

## Master's Thesis Evaluation Form

**Student's name:** Sopiko Shubitidze

Thesis title: Measuring the Performance of Public Universities of Georgia: The Case of Social Sciences Faculties. Problems of Education Quality and Knowledge production

Name of the supervisor: Jan Balon

Name of the opponent:

What are the strengths and weaknesses of the thesis? Please give your reasons for the suggested grade in detail below.

1. *Does the author show understanding of one or more theories, and use theory to generate a hypothesis or to make the problem area more understandable.*

Comments:

Yes. This thesis is a very good example of the ability to integrate theoretical insights into the understanding of recent changes in the area of higher education. Although the thesis puts focus on a specific national context (the transformation of education in Georgia), it incorporates relevant arguments from sociological analyses of the rise of the new knowledge regime. The author is familiar with relevant concepts in the area of her research (such as “epistemic cultures”, “modes of knowledge” etc.). The thesis is also strong in its comparative dimension. Whenever comparisons are made, it is to the benefit of understanding more general implications of recent educational reforms.

2. *Is the research question articulated clearly and properly? Is the research question sufficiently answered in the conclusion?*

Comments:

Yes.

3. *Is the thesis based on relevant research and literature and does it accurately summarize and integrate the information?*

Comments:

Yes. The literature is relevant. The author is capable of sorting out relevant sources for her arguments.

4. *What is the quality of the data or the other sources? Are the sample method, data collection and data analysis appropriate?*

Comments:

Yes. The author employs various methods in her thesis. They are well-justified.

5. *Are the findings relevant to the research question? Are the conclusions of the thesis based on strong arguments?*

Comments:

Yes. The conclusion brings together research findings and arguments that were set out in the theoretical and descriptive parts.

6. *Are the author's thoughts distinguished unambiguously from the borrowed ideas?*

Comments:

Yes, no problems in this matter.

7. *Is the thesis containing original/innovative research (in terms of topic, approach, and/or findings)?*

Comments:

I find this research very useful. It shows the confrontation between new public management's ideas and the remnants of ideas such as academic autonomy ...

8. *What is the quality of style and other formal requirements?*

Comments:

The formal requirements have been met. The style is very mature. One of the thesis' merits is that it has its argument under control.

9. *Are there any other strengths and weaknesses of the thesis, which are not included in the previous questions? Please list them if any.*

Comments: No

10. *What topic do you suggest for the discussion in the thesis defence?*

Comments: Which part will be taken out and prepared in an article form?

Overall assessment of the thesis:

*(Please, state clearly whether the thesis is or is not recommended for a defence and write the main reasons for the recommendation).*

Proposed grade:

*(A- B: excellent, C-D: very good, E: good, F: fail)*

Without any doubt, I recommend this thesis for a defence. The proposed grade is A. This thesis provides a highly valuable analysis of the happenings in the area of educational reform not only in Georgia but also in a more generalizable sense – by and large, it demonstrates how the vicissitudes of the current knowledge regime unravel and tend to be reproduced in various national contexts.

Date:

Signature: