

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator
(cc Chiara Amini chiara.amini@ucl.ac.uk and ssees-imess@ucl.ac.uk)

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:	XIANGYI KONG
Dissertation title:	The Trade Effects of the EU-Turkey Customs Union: Based on the Gravity Model

	70+	69-65	64-60	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
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 argument 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					
Methodology <i>Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.</i>	X					

ECTS Mark:	A	UCL Mark:	A/72	Marker:	
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>				Signed:	Ilias Chondrogiannis
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	17/8/2021

MARKING GUIDELINES

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

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(UCL mark 65-69):

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.

C (UCL mark 60-61):

Some evidence of critical analysis, knowledgeable interpretation. Wide range of sources used to develop a logic and coherent argument. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, the extent of independent research could have improved.

D (UCL mark 59-55):

Employ relevant sources and show ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Little critical analysis of the material. It demonstrate methodological awareness but the standard and rigor of the analysis can improve.

E (UCL mark 54-50):

Mostly descriptive argument. Employ relevant but limited sources. The structure, logic and overall quality of the argument needs improvement.

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.

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

1) The scope, as discussed in p.14, is not necessarily a weakness. There have been significant rule of law, human rights, geopolitical and economic concerns about Turkey, let alone the great harmonisation required to achieve an expansion to labour/ services. This section is a bit weak and could use more factual info and citations, while the FTA paragraph is unclear.

2) Section 4 could/ should have been used as introduction or at least appear just after it.

4) Estimation focuses on regressions using the full 44-country sample. This is fine, but some estimation, results or discussion on specific countries (Germany, France, China etc) that are important trade partners. Although country fixed effects are included, individual examples would strengthen the narrative and argumentation. The same applies to the discussion of the results.

5) The conclusions are overly optimistic and the discussion in that section ignores the contemporary political and economic reality, e.g. briefly discussed in the introduction. Fitting a model and getting desirable statistically significant results is one thing, how these results compare to real world issues is another. While it is correct that trade flows have been increasing in the past and there are gains to be made in the future, further economic integration touches on accreditation/ specification issues, mobility, FDI, political and economic stability, dependency etc. These issues are not touched upon, and the discussion holds only to the extent that it is based on the "true" model with statistically significant results. Indicatively, a renegotiation of the Customs Union is first and foremost a political issue, both between EU countries and between the EU and Turkey.

4) Very strong dissertation with good level of knowledge on the specifics of the topic, the literature and the theoretical background of the methodology. Meaningful and statistically significant, yet expected, results. Descent econometric section and good use of raw data.

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

1) What insight can be provided for bilateral trade flows with main partners?

2) How have the economic and political limitations discussed in the introduction that led to the delay in updating the customs union been overcome, so that the dissertation's policy suggestions can be implemented?

