

Thesis Review Guidelines

The thesis must demonstrate that the student:

- Understands the project's relevance to the field of study
- Is able to apply theories and methods of research, analysis, or interpretation, as appropriate to the field
- Has cited appropriate sources
- Is able to critically examine the work of other scholars and relate that work to the thesis
- Has developed excellent writing skills
- Has contributed original research, ideas, knowledge, or interpretations, at a level appropriate for undergraduate study, such that the thesis goes beyond describing existing work.

The thesis is judged on four different dimensions as outlined below: **Contribution**, **Survey of Field**, **Written communication** and **Critical Analysis**. In addition there is an **Overall** score given to the thesis. The following detailed criteria are used to assign a mark to different aspects of the report, but do not directly determine the overall mark. Please note that *separate criteria are given for the overall mark*.

Note: the standard grading scheme is used: HD (80-100), DI (70-79), CR (60-69), P (50-59), F (Fail)

Contribution

HD	The thesis makes a very good contribution, in the sense that it uses an appropriate methodology, and was performed systematically and thoroughly. It could form the basis of a conference paper at a good conference.
DI	The thesis may have a number of minor flaws. For example, the methodology may not be appropriate, the work may not have been thoroughly done, or results may not be significant.
CR	The research has a number of flaws, but still has at least some merit. For example, the methodology was good even though the results produced weren't useful, or interesting results were produced even though the process wasn't systematic. The thesis must at least show the student's serious involvement.
P	The research has a number of significant flaws with limited redeeming features. For example a flawed methodology that was sloppily carried out and which generated some suggestive preliminary results.
F	The research is worthless - no results, or results are worthless.

Survey of field

HD	Provides a thorough survey of the relevant literature, including all key papers, and demonstrates good understanding of this material including the relationship between bodies of work in the area.
DI	Has a reasonable number of references but is not detailed or comprehensive. The student shows good understanding of the cited material.
CR	The bibliography has gaps and is not discussed in sufficient detail. The student's understanding of the area is acceptable.
P	The bibliography has major gaps and is only discussed superficially. The student's understanding of the area is open to question.
F	The bibliography has major gaps. The student does not understand the research in the area.

Written communication

HD	The report is well written, structured so as to be easy to follow, and is appropriately formatted. "Well written" means both that English is correctly used, and that concepts, ideas, etc. are explained well at an appropriate level.
DI	Coherent, concise, and complete, but has some minor defects of presentation such as unusual ordering or a few difficult passages.
CR	Mostly easy to read but incomplete or strangely organised.
P	Difficult to read. Important topics omitted and badly organised.
F	Generally incomprehensible.

Critical analysis

HD	Has a detailed assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the results. Explains the importance of the work in a broad context, comparing it with other similar work. Identifies how the work could be extended.
DI	Covers most of the points under HD but misses one, or covers a number of points in insufficient detail. For example, an explanation of strengths and weaknesses that misses a crucial property.
CR	Misses more than one point, or is very brief in coverage of most points. For example, doesn't assess the strengths and limitations of the work and doesn't place the contribution in context.
P	Unclear or inaccurate identification of the important results, with little demonstration of their relevance.
F	No discussion of the results whatsoever.

Overall

High H1 (90-100)	The report is excellent and could be published after a limited amount of rewriting or further work. It has no significant shortcomings. The student is a candidate for direct entry into the PhD program and clearly merits a scholarship.
H1 (80-89)	The report is generally clear and well-executed, but has some shortcomings. The report could be published after some amount of rewriting or further work to correct these shortcomings. The student is a candidate for direct entry into the PhD and merits a scholarship.
H2A (75-79)	The report is a strong effort but is limited by shortcomings. It indicates directions for interesting research and, with substantial further work, could provide the basis of a publishable paper. The student may be suitable for entry into the PhD program but may not merit a scholarship.
H2B (70-74)	The report has good points but has significant shortcomings. The results are of marginal interest and would be unlikely to lead to a publishable paper.
H3 (60-69)	The report has one good aspect (such as a comprehensive survey) but is otherwise mediocre and has no interesting results. The student might be a candidate for a postgraduate degree by coursework but would not otherwise be encouraged to continue.
Pass (50-59)	The report is not at an acceptable standard for Honours. The student would not be permitted to continue.
Fail (0-49)	The report is without value. The student would not be permitted to continue.