

Legal Notice 25 of 2016 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,523 – 19 January 2016  
Amended by:  
Legal Notice 160 of 2016 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,570 – 9 May 2016  
Legal Notice 334 of 2016 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,653 – 7 October 2016  
Legal Notice 112 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,974 – 6 April 2018  
Legal Notice 281 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,038 – 14 August 2018  
Legal Notice 53 of 2019 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,158 – 2 April 2019  
Legal Notice 133 of 2019 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,217 – 21 June 2019  
Legal Notice 274 of 2020 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,428 – 26 June 2020

**EDUCATION ACT  
(CAP. 327)**

**Bye-Laws of 2016 in terms of the  
General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008  
for the Degree of Master of Science – M.Sc. –  
under the auspices of the  
Faculty of Information and Communication Technology**

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon him by articles 74 (5) and 75 (6) of the Education Act (Cap. 327), the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following bye-laws made by the Board of the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by article 81 (1) (c) of the said Act and which have been approved by the Senate of the University of Malta as required by article 81 (2) of the said Act:

**Citation and Interpretation**

1. (1) These bye-laws may be cited as the Bye-Laws of 2016 in terms of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008 for the degree of Master of Science - M.Sc. – under the auspices of the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology.

(2) In these bye-laws, unless the context otherwise requires –

“the Board” means the Board of the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology;

“the Board of Studies” means the Board of Studies appointed by Senate for the Course/area of study, on the recommendation of the Board;

“the Course” means the programme of study leading to the degree of Master of Science - M.Sc.;

“the Degree” means the degree of Master of Science - M.Sc.;

“the Postgraduate Certificate” means the Postgraduate Certificate in Information and Communication Technology - P.G. Cert.; and

“the Postgraduate Diploma” means the Postgraduate Diploma in Information and Communication Technology - P.G. Dip.; and

“the Principal Regulations” means the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008.

### **Applicability**

2. These bye-laws shall be applicable for courses commencing in October 2015 or later.

### **Areas of Study**

3. The Course shall be offered in any area of study that falls within the academic responsibility of the Board, after approval by Senate.

### **Requirements for Admission**

4. (1) For programmes of study structured as detailed in paragraph (1) of bye-law 7 and in paragraph (a) of bye-law 8, applicants shall be in possession of one of the following qualifications:

(a) the degree of Bachelor of Science in Information Technology (Honours) – B.Sc. I.T. (Hons) - with at least Second Class Honours; or

(b) the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Information and Communication Technology – B.Sc. (Hons) I.C.T. - with at least Second Class Honours; or

(c) the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing Science – B.Sc. (Hons) - with at least Second Class Honours; or

#### **Applicable for courses commencing in October 2016 or later:**

(c) the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing Science or in Computer Engineering – B.Sc. (Hons) – with at least Second Class Honours; or

#### **Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:**

(c) the degree of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Computing Science or in Computer Engineering – B.Sc. (Hons) – with at least Second Class Honours, provided that for the degree in Signal Processing and Machine Learning, other areas of study deemed relevant by the Board may also be considered; or

(d) the degree of Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) – B.Eng.(Hons) - with at least Second Class Honours in an ICT related area of study; or

**Applicable for courses commencing in February 2018 or later:**

(d) the degree of Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) – B.Eng.(Hons) – with at least Second Class Honours in a suitable area of study; or

(e) any other Honours degree with a strong ICT component which the Board deems comparable to the qualifications indicated in (a), (b), (c) or (d) of this bye-law; or

(f) a Third Class Honours degree in an ICT related area of study together with a professional qualification/s or experience as evidenced by a substantial portfolio of recent works, deemed by the University Admissions Board, on the recommendation of the Faculty Admissions Committee, to satisfy in full the admission requirements of the Course.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2018 or later:**

(f) a Third Class Honours degree in an ICT related area of study together with a professional qualification/s or experience as evidenced by a substantial portfolio of recent works, deemed by the University Admissions Board, on the recommendation of the Faculty Admissions Committee, to satisfy in full the admission requirements of the Course; or

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2018 or later:**

(g) any other Honours degree obtained with at least Second Class Honours, provided that applicants would have successfully completed at least three individual study-units as directed by the Board, prior to being admitted to the Course.

