

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2592750B DCU Charles 95461480 Trento
Dissertation Title	The Position of Nuclear Power within European Energy Security Following the 2022 Russian Invasion of Ukraine

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade C2 [13]	Reviewer 2 Initial Grade C2 [13]	Late Submission Penalty No penalty
Word Count Penalty (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)		
Word Count: 20311 Suggested Penalty: 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: C2 [13] **After Penalty:** C2 [13]

DISSERTATION FEEDBACK

Assessment Criteria	Rating
A. Structure and Development of Answer	
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>	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>	Good
• <i>Application of theory and/or concepts</i>	Good
B. Use of Source Material	
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>	Very Good
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Good
• <i>Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence</i>	Good
• <i>Accuracy of factual data</i>	Excellent
C. Academic Style	
This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• <i>Appropriate formal and clear writing style</i>	Good
• <i>Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation</i>	Very good

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• Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)	Excellent
• Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?	Yes
• Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)	N/A
• Appropriate word count	Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

Russia's invasion of Ukraine and subsequent rounds of economic sanctions made the issue of Europe's energy dependence on Russia more critical than ever. This dissertation tries to unpack numerous aspects related to the crossroad of energy security, nuclear energy, and the war in Ukraine. Consequently, the dissertation promises to address a very timely and important topic.

There is much to like about the dissertation. The topic is timely, and the text shows the author's solid knowledge of the many issues and nuances related to nuclear energy, energy security, and current debates about the role of nuclear power in Europe's future energy mix. Having said that, I believe several changes could have made this dissertation even stronger.

Most importantly, while the general topic is undoubtedly important and timely, the specific objectives could be specified more clearly. In fact, having read the dissertation, I was struggling to understand what specific objective the dissertation pursues. I think the introduction could have paid less attention to introducing the general subject and more to introducing the dissertation's analysis, objectives, contributions, and structure.

The literature review covers a good number of sources. The chapter even tries to identify the gaps in the literature, which need to be applauded even though the gaps are not really identified.

I also think the description of the methodology could be more specific. The dissertation claims that "papers and articles were the appropriate methods to use when researching for this paper due to the content which is being discussed" (p.30). I am sure the readers will appreciate knowing more about what papers and articles are the source of data and what makes them appropriate.

The shortcomings mentioned above are exacerbated by the style, which makes the text difficult to read and understand. The dissertation would benefit from being cut into shorter topical paragraphs, each containing a single argument. Currently, some paragraphs span over several pages, which makes them very difficult to read. Furthermore, the text suffers from excessive verbiage.

Overall, the dissertation reads as an exciting but unsystematic flow of ideas and information collected in the process of writing. Furthermore, its current form contains relatively little original analysis. As such, the dissertation is not short of valuable ideas but appears unfinished and needs a more systematic organization and analysis.

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Reviewer 2

The dissertation seeks to address a pertinent issue for Europe – the role and place of nuclear power in the energy mix in light of the Russia-Ukraine war and increased energy insecurity. However, as with any research topic that is so contemporary in nature the dissertation struggles to maintain focus and purpose. This is immediate obvious within the introduction which fails to adequately establish the central research question or to locate the concerns around nuclear more broadly within the general literature. For example, concern about the environmental impact of nuclear power is well established in the literature but this is not explored in any great detail either in establishing the context for the research or within the literature review. What we are given is a mixture of pertinent and interesting but disconnected issues, which at times reads like a stream of consciousness. In addition, we are faced with a significant number of rhetorical questions for which answers are never provided. Therefore, the introduction would have benefited from some clear restructuring that establishes the topic, its context and research purpose in a simple clear manner. The introduction would also have benefited from a structural synopsis in the final section.

The literature review covers a lot of ground, and it is clear that the student has taken time to engage and identify material, but much like the introduction it lacks a sense of coherence. Clarity of themes is needed and confirmation of the central research interest as drawn from the existing literature gaps. Although we are told there are gaps it is not clear what these are and how they specific link back to the central research question. The literature review also veers off into commentary at times that adds to the disjointed nature of what is presented.

The methodology chapter provides us with some discussion of the rationale for the methods but doesn't really provide clarity around how discourse analysis or media analysis was to be carried out. How was material selected etc. More could have been offered here.

The empirical chapters have a lot to unpack, and this can be quite challenging for a reader who remain unclear what the central research question is. At times the analysis comes across as a continuation of the literature review. Rhetorical questions continue to be dropped into the discussion with no follow through beyond a generalised commentary.

Overall, I can see that the student is deeply interested in the topic and there are many relevant issues which are alluded to showing that the student is able to recognise the complex reality of the energy sector. But the dissertation doesn't go far enough in establishing a clear focused and structured analysis. Taking a step back at the beginning, establishing some parameters, for example, placing less of a focus on the specific impact of the Russian war on Ukraine (which is always going to be difficult to engage with while it is a live situation) and looking at the issue more as a trajectory of Europe's relationship with nuclear within a specific defined timeframe may have helped to focus attention on a central research question. This could then have supported a comparative study of official state and public opinion on the subject. This would have lent itself to a more robust methodological analysis of official government publications, public opinion databases and media analysis.

I can identify many interesting ideas and though provoking questions throughout the dissertation which suggests a good basic understanding of the topic and there is as said evidence of relevant reading and research, but the dissertation does not adequately present a well structured argument that purposely addresses a central question. Neither does it establish a clear evidence base to back up the comments and points that are made. Addressing these issues would without a doubt elevate the dissertation.