

## IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

<b>Student Matriculation No.</b>	<b>Glasgow 2604760L DCU 20109873 Charles 62035110 Trento</b>
<b>Dissertation Title</b>	<b>RISK ASSESSMENT: VNSAS' ABILITY TO ACHIEVE CBRN CAPABILITY</b>

### INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

<b>Reviewer 1 Initial Grade</b> A3 [20]	<b>Reviewer 2 Initial Grade</b> A3 [20]	<b>Late Submission Penalty</b> no penalty
<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> 21881 <b>Suggested Penalty:</b> no penalty		

### 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:** A3 [20]      **After Penalty:** A3 [20]

### DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
<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>	Excellent
• <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>	Good
• <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>	Excellent

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• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Excellent
• <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>	Yes
• <i>Appropriate word count</i>	Yes

### ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

#### **Reviewer 1**

This thesis addresses a substantive and important topic, it approaches the question of VNSA's using CBRN weapons from relatively novel perspective and deals with the issue without sensationalising or catastrophising the nature of the threat. The thesis and findings provide a useful contribution to both academic and policy discussions in this area and point to further research avenues that could be explored. The main weakness of the thesis is the integration of the academic literature with the empirical work, more attention to the contemporary debates on this specific issue would have helped to highlight the contribution of the thesis. That said the thesis does well to grapple with the challenges of finding information on and analysing an area that is by its nature clandestine and obscure. Overall the thesis succeeds in its objectives and merits a high grade.

#### **Reviewer 2**

The thesis deals with an important phenomenon of international politics in general and of security studies in particular. The ability of non-state actors to access CBRN has been long recognized as a pressing problem and it's useful to look into the NSA's actual capacity to obtain such weapons. I appreciate the research design which is led by a clear objective, identified against the background of an under-researched phenomenon. The thesis is well-organized; it is driven by clear RQs; and draws on a solid knowledge of the empirical material and the related conceptual literature. The thesis is not without weaknesses though. First, a more focused (research problem-based) lit review is missing; instead of a general overview of the phenomenon, a more state of the art-based lit review would have casted a better light into the researched phenomenon. Second, the empirical analysis is more of an intuitive nature; a robust statistical analysis which would have involved coding and deductive hypotheses would have addressed the missing pieces of the puzzle better. The author rather engages in treatising in an analytically profound, yet still somewhat methodologically superficial level with what I would consider pieces of anecdotal evidence. The thesis is still well-written and delivers an interesting message, so the above mentioned shortcomings shouldn't be taken as disqualifying. All in all, I consider this thesis fairly successful.