

# Instructions for reviewers

**The following aspects should be taken into account in the assessment:**

1. Examination of the research topic and formulation of the research question
  - The approach and the definition of the topic
  - The definition of the research task and objectives
  - Ethical perspectives of the research
2. Knowledge of the research field
  - Expertise and familiarity with the theoretical background and previous research and publications
  - Source criticism and the use of source material
  - Critical attitude and the courage to comment on other researchers' claims
3. Research
  - The application of theory to practical research
  - The use of research methods
  - The critical and evaluative use of methods, and the demands of the chosen methodology
  - Results and their reliability
  - Independence, initiative and responsibility for one's own research
4. Research results and their presentation
  - The comprehensive reporting of methods
  - The analysis of experimental data and results
  - The ability to focus on central information
  - The assessment of the reliability of results
  - Clear and illustrative reporting, and the relationship between graphs, drawings and tables and the body of the text
5. Discussion and conclusions
  - The thoroughness, plausibility and innovativeness of conclusions
  - The comparison of research results with previous research and literature
  - The assessment of the importance of results and the proposal of future research topics
  - The critical assessment of results and their reliability
6. Scholarly presentation and final polishing
  - The use of a clear and appropriate structure; style may help to capture the reader's attention
  - The ability to write in an academic style
  - Correct language use
  - Appropriate and consistent citation, and a clear, accurate list of references
  - The appropriate and smooth integration of results and conclusions with previously published literature presented in the thesis
  - Appropriate layout
7. Independence and maturity of the author
  - The ability to establish an overview of the field and further develop it independently
  - The ability to produce results
  - The ability to find and present research literature
  - Creativity and open-mindedness (within reason)
  - A sense of responsibility and purpose

## Description of overall grades

### *Laudatur*

The grade *laudatur* is given to theses that meet all the requirements set for a thesis and deserve special distinction. The theoretical background of the thesis is well-established, and the premise is skilfully set and critically validated. The author formulates the research problem and develops solutions and methods independently and innovatively. The research work and data handling demonstrate an exceptional ability to produce results creatively. The reliability of the results is thoroughly assessed, and the results are extensively and critically discussed. The language use and scholarly presentation are impeccable.

### *Eximia cum laude approbatur*

The grade *eximia cum laude approbatur* is given to theses that demonstrate profound familiarity with the theory and literature in the field and show an excellent grasp of research methods. The author has a good grasp of broad issues and problems, and can make conclusions and provide recapitulations that open new perspectives. The research topic and objectives are comprehensively validated. In contrast to a thesis receiving a *laudatur* grade, the conclusions may not be quite as creative or innovative, or the arguments may not be quite as convincing. A thesis receiving an excellent grade must be written in flawless language, and information must be presented logically, accurately and clearly. No significant shortcomings are allowed in the presentation.

### *Magna cum laude approbatur*

The grade *magna cum laude approbatur* requires familiarity with the theory and literature in the field and a good grasp of experimental methods. The author has carefully studied the literature in the field and summarizes it comprehensively. His or her research methods and results are described accurately and contrasted skilfully with the theoretical background and previous research. The interpretation of results, the examination of their reliability and the drawing of conclusions are validated consistently and critically. The presentation is well-organized throughout the thesis and complies with the practices of the discipline. The layout and language are polished. The thesis is a logical entity which shows the author's ability to examine the topic comprehensively.

### *Cum laude approbatur*

A thesis that receives the grade *cum laude approbatur* is a successful, well-functioning text. The author has a grasp of the theoretical background and discusses key publications. The research methods are used skilfully. The results and conclusions are presented logically, and their reliability is appropriately assessed. In contrast to a thesis receiving a *magna cum laude approbatur* grade, the author may show slight uncertainty in the way the main issues are stressed and the wider entities structured, or the discussion may not be quite as broad. Terminological errors or clear deficiencies in presentation may also separate a *cum laude approbatur* thesis from theses receiving the higher grade.

### *Non sine laude approbatur*

A thesis that receives the grade *non sine laude approbatur* is a well-functioning thesis approved with merit. The author has studied the theoretical or practical background of the topic and has produced a broadly comprehensive literature review. The results are presented appropriately, and their importance and opportunities for further development are also assessed. In contrast to a thesis receiving the higher grade, the presentation may be mechanical or list-like and superficial. The author may also show uncertainty in the way issues are stressed and wider entities structured, or he or she may not discuss issues sufficiently critically and comparatively. Many theses receiving this grade have clear deficiencies in terminology, language use or presentation.

### *Lubenter approbatur*

A thesis that receives the grade *lubenter approbatur* is approved under the requirements set by the Faculty although there are considerable deficiencies in the research methods, data or presentation. The essential results may not be clearly separated from inessential ones, or the recapitulations and conclusions may be uncertain. The results are presented intelligibly but discussed superficially, and their reliability is inadequately assessed. The author may also have an inadequate grasp of the concepts. The thesis is often too constricted and one-sided, but it may also be too extensive and unbalanced.

### *Approbatur*

An approved thesis must be a coherent text that follows the presentation practices used in the field. A thesis that receives the grade *approbatur* barely fulfils this requirement but has no noteworthy merits in any of the areas assessed. The objectives, methods and results should always be presented clearly, but a thesis receiving the grade *approbatur*, the lowest possible grade, may have severe shortcomings in methodology, the handling of data and written presentation which clearly jeopardize the reliability of the results. Moreover, the literature review may be lacking essential elements, or the structure of the thesis may be illogical. Other important factors that lower the grade include the unreliability of experimental work, scant results and a deficient assessment of their reliability, and deficient or unjustified conclusions.