

MSc Neuroscience Projects 2022-23

Dissertation Marker's Report Sheet

Name of Candidate:

Name of Marker:

Thank you for agreeing to be an internal examiner for this MSc project dissertation. The project counts for 50% of the mark for the entire degree. The mark boundaries are 50% for a pass, 60% for a merit and 70% for a distinction. We normally see around 25% of the cohort awarded a distinction-level mark for their project dissertation. The dissertation format is based on requirements for submission to the *Journal of Neuroscience*. The following word limits are stipulated (legends, references, acknowledgements and tables are excluded):

SECTION	WORD LIMIT
Abstract	250 words
Introduction	750 words
Methods & Materials	jointly 3,750 words
Results	
Discussion	1,500 words
Limitations of Methods	750 words
TOTAL	7,000 words

Please complete and return this, along with any annotated dissertation to Jenni Todd (j.todd@ucl.ac.uk) on or before **4 September 2023**.

Accordingly, please fill in the 6 sections below.

Expand the space as required for your comments.

These comments will be made available to the students once project marks are ratified.

(1) INTRODUCTION

The topic of the project should be placed in its biological context with a concise review of the work leading up to the project. The rationale leading up to the question being addressed and the specific aims should be clear.

Comments:

(2) METHODS AND MATERIALS

Concise but provide enough detail to enable reproduction of the experiments.

Comments:

(3) RESULTS

The objective and structured description of the results of the experiments using appropriate controls. Figures should be clear and accompanied by a good legend. Appropriate statistical analysis should be present.

Comments:

(4) DISCUSSION

Interpretation of the results in relation to the previously published literature. The significance of the findings should be fully explained. Future work that might arise out of the project should be discussed.

Comments:

(5) LIMITATION OF METHODS

This additional section can be placed in the discussion or methods sections. The candidate is expected to show good awareness of: (i) General Limitations of the techniques used. This would be true whoever did the experiments and (ii) Specific Limitations of the student's practical work. eg. sub-optimal experiments, low N values etc.

Comments:

(5) TITLE AND ABSTRACT

Is the title easily understandable and does it catch the 'essence' of the project? Does the abstract adequately summarise the main components of the dissertation in a terse manner?

Comments:

(6) CONFIDENTIAL FEEDBACK FOR EXAMINERS

There might occasionally be reason to wish to communicate something to the examiners that you do not wish the student to be party to. Please use this box for these comments.

Comments:

Refer to marking guidelines below.

Overall Recommended mark: « ____ »%

FURTHER COMMENTS, IF NECESSARY

Assessment of the Project

The final mark for the project is calculated as follows. **Please do not indicate to the student the mark that you have given for any component.**

Research Proposal 10%	Supervisor's Mark 15%	Thesis Marker 1 25%	Thesis Marker 2 25%	Oral Exam 25%	Total =100%
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GUIDANCE FOR GRADING THE PROJECT

Pass 50-59%: The pass mark for the project is 50%. In order to pass, students have to demonstrate that they have reached a satisfactory understanding of their project in the context of the field as a whole. The write-up should provide a satisfactory background for the project with adequate presentation and analysis of the data and discussion of the results, although the writing may lack clarity in places.

Merit 60-69%: In order to achieve a merit, students should demonstrate a good theoretical understanding of their project. The thesis should provide a good scientific background to the project, clear presentation of the data and a reasonable discussion of the results in the context of the scientific literature. Students in this category may not consistently show the level of critical awareness or analysis to demonstrate clearly the capacity for independent research. However, there should be indications that the candidate has the potential to reach this level.

Distinction 70% and over: A distinction means that the student has attained a high level of theoretical understanding such that you would be happy for them to have a PhD position in your laboratory. Their performance should be such that you would have confidence in their ability to continue independently in scientific research, i.e. they could ask their own questions, design their own experiments and analyse their own experiments and other people's work. The write-up should demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the topic, a focussed resume of the relevant literature, good presentation of the data and clear evidence of scientific analysis and critical awareness. Please note that marks much in excess of 80% indicate an exceptional performance that would not be encountered often.

Provided it is not due to failings on the student's part they should not be penalised if the project has not worked as well as anticipated or has encountered problems outside the student's control.