# MSc individual project assessment guidelines

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| Distinction | >=70% |
| Merit | 60-69% |
| Pass | 50-59% |
| Fail | <50% |

The College's grade boundaries for MSc are as follows:

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| **90% - 100% A++ (Outstanding): “**publishable quality, outstanding research potential, originality and/or independent thought, ability to make informed judgments. Highest standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area and its place within the subject. Proceeds from the wider concerns of relevant disciplines to the specialised subject of the report by way of an orderly and natural progression of ideas. |
| Review | Reviews the background to the project deeply and systematically. Incorporates relevant issues from the specialised area succinctly. Omits the irrelevant. Identifies all the main issues, which are then analysed and developed. The Review is a penetrating analysis, showing an impressive grasp of the subject and excellent judgement in the selection of previous work that should be applied in project. It gives new insights into the project area, not immediately identifiable from literature. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | From the Review explains the rationale behind the design for the artefact, comparing alternatives and selecting appropriate advanced approaches. Describes the requirements for the artefact succinctly, but in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. There is something distinctly novel about what is being attempted and the student has carried off the attempt with style, rarely defeated by problems encountered and more typically finding some clever original solution. This should be publishable or marketable. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Displays a systematic and carefully planned approach, with a clear understanding of the current methodological and theoretical approaches. There is something distinctly novel about what has been attempted and the student has carried off the attempt with style, rarely defeated by problems encountered and more typically finding a substantial original solution. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Critically evaluates the effectiveness of the artefact, comparing results expected from theory (including those for alternative designs) with those obtained in practice. Results are excellent and of publishable quality, and well supported by systematic analysis and evaluation. |
| Conclusion | Uses critical reflection to analyse the work done, stating clear conclusions, identifying related problems and areas to which the work may be applied. |
| Report Quality | Clear, coherent, logical structure to the report. Grammatical, expressive style.  Appropriate use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **80% - 89% A+ (Excellent): “**work of publishable quality, excellent research potential, originality and/or independent thought, ability to make informed judgments. High standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to the project deeply and systematically. Incorporates relevant issues from the specialised area succinctly, omitting the irrelevant. Identifies all the main issues, most of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | From the Review explains the rationale behind the design for the artefact, comparing alternatives and selecting appropriate advanced approaches. Describes the requirements for the artefact succinctly, but in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. There is something distinctly novel about what is being attempted and the student has carried off the attempt with style, rarely defeated by problems encountered and more typically finding some original solution. With some further work, this should be potentially publishable or marketable. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Displays a systematic and carefully planned approach, with a clear understanding of the current methodological and theoretical approaches. There is something distinctly novel about what has been attempted and the student has carried off the attempt with style, rarely defeated by problems encountered and more typically finding some original solution. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Critically evaluates the effectiveness of the artefact, comparing results expected from theory (including those for alternative designs) with those obtained in practice. Results are outstanding and could be publishable, and well supported by systematic analysis and evaluation. |
| Conclusion | Uses critical reflection to analyse the work done, stating clear conclusions, identifying related problems and areas to which the work may be applied. |
| Report Quality | Clear, coherent, logical structure to the report. Grammatical, expressive style.  Appropriate use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **70% - 79% A (Very Good): “**good research potential, evidence of independent thought, ability to make informed judgments. High standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to the project comprehensively. Incorporates relevant issues succinctly, omitting the irrelevant. Identifies all the main issues, most of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Explains the rationale behind the design for the artefact, comparing alternatives and selecting appropriate advanced approaches. There is something distinctly ambitious about what has been attempted and the student has carried off the attempt with style, rarely defeated by problems encountered and more typically finding some clever solution but not yet reach a publishable quality. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Displays a systematic and carefully planned approach, with a clear understanding of the current methodological and theoretical approaches. Reveals more than mere competence in the application of specialised knowledge. There is a satisfying quality and thoroughness about the work and it is free from any significant defects. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact, comparing results expected from theory with those obtained in practice. Results are of significant and well supported by systematic analysis and evaluation. |
| Conclusion | States clear conclusions, identifying related problems and areas to which the work may be applied. |
| Report Quality | Clear, coherent, logical structure to the report. Grammatical, expressive style. Appropriate use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **65% - 69% B+ (Relatively Good): “**some evidence of research potential, clear thinking and/or ability to make informed judgments. Good standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to the project comprehensively. Incorporates some relevant issues. Identifies all the main issues, most of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Describes the requirements for the artefact succinctly, but in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. Reveals more than mere competence in the application of specialised knowledge. |
| Methodology and Implementation | The relevant problems were mostly solved and some unexpected difficulties were resolved to obtain a worthwhile result. Displays a systematic and carefully planned approach, with a clear understanding and well application of the current methodological and theoretical approaches. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact, comparing results expected from theory with those obtained in practice. Satisfactory results are achieved and systematic analysis is carried out. Some results are excellent in some areas but not comparable to the research level. The argument is concise, explicit and logical and accurate. |
