

# Thesis Assessment Form

Please complete this assessment form within four weeks of receiving the thesis and send it to the chair of the assessment committee.

## Personal information assessor

Full name	
Title	
Affiliation(s)	
Date of assessment	

Please only include your personal information on this page, so that the assessment form can be anonymised easily.

## Assessment Guidelines

### Thesis guidelines

The thesis comprises either an academic treatise on a specific subject, or a number of separate academic papers which demonstrate sufficient coherence. According to the 'Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree' of HSA, the thesis that is assessed by the assessment committee comprises:

- a) an introduction, indicating the position of the research compared with other related research in a national or international context;
- b) the academic treatise on a specific subject, or a number of separate academic papers which demonstrate sufficient coherence;
- c) a general discussion, which includes a reasoned representation of the doctoral candidate's point of view in relation to the main topic, or the most important topics of the thesis;
- d) a summary of the thesis;
- e) a reflection, in layman's terms, on the scientific impact of the research, as well as, if applicable, the social impact anticipated or already achieved (i.e. impact-paragraph).

### Assessment criteria

According to the 'Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree' of HSA, the assessment committee shall give the chair a reasoned opinion on the question of whether the doctoral candidate has provided, by means of the thesis, such evidence of his/her competence to carry out independent academic work, that the thesis can be accepted as a doctoral thesis and that he/she can be admitted to the degree ceremony.

According to the 'Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree' of Maastricht University, the assessment of the thesis is based on the following criteria:

- a) the contribution to the body of academic knowledge and the impact of the research;
- b) the importance of and a clear definition of the problem statement;
- c) the originality of the approach;
- d) the academic level of the structuring, analysis and processing of the material;
- e) the soundness of the methodology used in the analysis of the material;
- f) the drawing of new insights and new views from the analysis of the material;
- g) a critical confrontation between the conclusions of the doctoral candidate and existing theories or views;
- h) a creative approach to the academic field covered in the thesis;
- i) balance in the structure of the thesis and clarity of the style;
- j) self-imposed restriction in the volume of the text.

If applicable, the chair will inform the members of the assessment committee about Faculty or School specific norms.

### ***What is expected from the assessment committee?***

Each member of the assessment committee receives an assessment form from the chair of the assessment committee. The members of the assessment committee (including the chair) are requested to use this form to assess the thesis within four weeks of receipt of the thesis. The completed assessment form must be returned to the chair.

Members of the assessment committee are not allowed to have contact with each other regarding the assessment. The communication regarding the assessment between the chair and the members of the assessment committee shall take place on an individual basis.

The decision to allow the doctoral candidate to defend the thesis is taken if a majority of the assessment committee, with no more than one vote against, approves the thesis. If the thesis is approved, the members of the assessment committee do not include any required changes or additions to the thesis or attach any conditions to that effect to their decision. The chair shall send the approval of the assessment committee and the assessment forms to the Board of Deans. The chair will also send the approval of the assessment committee and the anonymised assessment forms to the supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) are entitled to share the anonymised assessment forms with the doctoral candidate.

If the assessment committee decides to refuse admission to defend the thesis, the chair shall consult with the supervisor(s) and ask that the thesis be improved. The composition of the assessment committee for assessing the revised version of the thesis must be the same as for the original assessment.

### ***Guidelines for consideration of cum laude***

According to the 'Regulations for obtaining the doctoral degree' of HSA, to be eligible for the distinction cum laude, a thesis must be of exceptional quality and belong to the top of its scientific field. At least the following criteria are relevant in this regard:

- a) the thesis formulates clear theoretical and normative basic principles;
- b) to this end, the thesis contains a thorough and exhaustive analysis of a particular scientific problem;
- c) the thesis places that analysis (and thereby the problem) in a wider theoretical framework;
- d) the thesis demonstrates that the doctoral candidate is able to step outside the boundaries of his/her own academic field and go beyond its accepted assumptions;
- e) the thesis must make a substantial contribution to the academic debate leading to new points of view or insights;
- f) the thesis must be readable and accessible.

If a member of the assessment committee considers that the thesis is eligible for award of the designation cum laude, he/she can make this known to the chair of the assessment committee. The chair may then propose to the members of the assessment committee that the distinction cum laude be assigned to the doctoral degree in due course. The decision on this proposal shall be taken by the assessment committee by a unanimous vote. If the supervisor(s) (after consulting any co-supervisor(s)) agree with that, the chair of the assessment committee shall contact the Rector within two weeks of the committee's decision. To decide whether the thesis should indeed be considered for cum laude, the Rector, in consultation with the dean of the faculty, will consult two independent external experts in the relevant academic field. A unanimous positive opinion from these two experts is required for award of the distinction cum laude. The distinction shall be awarded if, after defence of the thesis, the defence committee decides unanimously on the proposal by voting.

## Assessment of the thesis

### Thesis information

Name of the doctoral candidate	
Title of the thesis	

### Conclusion

I consider that the doctoral candidate can be admitted to defend the thesis	Yes / No *
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*\*delete as appropriate*

### Explanation

Please give a short comment explaining your decision whether or not the doctoral candidate can be admitted to defend the thesis, considering the thesis guidelines and requirements of HSA. The anonymised assessment form will be sent to the doctoral candidate's supervisor(s) by the chair of the assessment committee.

<< *Short comment explaining your decision* >>