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**GENERAL INFORMATION**

<b>1</b>	<b>Document category</b>	Rules and regulations		
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<b>3</b>	<b>Minimum list of document users to be notified upon release of document update</b>	All Academic Staff and course participants		
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**Instructions for document users with access to College Website**

All MCAST and IfE students and staff can access current, controlled and approved documents related to the Quality Management System via the MCAST website [www.mcast.edu.mt](http://www.mcast.edu.mt) and the IfE website [www.ife.gov.mt](http://www.ife.gov.mt).

Document users are encouraged **NOT** to retain printed hard copies of the Quality Management System documents. If, however a hard copy of the document is required, the user is to ensure before use that the printed document is the current revision.

**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 the Course Coordinator **today!**

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**Note:** The programme is being delivered jointly by MCAST and IfE, hereafter referred as the Institutions. The MCAST and IfE Management Teams are referred to in this document as the 'Joint Management Team' (JMT) and the Joint Operations Team (JOT).

## 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 of the MCAST-lfE BA (Hons) Early Years Learning and Care Programme.

## 2 APPLICABILITY OF REGULATION

- 2.1 This regulation applies only to the MCAST-lfE programme commencing as from academic year 2020/21, onwards:

The top-up Degree (60 ECTS) is intended for Students who have successfully completed the higher Diploma (120 ECTS MQF 5) and who wish to extend their qualification to an Honours Degree (refer to Section 6.2.1).

The academic title conferred upon a Student who successfully completes the qualification shall be Bachelor of Arts (Honours).

This regulation is equally applicable to Students, Lecturing and Administrative staff within the MCAST and IfE.

- 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.

## 3 UPDATING AND DISSEMINATION OF REGULATION

- 3.1 Updates to this document will need to be approved by both the MCAST Council of Institutes (Col) and the IfE Quality Assurance Committee (QAC).
- 3.2 The respective institutions shall ensure that the latest revision of this document is uploaded on the respective website / online portal and those changes will be communicated promptly to all end users. Both Institutions shall ensure that a copy of this regulation is available to the Student.
- 3.3 The only official valid version of this Regulation shall be the one published on the MCAST and IfE website / online portal and the MCAST intranet.

## 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 course of study. The Student's work shall be expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of a study unit.

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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 **CMIS:** College Management Information System also known as Classter
- 4.6 **Col:** The MCAST Council of Institutes.
- 4.7 **Institutions** Refers to the Malta College of Arts Science and Technology (MCAST) and the Institute for Education (IfE) as joint owners, providers and awarding bodies responsible for the joint programme.
- 4.8 **Interruption of Studies:** An authorised, temporary break from a programme of study usually due to extenuating circumstances.
- 4.9 **Joint Programme:** A Programme of Study which is designed, accredited, delivered and awarded jointly by two collaborating institutions (MCAST and IfE) with an integrated curriculum with a single set of programme learning outcomes.
- 4.10 **Joint Management Team (JMT):** The JMT shall be, as a minimum, comprised of the following members:
- **MCAST;** Director ICS (Chair), Director Education & Training Programmes, Director Quality Assurance,
  - **IfE** – CEO, Manager Internal Evaluation and Internships, Senior Manager Programme Development, Head of Admissions
- 4.11 **Joint Operations Team (JOT):** The JOT shall be, as a minimum, comprised of the following members:
- **MCAST;** Director ICS (Chair); Course Coordinator
  - **IfE;** Manager Internal Evaluation and Internships, Course Coordinator, Manager Centre Administration, Manager Student Affairs
- 4.12 **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.
- 4.13 **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.
- 4.14 **Mandatory Assessment Tasks:** Parts of the Assessment which must be attempted and completed successfully by Students in order to progress further with their studies. Mandatory Assessment Tasks cannot be compensated by other assessment tasks and/or other mechanisms available for this programme of study.