(2) For programmes of study structured as detailed in paragraph (b) of bye-law 8, applicants shall be in possession of one of the following qualifications:

(a) a Bachelor degree with a strong ICT component obtained with at least Second Class Honours and comprising 240 ECTS credits; or

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2019 or later:**

(a) a Bachelor degree with a strong ICT component obtained with at least Second Class Honours (Upper Division) and comprising 180 ECTS credits or more; or

(b) a Bachelor degree with a strong ICT component obtained with at least Second Class Honours and comprising 180 ECTS credits, together with a Postgraduate Diploma in an ICT related discipline; or

(c) the degree of Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) – B.Eng.(Hons) - with at least Second Class Honours in an ICT related area of study.

(3) The admission of applicants under sub-paragraph (f) of paragraph (1) of this bye-law and of applicants under paragraph (2) of this bye-law may be made conditional on the results of an interview conducted for the purpose.

(4) Interviews, when necessary, shall be conducted by a board composed of at least three members.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2018 or later:**

(5) Eligible applicants in terms of sub-paragraphs (a) to (f) of paragraph (1) of this bye-law may register as visiting students for individual study-units, as directed by the Board, and obtain credit for them. Should applicants be accepted to join the Course within 5 years from following the first study-unit, the Board may allow the transfer of credits to the student's academic record for the Course in lieu of comparable units in the current programme for the Degree.

**Course Duration**

5. (1) The Course shall extend over three semesters of full-time study or the equivalent in part-time study.

(2) The Course may include a summer period as specified in the programme of study.

**Programme of Study**

6. (1) The programme of study for any area of study offered in the Course may be either mainly taught or mainly by research, and shall comprise study-units to which a total of 90 ECTS credits shall be assigned.

**Applicable as from 1 March 2019 onwards:**

(2) Students who obtain 30 ECTS credits for taught study-units with an average mark of at least 50% and do not proceed with the Course, or having proceeded do not successfully complete the Course, shall be eligible for the award of the Postgraduate Certificate.

(3) Students who obtain the 60 ECTS credits for taught study-units with an average mark of at least 50% and do not proceed with the Course, or having proceeded do not successfully complete the dissertation, shall be eligible for the award of the Postgraduate Diploma.

7. Mainly taught programmes of study shall comprise taught study-units to which a total of 60 ECTS credits are assigned and a dissertation study-unit to which 30 ECTS credits are assigned.

8. Programmes of study mainly by research shall be of two types and shall comprise either:

(a) taught study-units to which 30 ECTS credits are assigned and a dissertation study-unit to which 60 ECTS credits are assigned; or

(b) taught study-unit/s to which 6 ECTS credits are assigned and a dissertation study-unit to which 84 ECTS credits are assigned.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2016 or later:**

(b) taught study-unit/s to which 5 ECTS credits are assigned and a dissertation study-unit to which 85 ECTS credits are assigned.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:**

(b) taught study-unit/s to which 10 ECTS credits are assigned and a dissertation study-unit to which 80 ECTS credits are assigned.

9. In cases where an applicant lacks essential knowledge in particular areas not covered in his/her first degree, the Board, on the recommendation of the Board of Studies or the applicant's Panel of Supervision, may require the applicant to follow and pass supplementary study-units at level 4 or lower to which not more than 12 ECTS credits are assigned.

10. The programme of study shall be published after approval by Senate, normally not less than eight months prior to the commencement of the Course.

**Assessment and Progress**

11. (1) The assessment of each taught study-unit shall be held by the end of the semester in which the teaching of the study-unit is held.

(2) Students who in any academic year fail in the assessment of not more than 20 ECTS credits, if following the Course full-time, or not more than 10 ECTS credits if following the Course part-time, shall be given the opportunity to re-sit the failed assessments during the September supplementary examination session.

(3) Students who fail in more than the number of credits permitted under paragraph (2) of this bye-law, or students who after re-assessment fail to obtain credit for any study-unit, shall be deemed to have failed the Course.

**Dissertations in Mainly Taught Programmes of Study**

12. (1) In mainly taught programmes of study, structured as detailed in paragraph (1) of bye-law 7, students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation (30 ECTS credits) of not more than 20,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board of Studies. The dissertation must also satisfy the Board as regards content and presentation.

(2) Work on the dissertation shall be undertaken during the third semester of the Course. Each student shall be assigned a supervisor who shall provide guidance and advice on a regular basis during the period of study.

(3) A provisional title for the dissertation and a detailed research proposal shall be submitted to the Board of Studies for approval before the end of the second semester.

