CHARLES UNIVERSITY IN PRAGUE
Faculty of Social Sciences
Institute of International Studies

PROTOCOL ON DIPLOMA THESIS ASSESSMENT
(Reviewer)

Name of the student: Vincent Gautier
Title: Academic Mobility: Motivations and Outcomes. Case study of the Faculties of the Social Sciences of Prague and Brno.

Reviewer (external reviewers including the address and position):

1. TOPIC AND OBJECTIVE (short information on the thesis, research objective):

The thesis looks at an understudied aspect of higher education and mobility policy, that of short term academic mobility for teaching, with a particular focus on the Erasmus+ program. While much analysis has been done on student mobility, the same cannot be said for academic staff. By using a mixed methods approach, the author aims to understand both the motivations and outcomes of academic mobility of this sort.

2. CONTENT (complexity, original approach, argument, structure, theoretical and methodological backing, work with sources, appropriateness of annexes etc.):

The author combines an online survey with in-depth follow-up interviews, which works well. The survey is limited to only a sub-set of social sciences departments in two different universities, so it is not possible to make any strong claims of representativeness; however, there was a solid response rate for both the survey and the interviews. The methodology is therefore sound. The thesis misses a strong theoretical background. In the section on historical background I would have liked to see the author make more use of actual policy documents, rather than only reports. As well, it would have been helpful if the author had described the process of application and acceptance according to his own desk research so that it could have been compared to the impressions of the academics. Finally, I was missing a clear statement of the research questions and objectives, beyond the descriptive aim of describing how academic mobility is understood by Czech academics.

3. FORMAL ASPECTS AND LANGUAGE (quality of language, citation style, graphics, formal aspects etc.):

The writing style and quality of the thesis are acceptable. The bibliography is formatted in a unusual style. There should not be dashes before each work. Also, the categorization of works is confusing: some of what are labelled academic articles, look like reports, and books and reports are lumped together, but these are separate from official documents, even though some of those are reports. In the footnotes, 'ibid' should be used instead of 'see above'. I would have liked to see an appendix with the complete list of questions in the survey.

4. SHORT COMMENTS BY THE REVIEWER (overall impression, strengths and weaknesses, originality of ideas, achievement of the research objective etc.):

The strengths of the thesis lie in the interview and survey data, which is quite interesting. In some points, for example pages 59-61, the author really captures the academic reality. The quotes which he uses are succinct and pithy. He also makes use of the broader academic literature in the analysis of these sections, noting when his findings do or don't correspond to the expectations and findings of others. The thesis is weaker in its overall argument as mentioned above. The originality of the thesis is in its choice of subject matter (both the academic mobility and the choice of the Czech Republic as the case study). Provided that the objective was to describe the motivations and outcomes of mobility, this aim was met.

5. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS THAT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED DURING THE DEFENCE (one to three):

What policy recommendations would you have for the EU based on your research results?

What differences did you find between the attitudes and experiences expressed by academics in Prague as opposed to Brno?

The respondents were heavily male. Why do you think that was? Do you think it affects your findings?

6. (NON-)RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTED GRADE
    (excellent, very good, good, unsatisfactory): C

Date: Signature: