

## Evaluation Criteria for Master's Theses/Project

These evaluation criteria apply to quantitative and qualitative empirical studies as well as to literary reviews. The evaluation criteria for the highest grades implicitly include the criteria for the lower grades: to be awarded a high grade, a thesis must meet the criteria for a good thesis. To receive a passing grade, the thesis must meet all the criteria for a sufficient thesis. The overall grade is the average value of the component grades.

	Sufficient (1)	Satisfactory (2)	Good (3)	Very good (4)	Excellent (5)
<b>BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVE</b>					
<i>Defining and describing the phenomenon studied</i>	The author defines and describes the studied phenomenon poorly or fails to define it altogether.	The author describes and defines the phenomenon, but in a disconnected or inadequate manner.	<b>The author describes and defines the studied phenomenon and related key concepts clearly.</b>	The author describes and defines the studied phenomenon and related key concepts clearly and comprehensively.	In addition to meeting the criteria for the lower grades, the author links the studied phenomenon to a wider scientific (theoretical or methodological) context.
<i>Justifying the choice of topic in accordance with the field's conventions</i>	The author gives a few reasons to justify his/her choice of topic, but the reasons fail to form a whole. The literature review is too brief or too rambling.	The author justifies his/her choice of topic well.	<b>The author justifies his/her choice of topic well, and the reasons form a logical whole. The thesis addresses a question not studied previously.</b>	In addition, the author justifies his/her choice of topic from the point of view of theory building, previous research and practical needs.	In addition, the author justifies his/her choice of topic with insight and from the point of view of theory building, previous research and practical needs. The reasons provided create a synthesis of previous knowledge. The studied phenomenon and its research tradition are zproblematized well.
<i>Presenting research questions (purpose, research problem, and questions, problems and objectives)</i>	The author presents research questions he/she aims to answer in the thesis.	The research questions are well-defined and presented according to the conventions of the field or phenomenon.	<b>The research questions are clear, well-defined and well-reasoned and are clearly linked with the established knowledge presented in the study. The data is appropriate to answer the research questions.</b>	The research questions are especially relevant to the field. The author has contributed significantly to formulating the research questions.	The author has phrased the research questions himself/herself, and the research questions are especially innovative or topical in nursing science or public health.

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<b>DATA AND METHODS</b>					
<i>Describing the data collection method and context (NB: Even if the author uses secondary data, the description meet the same requirements as personally collected data.)</i>	The author describes the data collection methods, but the description of the process is clearly inadequate.	The author describes the data collection methods and the collection process in general.	The author describes the data collection methods and context. The description of the process proceeds logically.	The author describes the data collection methods and context precisely. The description of the process is clear and comprehensive and demonstrates a good theoretical and practical command of data collection.	The author describes and justifies his/her data collection methods, process and context concisely. The use of methods demonstrates a critical approach.
<i>Choosing, using and reporting the data processing and analysis methods</i>	The author describes the analysis methods, data processing stages, and analysis, but the description does not form a coherent and logical whole. The analysis methods are mainly chosen to answer the research questions, but the author has insufficient command of the methods.	The author gives an overview of the analysis methods, data processing stages and the analysis itself, but the description may be insufficient. In general, the author uses methods correctly.	<b>The author correctly presents the analysis methods and data processing stages and also outlines the analysis itself, allowing the reader to follow the progress of the process easily. The analysis demonstrates a good command, and reliable use of the method and the author uses methodological literature successfully.</b>	The author justifies his/her choice of analysis methods and presents the data processing stages and analysis. The analysis demonstrates that the author has a good command of the methods both theoretically and in practice. The author makes good use of the data in the analysis and does a good job of taking its richness and details into consideration. The author chooses the methods sensibly to best summarize the information provided by the data.	The author justifies his/her choice of methods systematically and presents the data processing stages and analysis. The author skillfully tailors the methods to meet the needs of his/her study. Overall, the use of methods are insightful and impeccable.

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<b>FINDINGS</b>					
1) <i>Presenting findings</i> 2) <i>The quality of reporting the findings</i>	The findings can be understood to answer the research question, but they are not presented clearly or logically, nor are they grouped by research problem or question.	The author presents the findings according to his/her research problems or questions. The author uses the language of results to present his/her findings, which are clear and answer the research questions (no language of analysis when presenting findings).	<b>The author presents his/her findings comprehensively and according to the research problems or questions, and uses the language of results. The author interprets the results of the analysis correctly and illustrates his/her findings with figures or tables.</b>	The author presents the findings appropriately, correctly and concisely.	In addition, the author presents his/her findings especially clearly, in an engaging and informative way. The ratio of text to figures and tables is meaningful.