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- 4.15 **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.
- 4.16 **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.
- 4.17 **Qualification:** The academic title conferred upon a student who has successfully completed a programme of study based on learning outcomes at the respective MQF level and having enough workload to meet the requirements depending on the level. 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.
- 4.18 **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.
- 4.19 **2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt /Resit /Resubmission/ Retake:** An opportunity for Students to re-attempt one or more assessment tasks that were failed in the original first attempt.
- 4.20 **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.
- 4.21 **Take Home Assignment (THA):** Assignments which are done at home over a pre-established period of time, and must be submitted by a given deadline.
- 4.22 **Top Up Degree (level 6):** The final year of Undergraduate study which leads successful candidates to a Level 6 bachelor's degree qualification. A Top up Degree is usually comprised of study Units at MQF/EQF Level 6 and builds upon a previously obtained MQF/EQF Level 5 qualification.
- 4.23 **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.
- 4.24 **De-Registration:** The process by which students are removed from MCAST registers as a result of missed attendance. (see Paragraph 9.3 for details)

## **5 STUDENT BEHAVIOUR, ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND REPORTING OF GRIEVANCES**

### **5.1 Student Roles, Obligations and Rights**

- 5.1.1 Both Institutions seek to promote and respect the principles of diversity, inclusion and respect for the dignity of all its members.

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5.1.2 Both Institutions expect all Students to work in a safe environment in which they feel comfortable. The Institutions consider 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:**

*IfE: Course Participants' Grievance Policy and Procedures*

*MCAST Doc 038: Student Conduct Regulations*

*MCAST Doc 188: College Academic Board Procedures*

## 5.2 Student Academic Conduct

5.2.1 Students are expected to carry with them their Student Identity Card at all times. Students may be barred access to the various 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 the programme regulations and behave respectfully towards all members of the Institutions' community and visitors. When regulations are contravened, measures to rectify matters, to ensure conformity and safeguard the interest of the community in line with the joint regulations shall be implemented.

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.

5.2.5 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.

**Reference Documents:**

*MCAST Doc 038: Student Conduct Regulations*

*MCAST Doc 188: College Academic Board Procedures*

## 5.3 Drugs and Alcohol Policy

5.3.1 Drug and alcohol misuse affect performance, conduct and relationships at the premises of the Institutions and at society at large. Individuals who develop drug and alcohol-related problems cause harm to themselves and to others.

The Institutions must ensure the health, safety, and welfare of all individuals, including employees, Students, visitors and contractors who use the premises.



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The Institutions consider 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.

The policy on the misuse of drugs is in place to comply with the laws of Malta.

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

**Reference Documents;**

*MCAST Doc 212: Illegal Substance Procedure*

## 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 Students resorts to a formal grievance, s/he 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.

The Institutions acknowledge the fact that a Students 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.

**Reference Documents:**

*IfE: Course Participants' Grievance Policy and Procedures*

## 6 PROGRAMME OF STUDY

### 6.1 General Programme Information

6.1.1 The programme details are available on the Institutions' website / online portal and will include as a minimum,

- a) Programme qualification title.
- b) Programme Rationale.
- c) Name of Awarding Body/ Bodies.
- 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) Employment paths.

6.1.2 The Institutions are responsible for the provision of the correct pedagogical approach for facilitating the learning, teaching and assessment processes and are required to ensure that the unit curriculum is up to date and reflects the needs of the Students.



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6.1.3 The programme (MQF Level 6) is delivered jointly by the MCAST Institute of Community Services and IfE.

6.1.4 The programme of study is Students-centred, adopting a learning outcome-based approach to vocational training and assessment.

6.1.5 The programme of study is built on a framework of a combination of study units and work-based learning, normally completed within 18 months.

6.1.6 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.

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## 6.2 Learning Framework for MQF / EQF Levels 5 and 6 and Entry Requirements

### 6.2.1 Learning Framework

6.2.1

The Table below provides the programme structure for MQF / EQF Levels 6.

Level	Level 5 Higher Diploma)	Level 6 Degree
<b>Duration</b>	2 years full-time	18 months part-time
<b>Total Credits (ECTS)</b>	120	60
<b>Total Learning Hours</b>	3,000	1,500
<b>Typical number of Study Units</b>	20	12
<b>Note (*):</b> Progression into MQF Level 6 Degree follows the successful completion of the MQF Level 5 Diploma.		

