

## REPORT ON THE MASTER THESIS

IEPS – International Economic and Political Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Charles University

<b>Title of the thesis:</b>	<b>Internationalisation of Higher Education in Kyrgyzstan</b>
<b>Author of the thesis:</b>	<b>Tolgonay Dogochieva</b>
<b>Referee (incl. titles):</b>	<b>Mgr. Jan Kohoutek, PhD.</b>

**Remark:** It is a standard at the FSV UK that the Referee's Report is at least 500 words long. In case you will assess the thesis as "non-defendable", please explain the concrete reasons for that in detail.

### **SUMMARY OF POINTS AWARDED** (for details, see below):

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<i>Theoretical background (max. 20)</i>	13
<i>Contribution (max. 20)</i>	12
<i>Methods (max. 20)</i>	7
<i>Literature (max. 20)</i>	17
<i>Manuscript form (max. 20)</i>	12
<b>TOTAL POINTS (max. 100)</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>The proposed grade (1-2-3-4)</b>	<b>2 (B grade)</b>

You can even use a decimal point (e.g. giving the grade of 2.5 for 60 points).

### **Comments of the referee on the thesis highlights and shortcomings (following the 5 numbered aspects of your assessment indicated below).**

#### **1) Theoretical background:**

The thesis outlines a wide range of conceptual approaches to studying and researching internationalization in higher education. The concepts are relevant and widely discussed, however, the discussion boils down to utilization of one perspective, i.e. four types of rationales for internationalizing higher education. The chosen rationales are appropriate to the analyzed case of internationalization of the higher education sector in Kyrgyzstan, however, more could certainly be gained for potential construction of a more developed analytical framework by e.g. *explicitly* taking account of potential problems that internationalization may bring to developing countries (the more so given the fact that these problems make up a part of the primary data collection instrument (questionnaire)). **13 points**

#### **2) Contribution:**

Despite the utilization of some primary data from six respondents, the main body of the thesis deals with description of a variety of activities and/or factors affecting internationalization of the higher education sector in Kyrgyzstan. This is where the major contribution of the thesis is. The actual effects of the international processes are, however, only sketched out with e.g. recognition of study results not taken up at all. However two things should be added. First, the topic of the thesis is not widely researched so the prevalingly descriptive approach has some value in itself. Second, the discussion section brings in some analytical elements especially when dealing with the extent of utilization of the four internationalization rationales in Kyrgyz higher education. The author also rightly points out that the identified primacy of educational rationale is limited by the political developments enabling the donor/funding foreign agencies/organizations to operate and principles of the Bologna process to gain gradual acceptance through the state policies; the observation not made by the interviewees themselves. **12 points**

#### **3) Methods:**

The thesis makes use of a qualitative methodology, combining secondary literature review with semi-structured documents. The total of six respondents were interviewed with relation to the

individual rationales for internationalization of higher education. Definitely more could be said about how the analysis of the documents was done, i.e. what the coding units were, how they were constructed, what limitations the data analysis has (author mentions potential bias due to the inclusion of respondents only from the academe). **7 points**

**4) Literature:**

The author should be commended for making use of a wide range of relevant sources, including statistics and original research studies from a variety of authors. This is even more welcome given the dearth of information on the subject of research. **17 points**

**5) Manuscript form:**

The thesis has a logical structure. Some minor formal issues concerning missing brackets, spaces left or misspelled numbers (see p. 4) could be identified. More attention could be paid to the formatting of the tables/figures. The citation approach of referencing the given work both in brackets and also in a footnote is a bit unconventional and unnecessary. On the other hand, all the sources are properly acknowledged and available in a reference list. **12 points**

**DATE OF EVALUATION:**

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**Referee Signature**

**The referee should give comments to the following requirements:**

**1) THEORETICAL BACKGROUND:** Can you recognize that the thesis was guided by some **theoretical fundamentals** relevant for this thesis topic? Were some important theoretical concepts omitted? Was the theory used in the thesis consistently incorporated with the topic and hypotheses tested?

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**2) CONTRIBUTION:** Evaluate if the author presents **original ideas** on the topic and aims at demonstrating **critical thinking** and ability to draw conclusions based on the knowledge of relevant theory and relevant empirical material. Is there a distinct **value added** of the thesis (relative to knowledge of a university-educated person interested in given topic)? Did the author explain **why** the observed phenomena occurred? Were the policy implications well founded?

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**3) METHODS:** Are the **hypotheses** for this study clearly stated, allowing their further verification and testing? Are the theoretical explanations, empirical material and **analytical tools** used in the thesis relevant to the research question being investigated, and adequate to the aspiration level of the study? Is the thesis **topic comprehensively analyzed** and does the thesis not make trivial or irrelevant detours off the main body stated in the thesis proposal? More than 10 points signal an exceptional work, **which requires your explanation "why" it is so**.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**4) LITERATURE REVIEW:** The thesis demonstrates author's full understanding and **command of recent literature**. The author quotes relevant literature in a proper way and disposes with a representative bibliography. (Remark: references to Wikipedia, websites and newspaper articles are a sign of **poor research**). If they dominate you cannot give more than 8 points. References to books published by prestigious publishers and articles in renowned journals give much better impression.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**5) MANUSCRIPT FORM:** The thesis is **clear and well structured**. The author uses appropriate language and style, including academic **format** for quotations, graphs and tables. The text effectively refers to graphs and tables, is easily readable and **stimulates thinking**.

Strong                      Average                      Weak  
20                              10                              0                      points

**Overall grading scheme at FSV UK:**

TOTAL POINTS	GRADE	Czech grading	US grading
81 – 100	<b>1</b>	= excellent	= A
61 – 80	<b>2</b>	= good	= B
51 – 60	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= C
41 – 50	<b>3</b>	= satisfactory	= D
0 – 40	<b>4</b>	= fail	= not recommended for defence