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Continuous Improvement

Procedures are meant to be 'living' documents that need to be followed, implemented and maintained. If the procedure does not reflect the current, correct work practice, it needs to be updated! Contact your Document Controller on Ext 7121 **today!**

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1 PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

- 1.1 *The purpose of this document is to describe the programme regulations pertaining to the teaching, learning and assessment processes for MQF Level 1 – 3 programmes.*

2 APPLICABILITY OF REGULATION

- 2.1 *These regulations apply to the MCAST programmes (see levels below) commencing as from academic year 2016/17, onwards.*

- a) MQF / EQF Level 1 : Introductory Level;
- b) MQF / EQF Level 1 : Skills Kits (Refer to Appendix 1);
- c) MQF / EQF Level 2 : Foundation Level;
- d) MQF / EQF Level 3 : Diploma Level.

These regulations are equally applicable to Students, Lecturing and Administrative staff within the College, Institute and Corporate functions.

- 2.2 *It is in the Student's interest, and finally the Students' responsibility, to ensure that s/he has access to and is familiar with the content of this Regulation.*
- 2.3 *In cases where certification by foreign awarding bodies is still being awarded, the relevant regulations of the awarding body concerned apply.*

3 UPDATING AND DISSEMINATION OF REGULATION

- 3.1 *Updates to this document will need to be approved by the Council of Institutes (Col).*
- 3.2 *The QA Document Control Section will ensure that the latest revision of this document is uploaded on the College website and that changes will be communicated in a timely manner to all end users. Institute Management shall ensure that a copy of this regulation is available to the Student at the Institute Administration.*

The only official valid version of this Regulation shall be that published on the College website and on the MCAST e-portal.

4 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 **Academic Year:** *Refer to paragraph 7.1.*
- 4.2 **Assessment criteria:** *These are descriptions of what the Student is expected to do in order to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.*
- 4.3 **Assignments / Coursework:** *Tasks or exercises performed by the Student as part of a*

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course of study. The Student's work shall be expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of a study unit. Assignments may require to be done away from the institute (at home) within a particular timeframe (which can be anything from a few days to a number of weeks) and are to be handed in by a pre-established deadline which is normally within the semester in which the unit is being delivered.

- 4.4 **Core Units** are compulsory units which must be passed to complete a qualification.
- 4.5 **Col:** The MCAST Council of Institutes.
- 4.6 **Interruption of Studies:** An authorised, temporary break from a programme of study usually due to extenuating circumstances.
- 4.7 **Key skills:** Key skills are a range of essential skills that underpin success in education, employment, lifelong learning and personal development. Thus, Mathematics, Maltese, English, IT, Science, Individual and Social Responsibility, for example, are essential key skills. Other key skills include Entrepreneurship, Individual Social Responsibility and Critical thinking.
- 4.8 **Learning outcomes:** Learning outcomes are the specific intentions of a programme or study unit. They describe what a Student should know, understand, or be able to do at the end of that programme or study unit.
- 4.9 **Optional Units** are units which are chosen by the Institute from a prescribed list. A pass mark in each study unit is normally necessary to complete a qualification. If compensation is envisaged (e.g., where the achievement of a good grade in one unit makes up for a non-satisfactory grade in a different unit), this shall be indicated in the MCAST regulations and/or the Students' Handbook.
- 4.10 **Prerequisite/s:** A study-unit or units, exam/s or qualification/s which must be passed before entry to another unit/s or progression to another course is normally necessary. This shall ensure that a suitable grounding has been established before moving to a more demanding level of study. Entry to a new course would normally be denied if the prerequisite is not in place.
- 4.11 **Progression:** Progression means the movement through registration by a Student to a higher level course upon completion of a course of study.
- 4.12 **Qualification:** The academic title conferred upon a Student who has successfully completed a programme of study which has been approved by the Col. Programmes are normally made up of study units which may also be referred to as modules. The number of study units per programme may vary.
- 4.13 **Study Unit or Module:** A study unit or module is a self-contained study component delivered in an Institute. An MCAST programme of study is normally made up of a number of study units, some of which are compulsory while others might be optional.
- 4.14 **Synoptic Assessment:** An opportunity for Students to re-attempt a unit in which they have failed to achieve 50 % of the overall mark for that particular unit. The assessment covers a cross-section from all the Learning Outcomes for the respective unit. The assessment may include time-constrained examinations.

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- 4.15 **Time Constrained Assignments (TCAs):** Assignments in the form of an examination, done in class, under supervision. TCAs may be carried out during the delivery period of a unit, or at the end of a semester in which a unit is completed. The dates and venues for TCAs shall be communicated to Students in advance either through the notice boards or other means of communication.
- 4.16 **Withdrawal from Studies:** The discontinuation of a programme of study (resignation) with no intention of continuing the same programme of study at a later stage.

5 STUDENT BEHAVIOUR, ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND REPORTING OF GRIEVANCES

5.1 Student Roles, Obligations and Rights

- 5.1.1 MCAST is an inclusive, community College which seeks to promote and respect the principles of diversity, inclusion and respect for the dignity of all its members.
- 5.1.2 MCAST expects all Students to work in a safe environment in which they feel comfortable. MCAST considers the following acts of a very serious nature:
- a) All kinds of bullying;
 - b) Victimisation;
 - c) Harassment;
 - d) Unfair discrimination based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, race and disability;
 - e) Aggression, including physical and psychological.

The applicable documents (reference to below) inform the parties concerned of their expected conduct, main roles, obligations and rights.