### 6.2.2. Entry Requirements

- MCAST MQF Level 5 Higher Diploma in Advanced Studies in Early Years;
- Or MCAST-BTEC MQF 5 Early Years Learning and Development;
- Or MCAST-BTEC Higher National Diploma in Advanced Studies in Early Years;

### 6.2.3 Recognition of Prior Learning

Up to 33% Recognition of Prior Learning based on previous certificates (less than 5 years from the date of award of the certificate) to be charged to the applicants as per regulation referenced below (placement and dissertation excluded)

6.2.4 Applicants who do not have the MQF level 3 or equivalent, in Maths, Maltese or English shall sit for a proficiency test which is approved by both Institutions. These applicants may still apply provisionally for the Top UP Degree.

### Reference Documents

*MCAST Doc 185 Course Admission Regulations*  
*IfE: Recognition of Prior Learning Policy and Procedures*

## 7 ACADEMIC YEAR

7.1 The academic year and lecturing commence as approved by both Providers and as communicated on the respective websites.

7.2 The academic year is normally divided into 2 semesters, each lasting 16 weeks.

## 8 PROGRAMME DELIVERY

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## **8.1 Language of Delivery and Assessment.**

- 8.1.1 Lectures shall be delivered in English or in Maltese, as deemed appropriate by both Institutions.
- 8.1.2 The language of assessment shall be English, except for areas of study involving use of the Maltese language.
- 8.1.3 The Institutions may allow 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 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 (*refer to par. 9.3 and par. 12.1.3*).
- 9.1.3 Part-time (evening) Students will normally be asked to attend weekday afternoon/evening sessions (1530 to 1815hrs) as well as pre-advised 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 a requirement.
- 9.1.5 It is the sole responsibility of the Student to monitor his/her attendance.
- 9.1.6 Respective Institutions are required to retain attendance records for Students.

### **9.2 Justification of Absence and Extenuating Circumstances**

- 9.2.1 Every absence from any lecture session, or event, must be justified by either the National Insurance Social Services Medical Certificate (blue) or by providing an official document (such as the court hearing notification, driving test date schedule, examination timetables, medical appointments), which is to be submitted to the Course Coordinator.
- 9.2.2 When a Students is sick/taken ill, s/he will be expected to submit the Medical Certificate to the Course Coordinator as per the table below:

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<b>Number of Sick Days</b>	<b>Medical Certificate to be handed in</b>
1 day	The following lecture day
2 - 5 days	By not later than the 2 <sup>nd</sup> lecture day upon the Students' return to class
Prolonged sickness	Every six days from the first medical visit, either by post or by a trusted representative

9.2.3 The Student is to make sure that all the required information in the Medical Certificate (such as, the NI number, date, signature, etc.) is filled in. Medical Certificates with missing information will NOT be accepted. In cases of prolonged or regular illness, the Students is strongly encouraged to discuss his/her situation with the Course Coordinator, so that the particular circumstances are evaluated and a plan for the way forward is agreed upon.

9.2.4 It is highly recommended that Students retain a copy of all original certificates submitted.

### **9.3 Attendance Thresholds and De-registration**

9.3.1 Institutions are required to have systems in place that monitor and follow up Students who have high absentee rates in order to increase retention rates.

9.3.2 Attendance data and records will be shared between Institutions.

9.3.3 Students are required to attend a minimum of 80% of the total course hours to be eligible for certification.

9.3.4 It is important to note that students having specific course requirements such as international students on study visa, must respect the conditions of their course or visa irrespective of the above to be eligible to continue their course and be eligible for certification.

9.3.5 In view of the above, students who exceed the absenteeism limit for their respective course level will no longer be able to continue their course and will be de-registered. De-registered students will not be eligible for any refund.

9.3.6 Students may receive one or more reminders or warnings depending on their absenteeism rate throughout the duration of the programme.

### **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 the Course Coordinator to gain a full understanding of the process, the implication of their withdrawal or interruption. Students are advised to communicate with MCAST Registrar ([registrar@mcast.edu.mt](mailto:registrar@mcast.edu.mt)) 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.

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- 9.4.3 A Student who wishes to interrupt a programme of study before completion shall give notice in writing to the MCAST Registrar before suspending attendance. The Registrar shall, in turn, consult with the JMT 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 the programme before its completion shall give notice in writing to MCAST Registrar by filling in the form referenced to below (Resignation Letter Form). Students may request an official record of completed units for which they are eligible. For information regarding tuition fees please refer to the Student Agreement.
- 9.4.5 Students wishing to continue the programme after withdrawal or transfer shall seek written confirmation from the MCAST Registrar. They must also satisfy any other formal requirements, e.g. payment of any new fees, which may be applicable (refer to Student Agreement). Students are obliged to satisfy such expectations prior to admission.
- 9.4.6 Applications for withdrawal from study shall be received and processed by MCAST using the official Resignation Form referenced below. The IfE shall be kept duly and promptly informed of Students resignations at all times.

