CRIMINOLOGY CLASSIFICATION OF EMPIRICALLY BASED DISSERTATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES – MARKING RUBRIC

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|  | **Research conceptualisation, methodology and analysis (25%)** | **Knowledge and Understanding (30%)** | **Application, argument and critical analysis (30%)** | **Structure & Presentation**  **(15%)** |
| **First Exceptional (90-100%)** | Research questions have clearly arisen from extensive engagement with the literature, are relevant, innovative, and offer high potential for new insight. Insights are very likely to lead to further research. An exceptionally well justified project.  Outstanding choice of research design, and exemplary justification of research methodology. Methodology is a perfect fit for the research project. Research is conducted and defended to a professional standard. Analysis is very well explained, well understood, executed excellently and able to answer the research questions | Exemplary knowledge and critical understanding of the relevant theory and its significance for the specific research question/s. No errors or omissions. Work original and of publishable quality. Exceptional, comprehensive, thorough in treatment. | Exceptional demonstration of the use of theory to develop sophisticated, flawless and novel critical arguments. Exemplary application of the literature to the research question/s. Extensive range of academically robust sources used critically (including comprehensive and insightful critique of research methodology) in evidencing discussions, well in excess of expected requirements; insightful and of outstanding quality. Conclusion strong and well-evidenced from the research, drawing out novel understanding. | Flawlessly structured, focused and well-written presentation, with an exemplary level of conceptual clarity. Flawless Harvard referencing with a perfectly presented reference list and bibliography (if applicable). Excellent use of appendices. Flawless use of grammar, spelling and language conventions. |
| **First Outstanding**  **(80-89%)** | Research questions have clearly arisen from extensive engagement with the literature, are relevant, innovative, and offer potential for new insight. Insights are likely to lead to further research. An excellently well justified project.  Excellent choice of research design, and exemplary justification of research methodology. Methodology is an excellent fit for the research project. Research is conducted to a professional standard. Analysis is very well explained, well understood, executed excellently and able to answer the research questions | Outstanding knowledge and in-depth critical understanding of theory, and its significance for the specific research question/s, with some originality in content and sophisticated insight. No errors or omissions. | Outstanding demonstration of the use of theory to develop sophisticated and novel critical arguments. Wide range of sources used and applied in a focused and critical manner (including insightful critique of research methodology). Outstanding application of the literature to the research question/s. Outstanding demonstration critical thinking and analysis, with a degree of autonomy/exploration clearly exceeding recommended reading. Conclusion strong and well-evidenced from the research. | Very clear and fluent academic writing style, with a high level of conceptual clarity. Very well focused and structured. Excellent Harvard referencing with a perfectly presented reference list (and bibliography where applicable). Very effective use of appendices. Excellent use of grammar, spelling and language conventions throughout. |
| **First Excellent**  **(70-79%)** | Research questions have arisen from the literature, are relevant, innovative, and offer a good potential for new insight. A well justified project with a convincing rationale.  Very good choice of research design, excellent justification of research methodology. Methodology is a good fit for the research project. Research is conducted well. Analysis is well explained, clearly well understood, well executed and able to answer the research questions | Excellent insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. Demonstration of an excellent and thorough knowledge and critical understanding of relevant theory, with clear insight. No significant errors or omissions. | Excellent demonstration of the use of theory to develop sophisticated critical arguments. A comprehensive range of relevant literature/evidence used and applied in a focused and critical manner (including critique of research methodology). Excellent application of the literature to the research question/s. Excellent demonstration of critical thinking and analysis. Conclusion strong and reasonably well evidenced from the research. | Very clear and logical presentation, with a good level of conceptual clarity. Excellent Harvard referencing with a correctly presented reference list and bibliography (if applicable). Effective use of appendices. Excellent use of grammar, spelling and language conventions. |
| **Upper**  **Second Good**  **(60-69%)** | Research questions have arisen from the literature, are relevant, innovative, and offer the likelihood of some new insight. Quite a well justified project and rationale.  Good choice of research design, and justification of research methodology. Methodology is a good fit for the research project. Research is conducted reasonably well. Analysis is well explained, understood, and executed (although there may be minor errors) and able to answer the research questions | Generally good knowledge, critical understanding and insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. Good application of the relevant theory to the research questions demonstrated. May contain one or two very minor inaccuracies, irrelevancies or omissions. | Good demonstration of the use of theory to develop clear critical arguments. A good range of relevant literature/evidence used and applied in a focused and critical manner (including critique of research methodology). Good application of the literature to the research question/s. Good demonstration of critical thinking and analysis. Conclusion strong, with some supporting evidence from the research. | Clear and logical presentation, with a good level of conceptual clarity. Good Harvard referencing with a correctly presented reference list and bibliography (if applicable). Quite effective use of appendices. Good use of grammar, spelling and language conventions, although there may be some minor errors. |