(4) Students shall seek approval from the Board of Studies through their supervisor for any substantial modifications in the title or content of the dissertation.

(5) Students shall be required to have regular contact with their supervisor, who shall submit to the Board of Studies progress reports for the student/s under their supervision at the end of each semester of studies, whether the student is following the Course on a full-time or part-time basis.

(6) Reports submitted by supervisors may include recommendations to (a) either extend the period of study in order to enable the student to complete the dissertation; or (b) terminate studies prematurely if the supervisor deems this to be proper in the circumstances, provided that:

(i) the extension of the study period referred to in (a) shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Principal Regulations; and

(ii) the Board may not terminate studies prematurely according to (b) until it has first given the student a chance to be heard.

### **Dissertations in Programmes of Study by Research**

13. (1) In programmes of study mainly by research, structured as detailed in paragraph (a) of bye-law 8, students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation (60 ECTS credits) of approximately 32,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board of Studies. The dissertation must also satisfy the Board as regards content and presentation.

(2) Work on the dissertation shall be undertaken throughout the Course after approval of a detailed proposal which will also include a provisional title for the dissertation. This detailed research proposal shall be submitted to the Board of Studies for approval before the end of the first semester. Each student will be assigned a supervisor who shall provide guidance and advice on a regular basis during the period of study.

14. (1) In programmes of study mainly by research, structured as detailed in paragraph (b) of bye-law 8, students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation (84 ECTS credits) of a maximum 45,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board of Studies. The dissertation must also satisfy the Board as regards content and presentation.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2016 or later:**

14. (1) In programmes of study mainly by research, structured as detailed in paragraph (b) of bye-law 8, students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation (85 ECTS credits) of a maximum 45,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board. The dissertation must also satisfy the Board as regards content and presentation.

**Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:**

14. (1) In programmes of study mainly by research, structured as detailed in paragraph (b) of bye-law 8, students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation (80 ECTS credits) of a maximum of 35,000 words in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board. The dissertation must also satisfy the Board as regards content and presentation.

(2) Applications for this type of research Master shall be approved by the Board and shall include the following details:

- (a) a provisional title; and
- (b) a provisional research proposal.

15. (1) Each student shall be assigned a supervisor by the Board who shall provide guidance and advice during the period of study, starting from the formulation of a detailed written proposal.

(2) Work on the dissertation may be undertaken at any time during the Course after approval of the proposal.

16. (1) For programmes of study by research as defined in bye-law 8, the Board shall appoint a Panel of Supervision for each student, normally composed of three members as follows: the Head of Department, or his or her delegate as Chairman, and two other members, one of whom being the research supervisor, provided that when the head of department is the supervisor, he or she shall not chair the Panel.

(2) Panels of Supervision shall follow, as they deem fit, the progress of students through the Course, provided that they meet at least once a year to review such progress.

(3) Students shall be required to report to their supervisor at least once every two months, and in addition as often as the supervisor deems necessary.

(4) At the end of each semester of studies supervisors shall be required to submit to the Panels of Supervision or Boards of Studies reports regarding the students under their supervision. Students shall seek approval from the Panel of Supervision for any substantial modification in the title or content of the dissertation.

(5) Panels of Supervision or Boards of Studies as appropriate shall periodically inform the Board, in writing, on the general performance of each student. Such advice may include a recommendation to either (a) extend the period of study in order to enable the student to complete the dissertation; or (b) terminate studies prematurely if the supervisor deems this to be proper in the circumstances, provided that the conditions specified in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) of paragraph (6) of bye-law 12 shall also apply in these cases.

### **Classification of the Awards**

17. The Final Weighted Average Mark for the purpose of the classification of the Postgraduate Diploma and the Degree shall be based on the results obtained in all the components of the programme of study, all credits being weighted equally.

### **Special Provisions for Part-Time Courses**

18. The provisions of the foregoing bye-laws shall apply mutatis mutandis to courses followed on a part-time basis, and subject to such changes as may reasonably be deemed by the Board as necessary due to the part-time nature of the Course.

### **Repeal**

19. The Bye-Laws of 2009 in terms of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2008 for the degree of Master of Science – M.Sc. – under the auspices of the Faculty of Information and Communication Technology, published as Legal Notice 81 of 2009, shall be deemed to cease to be in force as from 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015, provided that students registered for this course before 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 shall continue to be governed by the bye-laws that were in force at the time of their joining the course.