

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

Student Matriculation No.	Glasgow 2486215 DCU 19108770 Charles 17405751
Dissertation Title	AUKUS and the Securitization of the South Pacific Island States: Entrapment, Abandonment, and the Security Dilemma in the South Pacific

INDIVIDUAL INSTITUTION GRADING

		Late Submission Penalty 2 working days = 4 secondary bands
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: 20519 Suggested Penalty: 1 point 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: B2 [16] **After Penalty:** D1 [11]

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>	Good
• <i>Appropriate methodology and evidence of effective organisation of work</i>	Satisfactory
• <i>Logically structured argument and flow of ideas reflecting research questions</i>	Good
• <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>	Very Good
• <i>Selection of relevant primary and/or secondary evidence to support argument</i>	Very 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>	Very Good
• <i>Consistent and accurate referencing (including complete bibliography)</i>	Good
• <i>Is the dissertation free from plagiarism?</i>	Yes
• <i>Evidence of ethics approval included (if required based on methodology)</i>	Not required

IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

- *Appropriate word count*

No

ADDITIONAL WRITTEN COMMENTS

Reviewer 1

The dissertation contains a lot of evidence that the author devoted considerable effort to presenting an original piece of academic work. Most importantly, this concerns the topic - the author is quite right that in the discussions of either Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific, the Pacific part (meaning especially the Pacific island states) is often ignored. Hence, the author deserves praise for the selection of the topic.

I also appreciate the author's attempt to construct a theoretical framework for the understanding of the subject of her analysis. Here, however, the dissertation runs into difficulties, as the scope of concepts it aims to apply (including neorealism, securitization, security dilemma and alliance entrapment vs. abandonment) is simply too broad and incongruous.

That being said, the author's "conceptual narrative" (for a lack of a better term) does make general sense: The argument that it is the power-dependent security relations which matter most in the regional context, and that progressive securitization of the region as a potential battlefield (so far only in politico-strategic sense) between China and the U.S. (or AUKUS) has created a security dilemma for the Pacific island states which materializes in the fear of entrapment or, to the contrary, abandonment in their relations with Australia, makes sense. As a narrative, that is; at the same time, it fails in the function of a theoretical framework that would guide the author's research (e.g. because securitization is only implied but not rigorously studied in the dissertation).

The lack of methodological rigour is most evident at the level of the four empirical cases. These are, on the one hand, quite informative, but, on the other hand, remain largely descriptive and the subsequent analysis is more an argumentative exercise than a rigorous analysis. Especially in relation to the entrapment/abandonment dilemma, the conclusions should (and could) be more clear-cut.

Generally, the dissertation is strong in the originality of the topic and the effort (also resulting to a good general structure) to link it to a rich theoretical framework. However, the theoretical promise remains in a substantial part only an initial (and internally contradictory) sketch, and the ensuing analysis is, as a result, prevalently descriptive.

Reviewer 2

The dissertation seeks to contribute to the debate on a relatively new and still under-researched topic, i.e. the political and security implications of the AUKUS Treaty's securitisation of the Pacific region. In this regard, the dissertation is an interesting and informative analysis on a timely and critical issue, that definitely needs more scholarly and policy research, and thus is to be commended for its ambition. The study is generally well organized and written, though the theoretical framework is not enough focused and hence not always capable of effectively guiding the student in the analysis. Indeed, the analytical framework could have benefited from more in-depth elaboration. It follows that the research tends to lean more towards descriptive content at the expense of the analytical dimension. That said, the dissertation stands as a good piece of work that meets the standards expected at the master's level and reflects the student's maturity and ability in conducting independent and critical analysis.



IMSIS Dissertation Feedback & Mark Sheet

--