

ACTING AS A DISCUSSANT

What does it mean?

Acting as a discussant means evaluating a fellow student's work (research proposal or final thesis) in terms of its content, structure, language, and other aspects, in a constructive spirit. The intention of discussant is not to judge the work but rather to find different ways to address the research topic and provide suggestions for improving the work. Every work has some positive aspects, as well as aspects that could be improved – it is the discussant's job to identify them and communicate them to the author!

When acting as a discussant, please structure your feedback as follows:

1. Positive aspects of the work
2. Aspects that have room for improvement
3. Suggestions for improving and/or extending the work

Questions to think about when acting as discussant:

Note: concentrate on the first three parts when evaluating research proposals

Title and introduction:

- Does the title correspond the content? Is it informative?
- Does the introduction communicate the purpose of the research and the perspective taken on the topic? Does it evoke reader's interest?
- Is there a clearly iterated research question? Is it well-justified?

Literature and theory:

- Does the author define the central concepts discussed in his/her research?
- Does the work have sufficient and appropriate theoretical background?
- Is relevant prior literature cited?

Method:

- Is the chosen research method appropriate for investigating the research question?
- Does the author apply the method correctly?

Results and conclusions:

- Are the results reported exhaustively and appropriately?
- Does the author answer the research question? Is the answer well-justified and grounded in the results?
- Does the author provide implications to theory and practice based on the results?

Style, structure, and language:

- Does to author use sound argumentation?
- Is the work logically structured? Do the section titles reflect their content?
- Is the text understandable and grammatically correct? Does it reflect good scientific writing style?
- Are all the cited works included in the list of references?