defined in an unclear manner and it is not particularly successful with regard to to the research task. Literature related to the research topic has been discussed too narrowly or too extensively. Definition of key concepts is insufficient. The student has required a great deal of help to find relevant literature.

2.2 Use of source materials	The quality, relevance and variety of source materials	Varied and critical use of sources demonstrates knowledge of scientific discourse. Sources are relevant with regard to the research problem and questions.		Sources have been clearly selected based on the research topic and there are enough of them.		The use of sources is scarce and does not demonstrate source critique.
3. Methods and materials						
3.1 Research frame	The compatibility of the research problem, theories and methods	The research problem has been clearly described and justified and the compatibility of its various areas has been demonstrated. Choice of methods has been comprehensively justified. The data are suited for the research frame.		Research frame has been described. Grounds for the choice of methodology have been described. The data allow delving into to the research problems.		There are deficiencies in the description of the research frame. The data are not entirely suited to answering the research question.
3.2 Competence in selected research methodology	Selection of methodology	Methodology competence is at good level and handling of materials is good. Used methods are challenging.		The work has been performed in a methodically correct manner.		There are deficiencies in the handling of the materials and/or methodology competence. The student has required a great deal of time to come up with the analysis.
4. Outcomes and conclusions						
4.1 Presentation of outcomes	Achievement of goals and presentation of outcomes	The outcomes are presented knowledgeably and they demonstrate the ability to learn about scientific work and analyse it independently.		Research outcomes have been presented in a competent manner.		The research outcomes have been presented in a list-like manner and not a great deal of work has been done to analyse them.
4.2 Interpretation of the results and conclusions	Interpretation of the outcomes and pointing out further research topics	Conclusions have been presented in clear way and answers to research questions are presented in a coherent manner. The conclusions contain in-depth discussion in relation to earlier research. Well-grounded presentation of further research		The link between the conclusions and research questions is left somewhat unclear. Links between student's own outcomes and prior research are presented in conclusions. The outcomes have been evaluated and		Presentation of conclusions and outcomes is list-like, unclear or deficient. Answers to research questions studied and discussion about them is almost entirely missing or it is unconnected from the perspective of the research problem set. Evaluation of

		themes and evaluation of outcomes demonstrates understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the student's own research.		further research proposals listed.		outcomes is negligible and further research proposals are missing.
5. Research report						
5.1 Argumentation and critical thinking	The ability to synthesise, combine and compare with the outcomes of prior research.	The sources used discuss with each other and the text is analytical both with regard to handling the sources as well as student's own outcomes. The discussion demonstrates that the thesis writer is capable of scientific argumentation and reasoning.		Synthesis of concepts and literature is limited in scope. The topic is handled in an analytic manner.		Text is list-like and declatory as well as uncritical.
5.2 Degree of writing-technical finalisation and written expression	The linguistic form and the clarity and coherence of the written report	The thesis is faultless with regard to its linguistic form and appearance. Written expression is clear and smooth. The thesis forms a coherently organised, uniform whole presenting the key facts. The layout complies with the Oulu Business School's guidelines.		The thesis is mostly faultless with regard to its language use and layout. Written expression is understandable. The thesis forms a balanced whole. The presentation complies for the most part with the Oulu Business School's thesis writing guidelines.		There are significant deficiencies in the thesis with regard to language or layout. Written expression is stilted and hard to comprehend. The thesis is organised in an illogical manner and/or forms a fragmented whole. The presentation is clearly lacking with regard to Oulu Business School's thesis writing guidelines.

Grading scale: 5 (the highest), 4, 3, 2, 1 (the lowest). The grades 4 and 2 are not described in detail but are used in evaluation like all the other grades. The success of the master's thesis writing process and reception of supervision are assessed within the defined criteria. The overall grade is the arithmetic average of partial grades

Minimum level of the master's thesis: The thesis has an aim, towards the achievement of which scientific literature and the selected methodology are used. The thesis outcomes are reported in writing and presented orally. Cf. the grade 1 of this evaluation rubric.

In addition to the grade of the actual master's thesis, the written competence is evaluated with a maturity examination and oral presentation skills either in an interim report or end report for measuring the learning objective 5 using the master's level evaluation criteria developed in cooperation with MOKTR.