Reference Documents;

Doc 035 : Learner's Grievances Policy and Procedure

5.2 Student Academic Conduct

- 5.2.1 Students are expected to carry with them their MCAST Student Identity Card at all times. Students may be barred access to various MCAST facilities, functions and activities, and may be asked to leave the campus if they fail to present their Student Identity Card upon demand.
- 5.2.2 The Student is expected to comply with MCAST regulations and behave respectfully towards all members of the College community and visitors. When MCAST rules and regulations are contravened, the College shall be constrained to implement measures to rectify matters, ensure conformity and safeguard the interest of the community.
- 5.2.3 The Student is also required to act with honesty and integrity in fulfilling requirements in relation to learning and assessment.

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5.2.4 *Continuous assessment of work typically warrants continuous effort and application on the part of the Student. If such work is left to accumulate and/or overlap with the delivery of new units and further coursework, the Student will find that he/she is unable to complete the work expected of him/her by the prescribed deadlines. This may have a negative impact on his/her performance.*

5.2.5 *When a Student is alleged to have committed a breach of academic conduct, a report shall be made in writing to the Institute Director. A summons (refer to Form referenced below) is then issued to the Student to appear in front of the Institute / Corporate Student Disciplinary Board (IDB).*

5.2.6 *Additional information regarding academic misconduct, disciplinary procedures, conduct during assessment / examinations can be found in the procedures referenced below. The Student is encouraged to read through these procedures at the beginning of the academic year.*

5.3 Drugs and Alcohol Policy

5.3.1 *Drug and alcohol misuse affects performance, conduct and relationships both at College and at society at large. Individuals who develop drug and alcohol related problems cause harm to themselves and to others.*

MCAST has the duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of all individuals, including employees, students, visitors and contractors who use the premises.

MCAST considers that it has a responsibility to promote good health, by raising the awareness of Students and employees as to the risks of drug and alcohol misuse and by offering counseling for those who have a drug or alcohol problem.

MCAST policy on the misuse of drugs is to comply with the laws of Malta and police will be notified if a student, employee or any other person is found on any of the College's campuses to:

- a) Be in possession of illegal drugs, or*
- b) Be supplying / providing or using illegal substances.*

The College Drugs and Alcohol Policy is available in the document referenced to below.

5.4 Reporting of Grievances

5.4.1 *Some grievances may result from misunderstandings, while some others are genuine cases of unfair treatment or misconduct.*

Before a Student resorts to a formal grievance, he/she is encouraged to first seek to resolve the matter informally. In many cases, a fair dialogue between parties involved may lead to an amicable solution, without the need to go any further in settling issues.

MCAST acknowledges the fact that a Student may wish to resolve his/her grievance informally, thus achieving a fair solution without the need of going for the formal procedure. In case a Student feels dissatisfied with the outcome of the informal handling of the grievance procedure, then s/he is free to make use of the formal procedure as regulated below.

All grievances shall be dealt with in the strictest confidence, and they should be reported to the Institute Director who will then act and refer the case accordingly.

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Reference Documents:

- Doc 026 : Drugs and Alcohol Policy*
- Doc 031 : Counselling Services Policy*
- Doc 032 : Plagiarism Policy*
- Doc 035 : Students' Grievances Policy and Procedure*
- Doc 038 : Student Conduct Regulations*
- Doc 044 : Counselling Services Guidelines*
- Doc 055 : Career Guidance Policy*
- Doc 075 : Instructions to Students for Proper Conduct During Assessment / Examination*
- Doc 284 : Summons for the Institute Disciplinary Board (IDB) Hearing Form*
- Doc 285 : Summons to the MCAST Corporate Disciplinary Board Hearing Form.*

6 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

6.1 General Programme Information

- 6.1.1 *A full list of programmes is given in the MCAST prospectus which is published annually.*
- 6.1.2 *The College Prospectus provides the following programme related information:*
- a) Programme qualification title;*
 - b) Programme Rationale;*
 - c) Name of Awarding Body;*
 - d) Programme Duration;*
 - e) Programme work load (ECVETs / ECTS);*
 - f) Programme EQF / MQF level*
 - g) Fees (where applicable);*
 - h) Entry Requirements, Academic and Otherwise (including entry conditions for mature Students);*
 - i) Overall Learning Outcomes;*
 - j) Employment paths.*
- 6.1.3 *In this regulation, a programme of study refers to the vocational and training education provided by MCAST in preparing its Students for employment in different industrial sectors and/or for progression to further/higher education.*
- 6.1.4 *The terms 'Student' and 'trainee' may be used interchangeably and refer to an individual following a programme of study.*
- 6.1.5 *The Institute is responsible for the provision of the correct pedagogical approach for facilitating the learning, teaching and assessment processes and is required to ensure that the unit curriculum is up to date and reflects the needs of the Students.*

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6.1.6 *MCAST's vocational programmes (pre MQF Level 1 and MQF Level 1 to 3) are delivered by the following Institutes / Centres:*

- *Institute of Applied Sciences;*
- *Institute of Business Management and Commerce;*
- *Institute of Community Services;*
- *Institute for the Creative Arts;*
- *Institute of Engineering and Transport;*
- *Institute of Information and Communication Technology;*
- *Gozo Campus*

6.1.7 *Programmes of study offered at MCAST are Student-centred adopting a learning outcome-based approach to vocational training and assessment.*

6.1.8 *A programme of study is built on a framework of a combination of study units and work based learning normally taken over one or two years full-time or an elongated period if part-time. The Student is awarded a qualification after successful completion of all the units within the programme of study.*

6.1.9 *Details of the programme of Study are included in the programme Specification. The programme Specification includes as a minimum the following information:*

- a) Programme Title;*
- b) Programme rationale;*
- c) Overall Learning Outcomes;*
- d) List of Study Units.*

A Study Unit is a self-contained, credit-rated and assessed unit of study. A study unit is built upon a framework of defined learning outcomes which specify the knowledge, skills and competences that the Student will obtain after the completion of each study unit.

