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				26/09/2019

GENERAL INFORMATION

1	Document category	Rules and regulations		
2	Document approver	Council of Institutes		
3	Minimum list of document users to be notified upon release of document update	All Academic Staff and All Students		
4	Document change history			
H	Document Change Tracking Number	Date released	Change originator	
	054/2018	30/11/18	Rizzo Alex / Calleja Eman	
	Change history (Section/change details)			
Added paragraph 14.1.5 (c). Renumbered subsequent paragraph.				
I	Document Change Tracking Number	Date released	Change originator	
	39/2019	26/09/2019	Agius Albert	
	Change history (Section/change details)			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Removed reference to Foundation, Technical, and University College; replaced with MCAST or MQF Levels 1 – 7, as appropriate. 2. Updated responsibilities: DDPM → Deputy Director; College Head → Deputy Principal 3. Removed DDPM Definition 4. Updated numbering 5. Removed reference to superseded documents and procedures and updated document titles. 6. Updated reference to plagiarism software from TURNITIN to UNICHECK 				

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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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NOTE: Sections that are common to the programme regulations MQF Levels 1 – 4 are identified below in the italic text.

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 Levels 5 – 7 programmes.*

2 APPLICABILITY OF REGULATION

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

- a) MQF / EQF Level 5 Higher Diploma
- b) MQF / EQF Level 6 Vocational Degree
- c) MQF / EQF Level 7 Post-Graduate Certificate, Post-Graduate Diploma, Master's Degree

The Vocational Degree is intended for Students who have successfully completed the first two years of the Vocational Degree programme, that is the Higher Diploma, and who wish to extend their qualification to an Honours Degree.

The academic title conferred upon a Student who successfully completes an MCAST Vocational Degree programme of study shall be a B.A. (Hons) or a B.Sc. (Hons.), or a B.Eng. (Hons.), or an equivalent Bachelor's Degree, in a defined area of study.

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 a 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 promptly 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 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.*

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- 4.3 **Assignments / Coursework:** Tasks or exercises performed by the Student as part of a 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, Personal Development, 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 will 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:
- All kinds of bullying;
 - Victimisation;
 - Harassment;
 - Unfair discrimination based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, race and disability;
 - Aggression, including physical and psychological.

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

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.
- 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.

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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 must 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 to counsel 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:

- *Be in possession of illegal drugs, or*
- *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 first to 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.
- 6.1.6 MCAST's vocational programmes (MQF Level 5, 6 and 7) 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

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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 ECTSs (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 ECTS except for the Dissertation or Final Major Project which is equivalent to two Units in terms of ECTS, hence carrying 12 ECTS.

6.2 Learning Framework for MQF / EQF Levels 5,6 and 7

6.2.1 The Table below provides the programme structure for MQF / EQF Levels 5, 6 and 7.

Level	Level 5 Higher Diploma)	Level 6 Vocational Degree	Level 7 Master's Degree (*)		
			Post- Graduate Certificate	Post-Graduate Diploma	Master's Degree
Duration	2 years full-time	1 or 2 further years full-time	1 year part-time	1 further year part-time	1 further year part-time
Total Credits (ECTS)	120	180 (120 + 60) or 240 (120 + 120)	30	60 (30 + 30)	90 (30 + 30 + 30)
Total Learning	3,000	4,500 or 6000	750	1,500	2,250

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Hours					
Typical number of Study Units	20	30 or 40	5	5	1 – Research Dissertation
<p>Note (*): Progression into the Post-Graduate Diploma follows the successful completion of the Post-Graduate Certificate. Progression into the Master's Degree component follows successful completion of the Post-Graduate Diploma.</p>					

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.*

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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 Institute 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 the 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.
- 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:

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

The Deputy Director will be responsible for the learning agreement process in liaison with the relevant 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 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 are available to Students who are considering withdrawing from or interrupting their study. Students considering withdrawing or interrupting their study should seek information from their Deputy Director to gain a 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.*

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).*

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- 9.4.5 *When a Student interrupts or withdraws from a programme, the stipend is stopped with immediate effect. A 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.*
- 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 preceding, 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.

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10.1.5 The indicative weighting of the cognitive processes at Levels 5 and 6 are as described below:

MQF / EQF Level 5	Set A: Knowledge & Understanding	Set B: Application & Analysis	Set C: Synthesis & Evaluation
Percentage distribution	35 %	35 %	30 %
Number of criteria	7	5	3
Marks allocation per criteria	5	7	10

MQF / EQF Level 6	Set A: Knowledge & Understanding	Set B: Application & Analysis	Set C: Synthesis & Evaluation
Percentage distribution	25 %	35%	40 %
Number of criteria	5	5	4
Marks allocation per criteria	5	7	10

10.1.6 The grading criteria and mechanisms for assessment of a Master's programme shall be defined according to the nature and content of the programme.

