

## M.Sc. Thesis Rubric

## Aalto University School of Business

**I Problem setting of the study, attributes 1-2**

**II Contribution and the use of scientific methods, attributes 3-10**

**III Presentation and integration of the study, attributes 11-14**

Measurable Attributes	0 – Insufficient	1 – Sufficient	3 – Good	5 – Excellent
1. Explication of how the study relates to a phenomenon or area of interest	Provides a vague or no description of the relationship.	Provides some explication of the relationship.	Provides a clear explication of the relationship.	Explicates the relationship in an insightful manner.
2. Specification of the research problem, objectives and/or questions	Provides very vague or no description of the research problem, objectives and/or questions.	Provides limited specification of the research problem, objectives and/or questions.	Provides clear specification of the research problem, objectives and/or questions.	Provides an insightful specification of the research problem, objectives and/or questions.
3. Positioning of the research problem within the discipline	Does not position the research problem within the discipline.	Positions the research problem within the discipline to some extent.	Positions the research problem appropriately within the discipline.	Positions the research problem solidly within the discipline.
4. Review of literature	Reports on earlier literature without connecting it to the research question and/or objective, possibly omitting key references.	Reports on earlier literature without connecting it fully to the research question and/or objective.	Reviews earlier literature relevant to the research question and/or objective in an appropriate manner.	Demonstrates critical thinking in reviewing earlier literature relevant to the research question and/or objective.
5. Development of a theory-based research framework, model and/or hypotheses	Does not use a theory-based research framework, model and/or hypotheses.	Applies a framework, model and/or hypotheses loosely based on theory.	Develops or applies a theory-based research framework, model and/or hypotheses.	Develops an innovative theory-based research framework, model and/or hypotheses.
6. Selection and justification of research methods	Selects inappropriate research methods, does not justify or link them to the research questions or objectives.	Selects appropriate research methods, but does not justify them clearly or create a linkage to the research questions or objectives.	Selects appropriate research methods that are justified and linked to the research questions or objectives.	Selects appropriate, sophisticated, and rigorous research methods that are clearly justified and linked to the research questions or objectives.
7. Selection and justification of research material or data	Selects inappropriate research material, does not justify it, or link it to the research questions and methods.	Selects applicable research material that is weakly justified and/or linked to the research questions and methods.	Selects appropriate research material that is justified and linked to the research questions and methods.	Selects rich research material that is fully justified and solidly linked to the research questions and methods.
8. Application of research methods	Applies research methods in an inappropriate manner.	Applies research methods in a broadly appropriate manner, with some implementation weaknesses that affect the outcome.	Applies research methods in an appropriate manner.	Applies research methods with rigor and proficiency.

9. Analysis and presentation of data/findings (including diagnostics)	Analyses and/or presents data/findings inadequately.	Provides mostly adequate analysis and presentation of the data/findings.	Provides clear and competent analysis and presentation of the data/findings.	Provides rigorous and convincing analysis and presentation of the data/findings.
10. Discussion and interpretation of findings, including limitations	Fails to relate findings to existing literature; provides superficial or erroneous interpretations; provides limited or no discussion of the limitations.	Discusses some connections between findings and existing literature on a general level; provides limited interpretations; addresses some limitations of the study.	Discusses findings and relates them appropriately to existing literature; provides appropriate interpretations; addresses the key limitations of the study.	Discusses thoroughly and critically the findings in relation to existing literature; provides perceptive interpretations; discusses the limitations appropriately.
11. Development of practical, societal, and/or theoretical implications and discussion of avenues for future studies	Fails to develop implications of the study; fails to suggest avenues for future studies.	Develops some implications of the study; presents some avenues for future studies.	Develops clear implications of the study; presents avenues for future studies.	Develops insightful implications and avenues for future studies.
12. Knowledge of ethics in academic research	Fails to conduct research according to academic norms.	Shows awareness of ethical issues; may report on them.	Demonstrates knowledge of ethical issues; may discuss them explicitly.	Displays competence in addressing ethical issues in academic research; may provide suggestions of advanced or innovative solutions to ethical problems.
13. Academic style, language use and readability	Uses nonacademic style; inaccurate language use interferes with reading and comprehension; citation format not observed.	Uses sufficiently appropriate academic style; inaccurate language use does not interfere substantially with reading and comprehension; use of illustrations and examples infrequent and/or not fully competent; citation format not always observed.	Uses academic language fluently; minor errors may exist but do not interfere with reading and comprehension; illustrations and examples contribute to the clarity of the arguments; citation format almost always observed.	Produces a thesis that meets academic writing standards; readily conveys meaning; illustrations and examples enhance the clarity of the arguments; citation format consistently observed.
14. Consistency and coherence of the thesis	Text is fragmented and unbalanced; internal links among theory, methods and results are not explicit; problems with headings and paragraph and section structure.	Text is not fully balanced; some key internal links are missing; does not fully form a coherent whole; some problems with headings and paragraph and section structure.	Forms a balanced and coherent whole; some internal linkages are implicit rather than explicit; headings and paragraph and section structure typically support the overall coherence.	Forms a coherent whole with consistent and explicit internal linkages; has a logical flow of argumentation with neat headings and clearly structured paragraphs and sections.