The programme Specification Study Unit includes as a minimum the following information:

- a) Unit Title;*
- b) Number of ECVETS (Credits);*
- c) MQF/EQF Level;*
- d) Unit Learning Outcomes;*
- e) Content;*
- f) Grading Criteria;*
- g) Assessment Methodology.*

6.1.10 *Each Unit carries a credit rating. All Units normally carry 6 ECVETs.*

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6.2 Learning Framework for Level 1 (Introductory), Level 2 (Foundation), Level 3 (Diploma)

6.2.1 The Table below provides the programme structure for Levels 1, 2 and 3.

Level	Level 1 (Introductory)	Level 2 (Foundation)	Level 3 (Diploma)
Duration	1 year	1 year	1 -2 year
Minimum Total Credits (ECVETs)	40	60	60
Total Learning Hours	1,000	1,500	1,500
Number of Study Units	8	10	12
Typical number of Key Skill Units	6 Units (18 ECVETs)	6 Units (18 ECVETs)	6 Units (24 ECVETs)
Typical number of Vocational Units (Study units related to the vocational sector of the programme of study)	2 Units (12 ECVETs)	4 Units (24 ECVETs)	6 Units (36 ECVETs)
Embedded Units (10 ECEVETs)	10 ECVETs	18 ECVETs	N/A

6.3 Embedded teaching and learning

- 6.3.1 MCAST offers six Key Skills subjects, namely English, Maltese, Mathematics, Information Technology, Science and Individual and Social Responsibility. The Key Skills component at Levels 1, 2 and 3 is common to Students in all institutes at the respective level.
- 6.3.2 The Key Skills component is embedded and contextualised in the Levels 1 and 2 programmes and contextualised in the Level 3 programme. Embedding and/or contextualisation will reflect the institutes where the Key Skills are taught.
- 6.3.3 For embedded learning purposes, the coursework has direct and exclusive relevance to the vocational units of the respective Institutes.
- 6.3.4 Key skills at level 3 (English, Maltese, Maths, IT, Science and Individual and Social Responsibility) are contextualised in accordance with the vocational content of the respective Institutes.
- 6.3.5 Embedding entails simultaneous teaching of the two components (Key Skills and vocational skills) within the vocational area. Key Skills lecturers work closely with vocational lecturers in order to plan their teaching as well as the embedded component to work in parallel with the respective vocational units and contextualise the Key Skills as to make them more relevant to the Students.

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7 ACADEMIC YEAR

- 7.1 *The academic year and lecturing commence as approved by the Council of Institutes and as communicated on the MCAST website.*
- 7.2 *Part-time (evening) courses may not follow the standard academic year format.*
- 7.3 *The academic year is normally divided into 2 semesters, each lasting 16 weeks*

8 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

8.1 Language of Delivery and Assessment.

- 8.1.1 *Lectures shall be delivered in English or in Maltese, as deemed appropriate by the Institutes for the Students concerned.*
- 8.1.2 *The language of assessment shall be English, except that for areas of study involving use of the Maltese language.*
- 8.1.3 *The Institute may allow particular Students for a just and sufficient reason to present assessment work written in the Maltese Language.*

9 ATTENDANCE REGULATIONS

9.1 Attendance

- 9.1.1 *Attendance is obligatory but is not however a direct component of any method of assessment.*
- However, the following exceptions apply:*
- a) Attendance as part of assessment for placements;*
 - b) Attendance as part of assessment for practical laboratory or workshop tasks;*
 - c) Attendance for a pre-determined group work exercise.*
- 9.1.2 *Every Student must attend all teaching sessions (i.e. lectures, seminars, tutorials, workshops, etc.) and undertake assessments as specified in the programme specification to be eligible for formal assessment and/or continuation on their programme of study.*
- 9.1.3 *Full-time Students shall make themselves available between 0800hrs and 2000hrs (Monday to Friday) to attend all formal and non-formal teaching and all forms of assessment of the programme of study at the times given. Failure to do so may result in a fail grade in that study unit. Part-time (evening) Students will normally be asked to attend afternoon/evening sessions (1700hrs to 2100hrs) as well as weekend tutorials as and when necessary.*
- 9.1.4 *Attendance registers are extremely important documents. Irrespective of any contestations which may or may not arise, proof of attendance for lessons and / or absence is always an MCAST requirement.*
- 9.1.5 *It is the sole responsibility of the Student to monitor his/her attendance.*

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9.1.6 *Institutes are required to retain attendance records for Students. Students will have their stipend deducted according to their attendance record.*

9.2 Student Learning Agreement

9.2.1 *Institutes are required to have systems in place that monitor and follow up Students who have high absentee rates in order to increase retention rates throughout MCAST.*

On approaching the 20% overall absentee rate for a particular academic year, a meeting is to be set up with the Student concerned and a signed learning agreement (Refer to Student Learning Agreement Form referenced to below) drawn up in which the following targets are agreed upon:

- a) Attendance targets*
- b) Attempts of all assignments*
- c) Any necessary improvements in behaviour (if relevant).*

The Deputy Director will be responsible for the learning agreement process in liaison with the Institute Director and in communication with academic staff. The aim of the learning agreement is to serve as a pro-active positive tool to set the Student on the right track with regards to attendance, behaviour and assessment contribution. At all times, all Students are expected to pass all units in order to be certified.