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<b>DISCUSSION</b>					
<i>Evaluating the reliability of the study</i>	The discussion demonstrates a relatively critical approach to the findings and methods.	The discussion considers the reliability of the findings and methods to some extent.	<b>The author describes the criteria for reliability and mainly evaluates the findings and methods accordingly.</b>	The author describes the criteria for reliability correctly and evaluates the findings and methods systematically in relation to the criteria.	The author describes the criteria for reliability clearly and in consideration of the methodology, and evaluates the findings and methods systematically and critically in relation to the selected criteria.
<i>Evaluating the ethicality of the study and its research framework (if a wider discussion of ethical issues is irrelevant, this component will not be evaluated. To pass, the author must mention that he/she has considered ethical issues and that his/her research framework includes none.)</i>	The author considers ethical issues and points of view somehow and uses literature on research ethics.	The author considers ethical issues and viewpoints throughout the the research process, discusses them only briefly.	<b>The author considers ethical issues throughout the process and examines them thoroughly in the thesis.</b>	The author considers and examines ethical issues comprehensively in the thesis, and uses literature on research ethics successfully.	In addition, the author examines ethical issues critically.
<i>Evaluating and discussing the findings (including conclusions)</i>	The thesis includes a discussion chapter that brings together the findings and involves at least some discussion.	The discussion summarizes the study's findings. The author compares his/her findings to previous literature and discusses only briefly or fails to discuss possible differences and the reasons for them.	<b>The author systematically evaluates and discusses his/her main findings, compares them to previous studies and analyses the possible differences. The discussion clearly indicates how the findings answer the research questions, and the author discusses the significance of the findings for practical applications or theory building. The author concludes the discussion with conclusions.</b>	The discussion clearly brings up new and unexpected findings and discusses them analytically in the light of previous literature. The author gives logical and well-justified reasons for his/her findings, and the conclusions are strongly rooted in the findings.	In addition, the discussion forms a coherent and logical whole. The author evaluates and discusses his/her findings analytically and critically demonstrates an indepth knowledge of the field as well as independent thinking. Suggested topics for further research are clearly connected to this study's findings.

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<b>USE OF REFERENCES</b>					
	The author uses at least some Finnish and international source literature. The source material is relevant to the topic of the thesis.	The author generally uses references where they should be used. The source literature is relevant to the topic.	<b>The author uses varied sources in an appropriate way. The author demonstrates the ability to evaluate the possible shortcomings in previous studies and other issues affecting the results.</b>	In addition, the author demonstrates that he/she can place the topic in a wider scientific context. His/her use of references is very good, and he/she cites literature that differs from or opposes the phenomenon.	In addition, the author uses reference material exceptionally well, critically and insightfully. If little research has been done on the subject in the field, the author uses reference material from other fields.
<b>GENERAL IMPRESSION, LANGUAGE AND LAYOUT</b>					
	There are some grammatical and spelling mistakes, but as a whole, the thesis is understandable. The thesis includes all the necessary components, and the author uses a referencing system consistently and correctly. The layout of the thesis and any tables and figures used is smart. The list of references is mostly correct.	In addition, the language mostly follows the conventions of good scientific writing. Tables and figures have appropriate headings, and the author uses correct in-text citations when referring to them.	<b>In general, the language of the thesis is impeccable (some punctuation and typing errors, etc. are allowed). The thesis follows the conventions of scientific writing; tables and figures are well-constructed, easy to read, understandable and have headings that are comprehensible even to a reader who isn't familiar with the text.</b>	The language of the thesis is fluent, follows the conventions of scientific writing and expresses clear and logical thinking. The author argues explicitly and well.	The thesis and its language express creative, critical and innovative thinking that fulfils the formal requirements for a Master's thesis. As a whole, the thesis is well-polished.

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<b>DEVELOPMENT AS A RESEARCHER</b>					
<i>Working throughout the research process, on the research team and/or in the supervising relationship</i>	The author made a supervising agreement and followed it. He/she did not, however, make good use of supervision despite problems in the thesis work.	The author followed the agreed schedule and came prepared to supervising meetings. His/her work was planned, but he/she did not bring his/her own views forward or adjust his/her views to those of the supervisor/research team or the requirements set out for Master's theses.	<b>The author brought forward his/her own views and justified them, but was also able to adopt the suggestions of the supervisor/research team. The author demonstrated the ability to give and receive critical feedback.</b>	The author came to the supervising relationship with a scientifically justified view of what or how he/she planned to research. OR The author has systematically acquired new skills and knowledge throughout the process and clearly developed as a researcher.	The author was a great help to the rest of the research team/peer group and demonstrated the ability to analyze his/her behavior and change it when necessary.