

REFEREE'S REVIEW

Program:	Master in Corporate Finance
Student:	Regina Kornilova
Title of thesis:	DETERMINANTS OF CROSS-BORDER MERGERS AND ACQUISITIONS SUCCESS IN THE RUSSIAN BANKING SECTOR

Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis. Justification of the topic choice; accuracy in defining the aim and tasks of the thesis; originality of the topic and the extent to which it was covered; alignment of the thesis' topic, aim and objectives.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2
Structure and logic of the text flow. Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives. Adequacy of objectives coverage; ability to formulate and convey the research problem; ability to offer options for its solution; application of the latest trends in relevant research are for the set objectives.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
Quality of data gathering and description. Quality of selecting research tools and methods; data validity adequacy; adequacy of used data for chosen research tools and methods; completeness and relevance of the list of references.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
Scientific aspect of the thesis. Independent scientific thinking in solving the set problem/objectives; the extent to which the student contributed to selecting and justifying the research model (conceptual and/or quantitative), developing methodology/approach to set objectives.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
Practical/applied nature of research. Extent to which the theoretical background is related to the international or Russian managerial practice; development of applied recommendations; justification and interpretation of the empirical/applied results.	5	4	<u>3</u>	2
Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5	<u>4</u>	3	2

Each item above is evaluated on the following scale, as applicable: 5 = excellent, 4 = good, 3 = satisfactory, 2 = poor.

Additional comments:

The aim and objectives of research are stated clearly, in alignment with chosen topic. Scope of thesis basically covers the research objectives.

The literature review is big but a bit confusing. For example, the large piece of references in the chapter "Factors that influence post-M&A financial performance" is actually devoted to the factors, indicating probability of being acquired. Also the detailed list of the literature, devoted to classification of M&A deals, looks interesting but not directly related to the topic.

One may notice certain inconsistency in research logic. First, it seems questionable that the success of M&A is mainly measured by changes in the performance of the target bank, rather than in acquirer. But the author focused on measuring post-performance of the target, lacking any elaboration on such choice.

Though the author formulated as an objective to find the relation between the performance of target bank and certain variables, in fact, post-M&A performance is measured by profitability only. Moreover, ROE has been chosen as a single measure of profitability. Such choice significantly narrowed the research and diminished its reliability.

Conclusions are a bit general. Though certain limitations are mentioned, mostly these are the limitations debated in research studies.

The research has by nature limited practical application for management, but the elaboration of this fact was omitted in the text and needs to be explained in presentation.

The quality of layout is good in general, though there are several inaccuracies in specifying the dimensions of numbers. For example: in Table 5 – figures are marked as mln. Rubles which seems to be a mistake, as the median income for example in this case would be 34006851 mln.Rub (!?). Table 6 is provided with

Note: All Rouble amounts are in mln EUR.

Master thesis of Regina Kornilova meets the requirements of Master in Corporate Finance program, and deserves a **satisfactory** grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Date 14/06/2013

Referee:

Candidate Degree in Economics,
Associate Professor

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Olga M. Udovichenko', written in a cursive style.

Olga M. Udovichenko