10.1.7 *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.*

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

10.1.9 *Time-constrained assignments may be held between 8 am and 8 pm 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:*

- The Assessment Front Sheet and Feedback Information,*
- 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.*

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 for collecting 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 The authenticity of Work (Plagiarism)

10.4.1 *Student's submitted work shall be authentic, genuine, 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 own previous 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 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.*

10.4.6 *All assignments are to be submitted online via Unicheck except in cases where the Lecturer explicitly informs otherwise due to the graphical or physical content of the assignment. The Unicheck submission is to be considered as the official assignment submission, with an identical hard-copy to be forwarded for official purposes.*

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Reference Document:

Doc 032 : Plagiarism Policy

10.5 Submission of Individual Home-Based Coursework (excluding the Dissertation or Research Project)

- 10.5.1 *Once set, coursework deadlines can only be changed in exceptional circumstances and then only by the authority of the Institute Director.*
- 10.5.1 *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 electronically (where applicable via Unicheck) and physically handed in by 2 pm 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:*
- 1) *Inform the Institute administration by phone on the morning of the submission date and;*
 - 2) *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 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 / 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.*

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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 with 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)

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.
- 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 the 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:
- is normally held during the same academic period, but not later than the September following that period;
 - covers a cross-section of the unit from all the Learning Outcomes for the respective unit in question;

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- 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 the 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, 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.*

10.8 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 work submitted for assessment.*

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- 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.*
- 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.*

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- 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 can 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 an 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.

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 the 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 Student attempts the synoptic examination. 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 4

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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).

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.

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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 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 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.*

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.*

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12 PROGRESSION, CONTINUATION AND CERTIFICATION

12.1 Progression from Level 5 to Level 6

- 12.1.1 Past HND and HD Students who had concluded their studies would have the facility to undergo an Accreditation of Prior Learning (APL) exercise, to assess their suitability to proceed to a relevant Level 6 programme.
- 12.1.2 Students gain credits by passing set study units or modules in order to achieve the qualification.
- 12.1.3 Progression from Level 5 year 1 to Level 5 year 2, and from Level 5 to Level 6 shall be automatic for Students who have not failed in more than 2 units in a particular year and who will not be carrying more than 3 failed units in all. An exception to this shall be in cases where key units have been identified that are fundamental to a Student's progression, for which the Student cannot progress before successfully completing these units. These units will be identified in the online data repository that students will be given access to.

Students will have the opportunity to repeat the failed unit/s at the end of the third (or fourth) year of the programme or repeat a year. If MCAST in liaison with the Institute considers that the Student's performance is not satisfactory, the Student may be requested to repeat a year and attempt the failed Units with attendance. Students will also have the option of exiting and receiving certification for the completion of their Level 5 programme if they do not wish to continue into Level 6. Students completing Level 5 and exiting the degree programme shall be allowed to re-join Level 6 at a later date, provided that the Level 6 programme still exists.

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 (excluding dissertation and projects) 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.*

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 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.

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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 Classification of Degree Awards

12.4.1 For the purpose of final classification, the results of all three or four years of study contribute to the final classification of the programme.

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12.4 Programme Duration

12.4.1 The period for a student to complete a programme of study shall not exceed the following periods:

- a) Three-year Degree Programmes: five years from the date of commencement to date of conclusion;
- b) Four-year Degree Programmes: six years from the date of commencement to date of conclusion;
- c) Part-time accredited programmes: the overall duration of the programme of study can be extended by 3 months for every completed semester.

If a student has suspended his studies and requests to resume, 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).*

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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14 DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

14.1 Introduction

- 14.1.1 Undergraduate Students are expected to complete a dissertation as part of their final degree studies. Masters Students are expected to complete a dissertation in their final leg of studies. The recommended mode of grading a dissertation shall be through a viva session, where the indicative grading provided by the Student's supervisor will be taken into consideration. The student's final dissertation, that is formally submitted in hard bound and soft copy, shall be that which includes any changes requested by the viva as well as the subsequent Degree Ratification Board.
- 14.1.2 Students will be required to follow the Research Ethics Policy and Procedure referenced to below when conducting their research. This procedure refers the Institute Research Sub-Committee (IRC) that is responsible for approving the research project once a Research Proposal has been submitted to the IRC by the Student. Students shall not commence their research before they have approval in writing to proceed by the IRC. The IRC shall, in turn, seek ethics approval from the Research Ethics Committee before proceeding to give final approval to the Student. Students should be very cautious in attempting to change their research theme once they have submitted their Research Proposal to the IRC, as this will cause delays that may result in the Student failing the research module.

Reference Document:

Doc 074: Research Ethics Policy and Procedure.

