

School of Languages and Cultures Honours Thesis Assessment Sheet

Name of student: _____

Title of thesis: _____

Supervisor: _____ Date: _____

UQ Honours assessment explained – Classes, grades & marks

At UQ, honours students receive a final honours CLASS of I, IIa, IIb, IIIa or IIIb, which is based on their GPA. The GPA is a weighted average of the student's GRADES which are numerical, 1–7. Those grades are in turn based on students' MARKS, which are percentages. Thus, the path from marks (a percentage) to classes (I, IIa/b, IIIa/b) is somewhat indirect. The equivalences are shown below.

From marks to grades — a calculation made *for an individual course*, and *for a thesis*:

Mark	Grade
85–100%	7 High distinction
75–84%	6 Distinction
65–74%	5 Credit
50–64%	4 Pass
45–49%	3 Fail
25–44%	2 Fail
0–24%	1 Fail

From GPA to class — a calculation made *for a whole honours year*. The thesis is weighted at 50% of the total weighted GPA.

Weighted GPA	Class
6.2 and higher	I
5.65 to less than 6.2	IIa
5.0 to less than 5.65	IIb
4.0 to less than 5.0	IIIa
less than 4.0	IIIb

When you grade this thesis, in addition to an examiner's report, we will ask you to supply a percentage MARK for the thesis overall, as well as ratings against specific criteria.

Honours thesis assessment by criteria

Please provide a numerical assessment rating (1–7) for each criterion below. Detailed definitions of the criteria and ratings appear on the following pages. Please also provide an overall rating and a percentage mark.

Criteria	Rating (1–7)
Research design and rationale	
Quality of argument	
Use of relevant literature	
Use of appropriate materials	
Methodology	
General presentation	
Quality of language (English or LOTE)	
<p>Overall assessment of the thesis</p> <p>This assessment is not necessarily a simple average of the individual criteria, but should reflect your judgment of the thesis as a whole.</p>	
<p>Percentage mark for the thesis</p> <p>This percentage should correspond to the ‘overall assessment’ within the ranges given above. For example, an ‘overall assessment’ of 6 would have a percentage in the range 75-84%</p>	%

7	excellent	85%+
6	very good	75-84%
5	good	65-74%
4	satisfactory	50-64%
3/2	fail	<50%

Thesis Requirements, and descriptors for criteria & ratings

An Honours thesis is a substantial project which should demonstrate understanding of research processes and scholarly conventions. In scope, the thesis does not necessarily make a new contribution, but should be an independent and valuable contribution to the field of study.

Requirements

Language of the thesis:

- English or French (FREN)
- English or Spanish (SPAN)
- English or German (GRMN)
- Otherwise, English (CHIN/INDN/JAPN/KORN/LING/RSSN)

Length: 15000-20000 wds (thesis in English); 12000-16000wds (thesis in Spanish/French/German)

Descriptors for individual criteria and their ratings

RESEARCH DESIGN AND RATIONALE The identification of clear research objectives and the development of an appropriate research design to address these objectives	
7 Excellent	The research objectives are appropriate, intellectually valuable and very clearly articulated, as are the place and potential contribution of the project in the field of study; the project is designed in such a way that the research objectives can be achieved.
6 Very good	The research objectives are appropriate and clearly articulated, as is the place/contribution of the project in the field of study; the project is designed in such a way that the research objectives can be achieved.
5 Good	The research objectives are clearly articulated; however the place of the project in the field of study may not be completely clear; the project is designed in such a way that the research objectives can be achieved to a large extent.
4 Satisfactory	The research objectives are articulated, and an attempt is made to articulate the place of the project in the field of study; the project is designed in such a way that the research objectives can be at least partially achieved.
3/2 Fail	Neither the research objectives nor the place of the project in the field of study are articulated clearly; the design of the project does not enable the student to achieve the research objectives.

QUALITY OF ARGUMENT Demonstration of an ability to formulate, develop and present a clearly defined and logical argument supported by literature and own study where relevant	
7 Excellent	The thesis presents a clear and coherent overarching argument amounting to a perceptive and intellectually probing evaluation of the subject, and each step of this argument is presented logically and supported by detailed evidence from the research undertaken. Complex ideas are presented clearly and without oversimplification. The thesis provides a clear and coherent analysis and synthesis of findings from data.
6 Very good	On the whole, the thesis presents a clear and coherent overarching argument amounting to a perceptive and intellectually probing evaluation of the subject. With few exceptions, each step of this argument is presented logically and supported by evidence from the research undertaken. Complex ideas are presented clearly. The thesis provides a largely coherent analysis and synthesis of findings from data.
5 Good	The thesis presents a clear overarching argument, which, for the most part, is presented logically and supported by evidence. The analysis and synthesis of findings from data are mostly convincing.
4 Satisfactory	A coherent overall argument can be identified. There is an attempt to argue points logically and support them with evidence. The thesis provides a degree of analysis and synthesis of findings from data.
3/2 Fail	A coherent overall argument is difficult to identify OR Points tend to be asserted rather than argued using evidence OR points are unclear / illogical / oversimplified OR analysis and synthesis of findings are unconvincing.

