

Criteria for the Assessment of Master Theses (version June, 2008)

| CONTENT | Description of Area | Examples |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Abstract | To what extent is the Abstract prepared in accordance with the requirements of relevant journals? | e.g., does the student clearly and concisely describe the objective, method, major results, and conclusions? |
| Introduction | To what extent does the Introduction reflect a good range of relevant literature, a good conceptual flow and relevant aims and hypotheses? | e.g., has the student included the key sources of literature (classic references)? e.g., has the student included recent literature? e.g., how much did the student rely on secondary sources? e.g., is there a satisfactory 'funnel effect', such that the aims and hypotheses flow logically from the literature review? e.g., is each hypothesis grounded in the reviewed literature? e.g., did the student give information on the (practical/scientific) contribution of the study? |
| Method | To what extent does the Method section include all major elements, such as description of the sample, measures, procedures, and statistical choices in such a way that the study could be readily replicated? | e.g., has the sample been precisely described? e.g., has the procedure, regarding the selection of participants, been concretely and clearly stated? e.g., have the measuring instruments been precisely and clearly described? e.g., have choices concerning qualitative and/or quantitative methods been adequately explained? |
| Results | To what extent does the Results section report on analyses appropriate to the research questions? | e.g., are the statistical analyses justified in the context of the research questions? e.g., are the results presented in a concise, coherent and focused fashion, such that it is easy for the reader to see the relationship between the research questions and the results? |
| Discussion | To what extent does the Discussion section include all major elements? | e.g., has the student succinctly summarized aim and results of the study, but then also gone on to discuss the results? e.g., have the results been discussed with reference to previous research? e.g., are seemingly conflicting results from the study discussed in relation to each other? e.g., has the student discussed the practical and/or theoretical significance of the results for the field of research? e.g., does the student give suggestions for future research? e.g., has the student discussed the most important limitations pertinent to the current study? e.g., does the content of the Discussion logically relate to the content of the Introduction? |
| Overall presentation | Is the presentation of the thesis adequate with regards to overall lay-out, structure, title, references, tables, appendices, etc.? | e.g., is the structure of the thesis logically organized (overall lay-out, cover, chapters, paragraphs, subparagraphs, table of contents)? e.g., is the title concise, clear and representative of the topic? e.g., is there a good correspondence between references included in the text and in the reference list? e.g., has the student conformed references and tables to APA guidelines? e.g., are the appendices appropriately presented / referred to in the text? |

| PROCESS | Description of Area | Examples |
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| Practical input | To what extent has the student invested time / effort in the various stages of the research? | e.g., time/effort invested by the student in conceptualization, (preparation for) empirical data collection, data entry, data analysis, etc? e.g., in projects involving collaborative data gathering and entry, did this student contribute significantly more time and effort? |
| Intellectual input | To what extent is the final product a reflection of the student's independent intellectual contribution? | e.g. was the student predominantly responsible for the development of the research question(s)? e.g., was the student predominantly responsible for the structure of the Introduction?; e.g., was the student predominantly responsible for the structure of the Discussion?; e.g., even after encouragement, did the student fail to adequately reflect upon the meaning of the results in the write-up of the Discussion? |
| Input of the supervisor | To what extent has the supervisor invested time / effort in the various stages of research? | e.g., was the time/effort invested by supervisor appropriate? e.g., was the assigned supervision time kept? e.g., did the student attend to comments/ handle feedback appropriately? |
| Style of writing / presentation | To what extent does the student's writing style reflect effort / capacity to write clearly / engagingly? | e.g., does the thesis consist of logically cohesive paragraphs? e.g., does the student make suitable use of headings and sub-headings? e.g., does the student use logical argumentation? |
| Accuracy of writing / presentation | To what extent has the student paid attention to the accuracy of the presented work? | e.g., cited materials represented in student's own words? e.g., cited materials reflect original authors' intended meaning? e.g., sloppy reporting of results (percentages not adding up to 100)? e.g., consistency in reporting of results between Results and Discussion? |
| Ethical aspects | To what extent has the student paid sufficient attention to the ethical aspects of the study? | e.g., submission of thesis proposal to the Ethics Committee Psychology? e.g., developed an adequate informed consent form? e.g., obtained informed consent from study participants? e.g., adequately debriefed study participants if necessary? |