| **Lower Second Satisfactory**  **(50-59%)** | Research questions may have arisen from the literature, but there may be some issues with their quality. Research questions are relevant, and offer the potential for some useful insight. Some justification given for the project, and reasonable rationale.  Reasonable choice of research design, and justification of research methodology. Methodology is a reasonable fit for the research project. Research is conducted quite well, although there may be minor issues. Analysis is reasonably well explained, understood, but there may be errors; it is able to answer the research questions | Reasonably good knowledge, critical understanding and insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. Fair application of the relevant theory to the research questions demonstrated. May contain some minor inaccuracies, irrelevancies or omissions. | Fair demonstration of the use of theory to develop critical arguments. A reasonable range of relevant literature/evidence used and applied with some critical insight (including some critique of research methodology). Fair application of the literature to the research question/s. Fair demonstration of critical thinking and analysis, but with some rather descriptive elements. Conclusion somewhat weaker, and with less supporting evidence from the research. | Reasonably clear presentation, with a fair level of conceptual clarity. Fair Harvard referencing with a correctly presented reference list and bibliography (if applicable), although this may be incomplete, and contain minor presentation errors. Most sources are defensibly academic, but some may be less so. Fair use of appendices. Fair use of grammar, spelling and language conventions although there may be some errors affecting clarity. |
| **Third Basic**  **(40-49%)** | Research questions appear not to relate very well to the literature, and may not be very useful in offering new insights. Little justification given for the project, and rather poor rationale.  Reasonable choice of research design, and justification of research methodology. Methodology is a reasonable fit for the research project. Research was not conducted very well leading to some serious issues. Analysis is explained and understood to some degree, but poorly executed leading to errors, and may not have answered well the research questions. | Limited demonstration of knowledge, critical understanding and insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. Limited application of the relevant theory to the research questions demonstrated.  Contains some inaccuracies, irrelevancies or omissions. | Limited demonstration of the use of theory to develop critical arguments. A limited range of relevant literature/evidence used and applied without much critical insight. Weak application of the literature to the research question/s. Limited demonstration of critical thinking and analysis, with largely descriptive content. Conclusion weak and with little supporting evidence from the research. | Presentation unclear, without much conceptual clarity. Harvard referencing contains many errors in both citations and reference list (and bibliography, if applicable). Many sources are not defensibly academic, although some are. Inconsistent and flawed use of appendices. Poor use of grammar, spelling and language conventions affecting clarity. |
| **Marginal Fail**  **(30-39%)** | Research questions appear not to have come from the literature (there may be some contradictions). No new insight is in likely. Project has not been justified, and there is little rationale given.  Poor choice of research design, and poor justification of research methodology. Methodology is a not a good fit for the research project. Research was not conducted well leading to serious issues. Analysis is not explained well seems not to be understood or executed at all well leading to serious errors. Methodology could not have answered well the research questions. | Little real demonstration of knowledge, critical understanding or insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. Very limited application of the relevant theory to the research questions demonstrated.  Contains many inaccuracies, irrelevancies or omissions. | Very limited demonstration of the use of theory to develop critical arguments. Very limited range of relevant literature/evidence used and applied without any critical insight. Very weak application of the literature to the research question/s. No real demonstration of critical thinking or analysis, with content descriptive. Conclusion extremely weak or absent. | Presentation extremely unclear, without any conceptual clarity. Harvard referencing contains frequent errors in both citations and reference list (and bibliography, if applicable). Most sources are not defensibly academic. Flawed use of appendices (or complete lack). Very poor use of grammar, spelling and language conventions rendering the work almost incomprehensible. |
| **Clear Fail**  **(1-29%)** | Research questions are flawed or make no sense, and do not relate to the literature on the subject. Nothing of value appears to come out of the study. No justification given for project, and rationale is very flawed.  Poor choice of research design, and inadequate justification of research methodology. Methodology is a not a good fit for the research project. Research was not conducted well leading to serious issues. Analysis is not explained, seems not to be understood or executed at all well leading to serious errors, or is entirely absent. Methodology could not have answered the research questions at all. | No real demonstration of knowledge, understanding or insight into the material researched and its significance for the specific research question/s. No effective application of the relevant theory to the research questions demonstrated.  Contains many and frequent inaccuracies, irrelevancies or omissions. | No real demonstration of the use of theory to develop critical arguments. Extremely limited range of literature/evidence used, and applied without any critical insight. No application of the literature to the research question/s. No demonstration of critical thinking or analysis, with content entirely descriptive, and possibly irrelevant to the question. Conclusion nonsensical or absent. | Presentation extremely unclear, without any conceptual clarity. Harvard referencing either absent or entirely flawed throughout. Any sources cited are not defensibly academic. No appendix usage. Extremely poor use of grammar, spelling and language conventions rendering the work incomprehensible. |
| **Absolute fail (0)** | A mark of zero may for example be awarded in accordance with penalties for late submission for which no special dispensation has been made or where submitted work is deemed to be of no academic merit, as a penalty in some misconduct cases. |  |  |  |