IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	**Glasgow** 2471280 **DCU** 19108486 **Charles** 90164042
Dissertation Title	GANs gone wild: Public perceptions of Deepfake technologies on YouTube

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade	*Reviewer 2 Initial Grade*	*Late Submission Penalty*
Select from drop down list	*Select from drop down list*	*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: 21836 *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: A3 [20]   *After Penalty:* A3 [20]

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	
• *Originality of topic*	Excellent
• *Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified*	Excellent
• *Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work*	Excellent
• *Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions*	Excellent
• *Application of theory and/or concepts*	Excellent
B. Use of Source Material This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner	
• *Evidence of reading and review of published literature*	Excellent
• *Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument*	Excellent
• *Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence*	Very Good
• *Accuracy of factual data*	Excellent
C. Academic Style This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• *Appropriate formal and clear writing style*	Excellent
• *Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation*	Excellent
• *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)*	Yes

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• *Appropriate word count*	Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

> **Reviewer 1**
>
> The dissertation investigates the so-called 'Deep Fakes' and related social and security phenomena invoked by high-profile artifacts, i.e., YouTube videos, produced by Generative Adversarial Networks. The core analytical steps as well as the theoretical framing are just two of many strengths shown by the submitted work. In particular, it is highly appreciated that the exposition did not shy away from technical matters, providing an informed and precise explanation of generative machine learning models that can be misused to produce misinformation/disinformation. This is important for two reasons. First, it allows the dissertation to reach an incomparably deeper level of understanding (compared to the mainstream social scientific works). Second, being aware of the technical intricacies affords the dissertation an opportunity to show that for the problem of Deep Fakes a strictly technological remedy is unlikely. Rather, as it is shown, the problem is sociotechnical, and the performed content analysis (of YouTube comments on the videos) allows us to gauge the range of understanding people have in regards to politically charged synthetic artifacts produced by machine learning. Additionally, the findings possess a strong epistemic warrant that is derived from the dissertation's methodology, which successfully bridges the initial technologically oriented exposition and the subsequently performed discourse analysis. Finally, if I should raise a (minor) critical point, I would argue that the final interpretation could be richer in line with the post-positivist nature of critical discourse analysis. Overall, this is a superbly executed research, providing a unique view on the phenomenon whose importance will only grow in the future.
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> **Reviewer 2**
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> A very relevant and up-to-date dissertation topic. Mixes contemporary culture with a legitimate security question/set of questions that are relevant to the IMSISS programme; there are flashes of artistic flair (and humour) that are welcome and nicely incorporated. A focus on ground level discourse as a sort of digital ethnography is highly novel and well judged, adding grounds for legitimate contribution to the literature. The literature review displays a genuine grasp of prominent academic discussions, as well as deep empirical(/cultural) grasp on the related subject matter. Reflections on post-truth and its ontological ramifications are on point. The emprical reflections unfold at a steady pace, ensuring that the analysis is meaningful for new and seasoned scholars of AI/ML alike. The methodology is expertly outlined and the student shows a strong grasp of CDA, including its epistemological commitments/assumptions. It would have been interesting to have more critical reflection on how the ('Enlightenment'-born) emanciptaory kernel at the heart of CDA squares with its application to 'post-truth' ontologies and any (pre-)determinative treatment of 'messy' discourses, but it is not such an important ommission; rather, it would be something to flesh out if the student were to take their research further towards PhD level. The conclusion could have been fleshed out a little more, but it is, nonetheless, on point. A fascinating and meaningful piece of work, skillfully constructed. Very deserving of a high grade.