

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2337439 DCU 17116562 Charles 75852735
Dissertation Title	A Critical Review of Bangladesh's Relations with China and India

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Reviewer 2 Initial Grade <i>Select from drop down list</i>	Late Submission Penalty <i>no penalty</i>
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: 22106 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: C3 [12] **After Penalty:** C3 [12]

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

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- *Appropriate word count*

Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The dissertation engages with the problematique of small states' foreign policy and focuses on Bangladesh's relations with China and India. It identified vulnerability and capability as the two dominant categories in theorising small states' foreign policies. The dissertation also emphasised that Western-centric IR theories cannot account for Bangladesh's relations with India and China. Unfortunately, this promising avenue of research remained underdeveloped; it would have benefitted from a more systematic approach.

Chapter 1 is formatted in an unusual way, one that resembles a project proposal rather than a dissertation. The dissertation lacks a proper introduction. The description of research methodology is rather cursory and does not elaborate either on concrete research methods or data collected for the dissertation.

An overview of mainstream IR theories with the focus on small states is interesting but limited in terms of literature consulted. While the discussion of constructivism is based on a more extensive engagement with literature, the dissertation approached constructivism as a unitary theory rather than a complex school of thought. It would have benefitted from more in-depth analysis of constructivist approaches to small states problematique as in a current form it seemed to have dismissed constructivist arguments out of hand. The application of a realist approach would also have benefited from a more extensive discussion with the tenets of this theoretical tradition vis-à-vis small states. The use of 'Thucydides's theory of realism' was an ambitious and innovative idea but it did not translate into a coherent analytical framework that could have been applied to the case study. As a result, the analogy of China and India to Sparta and Athens respectively seems a bit far-fetched.

The empirical chapters provide a lot of information but a framework that would allow for a systematic analysis and comparison is missing. Substantial parts of chapters 4 and 5 are enumerative and do not offer any analysis. There are no clear criteria as to which aspects of Bangladesh's relations with China and India should have been analysed in the first place. As a result, the empirical part is weakly linked with preceding theoretical deliberations. Chapter 6 that focuses on Sino-Indian relations also provided an enumerative description rather than a background to the dissertation's research question.

Reviewer 2

The thesis begins with a short and weak introductory chapter. The research question put forward is misleading because it is not clarified why Bangladesh would need to be 'completely aligned' with either China or India. Chapter two improves dramatically with a strong literature survey and an interesting parallel drawn between Bangladesh and the island of Melos, which sought to retain its independence and neutrality in the build-up to the Peloponnesian War. Having identified the limitations in mainstream IR theories to understand the choices and options facing smaller states, the author rightly points out the need to pay more attention to the perspective of the small state, in this case Bangladesh (p. 17).

Chapters 3,4,5 and 6 turn towards an empirical depiction of the strategic situation that Bangladesh finds itself in (the rivalry between India and China, the limited regional organisational capacity of SAARC); Bangladesh's relations with India, Bangladesh's relations with China and India-China relations.

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While this is all relevant information it could have been organised in a way that was more analytical and less descriptive. Instead of simply listing different aspects of the various bilateral relationships, a direct comparison could have been drawn and presented between trade, investments, foreign aid provided by the two Asian giants to Bangladesh.

Overall, the thesis presents a rather mechanistic view of Bangladesh's position and policies towards India and China. While this may certainly be pertinent, the thesis would have needed to engage more explicitly with the relevant systemic / structural theories. Throughout the text there are a number of grammatical and syntax errors..