

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (cc Chiara Amini chiara.amini@ucl.ac.uk and fiona.rushworth@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:	Jordan Marcella
Dissertation title:	Presenting Prague: Visions of a City through Western Guide books

	70+	69-65	60-61	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's 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:	67	Charles Mark:	B	Marker:	Eliška Tomalová
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>			No	Signed:	
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>			No	Date:	4/9/2022

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+) = A (Charles mark 91-100 - excellent): *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 69-65) = B (Charles mark 81-90 – very good)
C (UCL mark 64-60) = C (Charles mark 71-80 – good): 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.

D (UCL mark 59-55) = D (Charles mark 61-70 – satisfactory)
E (UCL mark 54-50) = E (Charles mark 51-60 – sufficient): 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.

F (UCL mark less than 50) = F (Charles mark 0-50 - insufficient): 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.

Please provide substantive and detailed feedback!

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

Jordan's thesis focuses on the image of Prague that selected guide books offered after the end of Cold war. The author presents a critical analysis of the narratives about Prague that these guide books have contributed to shape and have thus influenced the perceptions and stereotypes about the city.

The thesis is well structured - it is divided into three main chapters that analyse the introductory and history sections (considered by the author as the essential part of the selected guidebooks), recommendation sections and a final interpretive analysis. It is easy to read and follow, and does not show any major formal deficiencies.

I do mainly appreciate:

- The analytical approach to the role of guidebooks in image shaping and perception (pp. 8-10), the author highlights the main aspects of the importance that guide books have on forming narratives about a country or place.
- The topic choice that contributes to filling the gap in academic literature both from the historical perspective (Czechoslovakia/Czechia and Prague after 1990) and tourism studies (changing role of guide books).
- The choice of the sample and sources – selection of guide books is well explained, the case study design is clear.
- The contextualization of guide books – both the general historical context and other aspect that define the context of guide books (for instance the remarks on Czech versus Western authors – p. 69).

However, on a more critical note, the thesis does also have some weak spots. More specifically:

- The thesis does not explain clearly the link between the narratives that are present in the text and the stereotypes they contribute to shape.
- The definition of “western” would need more clarification or distinction among guide books and their publics.
- The thesis includes several images. As the author explains, the visual material is not the main object of analysis. However, as some of the pictures are part of the thesis, one would welcome a more detailed explanation of the link between the text and the pictures in the selected guide books.

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

I suggest that the author answers the following questions at the oral defence:

- 1) To what extent is the attention paid to Prague and its stories specific or maybe even exceptional in the regional context? Have other Central and Eastern European cities attract as much attention as Prague after the end of the Cold War? If yes, why?
- 2) How have the new social media and other digital instruments influenced the role and importance of guide books in tourism after 2000? Is their role in narratives and place branding still as crucial as it was in the 1990's?