**Reference Document:**

*MCAST Doc 278: Student 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 and the total learning hours.
- 10.1.4 A variety of assessment instruments, not solely Time Constrained Assessment (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. The distribution of marks and assessment mode depends on the nature and objectives of the unit in question.
- 10.1.5 Units are to be designed with a holistic overview of the whole programme of studies to ensure that a balance between the different domains is achieved.

In each unit, all domains of Bloom's Taxonomy (remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating) should be addressed in the specified grading criteria. The weighting for each domain, should be determined by the nature of the unit and addressed at grading criteria design stage e.g. a practical unit will most likely include a higher number of

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application and creation criteria compared to theoretical units. Similarly, assessment for units/ programmes at higher levels should move more towards Creation and Evaluation rather than Knowledge and Understanding.

- 10.1.6 Grading 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 within six (6) weeks from the last lecture of the Unit.
- 10.1.8 Time-Constrained Assignments may be held between 1530 and 2000hrs 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 respective portal. Students are to be responsible enough to be available for allocated TCA time schedules.
- 10.1.9 Certain circumstances (such as but not limited to the Covid 19 pandemic) may lead Institutions to hold Time-constrained assignments remotely (online). In such cases the regulations listed in the document referenced below apply.

#### **Reference Documents**

- *Doc 020 MCAST QA Policy and Standards for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment*

## **10.2 Assessment Documentation**

- 10.2.1 The coursework documentation required for the assessment process includes as a minimum:
- a) Assignment Cover Sheet
  - b) The Assignment Brief (including the title and rubric)
- 10.2.2 The following information is the minimum information that needs to be recorded in hard copy, via CMIS, Moodle, Turnitin or in combination depending on the nature of the assignment being issued:
- a) Assignment title
  - b) Course names
  - c) Module code
  - d) Module title
  - e) Name and surname of student and ID card
  - f) Assignment submission date
  - g) Name of lecturer
  - h) Student Declaration of Authenticity
  - i) Word count (as applicable)
  - j) Feedback Provision from the lecturer.
- 10.2.3 The Assignment Title 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 their assessment.

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10.2.4 In the Assessment Feedback section (on the coversheet or recorded on Turnitin), the assessor records his/her comments 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.

10.2.5 In the case of assignments which are uploaded via Turnitin (especially THAs), Assessment feedback may also be provided electronically via Turnitin (instead of the printed assignment front sheet).

### **Reference Documents**

*IfE: Assignment Cover Sheet*

*IfE: Assignment Brief*

## **10.3 Authenticity of Work (Plagiarism)**

10.3.1 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.

10.3.2 Plagiarism is defined 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. Plagiarism is 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.

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

10.3.4 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.

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

10.3.6 All assignments are to be submitted online via Turnitin except in cases where the Lecturer explicitly informs otherwise due to the graphical or physical content of the assignment. The Turnitin submission is to be considered as the official assignment submission.

### **Reference Document:**

*IfE: Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy and Procedures*

## **10.4 Submission of Individual Home-Based Assignments (excluding the Dissertation or Research Project)**

10.4.1 Once set, coursework deadlines can only be changed in exceptional circumstances and following a review by the JOT.

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



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- 10.4.3 As a general rule, all home-based assessment material shall be submitted electronically via Turnitin. In the case of assessments containing elements which are not text-based (as in the case of artefacts, resources etc.) Students will be requested to attach photographic evidence to their submissions. Any photographic material requiring the consent of third parties should be obtained prior to submission and in accordance with GDPR regulations.
- 10.4.4 Coursework is to be handed in together with the Assignment Cover Sheet' referenced below. Coursework which is handed in without this form shall not normally be accepted and/or assessed.
- 10.4.6 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 Course Coordinator prior to the submission date and request an extension (refer to section 10.8 'Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Extension of the Submission Deadline of Home Based Assignment'). The Course Coordinator is to inform the lecturer/s concerned accordingly.
- 10.4.7 Late work for which the student did not submit a request through the extenuating circumstances process shall not be accepted and shall not be assessed. In such cases, Students would have forfeited the respective marks and the assessor's feedback.