- 14.1.3 The Research Proposal also called the 'Statement of Intent', is a vital initial part of the Student's research endeavour. Students will normally be requested to submit an Initial Research Proposal Form (refer to document referenced to below) within Level 5 that outlines plans for their early stages of research, and a Detailed Research Proposal before entering the final year of the Level 6 programme that may be a continuation of their earlier research. In both cases, the Student shall seek separate IRC approval before commencing the research. The Research Proposal Form also includes summarized guidelines for ethical standards that are explained further in the Research Ethics Policy and Procedure.

Reference Documents:

Doc 074: Research Ethics Policy and Procedure

Doc 164: Initial Research Proposal Form (Statement of Intent)

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14.1.4 Final Level 6 dissertation submissions shall unless specified otherwise, follow the following schedule. The Student is to:

- Submit 2 spiral-bound copies of the dissertation to the Institute concerned together with an online submission for plagiarism checks, by Friday of the first full week of June.
- Collect 1 corrected spiral-bound dissertation copy by the 15th of July from the Institute concerned during office hours.
- Subsequently, submit 2 hard-bound copies and 1 PDF soft copy of the final corrected dissertation (in line with Clause 14.1.1) by the last Friday of September to the Institute concerned. One hard-copy of the dissertation will be kept in one of the MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centres, generally, the one closest to the Institute Campus where it was generated, while the other hard copy will be kept by the Institute concerned.

Students that fail their dissertation shall be provided with the following options to remedy their situation, following a decision by the MCAST Degree Ratification Board. This will be one of the following:

1. In cases of a marginally incomplete submission, Students will be given an extension till the end of October to resubmit their work. The research theme is to remain unchanged. The maximum grade achievable shall be a Pass, or 59% (Grade D). Students will still have the facility to graduate with their existing class cohort. In cases of extenuating circumstances, the Student's grade will not be capped at a Pass. As students will only have one chance to resubmit their work, they may opt to forfeit submission in October in favour of a later submission in the June window of the following year thus graduating the following year.
2. In cases of a significantly weak submission or no submission, Students will be requested to repeat their research project entirely over an additional academic year. The Degree Ratification Board may request that the Student enters a new or revised research stream here. The maximum grade achievable shall be a Pass, or 59%. In cases of extenuating circumstances, the Student's grade will not be capped at a Pass.

14.1.5 Undergraduate (Level 6) dissertations which are not accompanied by a tangible outcome in the form of a model, prototype or an actual product, shall normally be between 10,000 to 15,000 words in the main text that is excluding the abstract, the bibliography and the appendices. Masters dissertations shall be between 15,000 to 25,000 words in length. For Students carrying out their research within Level 5, this will follow similar structural expectations to Level 6 research, but with the following points of notice:

- a) A Level 5 research endeavour is considered to be a complete research project in itself, with the same ethical expectations, need for a Research Proposal, approval by the IRC, and such.
- b) Students should target researching Level 5 that is then enhanced and concluded at Level 6. For this aim, the outcome of the Level 5 research should follow a similar structure to the final L6 dissertation but with lesser volume/content. Level 5 research should be strongest in secondary research (i.e. literature review) and in developing and piloting a successful research project through a robust research methodology. It is then the Level 6 research that will enhance the existing literature and methodology, and focus predominantly on applying rigorous primary research and critically analyzing the outcomes of this research.

For the Level 5 research project, each student (or student team if it is group research) is required to evidence the research carried out through a Research Poster that is suitable for presentation in a Poster Exhibition. Research Posters aim

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to summarize the research concisely and visually to help the students present their work, and to generate discussion and encourage further research. The Research Poster should be a blend of text, tables, graphs and pictures, and should include the following that is compiled by the Student in an electronic format advocated by MCAST:

- Important text should be clear, relevant, and readable from up to 3 metres away.
- Titles should be bold, short and interesting.
- Word count would be from around 300 to 500 words.
- Effective use of graphics, colours and fonts is required.
- A consistent and neat layout is required.
- The Poster is to include the name of College (MCAST), Institute, Student/s and Lecturers/Mentors.

- c) There will be programmes where the Level 5 poster exhibit can be of substantial content and rigour such that this exhibit, and its presentation, would take the place of a report or write-up as the final product of that research, as determined by the lecturer concerned.
- d) Students may opt to change their research stream when progressing from Level 5 to level 6, but must be aware of the disadvantages that starting over again will bring about.

14.1.6 Students on programmes where a tangible outcome is expected as an integral part of the final major project, as in Art and Design, shall present a relevant 5,000 – 6,000-word dissertation. This number excludes the abstract, the bibliography and the appendices. The dissertation shall be of direct relevance to the product. This means that the designed product, model or prototype must be intelligently supported by a relevant argument. This writing will thus follow the same guidance offered above and must also include the Abstract, Introduction, Literature Review and other main chapters, as well as the Bibliography and the Appendices.