In cases where the learning agreement is not adhered to by the Student, the Principal and Deputy Principal Registrar may decide not to certify the Student concerned even if all units are achieved. A decision may also be taken to either halt the Student from attending further assessments/TCA's/Synoptics for that particular academic year, or even to halt the Student permanently from the programme.

In such cases, the Students' learning agreement may be extended in order to identify the clear targets which the Student needs to achieve in order to be certified.

Reference Documents

Doc 043: Student Learning Agreement Form.

9.3 Mobility Within Studies

9.3.1 *Should a Student wish to seek authorisation for studies abroad that may complement or integrate with a chosen programme, he/she should liaise with the respective Deputy Director for direction and guidance. The Deputy Director shall communicate with the Office of the Registrar and the Director of Institute, and where necessary the International Office, before giving the Student direction on how to proceed.*

9.4 Interruption and Withdrawal from Studies

9.4.1 *Help and guidance is available to Students who are considering of withdrawing from or interrupting their study. Students considering withdrawing or interrupting their study should seek information from their Deputy Director to gain full understanding of the process, the implication of their withdrawal or interruption. Students are advised to communicate with their Deputy Director before taking a final decision.*

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- 9.4.2 *Written authorisation should be requested prior to interruption or withdrawal from studies when a personal emergency or other circumstances arise which necessitate a break from studies.*
- 9.4.3 *A Student who wishes to interrupt a programme of study before completion shall give notice in writing to the Registrar before suspending attendance. The Registrar shall in turn consult with the Board of Studies before a decision is made. Students who interrupt their studies shall be aware that, if they are re-admitted, their current academic programme cannot be guaranteed to resume or to resume intact as if no interruption had occurred.*
- 9.4.4 *A Student who wishes to withdraw from MCAST before the completion of the programme of study shall give notice in writing to the Registrar by filling in the form referenced to below (Resignation Letter Form). Students may request any certification for which they are eligible. In such cases, there shall be no refund of programme fees (where applicable).*
- 9.4.5 *When a Student interrupts or withdraws from a programme, the stipend is stopped with immediate effect. Student may be requested to refund any money to which they were not entitled to as a consequence of their interruption or withdrawal.*
- 9.4.6 *Students wishing to return to MCAST after withdrawal or transfer shall seek written confirmation from the Registrar. They must also satisfy any other formal requirements, e.g. payment of any new fees, which may be applicable. Students are obliged to satisfy such expectations prior to admission.*

Reference Document:

Doc 278: Resignation Letter Form

10 CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

10.1 Continuous Assessment, Learning Outcomes, Grading Criteria and Assessment Tasks

- 10.1.1 *All Units of study are assessed throughout the academic year through continuous assessment using a variety of assessment tools.*
- 10.1.2 *Coursework tasks are exclusively based on the Learning Outcomes as prescribed in the course specification. No alterations, deductions or additions to the approved unit Learning Outcomes shall be allowed. The Learning Outcomes and Grading Criteria are communicated to the Student via the coursework documentation.*
- 10.1.3 *The method of assessment shall reflect the Level, ECTS points and the schedule of time-tabled/non-time-tabled hours of learning of each study unit.*

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10.1.4 *A variety of assessment instruments, not solely TCA, are used to gather and interpret evidence of Student competence toward pre-established grading criteria that are aligned to the learning outcomes of each unit of the programme of study, namely Set A, Set B and Set C. The distribution of marks and assessment mode depends on the nature and objectives of the unit in question.*

Additional to the foregoing, the Institute Assessment Board may require a candidate to sit for a viva voce session in addition to taking those assessments prescribed in the programme specifications. Reasons for such action shall be communicated to the Student/s. Viva voce examinations shall be conducted by more than one examiner and a record of the examination and examination outcomes kept. It shall be made clear to the Student whether the viva voce is being carried out solely to ascertain the originality and ownership of the Students' work, or if it carries marks as part of the assessment.

10.1.5 The indicative weighting of the cognitive processes at Levels 1, 2 and 3 are as described below:

	MQF / EQF Level 1 (%)	MQF / EQF Level 2 (%)	MQF / EQF Level 3 (%)
Set A : Knowledge	60	50	40
Set B : Comprehension	30	30	30
Set C : Application	10	20	30

10.1.6 *The Sets A, B and C comprise of a number of grading criteria. The criteria are assessed through a number of tasks, each task being assigned a number of marks. The number of grading criteria and the respective number of assigned tasks are described in the marking scheme that is included in the respective Programme Specification. Rubrics and/or model answers should be utilized to facilitate an understanding of the grading for a particular assignment.*

10.1.7 *Coursework shall normally be completed during the semester in which the Unit is delivered.*

10.1.8 *Time-constrained assignments may be held between 8am and 8pm during the delivery period of a Unit, or at the end of the semester in which the Unit is completed. The dates are notified and published on the Institute notice boards or through other means of communication. Students are to be responsible enough to be available for allocated TCA time schedules.*

10.2 Assessment Documentation

10.2.1 *The coursework documentation required for the assessment process includes as a minimum:*

- a) *The Assessment Front Sheet and Feedback Information,*
- b) *The Coursework Brief / Task Sheet / Assignment Brief.*

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10.2.2 *The Assessment Front Sheet shall typically include the following information:*

- a) *Grading Criteria and the task/s;*
- b) *Date of internal verification release;*
- c) *Date of the publication of the coursework;*
- d) *Deadline for submission of coursework;*
- e) *Student's signature of authenticity;*
- f) *Assessor's marks and feedback.*