**Reference Document:**

*IfE: Assignment Cover Sheet*

## 10.5 Successful Completion of Coursework

- 10.5.1 For each coursework assigned to the Students, the assessor shall provide feedback on the Students performance as well as the total marks achieved in the coursework.
- 10.5.2 The total mark for each unit is calculated by summing up all the marks obtained in (all) the respective assessments set for each unit.
- 10.5.3 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:

<b>% Mark</b>	<b>Award Grades</b>
90 – 100	A*
80 – 89	A
70 – 79	B
60 – 69	C
50 – 59	D
< 50	<b>Unclassified (U)</b>
40-49	<i>Compensatory Pass (Refer to section 12.2 for applicable terms and conditions)</i>

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10.5.4 Refer to section 10.6 for Unsuccessful completion of coursework.

## 10.6 Unsuccessful Completion of Coursework - 2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt

10.6.1. Assessments shall be made up of Mandatory and non-Mandatory tasks. Students are expected to attempt all the tasks set as part fulfilment of their assessments and submit all assessments.

If a Student fails (or fails to submit without proper justification) one of the assessments set, which does not include any mandatory tasks; 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).

If a Student fails (or fails to submit without proper justification) an assessment which includes mandatory tasks, s/he will need to re-take the assessment. The maximum mark that the Students can achieve will still be capped at 59% D. New tasks may need to be designed for the 2nd attempt. The Student does not need to re-sit/re-submit components of assessment that she/he has already passed.

10.6.2 If a Student fails a module (i.e. obtains an overall module mark below the pass mark) due to not meeting the academic requirements, not submitting all the assessment components or not attending a TCA, he/she will normally be given the opportunity to re-sit the component(s) and the module mark will be capped at the pass mark (59%/D). The Student does not need to re-attend the module, or to re-sit/resubmit components of assessment that she/he has already passed.

10.6.3 A candidate for reassessment is normally reassessed in the failed elements of assessment and by the same methods as the first attempt (unless a different method of reassessment is specifically stated in the module description or an alternative form of assessment is approved due to extenuating circumstances).

10.6.4 Students who fail a unit or a number of units after the Second Attempt assessment may be considered by the JMT 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 second attempt under the same conditions as above (with the new cohort). Students will be subject to additional tuition fees. Kindly refer to Student Agreement for more details.

10.6.5 The JMT 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.

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

## 10.7 Assessment of Group Work

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- 10.7.1 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.
- 10.7.2 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
- 10.7.3 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.
- 10.7.4 The way group coursework is structured shall make it possible for lecturers to identify each individual's contribution in work submitted for assessment.
- 10.7.5 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.
- 10.7.6 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.
- 10.7.7 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 Students-led or if a group will be assigned a tutor in which case the tutor must be clearly identified;
  - f) How group work will be assessed.
- 10.7.8 Irrespective of the nature of the work expected, individual contributions will be assessed separately and can be awarded different grades.
- 10.7.9 Students will be held individually accountable for their contribution to the project.
- 10.7.10 Feedback (formative and summative) shall be made available to all group members.

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- 10.7.11 For the purposes of transparency in assessment, when one or more Students 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.

### **10.8 Request for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Extension of the Submission Deadline of Take-Home Assignment (THA)**

- 10.8.1 THA Coursework submitted after the closing date shall not be assessed (no marks shall be allocated).
- 10.8.2 Students may request an extension in advance of the original THA 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 online form referred to below, requesting consideration of such circumstances.
- 10.8.3 The filled-in Extenuating Circumstances Form is to normally be submitted online for consideration at least five (5) working days prior to the submission date deadline.
- 10.8.4 It is the responsibility of the Students to provide the necessary evidence to support such claims.
- 10.8.5 Requests for Consideration of Extenuating Circumstances for Extension of the Submission Deadline of Home-Based Assignment shall be reviewed by the JOT and will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Students will be informed of the outcome by the Course Coordinator.
- 10.8.6 An extension shall only be granted if a Student can provide credible evidence of an extenuating circumstance which is considered as valid by the JOT. An extenuating circumstance shall consist of the recording of one or more, personal difficulties, which are supported by acceptable evidence as shown in the table below.

