

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator

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Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Di Zhao
Dissertation title:	Enemies, Rivals or Friends – Chinese Economic Diplomacy in Visegrád Countries since 2012

	Excellent	Satisfactory	Poor
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.</i>			x
Analysis & Interpretation <i>Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.</i>			x
Structure & Argument <i>Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an arguments limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.</i>			x
Presentation & Documentation <i>Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.</i>	x		

ECTS Mark:	E	UCL Mark:	50	Marker:	Petra Cibulkova
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>				Signed:	
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	25.8.2018

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work. **(Charles mark = 1)**

Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B/C (UCL mark 60-69):

A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research. 65 or over equates to a B grade. **(Charles mark = 2)**

D/E (UCL mark 50-59):

Demonstration of a critical use of sources and ability to engage in systematic inquiry. An ability to engage in sustained research work, demonstrating methodological awareness. 55 or over equates to a D grade. **(Charles mark = 3)**

F (UCL mark less than 50):

Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.

CONTINUES OVERLEAF

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (at least 300 words):

The topic of the dissertation is timely and promising. The author aimed to analyse China's motivation to strengthen economic engagement with the Visegrad countries after 2012. Using in the constructivism based content analysis (as mentioned in the introductory part and the title of chapter 2) to uncover ideational background of China-Visegrad relations seemed to be an appropriate method to achieve her/his intention.

Unfortunately, the text provides only an overview of the very basic International Relations theoretical concepts (liberalism, realism, and constructivism) without properly elaborating on the way the constructivist approach will be applied in the intended analysis of the Chinese economic diplomacy towards the Visegrad countries. The author does not specify either the resources used for the content analysis or the way she/he is going to build her/his arguments and conclusions.

Although the dissertation shows author's engagement with the topic and some research effort, the missing analytical strategy results into an insufficient level of analysis and does not allow the author to fulfil her/his research aims. The "empirical part" is, in fact, a description of China's economic development and more or less standard diplomatic relations and trade exchange with the V-4. The language of the arguments is frequently influenced by the political/diplomatic language of the resources. The author should have focused more on a critical review of the secondary resources (e.g., articles published in the journal *China International Studies*, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, shouldn't be the only secondary source for an assessment of the governmental policy).

Regrettably, given the objections mentioned above, the submitted dissertation is on the edge of a passable standard.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (at least 2 questions):

1. Please comment on the methodology and method used in your dissertation – the type of the documents analysed, the amount of them, the way they have been processed, etc.
2. Please assess bilateral relations between PRC and individual countries of the Visegrad group. Does the language of the bilateral documents differ if compared?