



## Guidelines for the assessment of dissertations leading to the degree of Master of Science in Building Services Engineering (taught, part-time)

The study unit: ENR5023 – Project in Building Services within the degree of Master of Science in Building Services Engineering, requires the submission of a written dissertation and the delivery of a presentation of the project at the end of the academic year.

### 1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to guide students prepare their dissertation and the Board of Examiners assess dissertations presented for the degree of MSc in Building Services Engineering (taught, part-time).

These criteria will be used in order to:

- (a) establish whether the dissertation satisfies the fundamental requirements of a Master's degree;
- (b) ensure that dissertations are assessed appropriately and marked consistently.

According to Article 53 of the [General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008](#), dissertations presented for a Master's degree shall:

- (a) *be work of an advanced or original nature in the area of study;*
- (b) *satisfy the Board of Examiners as regards content and presentation; and*
- (c) *fulfil the requirements as provided by relevant bye-laws and guidelines as regards format and length.*

1. The length of the dissertation is governed by Article 7 (1) of the [Bye-Laws](#)<sup>1</sup> which states that: *“Students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation normally not exceeding 20,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board”*.

### 2. Examination procedures

The Board of Examiners shall be appointed by Senate for the purpose (Article 55 of the University's General Regulations for Postgraduate Awards 2008) and shall be composed of at least three members including the external examiner from an overseas institution who will also review the degree programme.

When the number of dissertations is less than five, the external examiner is appointed on a non-visiting basis (Article 21.(2) of [University Assessment Regulations 2009](#)). In such case the

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<sup>1</sup> Bye-Laws of 2017 in terms of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008 for the Degree of Master of Science in Building Services Engineering - M.Sc. - under the auspices of the Faculty of Engineering

external examiner will join the viva voce examinations remotely via a video conferencing application.

Otherwise the external examiner is appointed on a visiting basis.

When the number of dissertations is more than six, the board of studies may appoint additional external visiting examiners. The visiting external examiners will then moderate the marks of all dissertations.

Each member of the Board of Examiners will prepare a report using a standard template (based on the assessment criteria in Section 3).

The Principal Supervisor and co-supervisors cannot form part of the Board of Examiners unless special permission is granted by Senate for justified reasons. However the Principal Supervisor shall be invited to attend as observer during the oral examination but must withdraw prior to the final deliberations of the Board.

### **3. Assessment criteria**

The unit includes two main assessment components for the study unit:

- Written dissertation which carries 90% of the total mark
- Presentation which carries 10% of the total mark

#### **(a) Written Dissertation (90% overall):**

The following factors and percentage weightings are to be taken into consideration by the examiners when assessing the written dissertation:

##### Explanation, contextualisation and articulation of project objectives (10%):

- Is the project objectives clearly specified and contextualized?
- Does the dissertation capture the relevance, rationale and objectives of the project proposal?

##### Literature review and relevant background theory (20%):

- Does the dissertation include a comprehensive review and critical discussion of the relevant literature and/or technological developments?
- Is the relevant background theory presented, discussed and explained well? Has the theory been contextualized appropriately within the framework of the project?
- Have the latest theoretical developments in the area been presented and described?
- Does the student demonstrate a systematic understanding of the relevant background theory and knowledge?

Methodology, design and implementation (30%):

- Is the adopted methodology and/or design approach clearly justified and described?
- Is the implementation well explained?
- Are there any novel or advanced engineering contributions from the student?
- Is there a clear identification of any limitations, assumptions and constraints which may influence or condition the applied methodology, design approach and implementation?

Testing/analysis, results and evaluation (30%):

- Are the test/analysis procedures sound and objective?
- Do the proposed tests/analysis address the project objectives?
- Are the test/analysis conditions, assumptions, constraints and limitations clearly identified?
- Are the results clearly presented, analysed objectively and critically evaluated?
- Are the results and analyses discussed objectively? Do they lead to appropriate conclusions and/or fulfilment of the project objectives?
- Does the analysis, evaluation and discussion of results exhibit independence of thought?

Report structure and organisation of dissertation (10%):

- Is the style and structure of the dissertation logical, coherent, flowing and focused?
- Is the student's contribution clearly communicated to the reader?
- Does the dissertation conform to the Faculty guidelines?
- Does it make good use of language, citations, figures and tables?

**(b) Presentation (10% overall):**

A ten minute slide show presentation of the project, followed by a ten minute question and answer session by the examiners:

- Is the presentation well prepared?
- Is the candidate clear and confident in his/her delivery?
- Does the candidate's response to the presented questions show that s\he has mastered the project well?

**(c) Marking and Grading:**

When awarding marks, the examiners shall be guided by the following descriptors extracted from Article 28 of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008.

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>Grade</b>
<b>Work of excellent quality</b> Superior performance showing a comprehensive understanding and application of the subject matter. Evidence of considerable additional reading/research/work.	80% - 100%	A
<b>Work of very good quality</b> Performance is typified by a very good working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of a considerable amount of reading/research/work.	70% - 79%	B
<b>Work of good quality</b> Above average performance, with a good working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of sufficient reading/research/work.	55%** - 69%	C
<b>Work of fair but below average quality</b> Considerable but incomplete understanding of the subject matter. Evidence of a fair amount of reading/research/work.	50%* - 54%	D
<b>Work of marginal quality</b> Minimal understanding of the subject matter, with no evidence of additional reading/research/work, which must be compensated by higher marks in other units in order to be eligible for the Postgraduate Award.	45% - 49%	E
Unsatisfactory, failing work in the dissertation study-unit.	0% - 49%*	F

\* The minimum pass mark for dissertations is 50%.