<b>Extenuating Circumstance</b>	<b>Example of Evidence</b>
Illness / Injury / Hospitalisation	A medical certificate signed by a registered doctor. Or Other appropriate signed medical evidence.  Cases will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, requests for special concessions such as long-term absence in view of hospitalisation (self and/or next of kin) due to Covid-19
Mandatory Quarantine after resulting positive to Covid-19	A copy of the letter issued by the Superintendence of Public Health clearly showing that mandatory quarantine is being imposed.  Proof of a negative test result is subsequently to be provided prior to the course participants' physical return to the Institute for Education

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Illness of a dependant / close relative	A medical certificate signed by a registered doctor verifying the illness. Or Other appropriate signed medical evidence.				
Bereavement	A letter from the family doctor/hospital or death certificate.				
Victim of crime	Police/crime report. Or Signed statement from a professional counsellor/doctor.				
Other serious circumstances	In these cases, the course participant should provide to the Institute all available specific facts and documentation.				

- 10.8.6 A copy of the coursework Extenuating Circumstances Form will be kept by the Course Coordinator in the Students personal file.
- 10.8.7 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 s/he was unable or, for valid reasons, unwilling, to disclose such information before.
- 10.8.8 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.
- 10.8.9 The coursework will be assessed and marked without any sanctions/penalties.
- 10.8.10 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 Students shall be deemed to have failed the assessment and shall receive a mark of 0.

**Reference Document:**

*IfE: Extenuating Circumstances Application form*

**10.9 Absence From Time Constrained Assessment (TCA)**

- 10.9.1 In the case of absence from a TCA, where the Student does not have any valid extenuating circumstances for missing the TCA, the Student will be considered to have forfeited his/her original first attempt and therefore shall have the opportunity to sit for a resit with the final grade capped at a pass (59%). In this case no further opportunities for resit will be provided. Furthermore, students who fail to obtain a pass will not be allowed to claim a Compensatory Pass in such cases.
- 10.9.2 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 the TCA on different date/time slot and will be allowed to obtain the full marks allocated to the assignment. This shall be considered as the original attempt for this student and hence, should they fail, they will be

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allowed to sit for a further attempt. Students who fail to obtain a pass will be allowed to claim a Compensatory Pass.

10.9.3 In highly exceptional cases where the Students would have missed a number of TCA's due to valid extenuating circumstances, and failed in more than one unit following resits, the Students' case shall be referred to the JOT for moderation. The JOT shall review these exceptional situations on a case-by-case basis, evaluating the Students' general performance, attendance records and critical nature of the units, and shall provide a final direction to the Students that may include further retakes or additional compensatory passes for these marginally failed units.

#### 10.9.4 **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 Students 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 Course Coordinator on the first day as soon as Students returns to class.

The Students are advised to keep a copy of all documents submitted to the Institute administration.

**Reference Document:**

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

### 10.10 **Assessment Feedback**

10.10.1 Individual feedback by the Lecturer is given to Students via Turnitin.

10.10.2 The Lecturer's feedback shall state what has been achieved or not achieved and possible areas for development and/or improvement.

### 10.11 **Academic Appeals**

10.11.1 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.

10.11.2 If, following the meeting with the assessor, the Student is still not satisfied with the outcome; 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 Course Coordinator within 10 working days from the first time of being notified of the result of the assessment.

10.11.3 The appeals procedure is explained in full in the document referenced to below.



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**Reference Document:**

*MCAST Doc 188: College Academic Boards Procedure*

*MCAST Doc 292: Assessment / Examination Appeals Form*

## 10.12 Record of Work

10.12.1 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.

10.12.2 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.

## 10.13 Students Work

10.13.1 The Institutions 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. .

10.13.2 The College shall have discretionary powers to determine when one or more such materials may be physically returned to the Student.

## 10.14 Internal Verification

10.14.1 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.

10.14.2 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.

**Reference Document**

*IfE: Internal Verification Policy*

## 11 PLACEMENTS

11.1 Accredited placements are a mandatory requirement of the programme. All students following MCAST IFE BA (Hons) Early Years Learning and Care Programme must undertake the placement.