USE OF RELEVANT LITERATURE Demonstration of an ability to review and assess the relevant literature and to use it as the basis of an analytical framework for the thesis	
7 Excellent	The candidate identifies and demonstrates understanding of the literature relevant to the thesis topic, and reviews it critically in order to position the thesis in relation to existing research. A comprehensive bibliography, appropriate to the topic, is provided. The literature review convinces the reader of the significance or interest of the research question, and of the contribution the thesis will make to the field.
6 Very good	The candidate identifies and demonstrates understanding of the literature relevant to the thesis topic, and reviews it critically in order to position the thesis in relation to existing research. A comprehensive bibliography is provided.
5 Good	The candidate identifies and demonstrates understanding of some important literature relevant to the thesis topic. An adequate bibliography is provided.
4 Satisfactory	The candidate identifies and demonstrates some understanding of some literature relevant to the thesis topic. An adequate bibliography is provided.
3/2 Fail	The candidate either does not identify or does not show understanding of the key literature relevant to the thesis topic. Bibliography suggests inadequate research.

USE OF APPROPRIATE MATERIALS (INCLUDING THE PRIMARY LANGUAGE SOURCES) Proficiency in selecting and locating relevant source materials/data and their appropriateness to the research objectives	
7 Excellent	Highly appropriate source materials, in sufficient quantity, have been selected and located.
6 Very good	A sufficient number of appropriate source materials have been selected and located.
5 Good	Appropriate source materials have been selected and located.
4 Satisfactory	The source materials selected and located are mostly useful.
3/2 Fail	The source materials selected and located do not enable the candidate to address the research objectives.

METHODOLOGY Understanding and justification of the use of appropriate methods and techniques	
7 Excellent	The candidate understands the methodological choices available and their advantages and disadvantages, and justifies the choices made. The methodology selected enables the research objectives to be achieved, and each step of the method (instruments, data collection, analysis) is outlined clearly.
6 Very good	The methodology selected is understood and outlined clearly and enables the research objectives to be achieved.
5 Good	The methodology selected is described and enables the research objectives to be achieved to a large extent.
4 Satisfactory	The methodology selected enables the research objectives to be achieved to a fair extent.
3/2 Fail	The methodology selected does not enable the research objectives to be achieved

GENERAL PRESENTATION Clear and careful presentation and organization of material.	
7 Excellent	Work has virtually no factual or typographical errors; sources are correctly acknowledged and consistently referenced in accordance with a recognized academic style (e.g. APA, Harvard, MLA). The thesis is appropriately ordered and formatted and within specified length (not including appendices).
6 Very good	Work has very few factual or typographical errors; sources are correctly acknowledged and consistently referenced in accordance with a recognized academic style (e.g. APA, Harvard, MLA) with few errors. The thesis is appropriately ordered and formatted and within specified length (not including appendices).
5 Good	Despite a few factual or typographical errors or inconsistency in referencing, a clear attempt has been made to conform to academic conventions. Essay is quite well formatted and within 10% of specified length (not including appendices).
4 Satisfactory	Work is marred by the number of factual or typographical errors, inconsistency in referencing or formatting, or inappropriate length, but still approximates an academic essay.
3/2 Fail	Work is marred by factual or typographical errors, inconsistencies or errors in referencing or formatting, or inappropriate length, to the extent that it does not meet the minimum standards of an academic essay.

QUALITY OF LANGUAGE	
7 Excellent	Clear, coherent paragraphs composed of well structured sentences; variety in sentence structure (not repetitive); nuanced vocabulary; impeccable grammar, spelling, and choice of wording throughout the thesis.
6 Very good	Most paragraphs are clear, coherent, and composed of well structured sentences with variety in sentence structure. A fairly nuanced vocabulary, with few grammatical infelicities, spelling or vocabulary errors in the thesis.
5 Good	Most paragraphs are clear, coherent, and composed of well structured sentences. Few grammatical, spelling or vocabulary errors.
4 Satisfactory	Most paragraphs and sentences are clear and well structured. While there may be grammatical, spelling or vocabulary errors, these are not so numerous as to interfere with the clarity of the argument.
3/2 Fail	A general lack of structure or clarity in the writing OR inability to construct sentences OR an unacceptable number of grammatical/spelling errors.

Grade descriptors for the thesis as a whole

7 Excellent 85–100%	Makes an independent and valuable contribution to the field; well written and argued, revealing a perceptive and intellectually probing evaluation of the subject based on thorough research appropriate to an Honours thesis. Quality is evident in argument, insights or intellectual evaluation, supporting evidence and expression. Material is presented with correct scholarly documentation.
6 Very good 75–84%	Makes an independent and valuable contribution to the field; well written and argued on the whole and shows ability to draw perceptive conclusions and make an intellectually probing evaluation of the subject based on thorough research appropriate to an Honours thesis. Weaknesses or limitations are present, however, which when taken together exclude the thesis from the excellence category. Such limitations might include some limitation in insights or intellectual evaluation, gaps in supporting evidence, confused expression and occasionally inadequate or defective scholarly presentation.
5 Good 65–74%	Adequate treatment of the topic within the definition of an independent and valuable contribution to the field; relative limitations in scope, perception or argument; in addition, or alternatively, there may be flaws in such areas as documentation, quality of research or written presentation of such an order that the total result although adequate is not distinguished.
4 Satisfactory 50–64%	Limited in such areas as its research, argument or documentation. Meets threshold requirements in insights or intellectual evaluation, supporting evidence, expression and presentation.
3/2 Fail <50%	Neither an independent nor valuable contribution to the field, nor sufficiently well written and argued to meet the requirements of an Honours thesis. Quality of research inadequate, arguments unsound or too derivative, presentation unscholarly and writing poor.