## IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

| Student Matriculation No. | Glasgow 2486209   DCU 19108591   Charles 90652073 |
|---|---|
| Dissertation Title | TACtical intelligence: Disrupting the Terrorist Attack Cycle by Analysing Terrorists' Intelligence Operations |

### *INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING*

| *Reviewer 1 Initial Grade* *Select from drop down list* | *Reviewer 2 Initial Grade* *Select from drop down list* | *Late Submission Penalty* *no penalty* |
|---|---|---|
| *Word Count Penalty* (1-15% over/under = 1gr point; 15-20% over/under = 2 gr points; 20-25% over/under = 3 gr points; more than 25% over/under = 0 fail) *Word Count:*        *Suggested Penalty:*  no penalty | | |

### *JOINT GRADING (subject to agreement of the external examiner and approval at Joint Exam Board)*

| *Final Agreed Mark.* (Following correspondence reviewers should list the agreed final internal grade taking before and after any penalties to be applied). *Before Penalty:* B3 [15]        *After Penalty:* B3 [15] |
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### *DISSERTATION  FEEDBACK*

| *Assessment Criteria* | *Rating* |
|---|---|
| **A. Structure and Development of Answer** This refers to your organisational skills and ability to construct an argument in a coherent and original manner | |
| • *Originality of topic* | Very Good |
| • *Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified* | Very Good |
| • *Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work* | Good |
| • *Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions* | Satisfactory |
| • *Application of theory and/or concepts* | Satisfactory |
| **B. Use of Source Material** This refers to your skills to select and use relevant information and data in a correct manner | |
| • *Evidence of reading and review of published literature* | Very Good |
| • *Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument* | Good |
| • *Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence* | Satisfactory |
| • *Accuracy of factual data* | Very Good |
| **C. Academic Style** This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner | |
| • *Appropriate formal and clear writing style* | Good |
| • *Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation* | Very Good |
| • *Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)* | Very Good |
| • *Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?* | Yes |
| • *Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)* | Not required |

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| • *Appropriate word count* | Yes |

## ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

### Reviewer 1

This thesis represetns an innovative approach to the study of terrorism and counter-terrorism. It adds an important layer to our understanding of how contemporary terrorist organisations plan and conduct terrorist attacks and applies intelligence cycle theory to novel cases.

The execution of the case studies isn't quite as successful as hoped, in part due to the constraints of desk based research during the pandemic and in part due to the limited access to primary material. Given these constraints the case studies make a plausible argument about the role of intelligence in terrorist attacks.

The final section outlines an approach to forecasting terrorist behaviour based on plausible assumptions about their behaviour in four different scenarios. Although the final discussion of the theory of terrorist intelligence practice isn't as well executed it does show an interesting future direction for research.

### Reviewer 2

This is a potentially important dissertation. It asks, "how do terrorist organisations collect and utilise intelligence in preparation for staging attacks" which I think is pertinent. Yet, having read the dissertation, my impressions are mixed at best. There is much to like about the dissertation, but it is enormously confusing. I think several issues need to be raised in particular:

First, I think very little is written about how terrorists collect, analyze, and use intelligence. The case studies describe the attacks in good detail but do not tell much about what the terrorists did to collect and analyze intelligence for the attack. Hence, having read the dissertation, I am left wondering what the answer to its research question is.

Second, style contributes significantly to the overall confusion. Headings and subheadings (and many sentences in the text) are way too colorful. I know saying 'literature review' sounds boring, and I would not object to a more engaging title. However, I should be able to recognize that what follows is a literature review. Is Setting Requirements: Definitions Matter literature review, Determining the Direction: A Cyclical Approach, or perhaps Collating a Collection: Terrorists' Intelligence? That I cannot say is problematic.

Furthermore, many paragraphs are too long and do not have one central idea/argument. Hence, I was often not entirely sure what the paragraph means for the research question. Similarly, perhaps because I felt confused, I was pretty unsure of the purpose of many sections.

Why is it necessary to spend five pages defining intelligence and terrorism? What is the added value of this discussion? Would anything be different had other definitions been used? I do not think the definitions anyhow help or change the analysis. Similarly, how does Quadrant Crunching and Red Hat Analysis (p. 61-65) help answer the research question? I think it would have been beneficial had the purpose of each section been more evident.