| Conclusion | Most of the conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Clear, coherent, logical structure to the report. Grammatical style, possibly with some errors. Appropriate use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **60% - 64% B (Good): “**some evidence of clear thinking and/or ability to make informed judgments. Good standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to the project comprehensively. Incorporates some relevant issues. Identifies all the main issues, most of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Describes the requirements for the artefact succinctly, but in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. Reveals more than mere competence in the application of specialised knowledge. |
| Methodology and Implementation | The relevant problems were mostly solved and some unexpected difficulties were resolved to obtain a worthwhile result. Displays a systematic and carefully planned approach, with a clear understanding of the current methodological and theoretical approaches. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact, comparing results expected from theory with those obtained in practice. Satisfactory results are achieved and systematic analysis is carried out. The argument is concise, explicit and logical and demonstrates good degree of accuracy. |
| Conclusion | Most of the conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Clear, coherent, logical structure to the report. Grammatical style, possibly with some errors. Appropriate use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **55% - 59% C+ (Relatively Satisfactory): “**evidence of clear thinking in places but lacks insight. Satisfactory standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to project. Identifies the main issues, most of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Explains the rationale behind the design for the artefact comparing some advanced alternatives from key references. Describes the design for the artefact in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. Reveals some competence in the application of specialised knowledge. |
| Methodology and Implementation | The student has solved a well-defined, moderately low-risk problem. The relevant challenges were mostly solved and some unexpected difficulties were resolved to obtain a worthwhile result. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact. Satisfactory results are achieved and systematic analysis is carried out but argument is narrow and contains some inaccuracies. |
| Conclusion | States some conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Coherent structure to the report. Grammatical style, possibly with some errors. Use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **50% - 54% C (Satisfactory): “**some evidence of clear thinking but lacks insight and fluency. Satisfactory standards of presentation” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to project. Identifies the main issues, some of which are then analysed and developed. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Explains the rationale behind the design for the artefact comparing some relevant alternatives. Describes the design for the artefact in enough detail for reader to appreciate all significant points. Reveals some competence in the application of specialised knowledge. |
| Methodology and Implementation | The student has solved a well-defined, moderately low-risk problem. The relevant challenges were broadly solved and some unexpected difficulties were resolved to obtain a worthwhile result. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact. Results are broadly satisfactory and analysis is provided but argument is narrow and contains some inaccuracies. |
| Conclusion | States some conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Coherent structure to the report. Grammatical style, possibly with some errors. Use of references, diagrams, figures etc. Consistent formatting and correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **40% - 49% F+ (Relatively Poor): “**limited evidence of clear thinking, insight and/or fluency. Presentational weaknesses” | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Reviews the background to project. The review is roughly right in what it says but has little to show that the writer really understands the subject. Some important references are missing. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Lists some design issues, most of which are relevant. Describes the artefact itself. Discusses very little above a "nuts and bolts" level. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Methodology is nearly adequate but demonstrates some drawbacks. The student has abandoned some aims when faced with unexpected difficulties. The final result is only partially functional, but the project could be completed to a satisfactory standard given additional time. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation | Evaluates the artefact. Results and analysis are incomplete. |
| Conclusion | States some conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Structured report. Comprehensible but not necessarily grammatical style. Correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **33%-39% F (Poor)** | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Lists some issues, some of which are relevant to the project. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Describes the artefact. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Methodology is not fully adequate but possible to solve major part of the problem. The artefact is likely to be fully developed but the original aims of the project are unfulfilled. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation |  |
| Conclusion | States some conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Comprehensible but not necessarily grammatical style. Correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **20% - 32% FF (Very Poor)** | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | Lists some issues, a few of which are relevant to the project. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Describes the artefact. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Methodology is not fully adequate but possible to solve minor part of the problem. The artefact has not been fully developed. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation |  |
| Conclusion | States some conclusions that can be drawn from the work done. |
| Report Quality | Comprehensible but not necessarily grammatical style. Correct use of bibliographical conventions. |

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| **0% - 19% FFF (Extremely Poor)** | |
| Introduction | Defines the project area. |
| Review | States at least one issue relevant to the project. |
| Objectives, Specification and Design | Describes some aspects of the artefact but the description is incomplete. |
| Methodology and Implementation | Methodology is not sound in general or even with flaws. The artefact has not been fully developed. |
| Results, Analysis and Evaluation |  |
| Conclusion |  |
| Report Quality |  |