14.1.7 The Student is encouraged to:

- a) Seriously consider the advice of the supervisor/tutor at all times;
- b) Attend all tutorial sessions as these give an opportunity to ask questions and discuss issues with the dissertation supervisor/tutor;
- c) Read regularly and take note of all relevant information and instructions;
- d) Work out a timetable of dissertation activities and scheduled meetings with the dissertation tutor to ensure that the final objective of a good dissertation by the prescribed deadline is met;
- e) Become well familiar with library resources both in print and electronic format through visits to the library and use of the online library catalogue and library web pages.

14.2 Research Proposal

14.2.1 The Student is required to submit an Initial Research Proposal (Statement of Intent) on the appropriate template. When completing Level 5, the Student may be required to submit his early research in the form of a Detailed Research Proposal, to be continued through further research when in Level 6. At latest, the Detailed Research Proposal is to reach the IRC by the end of the third full week of September of the final year of the Level 6 programme.



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Reference Documents:

Doc 164: Initial Research Proposal Form (Statement of Intent)

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14.3 Dissertation Meetings with the Supervisor and Dissertation Logbook

- 14.3.1 The Student is expected to keep a Dissertation Logbook (refer to document referred to below) of the work carried out towards the development of the dissertation and also a record of the meetings with the dissertation supervisor. As a general rule at least ten (10) Student-Supervisor meetings are expected over the research period.

The Student is to ensure that the Dissertation Logbook is correctly documented and maintained. The logbook is to be submitted together with the dissertation at the end of the dissertation period. Students are to request written supervisor feedback and signatures to each logbook input that they will make, relating to the various individual meetings that take place throughout the academic period. Supervisors will add their comments and feedback/direction to the descriptions and inputs made by the Student in each logbook entry. Students have to actively seek out their supervisor to ensure that this feedback/direction is regularly provided and the logbook adequately documented.

The Institute reserves the right not to accept the dissertation for evaluation if the logbook is not filled in correctly and each meeting duly signed off by the Student and Supervisor.

Reference Documents:

Doc 067 : Dissertation Log Book

14.4 Dissertation Structure, Layout, Font Size and Line Spacing

- 14.4.1 The following section provides information regarding the design of the front cover, dissertation chapter structure, layout, font size and line spacing.

Front cover

For details of front cover and binding of dissertation copies, refer to section 14.8 and Appendix 3.

Front page

This page is to include in font size 14 and 1.5 line spacing:

1. Dissertation title (bold font)
2. Student's name and surname (italics)
3. Month, the year when the dissertation is submitted.
4. The following text: 'Submitted to the (*name of Institute*) in part fulfilment of the requirements for the (*degree title*).

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'Authorship Statement' page

Note: Plagiarism occurs when someone else's work is used by the Student without acknowledging it. Dissertations are to be uploaded through Unicheck. Refer to MCAST regulations regarding plagiarism.

This page is to include in font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing:

Text 1: This dissertation is based on the results of research carried out by myself, is my own composition, and has not been previously presented for any other certified or uncertified qualification

Text 2 : The research was carried out under the supervision of (name of dissertation tutor – Title, Name and surname)

Signature and date

'Copyright Statement' page

This page is to include in font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing)

Text 1: In submitting this dissertation to the MCAST Institute of..... I understand that I am giving permission for it to be made available for use in accordance with the regulations of MCAST and the College Library.

Signature and date.

'Acknowledgments' page

This page is to include in font size 12 and 1.5 line spacing) the list of people that the Student would like to thank on the completion of the dissertation. For example 'Mr Name Surname, who supported me during my dissertation work as my tutor'.

Acknowledgements should be kept to a maximum of five people.

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‘Contents’ Page

This page is to include in font size 12, with 1.5 line spacing the main items of the dissertation indicating the page from where each item starts.

The contents include:

Dissertation Title (and corresponding page number)
Authorship Statement (and corresponding page number)
Copyright Statement (and corresponding page number)
Acknowledgements (and corresponding page number)
Contents (and corresponding page number)
Abstract (and corresponding page number)

Chapter 1 : Introduction (and recommended page number)
Chapter 2: Literature Review (and recommended page number)
Chapter 3 : Research Methodology (and recommended page number)
Chapter 4 : Analysis of Results and Discussion (and recommended page number)
Chapter 5 : Conclusions and Recommendations (and recommended page number)

List of references (and recommended page number)
Bibliography (and recommended page number)
Appendices (and recommended page number).

Refer also to Appendix 1 for sample of contents page.

Subsequent Pages

The font of all the remaining text (following the contents page) is to be Times New Roman, font size 12, double-line spacing and printed on one-sided pages.

