

SCIENTIFIC ADVISOR'S REFERENCE

Program:	Master in Management (MIM)
Student:	Aleksandr O. Gasford
Title of thesis:	Internationalization of National Oil Companies: Asset Acquisitions and Asset Swaps

<p>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.</p> <p>The thesis deals with a relevant topic and provides original analysis of internationalization strategies of National Oil Companies. The aim and the objectives of the research have been depicted in a convincing way. The research objectives are fully achieved.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The structure of the thesis is in accordance with the research objectives. The thesis is based on case method.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The research design is adequate, although the literature review is not sufficiently focused on internationalization studies applied to the oil and gas industry.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>Primary data is fully adequate to the research objectives. Dataset is comprehensively described in the thesis. The thesis is backed by substantial empirical data on acquisitions implemented by NOCs and in-depth interviews with Gazprom neft representatives.</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The student proved strong capacities to discern and solve the problem and developed original analytical approach. In result, the thesis provides an interesting contribution in terms of NOCs classification according to their internationalization (asset acquisition).</p>
<p>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.</p> <p>The research results are relevant for oil and gas market players. The thesis brings evidence of independent applied research capacities of the student.</p>
<p>Quality of thesis layout. Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defence, correct layout of tables, figures, references.</p> <p>The criterion is well addressed, although some minor drawbacks could be identified.</p>
<p>Originality of the text. All sources of match identified by the Safe Assign system follow the allowed cases, the paper does not contain any elements of plagiarism.</p> <p>The thesis text is original and does not contain elements of plagiarism.</p>

The Master thesis of Aleksandr Gasford meets the requirements for master thesis of Master in International Business program thus the author of the thesis can be awarded the required degree.

Date: June 04, 2016

Scientific Advisor: PhD, As.prof. Olga L. Garanina

