IMSISS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	**Glasgow** 2285100 **DCU** 17116171 **Charles** 86609375
Dissertation Title	Western arms transfers, the tension between an ethical foreign policy and national interests

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

Reviewer 1 Initial Grade *For internal use only*	*Reviewer 2 Initial Grade* *For internal use only*	*Late Submission Penalty* *no penalty*
Word Count Penalty *(1 UofG grade point per 500 words below/above the min/max word limit +/- 10%)*		
Word Count: 22014 **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:** C1 [14]   **After Penalty:** C1 [14]

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*	Excellent
• *Coherent set of research questions and/or hypothesis identified*	Very Good
• *Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work*	Very Good
• *Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions*	Very Good
• *Application of theory and/or concepts*	Good
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*	Excellent
• *Critical analysis and evaluation of evidence*	Very Good
• *Accuracy of factual data*	Excellent
C. Academic Style This refers to your ability to write in a formal academic manner	
• *Appropriate formal and clear writing style*	Very Good
• *Accurate spelling, grammar and punctuation*	Excellent
• *Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)*	Excellent
• *Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?*	Yes
• *Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)*	Not required

• *Appropriate word count*	Yes

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

Overall, this dissertation, using the UK and Canada as case studies, represents a novel take on the extent to which western countries realise their discourse on arms transfers into action. It was a relatively well-written piece of work with just minor spelling and grammar mistakes/omissions. The word count was appropriate, and there were no concerns around the requirement for ethics approval nor were there concerns around plagiarism.

The dissertation on the face of it had a nice structure but there were some obvious deficiencies in terms of its formal research design. These emanated primarily from the absence of a clear and coherent research question "The research will try to answer the following question, in which way is the issue of arms trade regulation being framed in Western politics? It will attempt to provide an explanation as to why the Western states support the regulation of the arms trade at the international level, yet they do not reflect the changes they support in their behaviour". At times, the work appeared to mirror that of a story. It was not clear where the candidate positioned himself or herself regarding an overall contribution to research already conducted in this field.

Further to the above point, the literature review might have demonstrated more of a review and some critical analysis rather than an overview. The candidate engages in this better as they begin to conclude the section. Again, there was a missed opportunity here and elsewhere to demonstrate more effectively the contribution of their work. This chapter was also a bit unwieldy. Perhaps some sub-headings around different themes might have been offered. There seemed a lack of direction at times. The theoretical section was quite well done. The candidate demonstrated their command of existing works both here and in the literature review (but less so in the latter). Despite some efforts at this, it was important to refer back to this more concretely later on, esp. in demonstrating what they have added/done differently.

The methodology was relatively skeletal and a fair deal more might have been offered in this chapter in support of the decisions made. In terms of the approach actually undertaken, the case studies were well laid out but it seems as though they surely must be more than just illustrative (p.4-p.5) in terms of the findings, but rather, they are substantive in terms of the findings? e.g. p53 and "organised hypocrisy".

The dissertation, using the two case studies, more so in the case of the Canada case study, did offer up some good critical analysis and made attempts at relating this back to the theoretical section from earlier on, and more generally, analysing the cases of UK and Canada with reference to the literature. There were some good efforts made by the candidate but still, despite these sections, a discussion and "concluding remarks", the reader is left wondering how the state of literature has been altered due to this dissertation. The onus is on the candidate, in addition to the requirements to be reflexive and self-critical, to state their contribution more clearly.

Reviewer 2

This is an interesting and highly topical thesis attempting to assess the discourses and practices related to Western arms transfers in light of the Arms Trade Treaty of 2013. Two case studies are chosen to show the political calculations, workings of ethical discourse and moral oprobrium, as well as states' interests: The United Kingdom and Canada. The topic is being analysed against the

backdrop of the post-Cold War broadening and deepening of security conception and practice, i.e. human security. The author largely succeeds in the empirical dimension, showing both the difference between the two respective cases chosen and exposing the gap between discourses and practices. The quality of data analysis is high and represents the valuable contribution. Where I see the limits is 1) the robustness of theoretical framework (Human Security serves that purpose) and its applicability/application throughout the thesis; 2) unproblematic treatment of NGOs in the analysis (they too, have their own agendas, although these are different from states' ones); 3) a weak conclusion. On the other hand, formatting, systematic empirical analysis, quality reasources - both primary and secondary data, count among the strong parts of the thesis.