A wide left-hand side margin of 2.5 cm is to be included throughout the dissertation.

Quotations of more than three lines should begin on a new line, indented on the 2.5 cm from the main text.

Pages are to be numbered consecutively.

It is normal for chapters to have sub-sections (1, 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.) to display text in a more readable format.

14.5 Guideline for Content of Main Sections

14.5.1 Abstract (400 – 500 words)

This section should clearly state what the study is about, summarizing how it was carried out and what the results were. References are not to be included in the abstract. It should present only the essentials of the work in general.

14.5.2 Introduction (500 – 1000 words)

In this section, the Student is expected to state clearly:

- a) the ‘problem’ or ‘question’ being researched;
- b) why this topic was chosen;

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- c) what motivated the Student to choose this topic;
- d) why did the Student investigate it the way you did;
- e) what problem did the Student wish to explore;
- f) what is the context for the research?

14.5.3 Literature Review (2,000 – 4,000 words)

The main purpose of a literature review is to show the reader that the Student studied and analyzed viewpoints of other researchers on the problem under consideration. A literature review is not just a summary of the books read but rather a thorough analysis of other viewpoints on the problem.

14.5.4 Research Methodology (1,500 – 3,000 words)

This section should make about 20% of a dissertation. It presents the chosen research methods and explains why these methods are effective.

14.5.5 Analysis of Results and Discussion (3,000 – 4,000 words)

This section includes critical discussion about the Student's findings and shows how these findings support the original objectives laid out for the dissertation, which may be partially or fully achieved, or even exceeded. The Student may also include new areas of an investigation prompted by developments in the research dissertation. Above all, it is required to present strong arguments which show how findings may offer a valid contribution to the development of the subject of the selected research area or issues related to it.

14.5.6 Conclusions and Recommendations (1,000 – 3,000 words)

In this chapter, the Student has to evaluate the significance of the work done and give recommendations for any further investigations.

14.5.7 Bibliography

This section demonstrates what sources were used to conduct research. All sources presented in a bibliography list should be sorted alphabetically.

14.5.8 References

The Student is generally requested to use the following Harvard referencing style in the dissertation:

For books

Coleman, M (2002) *Women as head teachers: striking a balance*. Stoke on Trent: Trentham Books.

i.e., author (surname first, followed by a comma and initial of his name in capital letter) – date (in brackets) – the title of the book (in italics) – a place of publication – publishing company.

For a chapter in an edited book

Brenner, M. (1985) "Survey Interviewing' In M. Brenner, J. Brown and D. Canter. (eds) *The Research Interview: Uses and Approaches*, New York: Academic Press.

i.e., author (surname first, followed by a comma and initial of his name in caps) – date (in brackets – title of chapter (in single quotation marks) – name(s) of book editor/s followed by the abbreviation "ed' or "eds' (in brackets) – title of book (in italics) – location of publication – publishing company.

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For journal articles

Becker, H. (1984) "Fieldwork with Computers', *Qualitative Sociology* 7(12): 16-33.

i.e. author (surname first, followed by a comma and initial of his name in caps) – the title of the paper (in single quotes) – the title of the journal (in italics) – volume number – issue number (in brackets) – colon - page numbers.

For Internet references

Include the date when the page was last accessed because of the comparatively dynamic nature of internet resources. For example

Dowling, P.E. (2000) "A manifesto for design and the charismatic intellectual'. [Online]. Presented at Education and Social Democracies: Changing Forms and Sites. Institute of Education, University of London. 3-5 July 2000. Available at www.ioe.ac.uk/ccs/dowling/c2000. Last accessed 18 July 2000.

For References in the text

The Student is to place direct quotations over three lines long, in a separate paragraph indented left and right. Spacing between lines should be single.

The page number/s of the quotation should be given at the end of the quotation or after the date of the reference, for example, (Smith, 1976: 15) if it comes after a quotation, or Smith (1976: 15) if the reference just precedes the quotation.

In the body of the text, references are noted with the author's surname, followed by the date of publication in brackets, for example, Smith (1976). The "et al.' can be used when the number of authors is greater than two. However the full list of authors must be included in references at the end.

14.5.9 Appendices

Interview summaries, sample questionnaires, and references should be placed in this section.

For easier referencing, figures, tables, graphs, photos, diagrams, etc., should be inserted within the main text such as the literature review, the experimental process or procedure, the results and discussion chapters.

Appendices are usually used to present further details about the results. Appendices may be a compulsory part of a dissertation, but they are not treated as part of the dissertation for purposes of assessing the dissertation. So any material which is significant to judging the quality of the dissertation or of the project as a whole should be in the main body of the dissertation (main text), and not in appendices.

