What makes a good, bad or outstanding thesis? Some suggestions for incorporating in your own rubric

Dimensions of the task	Outstanding	Very good	Acceptable	Unacceptable
Introduction	Presents a compelling problem/research question and indicates why it is significant and important	Poses a good question	Orientates reader to a problem	Does not state the problem, or trivialises it
Literature review	Justifies criteria for inclusion and exclusion	Some discussion of criteria for inclusion or exclusion		Partial coverage Does not discuss criteria for inclusion or exclusion
	Distinguishes what has been done in the field, from what needs to be done.	Some critical examination of the state of the field, some understanding of the history of literature in the field		Accepts literature at face value History of the field not discussed
	Identifies ambiguities. Synthesizes and offers a new perspective on the field	Reviews relationships amongst key variables Some conceptualisation		Description, little synthesis.
Methodology and methods	Identifies main methodologies and research methods that have been used in the field. Demonstrates understanding of philosophical perspective. Embraces an ontological perspective	Critiques research methods. Discusses practical and scholarly significance of methods used. Demonstrates epistemic understanding.		Research methods and philosophical perspective not discussed
	Uses state of the art tools, techniques or approaches. Uses multiple methods	Uses existing methods correctly and creatively. Discusses why method was chosen.	Appropriate for the problem. Provides sufficient documentation	Uses wrong or inappropriate methods. Methods do not relate to the question or theory. Method is fatally flawed
Results/Analysis	Original, powerful, sophisticated, robust. Provides plausible interpretations, discusses limitations	Produces rich, high quality data. Substantiates results	Analysis is objective, aligns with question and theory, but based on a small amount of data/interpretation too simplistic	Analysis is wrong, inappropriate or incompetent. Cannot discern what is important or explain results. Makes improper inferences
Discussion and conclusion	Short, clear, concise. Refers back to introduction. Identifies significance and contribution. Places work in wider context	Provides a good summary. Ties everything together. Discusses limitations. Identifies some future directions	Summarises what has been accomplished, does not address the significance of the research or place it in context. Identifies a few non-specific next steps	Inadequate or misleading. Repeats the introduction. Does not understand the results of what has been done