10.2.3 *The coursework brief shall include the tasks assigned and the corresponding marks, together with any other relevant and essential material pertaining to the evidence required from the Students for his/her assessment.*

10.2.4 *In the Assessment Feedback section the assessor records his/her decisions regarding the Student's assessment marks together with written feedback. The written feedback describes the Student's level of achievement and possible areas for improvement.*

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10.3 Collection of Coursework Brief

10.3.1 *If Students happen to be absent when a coursework brief is issued, they shall be exclusively responsible to collect the coursework from the Lecturer as early as possible on their return to the institute unless it has already been provided by email. Nobody else, except the Student him/herself, shall be responsible if the coursework brief remains uncollected.*

10.4 Authenticity of Work (Plagiarism)

10.4.1 *Student's submitted work shall be authentic, genuine, and not false or copied, wholly or in part. An authenticity declaration shall be completed and signed by the Student on the coursework Front Sheet or on Form as instructed by Lecturer.*

10.4.2 *Plagiarism is defined in the Assessment Regulations (refer to Document below) as the deliberate and substantial unacknowledged incorporation in Students' work of material derived from the work (published or unpublished) of others or previous own work. It is considered by MCAST to be a very serious offence and can result in sanctions. In this regard Students are advised to be familiar with the relevant plagiarism document referred to below.*

10.4.3 *Other work which the candidate himself/herself has produced for past study units shall not be included in their submission of a new coursework unless adequately referenced.*

10.4.4 *A candidate shall indicate by means of explicit references when citing work whether own or others. Work produced by the same candidate for a different study unit shall be distinct from any previous work submitted for assessment in another unit.*

10.4.5 *Plagiarism may preclude Students from assessment and also carry further sanctions as envisaged in the College's policy regarding the subject.*

Reference Document:

Doc 032 : Plagiarism Policy

10.5 Submission of Individual Home-Based Coursework

10.5.1 *Once set, coursework deadlines can only be changed in exceptional circumstances and then only by the authority of the Institute Director.*

10.5.2 *Students are advised to fully understand the implications when deadlines for the presentation of work are not respected.*

10.5.3 *As a general rule, all home-based assessment material shall be physically handed in by 2pm on the due date unless otherwise stipulated by the Institute. Students are advised to inform themselves on the official drop-off points at the Institutes for the physical copy of the coursework.*

10.5.4 *The physical copy of the Coursework is to be handed in together with the 'Coursework Front Sheet / Feedback Form'. Coursework which is handed in without this form shall not normally be accepted and/or assessed.*

10.5.5 *Students who are unable to present the physical copy of the home-based coursework on the submission date due to a valid reason will be expected to:*

a) Inform the Institute administration by phone on the morning of the submission date

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and;

b) *Submit the assignment together with the relevant evidence (such as Medical Certificates if any) immediately upon their return to the institute.*

10.5.6 *In cases of prolonged illness or similar extenuating circumstance, or in cases where Students are aware in advance that they will miss the deadline for a valid reason, they are to inform the Institute Director or the relevant Deputy Director prior to the submission date and request an extension (refer to section 10.9 'Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Extension of the Submission Deadline of Home Based Assignment'). The Director or the relevant Deputy Director are to inform the lecturer/s concerned accordingly.*

10.5.7 *Late work shall not be accepted and shall not be assessed. In such cases, Students would have forfeited the respective marks and the assessor's feedback.*

10.6 Successful Completion of Coursework

10.6.1 *For each coursework assigned to the Student, the assessor shall provide feedback on the Student's performance as well as the total marks achieved in the coursework.*

10.6.2 *The total mark for each unit is calculated by summing up all the marks obtained in (all) the respective assessments set for each unit.*

10.6.3 *At the end of each Unit of study, Students will be awarded a grade which reflects the total mark obtained in accordance to the table provided below:*

% Mark	Award Grades
90 - 100	A*
80 - 89	A
70 - 79	B
60 - 69	C
50 - 59	D
< 50	Unclassified (U)

10.6.4 *If a Student fails to submit one of the assessments set, s/he may attempt the remaining assessments (for the respective Unit). However, the maximum mark that may be achieved for the respective Unit is 59 % (Grade D).*

10.7 Unsuccessful Completion of Coursework (Synoptic Assessment) and Non-Submission of Integrated Assignments

10.7.1 Synoptic Assessment

10.7.1.1 *Following the submission of all the unit coursework and its subsequent assessment, Students are assigned marks for each task. In cases when the overall minimum of 50 % is not achieved, the Student is considered to have failed the Unit but shall however be eligible to sit / attempt a synoptic assessment of that failed unit on one occasion only.*

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10.7.1.2 *The Student will be notified that she/he is eligible to sit for the synoptic assessment of that particular unit. Students who opt to formally appeal the result of an assessment will not have the result of that assessment changed until successful hearing of the appeal. For this reason the Student concerned is to continue with all ongoing activities (such as synoptic sits) under the assumption that his/her assessment result may not change. If in the event of a successful appeal the initial assessment result has been amended, the Student may seek to declare the subsequent synoptic results null and void and retain the earlier result. This may happen if an appeal takes place at a later date than the synoptic assessment.*

10.7.1.3 *The following sub regulations exist for the synoptic assessment: The synoptic assessment:*

- a) *is normally held during the same academic period, but not later than the September following that period;*
- b) *covers a cross-section of the unit from all the Learning Outcomes for the respective unit in question;*
- c) *may also include practical tasks;*
- d) *can be held as a time constrained assessment or through other assessment tools.*

The maximum mark that may be obtained in any synoptic assessment is 59% (Grade D).

