

IMESS DISSERTATION



Note: Please email the completed mark sheet to Year 2 coordinator (jiri.vykoukal@post.cz)

Please note that IMESS students are not required to use a particular set of methods (e.g. qualitative, quantitative, or comparative) in their dissertation.

Student:	Yinyong Dong
Dissertation title:	Does corruption affect FDI inflow in Visegrad countries? A panel Data Analysis

	70+	69-65	64-60	59-55	54-50	<50
	A	B	C	D	E	F
Knowledge <i>Knowledge of problems involved, e.g. historical and social context, specialist literature on the topic. Evidence of capacity to gather information through a wide and appropriate range of reading, and to digest and process knowledge.</i>			x			
Analysis & Interpretation <i>Demonstrates a clear grasp of concepts. Application of appropriate methodology and understanding; willingness to apply an independent approach or interpretation recognition of alternative interpretations; Use of precise terminology and avoidance of ambiguity; avoidance of excessive generalisations or gross oversimplifications.</i>				x		
Structure & Argument <i>Demonstrates ability to structure work with clarity, relevance and coherence. Ability to argue a case; clear evidence of analysis and logical thought; recognition of an argument limitation or alternative views; Ability to use other evidence to support arguments and structure appropriately.</i>				x		
Presentation & Documentation <i>Accurate and consistently presented footnotes and bibliographic references; accuracy of grammar and spelling; correct and clear presentation of charts/graphs/tables or other data. Appropriate and correct referencing throughout. Correct and contextually correct handling of quotations.</i>				x		
Methodology <i>Understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.</i>			x			

ECTS Mark:	C	UCL Mark:	60	Marker:	Elodie Douarin
<i>Deducted for late submission:</i>				Signed:	E. D.
<i>Deducted for inadequate referencing:</i>				Date:	02/09/2024

MARKING GUIDELINES

A (UCL mark 70+): Note: marks of over 80 are given rarely and only for truly exceptional pieces of work.

Distinctively sophisticated and focused analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

B (UCL mark 65-69):

A high level of analysis, critical use of sources and insightful interpretation. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen field of research, showing an ability to engage in sustained independent research.

C (UCL mark 60-61):

Some evidence of critical analysis, knowledgeable interpretation. Wide range of sources used to develop a logic and coherent argument. Good understanding of techniques applicable to the chosen

field of research, the extent of independent research could have improved.

D (UCL mark 59-55):

Employ relevant sources and show ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Little critical analysis of the material. It demonstrate methodological awareness but the standard and rigor of the analysis can improve.

E (UCL mark 54-50):

Mostly descriptive argument. Employ relevant but limited sources. The structure, logic and overall quality of the argument needs improvement.

F (UCL mark less than 50):

Demonstrates failure to use sources and an inadequate ability to engage in systematic inquiry. Inadequate evidence of ability to engage in sustained research work and poor understanding of appropriate research techniques.

Comments, explaining strengths and weaknesses (at least 300 words):

In this dissertation, the focus is on a very well studied topic: FDI in the Visegrad region. Specifically, the student investigate the role of corruption, pointing out that corruption could potentially facilitate or hinder inward FDI.

The question is interesting, but not well motivated – the opening of the dissertation simply states that the relationship can go both ways, without stating relevant sources, and then proceeds to the next section. What is the state of knowledge? What will be the contribution made here specifically? This is not clear from the introduction.

The following section, reviewing the literature, is too broad, and superficial. For example, the contribution of Kojima and Ozawa's model is stated twice as being a focus on comparative disadvantage, but this is not defined. It would have made more sense to focus on what was relevant to the analysis: what does it means for your model and specification? What is the relevant theory now? If you review work that discuss the micro and macro drivers of FDI, it is important to say what is relevant to your own analysis – otherwise you are just ignoring some of the literature you reviewed in your empirical part, and this is puzzling. Finally, while it is not bad to review potential drivers that you will include in your specification one by one, it is also important to explain why all together they make sense. Why your specification is good overall, not only why each element make sense.

Similarly, your section on corruption is unnecessarily long. You provide definitions that are irrelevant to your context, and do not translate into meaningful measurements than can be used in empirical work. Something more to-the-point would be much better. Your review of the empirical literature is again piece-meal and devoid of discussions on methods or specification.

As a result, there is a bit of a gap between the literature review section and the review of the empirical literature – they seem disconnected. Few of the issues discussed in the literature review are relevant to explaining the empirical approach chosen. There is also no discussion of the choice of focus on 4 countries over a few years, but 92 observations is not much. How does that compare to the dimensions of the datasets used in the papers you reviewed?

Section 3 is generic instead of specific. Do we really need a rephrasing of the content of your econometrics textbook? The whole section provides little guidance of direct relevance to section 4. As a result, a lot of it is actually repeated in section 4 – to discuss the steps taken empirically.

It is not a good choice to have all your tables in appendix. It makes the results much more difficult to follow and understand. All the tables also use abbreviations, making it impossible to understand without going back an forth in the text. Table 4 columns 2 and 3 are the same.

In terms of typesetting, it looked like your footnotes were missing (see page 32 on data sources for example). Several fonts are used with no apparent logic (see page 45 for example). Acronyms are defined multiple times for no clear reasons (see FDI).

Overall, the dissertation is overlong. It would have been much better to write something much shorter and to-the-point, focusing on the information relevant to this specific research question, rather than making broad, generic statements, detached from the empirical work attempted. This lowers your mark on analysis and interpretation especially, but also on structure and argumentation, since you have not been able to select and focus on the most important information.

There is not enough critical discussion of the choices you make and the results you get. Things do not need to be perfect, but you should show more awareness of the limitations of your work.

Presentation and documentation could be improved by including the tables in text and making them easier to read by themselves, and by making sure you use your sources better: associating statements with sources and generally going a bit deeper into the sources more directly relevant to your empirical focus.

Specific questions you would like addressing at the oral defence (at least 2 questions):

What are the advantages and drawbacks of focusing your analysis on 4 countries only?

How does your specification compare to other empirical papers focusing on the impact of corruption on inward FDI?

What is the biggest data limitation you faced in this project?

