



Dear Supervisor,

The grading of our students' thesis work is a highly responsible and once in a while also a demanding task. The grading schedule (0 to a maximum of 5 points) is clearly outlined in our regulations which also allow us to call for a co-supervisor who may allocate a maximum of 5 additional points to a work that is above regular standards. Since these standards are not explicitly set in our regulations, this policy paper may help you to support our approach to apply a set of common rules across different programmes in our School.

Our approach to grading a final thesis rests on the following guidelines:

1. Grades from zero (0) to five (5) apply to 80% of our students. A maximum of up to five (5) points is granted by the supervisor alone. Within this pool, some 70% receive grades between zero (0) and four (4) (leaving the grade 0 for a possible, but improbable and very unfortunate situation when the candidate is not able to produce an even vaguely consistent story*) and 30% receive five (5) points
2. Grades from six (6) through to ten (10) points apply to 20% of our students. There are some guidelines to be followed in this case:
 - a) At least 30 days prior to the corresponding final exam session, the supervisor submits to the Dean a report that marks the thesis with five (5) points out of five (5) and a motivated request for a co-supervisor reporting that, according to his/her view, the study deserves a total result of more than 5 points.
 - b) Typical situations implying a co-supervisor are an interdisciplinary study (and then the supervisor suggest a profile for the co-supervisor which is complementary to her/his own), a methodological novelty of the thesis and/or originality of the conclusions obtained (as an extreme case, when they contradict or go beyond an existing paradigm). The time period required by the student for writing and finishing the thesis does not on its own constitute a very convincing reason for the request for a co-supervisor, it has to be supported by additional arguments.
 - c) Since the supervisor is the appropriate person to establish the total value of the thesis, the supervisor should suggest the number of extra point(s) that should be allocated to the thesis, stating in her/his request to the co-supervisor "in my opinion this thesis deserves 5 points plus 1, or 2, or 3, or 4, or 5 extra points".
 - d) In her/his report, the co-supervisor assigns an extra 0, 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 points to the 5 points already given by the supervisor. She/He has to clearly state why the study at hand deserves these extra points. The grading practice in this case implies that 60% of these candidates (i.e. 12% of the total) are granted 0, 1 or 2 extra points. Another 30% (6% of the total) may expect 3 or 4 extra points. Only the remaining 10% of studies (2% of the total) may receive 5 extra points. The last situation is meant for exceptional cases, i.e. when the dissertation in its present form may be published as a working paper of the School of Economics and Management or an affiliated institution.
3. Applying these principles leads to the following grade distribution:

0 to 4 points	-> 60%	5 points	-> up to 20%
6 -7 points	-> at most 12%;	8 -9 points	-> at most 6%
10 points	-> at most 2%		

* a supervisor assigning a grade of zero (0) may consider not allowing the student to present the thesis