If a Student does not achieve at least 50% in the synoptic assessment of the failed unit(s), the Student is considered to have failed the programme of study.

10.7.1.4 *Students who fail a unit or a number of units after the synoptic assessment may be considered by the Board of Studies to repeat the outstanding units, with attendance, with the following cohort, assuming space on the course permitting and subject to same unit being delivered in the following cohort. In this case, the Student is still eligible for a synoptic assessment under the same conditions as above (with the new cohort).*

10.7.1.5 *The Board of Studies cannot guarantee that any of the units delivered during any one cohort period will feature again in the following cohort's programme or any subsequent programmes.*

10.7.1.6 *If a Student fails one or a limited number of units and the programme of study is no longer in existence, the MCAST in liaison with the Institute may consider mapping the Students' successful units onto a similar programme of study, and allowing the Student to follow the unmapped units of this new programme in order to complete his/her studies. The Student, if successful would then graduate under the new programme of study.*

10.7.2 Non-submission of Integrated Assignments

10.7.2.1 *In case of integrated assessments where the coursework has embedded criteria from Key Skills subjects, if a Student does not submit one such coursework the grade for that particular Vocational Unit will be downgraded to 'D' and any embedded Key Skill subject that carries 25 marks and over in that particular assignment, will also be downgraded to 'D'. However, if the embedded Key Skill carries 24 marks or less, the Student will lose the marks allotted for the key skills criteria but the Key Skill unit grade will not be downgraded to 'D' for the non-submission of the vocational integrated coursework.*

Reference Document:

*Doc 104 : Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances (TCA and non TCA assessments).
 Doc 188: Academic and Disciplinary Student College Board Procedures.*

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10.8 Assessment of Group Work

- 10.8.1 *One or more of the learning outcomes of a Unit may be assessed through group work through assessment criteria. This shall be clearly stated in the Unit coursework front page.*
- 10.8.2 *Group coursework can help Students develop competencies in:*
- a) Collaboration / teamwork*
 - b) Communication / listening*
 - c) Conflict management*
 - d) Leadership / project management*
 - e) Articulating and defending a position*
 - f) Negotiating ability*
 - g) Problem-solving*
- 10.8.3 *Students need to be aware that group coursework presents a number of challenges, namely:*
- a) Logistical challenges*
 - b) Time coordination*
 - c) Lack of time to form strong group bonds*
 - d) Personality conflicts among group members*
 - e) Students who are happy to leave the work to others*
 - f) Students who want to take over the project themselves.*
- 10.8.4 *The way group coursework is structured shall make it possible for Lecturers to identify each individual's contribution in the work submitted for assessment.*
- 10.8.5 *A clear declaration stating the Students own claims to their contributions shall accompany the final work submitted. This shall be countersigned by all the co-authors to indicate that they are all in agreement with each candidate's claim. The assessor/s may still wish to verify claims through a viva voce and/or any supporting evidence.*
- 10.8.6 *If any form of credit will additionally be allocated for process (such as how well the team collaborated) this shall be stated in the coursework front page.*
- 10.8.7 *The instructions to the Students shall clearly explain:*
- a) How groups will be formed, e.g., self-selecting or pre-assigned;*
 - b) The strategies that will be applied if Students drop out of groups (i.e. withdraw from the Unit);*
 - c) The minimum / maximum size of the group if groups are to be self-selecting;*
 - d) What groups should do if a member is not contributing;*
 - e) How groups will be managed, namely whether this will be Student led or if a group will be assigned a tutor in which case the tutor must be clearly identified.*
- 10.8.8 *Irrespective of the nature of the work expected, individual contributions will be assessed separately and can be awarded different grades. Students will be held individually accountable for their contribution to the project.*
- 10.8.9 *Feedback (formative and summative) shall be made available to all group members.*

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10.8.10 *For the purposes of transparency in assessment, when a Student/s in the group fail to obtain a pass mark for their own contribution, they shall be given a resit opportunity in line with existing regulations regarding resits. This shall be discussed openly in the presence of all team members and the additional work expected unequivocally agreed upon.*

10.9 Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Extension of the Submission Deadline of Home Based Assignment

10.9.1 *Coursework submitted after the closing date shall not be assessed (no marks shall be allocated).*

10.9.2 *Students may request an extension in advance of the original coursework submission date only if the circumstances are deemed to be genuine and extenuating. In such a case, Students are required to fill in the Form referred to below requesting consideration of such circumstances.*

10.9.3 *The filled-in Form (refer to Document 104) is to be submitted for consideration to the Senior Administrative Officer at least three (3) College days prior to the submission date deadline.*

10.9.4 *It is the responsibility of the Student to provide the necessary evidence to support such claims.*

10.9.5 *An extension shall only be granted if a Student can provide credible evidence of an extenuating circumstance which is considered as valid by the Institute Director. An extenuating circumstance shall consist of the recording of one or more college-recognized, personal difficulties, which is/are supported by acceptable evidence. Refer to Academic and Disciplinary Student College Board Procedures Document referenced to below.*

10.9.6 *Exclusions for consideration as extenuating circumstances are listed in the College Board Procedures referenced to below.*

10.9.7 *The original Form is to be attached to the coursework when it is submitted. A copy of the coursework Extension Application Form will be kept by the Senior Administrative Officer in the Students personal file.*

10.9.8 *If a request for consideration of extenuating circumstance is made after the submission date, the request shall only be considered if the Student is able to prove that he/she was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling, to disclose such information before.*

10.9.9 *If an extension is agreed, the Student shall be allowed an extension of the deadline for submission by not more than three (3) weeks. If this is not sufficient because of the circumstances, the Student shall be allowed to submit the coursework at the first practicable opportunity but not later than the end of the current academic year.*

10.9.10 *The coursework will be assessed and marked without any sanctions / penalties.*

10.9.11 *When the reason brought forward is not considered sufficient to justify the request for extension of the submission date (and the assessment is not subsequently submitted by the submission date), the Student shall be deemed to have failed the assessment and shall receive a mark of 0.*

Reference Document:

Doc 104: Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for the Extension of the Submission Deadline for Home Based Assignments Form.

