

## NUS Geography Honour's Thesis Marking Criteria

### Considerations for the HT Core Areas

1. Intellectual framework. Have the objectives been stated clearly? Are the research questions introduced and addressed throughout the thesis? Is there clarity and conciseness in setting the background context? Have relevant geographical literatures been included, and is the thesis positioned within the broader literature? Is the design of conceptual framework strong and logical?
2. Research design, methods, and techniques: Is the explanation of research design appropriate and sufficient? Are the methods clearly outlined, and justifiable for the defined research question? Are the challenges faced described? Are other possible approaches recognized? Have ethical considerations been addressed appropriately?
3. Analysis and Interpretation: Are the arguments sound and clear? Has an appropriate level of critical analysis been included? Are the findings appropriate and do they address wider implications? Have connections been made to the relevant literature?
4. Presentation, style, and structure: What is the quality of the expression? Is the writing clear and the thesis coherent? Are data presented in an appropriate and understandable manner? Has appropriate referencing been done? Does the thesis contain relevant visual and illustrative materials (e.g. maps, graphs, charts, tables, photographs, diagrams, sketches, flow charts) in support of the text?

**(A+): A mark in this range is indicative of outstanding quality work.** Marks in this range will be awarded for work that exhibits all the attributes of excellent work and includes substantial elements of originality, creativity, and a “value-add” to the discipline. The research questions will clearly link to findings and analysis. The conceptual framework demonstrates an outstanding understanding of the relevant debates and places the thesis clearly within those debates. The methods are clearly outlined. The analysis is sophisticated, clear, and insightful throughout. For example, the conceptual and empirical material is flawlessly integrated, there is a logical development of the ideas, and data is convincingly and creatively interpreted. Writing quality is exceptional and error-free with respect to mechanics. The HT will show very clear evidence of independent work and mature comprehension of the topic. The author uses his/her topic to address and contribute to wider debates within geography. Supporting materials are excellently organized, presented, and add a layer of richness to the overall product. Conclusions are clear and address wider implications in the relevant debates. Work of this quality is potentially publishable.

**(A): A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of an excellent quality.** The work exhibits excellent levels of knowledge and understanding. There will be fresh insights that challenge the reader's thinking as well as creativity. The research questions are developed and linked to findings and analysis. The conceptual framework demonstrates a strong understanding of the relevant debates and places the thesis within those debates. Methods are well outlined and are appropriate. Analysis is sophisticated and includes some strong insights. Writing quality is strong and essentially error-free with respect to mechanics. The work shows strong evidence of independent work and advanced comprehension of the chosen topic. The topic and analysis exhibit connections to wider debates within geography. Supporting materials are well organized and the presentation style is highly effective. The conclusions are clear and address wider implications in the relevant debates.

**Written by Godfrey, adjusted by Alan, Jamie, and Pow 2013**

**(A- to B+): A mark in this range is indicative of work that is of a very good quality.** Work of this quality shows a very good level of knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field. The research questions are clearly outlined and there are identifiable links to findings and analysis. The conceptual framework demonstrates an understanding of the relevant debates and the thesis speaks to them. Methods are sufficiently outlined and are appropriate for the chosen study. Writing quality is effective and mostly error-free in terms of mechanics. There should be clear evidence of critical engagement with the objects, issues or topics being analysed. Supporting materials are complete and enrich the thesis. The conclusions address wider implications and debates.

**(B to B-): A mark in this range is indicative that the work is of a good quality.** Work of this quality will show ample knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field. The research questions may be elementary, but are stated and connect to findings and analysis. The conceptual framework may make links between existing debates and the research question. Methods are likely simplistic, but are justified. Writing quality is clear and generally error-free in terms of mechanics. Arguments and issues should be discussed and illustrated by reference to examples, but these may not be fully documented or detailed. Supporting materials are sufficient and speak to the thesis. Conclusions are few and of limited insight.

**(C+ to C) A mark in this range is indicative of work that is of a satisfactory quality.** Work of this type will show elementary knowledge and understanding of the topic and/or field. The research questions may be vague or broad. The conceptual framework is adequately if loosely conceived. Methods are often simplistic and do not demonstrate rigor. Writing quality is adequate with some spelling, grammatical, and syntax errors. Use of diagrams and tables is adequate, but not exceptional. There may be errors related to methods, findings, and analysis, and thus it may be poorly presented and incorrect conclusions may be reached.

**(D+ to D-): A mark in this range is indicative that the work is weak/poor quality.** The HT will demonstrate very limited knowledge or understanding of the topic and/or field. Research questions are poorly conceived and executed. The conceptual framing is confusing and/or misdirected. Methods are unclear, of weak value to the thesis, or are not justified. Writing quality is poor and includes numerous spelling, grammatical, and syntax errors. The work will also show very poor presentation style. Thesis work will exhibit no clear argument, may have weak sentence structure, grammar, and syntax, inadequate or absent references and/or bibliography and may contain factual errors.

**(F): A mark in this range is indicative that the work is extremely poor quality.** This mark indicates that the work is of very poor quality and has fundamental flaws throughout. This will be because either the work is missing numerous critical components, or is badly jumbled and incoherent in content. Works of this nature often do not define research questions or explain the methods. Writing quality is very poor and is ridden with errors. The work will show minimal evidence of basic knowledge or understanding of geographical principles; and it may exhibit very weak writing and/or analytical skills.