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- 11.2 The placement cannot be obtained via RPL
- 11.3 Students following a placement as part of this programme will be asked to sign a Contract which is binding. The placement contract will include further and more specific guidelines related to the requirements, policies and procedures which govern the placement.
- 11.4 Students must complete the assigned minimum hours and must fulfill the requirements of the module in full as stipulated in the placement contract. Students must observe school policies and procedures.
- 11.5 Students will be asked to prepare a placement file and fill-in a logbook as instructed by the task brief.
- 11.6 The placement is an assessed component of the study programme. The main elements for the assessment of the placement are: the placement file; the logbook and; the assessor observation visits which can take place at any time throughout the duration of the placement.
- 11.7 Placements shall be coordinated by the MCAST Course Coordinator and all communication related to placements should be directed to him/her.

## **12 CERTIFICATION**

### **12.1 Compensatory Pass**

- 12.1.1 A Student is eligible for a Compensatory Pass if the following conditions are met:
- has obtained between 40 and 49 % in a unit\* of six ECTS' or less;
  - has not claimed a Compensatory Pass' in any other unit throughout the programme qualification;
- 12.1.2 The best mark obtained (i.e. sum of marks from ongoing assessment OR 2<sup>nd</sup> Attempt mark from current or previous years in the case of repeating students) is to be taken into consideration when determining student's eligibility for a compensatory pass
- 12.1.3 Students who have claimed a compensatory pass during the level 5 programme used as part of the entry requirements for the top up degree shall not be eligible to a Compensatory Pass for any of the units forming part of the top up degree.
- 12.1.4 Students who do not qualify for a compensatory pass are to discuss their options with the Course Coordinator.
- 12.1.5 All claims by Students for consideration of a compensatory pass are to be submitted by the Students on the document indicated below and signed by both the Students and the MCAST Institute of Community Services Director

#### **Reference Document**

*MCAST Doc 110 : Request for Consideration of Compensatory pass*

### **12.2 Certification**

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Students gain credits by passing set study units or modules in order to achieve the qualification.

The MCAST-lfE BA (Hons) Early Years Learning and Care is a top up degree of 60ECTS which builds on previously achieved MQF Level 5 (120ECTS) programme as stated in the entry requirements.

12.2.1 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 the programme of study will be conferred the certification of the qualification awarded by MCAST and lfE.

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

### **12.3 Classification of Degree Awards**

12.3.1 For the purpose of final classification, the results of the year of study contribute to the final classification of the programme.

12.3.2 The top-up degree classification is proposed by the Institute and ratified by the Degree Ratification board according to the following guidelines:

1. The Top-Up year course marks/grades are weighted at 1.5 times so a 100 mark for every 6 credit unit is weighted at 150 points to a maximum of 1500points for 60 ECTS
2. Grades/marks for each unit are added towards the final value (total points)
3. Grand total is compared to range for each classification, as per below,

The indicative classification range is as shown below:

- First Class 80% or higher
- Second Upper 70% to 79%
- Second Lower 60% to 69%
- Third Class 50% to 59%

### **12.4 Programme Duration**

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

- the overall duration of the programme of study can be extended by 6 months for every completed semester.

If a Student has suspended his/her studies and requests to resume, the Students shall require a confirmation from the Office of the Registrar (MCAST) that there is an adequate correlation between units already achieved by the Students 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 Students through an APL process that will allow them to use the programme components obtained so far to enter, at a suitable level, into a new, comparable programme.

Such processes will be subject to Administrative Fees. Tuition fees for resuming students will also apply.

## **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 as indicated in the documents referenced below.

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 Students are additionally responsible for keeping the JOT/Course Coordinator 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.

***Referenced Document:***

*MCAST DOC 250: Provision of IEU Support Sessions Procedure*

*MCAST DOC 253: IEU Registration Procedure*

### **13.2 Learning Resources**

13.2.1 Students are encouraged to make use of the Library and Learning Resource Centre (LLRC), the IfE Library and the online sources available through the IfE portal/ MCAST Portal.

13.2.2 The rules and regulations pertaining to the LLRCs of both institutions are prescribed in the documents referenced below.

***Reference Document:***

*MCAST Doc 041 : Library and Learning Resources Centre Regulations.*

*IfE: Library policy and Regulations*