Doc 188: Academic and Disciplinary Student College Board Procedures.

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10.10 Absence From Time Constrained Assessment (TCA)

- 10.10.1 *In the case of absence from a TCA, where the student does not have any valid extenuating circumstances for missing the TCA, the student shall not be given any further opportunity to sit for the TCA. If the student fails to obtain a pass grade (50% or over) for the unit in question, the student shall have the opportunity to sit for the synoptic of that unit, with the final grade capped at a pass.*
- 10.10.2 *In the case of absence from a TCA, where the student provides evidence of valid extenuating circumstances for missing the TCA, the student shall be allowed to sit for just a part of the synoptic that relates to the Learning Outcome/s or Grading Criteria of that missed TCA. This may be carried out irrespective of whether the student would have achieved a pass grade or not in the remaining assessments for the unit concerned. The marks for the remaining assessments of that unit will be carried forward and added to this partial synoptic mark to provide a final grade that shall not be capped, provided that the Student attempts the synoptic. If the student fails to obtain a final pass grade in the unit concerned and this is the only failed unit over the student's entire programme, and with a grade exceeding 40%, MCAST shall provide the student with a compensatory pass for that particular unit.*
- 10.10.3 *In highly exceptional cases where the student would have missed a number of TCA's due to valid extenuating circumstances, and failed in more than one unit following partial synoptic sits, the student's case shall be referred to the Institute Board of Studies (BOS) for moderation. The BOS shall review these exceptional situations on a case-by-case basis, evaluating the student's general performance, attendance records and critical nature of the units, and shall provide a final direction to the student that may include further synoptics or additional compensatory passes for these marginally failed units.*

Refer to Appendix 2

10.10.4 Note re use of Doc 106 'Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances'

Students who due to extenuating circumstances (including illness) absent themselves from a Time Constrained Assignment (TCA) are required to fill-in the Form referred to below.

In the case of absence due to illness, the student is to request his/her Medical Practitioner to elaborate in the Form referenced to below the reason why s/he is not fit to attend the TCA. The filled-in Form is also to include the name, stamp and medical registration number of the Medical Practitioner.

The filled-in and stamped form (Doc 106) is to be submitted together with the NI Certificate (blue Form) to the Institute Administration on the first day as soon as student returns to the College.

The students is advised to keep a copy of all documents submitted to the Institute administration.

Reference Document:

Doc 106: Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Time Constrained Assignments (Form).

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10.11 Assessment Feedback

- 10.11.1 *Individual feedback by the Lecturer is given to Students on the institute's official "coursework Front Sheet / Feedback Form".*
- 10.11.2 *The Lecturer's feedback shall state what has been achieved or not achieved and possible areas for development and/or improvement.*
- 10.11.3 *Assessed work shall normally be returned to the Students following the completion of the study unit/s. Irrespective of when assessed work is returned to the Students to keep, feedback shall be given during an individual or group/class session.*

10.12 Academic Appeals

- 10.12.1 *Upon being notified of the result of an assessment, a Student who wishes to contest the decision is encouraged to seek an appointment with the Lecturer in charge, in an endeavour to resolve the matter satisfactorily and amicably. The Student shall be entitled to see and discuss the marked exam script or assessed work with the Lecturer concerned.*
- 10.12.2 *If, following the meeting with the assessor, the Student is still not satisfied with the outcome; he/she may wish to lodge a formal appeal against the assessment decision. For such purposes, the Student shall fill in the Assessment Appeals Form referenced to below and submit it to the Institute Director within 10 college days from the first time of being notified of the result of the assessment.*
- 10.12.3 *The appeals procedure is explained in full in the document referenced to below.*

Reference Document:

Doc 188 : Academic and Disciplinary Student College Board Procedures
Doc 292: Assessment / Examination Appeals Form.

10.13 Record of Work

- 10.13.1 *For all written coursework, it is the Student's responsibility to make and retain a copy of their work before submission. No claims shall be accepted or considered if the Student's copy of the written work is not made available in the event of a request arising for any reason whatsoever or for necessary verifications.*
- 10.13.2 *In those instances where practical work is to be submitted for assessment, Students shall keep an appropriate photographic record of the work they submit for assessment. No claims shall be accepted or considered if the Student's photographic records are not made available in the event of a request arising for any reason whatsoever or for necessary verifications.*

10.14 Students Work

- 10.14.1 *MCAST holds the right to physically keep and/or exhibit work produced by the Students for formal assessment such as any written work, drawings, graphic design products, engineering models, sculpture, maquettes, etc.) up to one year after the end of the course during which such material was produced. .*
- 10.14.2 *The College shall have discretionary powers to determine when one or more such materials may be physically returned to the Student*

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10.15 Internal Verification

- 10.15.1 *All coursework tasks and a sample of Student works shall be verified by the Internal Verifier (IV). The latter shall ensure that all established programme requirements and documentation are in place and in line with approved practice. Internal Verifiers shall also ensure that assessors shall be able to make sound professional judgements.*
- 10.15.2 *The Internal Verifier shall also ensure that the assessor's decisions are accurate, fair and consistent and the written feedback is supportive and encouraging further achievement and improvement.*

