

## IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

<b>Student Matriculation No.</b>	<b>Glasgow 2458329 DCU 19108281 Charles 22199053</b>
<b>Dissertation Title</b>	Securitization of an Imaginary Threat as an Authoritarian Legitimation Instrument : The Cases of Belarus and Uzbekistan .

### INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

<b>Reviewer 1 Initial Grade</b> <i>Select from drop down list</i>	<b>Reviewer 2 Initial Grade</b> <i>Select from drop down list</i>	<b>Late Submission Penalty</b> <i>Select from drop down list</i>
<b>Word Count Penalty</b> (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail)		
<b>Word Count:</b> 22451 <b>Suggested Penalty:</b> <i>Select from drop down list</i>		

### JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)

**Final Agreed Mark.** (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied).

**Before Penalty:** A5 [18]      **After Penalty:** Select from drop down list

### DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	<b>Rating</b>
<b>A. Structure and Development of Answer</b>	
This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner	
• <i>Originality of topic</i>	Very Good
• <i>Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified</i>	Very Good
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Good
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Very Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Very Good
<b>B. Use of Source Material</b>	
This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• <i>Evidence of reading and review of published literature</i>	Excellent
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
<b>C. Academic Style</b>	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Very Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Very Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Excellent
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

### ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

#### **Reviewer 1**

The dissertation is very well structured with arguments clearly signposted. The analysis of cases is somewhat lopsided with twice as much attention given to Uzbekistan over Belarus (8621 words v 3446 words). It is true that the selection of threats is influenced by the geopolitical situation. There is also a strong echo of Soviet-era threats, and this would be an easy template both for the rulers and for the citizenry. Religion and the West were presented as bogeys by the USSR and Karimov and Lukashenko are, of course, both Soviet-educated.

#### **Reviewer 2**

This dissertation presents a valid argument that authoritarian regimes require legitimisation of its rule and, if other sources of legitimacy are missing, securitisation becomes a legitimising instrument of the regime. The cases of Uzbekistan and Belarus display various modes of such an instrumentalised securitisation. A competently written literature review provides references ranging from the Copenhagen school to the legitimacy of authoritarian regimes. The case studies are employed to contribute to both of these bodies of literature. Regarding securitisation theory, the author argues that securitisation is not conditioned by open political space, i.e. democracy, and that the Copenhagen school's emphasis on securitising actors is correct for authoritarian regimes.

While the arguments seem logical and convincing, their substantiation shows some deficiencies.

- 1) The emphasis on securitising actors is expectable if the analysis focuses on the securitising actors' discourse only;
- 2) There is little to no evidence of systematic and rigorous discourse analysis. The content analysis presented in one paragraph on page 40 does not make much sense.

The dissertation presents a sound argument substantiated by the author's extensive reading and personal experience. Unfortunately, it fails to demonstrate methodical and rigorous empirical research.