14.6 Timeframes for Dissertations

- 14.6.1 Scheduled dissertation tutorial sessions are expected to start immediately after the beginning of the academic year. These tutorial sessions are meant to facilitate the choice of your research topic and the drafting of your Statement of Intent. A minimum of 10 tutorial sessions is advised over the academic year.

14.7 Grading Criteria

- 14.7.1 Appendix 2 provides the expected dissertation grading criteria and a corresponding grading rubric for ease of reference.

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14.8 Hard Bound Presentation and Front Cover

- 14.8.1 Before final printing, Students must ensure that their final dissertation text includes any corrections that their dissertation tutor and/or the Institute academic staff would have indicated.

The printed pages should be numbered and hardbound in a **black cover**. The black cover is to have all script printed in gold lettering.

On the front top-part (middle position) of the cover the Student must write the TITLE of the dissertation in BLOCK LETTERS.

On the front lower-part (right-hand corner) of the cover the Student must write the following, not in block letters but using capital letters:

Student Name and Surname
Programme Name
Month, Year

On the spine of the cover, the following data shall appear positioned from left to right:

Programme Name
STUDENT NAME AND SURNAME (*in block*)
Year

As specified in Clause 14.1.4, two hardbound copies and 1 PDF soft copy of the dissertation must be submitted by the Student to the Institute. The Institute is to ensure that one copy of the dissertation will be kept in one of the MCAST Library and Learning Resource Centres, generally the one closest to the Institute Campus where it is generated, while the other hard copy will be kept by the Institute concerned.

- 14.8.2 All dissertations are copyright of MCAST (in line with MCAST Regulations and Chapter 417 of the Laws of Malta, and Legal Notices 181 and 186 of 2006, 426 of 2007, and Act XXX of 2014), and as such, under the discretion of MCAST, dissertations may be uploaded onto internal portals and repositories for academic reference by researchers, lecturers, students and other select parties, after ensuring that no personal student details are exposed outside of their name and relevant academic information.

In extraordinary cases where students require an embargo of publication of their dissertation due to any reason, students must by the first week of June, submit to the IRC the filled-in form 'Request for Exemption Embargo for Dissertation Publication' (refer below), which can be found on the College Documentation web page. The student will need to present detailed reasons of why such embargo is required to the IRC, who will approve or reject the embargo request, and if approved, decide for which length the embargo shall be retained.

Once the embargo has been sanctioned it is the student's full responsibility to ensure that the final, approved embargo form is included as the first inside page of the final dissertation, both for the hard bound and soft copy versions.

Reference Document

Document 034 : Request for Exemption Embargo for Dissertation Publication

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15 INTERNSHIP FRAMEWORK

15.1 Undergraduate Internship Framework

15.1.1 Undergraduate Students following a full 3-year or 4-year degree programme will be expected to follow an internship scheme within their programme period. A minimum expectation is for each degree Student to follow a minimum of 200 hours of work placement activity within the internship. In general the internship component will relate to a credit value of 6 ECTS or more within the Student's programme of study. Various internship formats exist including the implementation of live cases as well as the more traditional work-based training. Students are expected to demonstrate maturity, discipline, high ethical standards, and respect within this internship period. Information accessible at the work-place is confidential and cannot be taken out of that workplace or used for ulterior purposes.

15.2 General Conditions Within the Internship Framework

- 15.2.1
- The internship is focused on educational purpose and there is no guarantee or expectation that the activity will result in employment with the Company.
 - The education received by the Intern from the internship is for the express benefit of the Intern.
 - The Intern will not replace or displace any employee of the Company.
 - The Intern will receive supervision by an appropriate company appointed mentor, but will also be expected to work with a degree of autonomy while following the mentor's guidance.
 - The Intern is not entitled to wages or any compensation or benefits for the time spent in the internship.
 - The Intern shall maintain records of his/her learning through an appropriate logbook or portfolio that is also endorsed by the Company.
 - The Intern shall sign an 'Internship Learning Agreement' that will stipulate the conditions and expectations that the internship experience will entail.