11 WORK BASED LEARNING

- 11.1 *The normal prerequisite for taking up a placement at work locally or abroad, say, in connection with a mobility action, is the completion of all modules related to that placement taken in the previous stages.*

12 PROGRESSION, CONTINUATION, COMPENSATORY PASS, CERTIFICATION AND DURATION OF PROGRAMME

12.1 Progression and Continuation

- 12.1.1 To progress from Level 1 to Level 2, Students need to achieve all credits assigned to the Level 1 course.
- 12.1.2 In the event that a Level 1 student fails to achieve all credits assigned to the Level 1 course, he/she may retake the Initial Assessment Test and if successful may progress to Level 2. In such cases, full Level 1 certification will not be awarded while a transcript for all successfully completed Level 1 units shall be issued.
- 12.1.3 To progress from Level 2 to Level 3, Students need to obtain a minimum of 30 out of 60 credits. Specific (mandatory) credit requirements may apply according to the specific programme of study.
- 12.1.4 To progress from Level 3 to Level 4 Students need to obtain the full 60 credits.
- 12.1.5 *Students who are unsuccessful may re-apply to repeat the failed unit/s the following year.*

12.2 Compensatory Pass

- 12.2.1 *Students who are at the final year of their course and have obtained between 40 and 49 % in only one of the 6-credit units will be offered a compensatory pass.*
- Only one compensatory pass is allowed per qualification.*

12.3 Certification

- 12.3.1 *The total mark for the programme is calculated by summing up all the marks obtained in (all) the respective Units.*

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The final percentage mark achieved by the Student for the programme of study is worked out by calculating the overall average mark achieved in all the units of the programme of study.

For a Student to successfully complete the programme of study and hence be eligible for a qualification, s/he must achieve a minimum overall mark of 50% for each unit within the programme of study.

Candidates who successfully complete the full requirements of a programme of study will be awarded the level appropriate full MCAST certification.

12.3.2 *Candidates who fail to complete the full requirements of a programme of study shall be issued a transcript of their academic record.*

12.4 Duration of Programme

12.4.1 The duration of a programme of study at MQF Level 1 and 2 shall not exceed three (3) years and MQF Level 3 four (4) years from date of commencement to date of conclusion.

In the event that a student has suspended his studies and requests to resume with a timing that exceeds the above, the student shall require a confirmation from the Office of the Registrar that there is an adequate correlation between units already achieved by the student and the remaining units that make up the programme. If this mapping exercise does not show an adequate correlation, the Registrar may opt to guide the student through an APL process that will allow him/her to use the programme components obtained so far to enter, at a suitable level, into a new, comparable programme.

13 STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

13.1 Students with Disabilities, Medical Conditions and/or Learning Difficulties

13.1.1 *Access arrangements are coordinated by the Inclusive Education Unit (IEU) and Students are thus required to formally apply for such an entitlement. The application must be accompanied by all the required supporting evidence.*

13.1.2 *Failure to report known medical/psychological conditions or any related changes to the IEU is considered to be an act of negligence which may work against the Student himself/herself and may result in access arrangements and entitlements not being granted.*

13.1.3 *The Student, parent/s or guardian (if the Student is under 18 years of age) are additionally responsible for keeping the College and the Institute informed of all medical/psychological conditions or any related changes and for providing the proper medical/psychological documentation updates, specifically stating the ability and/or inability of the Student to continue with his/her vocational training.*

13.2 Learning Resources

13.2.1 *The College encourages Students to make use of the Library and Learning Resource Centre (LLRC)*

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13.2.2 *The rules and regulations pertaining to the LLRC are prescribed in the document referenced below.*

Reference Document:

Doc 041 : Library and Learning Resources Centre Regulations.

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APPENDIX 1: SKILLS KITS REGULATIONS

1. Structure

Each Skills Kit carries 1 Credit (ECVET) and consists of about 20 contact hours. Typically, the year is divided into three terms. At the beginning of each term, the student registers for a number of Skills Kits which cannot exceed 10 Skills Kits per term, ie. not more than 30 Skills Kits over an academic year.

There is no restriction on the duration of the course as the student can spread out the Skills Kits over a number of years.

2. Assessment

There are no synoptic assessments or resits for the Skills Kits. If a student fails a Skills Kit, the student would need to repeat that particular Skills Kit and successfully complete its assessment for the student to be certified in that Skills Kit.

3. Certification

Students are certified for each Skills Kit they are successful in. On successful completion of 30 Skills Kits, the MCAST Introductory Skills Certificate at Level 1 is obtained.

4. Progression

Students are eligible to progress to Level 2 if they successfully complete at least 30 Skills Kits which must include 6 Skills Kits from Employability Skills, 6 Skills Kits from Personal Skills and 3 Skills Kits which target English, Maltese and Maths.

5. General Regulations

The following general regulations (as described in main document) apply to Students registered on Skills Kits programmes;

Paragraph 1: Purpose of document

Paragraph 2: Applicability of regulation

Paragraph 3: Updating and dissemination of regulation

Paragraph 4: Definitions

Paragraph 6.1: General programme information

Paragraph 5: Student behaviour, academic conduct and reporting of grievances.

Paragraph 7: Academic year

Paragraph 8 Programme delivery

Paragraph 9: Attendance regulations

Paragraph 10: Continuous assessment, excluding 10.1.5 to 10.1.8, 10.6.4, 10.7 and 10.10

Paragraph 13: Student Support Services

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APPENDIX 2: Missed Time Constrained Assignment Process Flow Chart

