

## REFEREE'S REVIEW

<b>Program:</b>	Master of Corporate Finance
<b>Student:</b>	Ruska Polina
<b>Title of thesis:</b>	THE RELATION BETWEEN DIVIDEND POLICY AND STOCK RETURNS: AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF LARGE RUSSIAN COMPANIES

<b>Justification of the topic choice. Accuracy in defining the aim and objectives of the thesis.</b> 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			
<b>Structure and logic of the text flow.</b> Logic of research; full scope of the thesis; alignment of thesis' structural parts, i.e. theoretical and empirical parts.	5			
<b>Quality of analytical approach and quality of offered solution to the research objectives.</b> 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			
<b>Quality of data gathering and description.</b> 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.			3	
<b>Scientific aspect of the thesis.</b> 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.			3	
<b>Practical/applied nature of research.</b> 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.			3	
<b>Quality of thesis layout.</b> Layout fulfils the requirements of the Regulations for master thesis preparation and defense, correct layout of tables, figures, references.	5			

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

### Additional comments:

**Quality of data gathering and description.** The author describes in detail all of the data, except for one – the stock return (it's the dependent variable). Judging from the general context of the work, it is the relative change of the share price in the current year. But from information of the author (fig.3.12 on p.64, appendices 2-9) the stock returns of Russian shares in any one year were approximately 2-3%, and has never been negative (even in 2008). Where the author has taken such kind of data for companies? Therefore, all regression constructed by author shows that the stock return approximately equals of dividend yield. This is completely contrary to reality. The Russian stock index rose by 250% from 2004 to 2008, then fell and rose again (see also fig.3.8 on p.60).

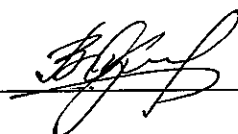
### **Scientific aspect of the thesis. Practical/applied nature of research.**

Incorrect data used by the author reduce to zero the scientific and practical value of the work.

Master thesis of Ruska Polina meets the requirements of MCF program, and deserves a "satisfactory" grade, thus the author can be given the desired degree.

Referee:

Associate Professor

 /Okulov V.L./

15.06.2013