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APPENDIX 2 : DISSERTATION GRADING CRITERIA AND RUBRIC

GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)				Student score
	0	1	2-3	4-5	
K1: Locate and relate data source/s (data collected by researcher)	Knowledge of existence and format of primary data sources are non-existent.	Basic knowledge of how to access, obtain and interpret primary data has been demonstrated.	A good level of knowledge of how to access, obtain and interpret primary data has been demonstrated.	An excellent understanding of the source of primary data, how to compile a tool to access the primary data, and how to analyze the primary data, has been demonstrated.	
K2: Understand the required dissertation structuring and format	Dissertation format does not confirm to the required format.	Good understanding of the dissertation structure and format. Dissertation handed in follows all main guidelines and formatting.	An excellent understanding of the dissertation structure and format. Dissertation handed in follows all guidelines and structure, and might only have minimal mistakes	An excellent understanding of the dissertation structure and format. Dissertation handed in follows all guidelines and structure. Dissertation results, such as table of figures etc, are presented in an excellent way.	
K3: Show an understanding of the research topic	No understanding of the main topic by the students	Basic understanding of the research topic, but evident gaps of such understanding is clear.	Good understanding of the research topic. Some understanding may be unclear.	An excellent understanding of the research topic, with a lot of initial research undertaken to understand such topic.	
K4: Demonstrate an understanding of the chosen research methodology	No methodology adopted, or section completely missing.	Basic understanding of research methodology, but evident flaws in such methodology is apparent. No justification provided on methodology adopted.	Good understanding of methodology adopted, and major decisions have been clearly justified.	An excellent understanding of methodology adopted with clear and concise justification why such decision has been taken. Informed decision was taken, by analysing and reviewing other methodologies, that were adopted in similar studies.	

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GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)				Student score
	0	1	2-3	4-5	
K5: Show insights into research project planning and control techniques	Student did not follow agreed any timelines stipulated during the dissertation process. These plans can include, but not limited to, SOI submission date, dissertation meetings with tutor etc. There was no follow up on the recommendation set by the tutor.	Poor time management on the milestones set by the tutor. Scheduled meetings were continuously postponed, for no apparent reason. On most occasions student did not follow up or did not work on recommendations set by the tutor in the previously scheduled meeting. Milestones as set by tutor were poorly followed.	Good time management on the milestones set by the tutor. This includes a good follow up, upon the tutor's recommendation set in the previous meeting. Milestones, as set by tutor, were followed, despite some minor issues.	Excellent dissertation planning. The student was continuously in contact with a tutor, and proactive in setting meetings with tutor, and giving own recommendations throughout dissertation process. There was an excellent follow up on the recommendation set by the tutor in the previous meeting. Milestones as set by the tutor/student were followed throughout.	
GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)				Student score
	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	
A1: Implement the dissertation writing through a clear and concise structure	No structure whatsoever in dissertation. Most sections were missed. No abstract or abstract is of insufficient standard.	Dissertation write-up follows a basic structure but is not concise. Most sections do not follow one another. Abstract gives a fair overview of all dissertation sections	Dissertation write-up follows a good structure and is quite concise. Dissertation sections do follow one another. Abstract covers most of the sections in the dissertation	Dissertation write-up follows a very good to excellent structure and is concise. Abstract is comprehensive and fully encompasses all segments of the dissertation	
A2: Carry out the research in a logical and transparent way	No logic was demonstrated, the methodology does not document the process well	Research carried out lacks in logic, and methodology lacks sufficient detail. Basic research including artefact, where applicable, was carried out and containing some flaws.	The artefact, or research presented, is good overall but more work and attention would have improved it.	The artefact, or research presented is very good to excellent. A very good/excellent amount of analysis, design and justification has gone into it. A strong element of innovation and logic is evident.	

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GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)				Student score
	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	
A3: Collect, examine and interpret primary data through a sound research methodology	No methodological basis was applied.	Initial attempts at collection and interpretation of primary data were made. Chosen research methodology is identified and applied, but has only allowed student to collect some data and give an initial interpretation of the data gathered.	Good collection and interpretation of primary data. Chosen research methodology is well applied, and has allowed student to collect data correctly and give a good interpretation of the data gathered.	Very good to excellent collection and interpretation of primary data. This interpretation was done through a very good/excellent research methodology. Proper care and due diligence has been taken to make the right choices in formulating and applying the chosen methodology.	
A4: Compare and contrast literature to construct a robust literature review of the relevant secondary data.	No papers, books, or any other sort of literature was read, and included in final submission	A basic comparison between literature was provided. Moreover a limited amount of literature was read and presented in final dissertation. The final literature review has several flaws.	A good amount of literature was read and presented, and a good comparison was given between different journals, and literature read. The final literature review is good.	A vast array of literature was read and included in dissertation. Moreover the comparison of such literature is very good to excellent. The final literature review is very good to excellent.	
A5: Construct a correct referencing framework	No references were found, or if found, they do not follow any referencing guideline.	Basic application of a correct referencing framework (ie Harvard style). Some evident mistakes were found throughout all references.	Good understanding and adoption of approved referencing framework (Harvard style). Very minor mistakes ,which were not evident in all references presented, were found.	A very good to excellent understanding and application of approved referencing framework (ie Harvard style). Very few evident mistakes were found. Supporting referencing tools have been used.	

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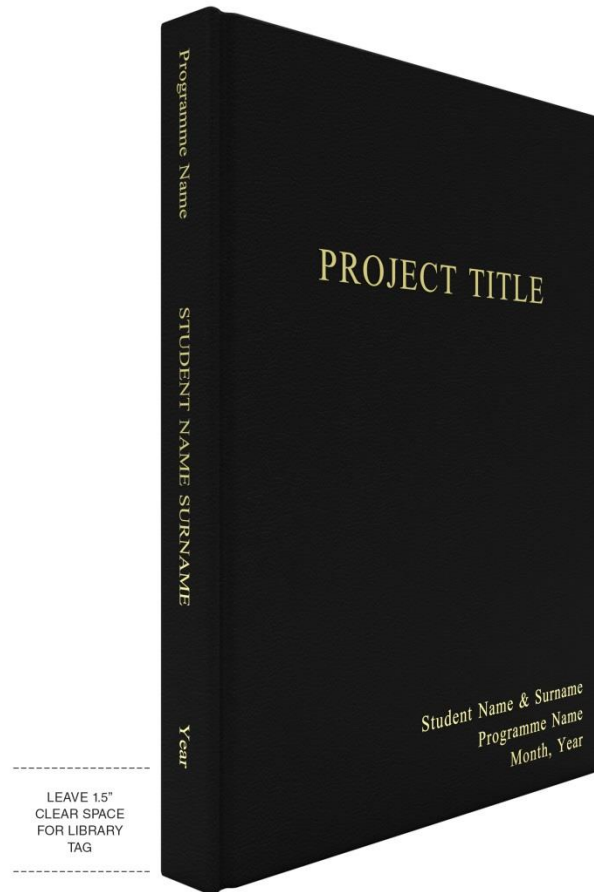
GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)					Student score
	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	8-10	
S1: Critically evaluate, analyze and interpret the research results	No evaluation / interpretation of results was found in final submission.	A very poor to poor evaluation, analysis and interpretation of research results. Such task lacks a lot of detail.	A good evaluation, analysis and interpretation of results. Such analysis, interpretation and evaluation was sometimes not rigorously proven and has some flaws. No correlation and investigation between what was included in literature review and your results.	A very good evaluation, analysis and interpretation of results. Such analysis, interpretation and evaluation are sometimes not rigorously proven. Very good investigation between existing results and literature presented in previous sections.	An excellent evaluation, analysis and interpretation of results. Such analysis, interpretation and evaluation are rigorously proven. Excellent investigation between existing results and literature presented in previous sections.	
S2: Develop the research endeavour in a logical and rigorous manner	No research done, and discussion of findings and actual results were completely missing	A very poor to poor final research/artefact was developed. No creativity or rigorousness to develop the said product was observed. Moreover the final artefact is not yet complete, and only a very bare prototype has been handed in. A lot of improvements can be made.	A good final research/artefact was developed. Some creativity and rigorousness was observed throughout implementation phase. A number of improvements could have been implemented to produce a better artefact/study. A final good prototype which proves the empirical research undertaken has been handed in, but which has some flaws.	A very good final research/artefact was developed. Creativity and rigorousness was observed throughout implementation phase. The final artefact does not contain any flaws.	An excellent good final research/artefact was developed. Creativity and rigorousness was observed throughout implementation phase. The final artefact was presented in a work shop and write up journal article.	

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GRADING CRITERIA	LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE (MARKS)					Student score
	0	1-3	4-5	6-7	8-10	
S3: Challenge and discuss the research findings and limitations	Discussion section was completely missing in final submission	A very poor to poor discussion section, with much to be desired. Discussion was very poor and limited, where initial research answer question was not targeted properly.	A good discussion section where the main research question was indeed answered, but some arguments may not be well constructed.	A very good discussion section where there were some minor flaws in writing and clarity of arguments	An impeccable discussion of results with very concise and clear arguments.	
S4: Synthesize and present the research undertaken, and recommend further structured development on the theme	Conclusion and further research were missing or did not meet the expected standard	A very poor to poor conclusion section, with much to be desired. Conclusion and further research were very poor and limited. Presentation in VIVA or in any other setup was very poor, where the student was not able to clearly present own dissertation	A good conclusion with good concluding remarks and good recommendation of further research to be undertaken on the theme. Presentation in VIVA or in any other setup was good, but some improvements are evident	A very good conclusion with good concluding remarks and good recommendation of further research to be undertaken on the theme. Presentation in VIVA, or any other setup, was clear, concise and logical, albeit some sections were left out from presentation	An excellent conclusion and recommendation of further research. Presentation in VIVA, or any other setup, was clear, concise and logical. Such presentation was easy to follow by persons who do not have any experience in dissertation area, and all areas were covered in presentation.	

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APPENDIX 3: SAMPLE OF DISSERTATION COVER



Black hard bound with gold lettering

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APPENDIX 4 : Missed Time Constrained Assignment Process Flow Chart

