

**EDUCATION ACT  
(CAP. 327)**

**Professional Doctorate Degree Course Regulations, 2014**

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon him by sections 74 (5) and 75 (6) of the Education Act (Cap. 327), the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following regulations made by the Senate of the University of Malta by virtue of the powers conferred upon it by sections 75 and 79 of the said Act:

**Citation and Interpretation**

1. (1) These regulations may be cited as the Professional Doctorate Degree Course Regulations, 2014.

(2) In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires, the terms used shall be taken to mean as indicated in the Glossary of Terms listed hereunder:

<b>Glossary of Terms</b>	
<b>Term</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>Award Classification Board</b>	the Award Classification Board appointed for the award of Postgraduate Diplomas and Master's degrees
<b>Board</b>	the board of the University faculty, institute, centre or school where the Programme will be carried out
<b>Board of Studies</b>	the Board of Studies appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Board
<b>Course</b>	the programme of study leading to a professional doctorate degree
<b>Faculty</b>	the University faculty, institute, centre or school offering the Degree
<b>Faculty Doctoral Committee</b>	the committee entrusted to oversee each student's doctoral studies as specified in the Ph.D. Degree Regulations, 2008
<b>Degree</b>	the professional doctorate degree termed 'Doctorate in (area of study)' is designed for students pursuing professional or industry-based careers and who are interested in the opportunity to reflect on best practice, rather than in pursuing academic careers for which the degree is not designed
<b>Master's degree</b>	the degree of Master in a named area of study that shall be awarded in the cases specified in regulations 37 and 38
<b>Postgraduate Diploma</b>	the Postgraduate Diploma in a named area of study that shall be awarded in the cases specified in regulation 35
<b>Programme</b>	the taught and research programme of study in the area of study chosen
<b>Sub-Committee</b>	the University Ph.D. Committee appointed by Senate in terms of the Ph.D. Degree Regulations, 2008

## **Applicability**

2. These regulations shall be applicable as from October 2014 and brought into force as bye-laws of these regulations.

## **Eligibility to offer the Degree**

3. Applicants shall be accepted to register for the Degree after it is ascertained by Senate that the Faculty where the teaching and research will be carried out can provide suitable facilities for the proposed Programme, as well as dissertation supervisors who can provide regular supervision for the dissertation and professional practice supervisors who can provide mentoring for the professional practice component, taking account of their academic record and expertise and other commitments.

## **Eligibility for the Award of the Degree**

4. (1) The Degree shall be awarded upon the successful completion of a programme of study, comprising taught study-units, a professional practice component, where this is required, and the writing and defence of a dissertation which shall provide an original contribution to both theory and practice in the area of study with the aim of developing critical thinking skills and reflecting on professional practice.

(2) Students shall comply with the provisions of these regulations and of the Faculty Professional Doctorate Degree Bye-Laws and shall also satisfy any other requirements prescribed in any other relevant statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University, including applicable ethical, and health and safety procedures or guidelines.

(3) In accordance with the provisions of Statute 3, where the University, with the approval of Senate, enters into an agreement with other universities for the granting of a joint or double degree, then the Professional Doctorate Degree may be awarded:

(a) in the case of a joint degree, jointly on one certificate by all the partner universities and shall be conferred at one of the partner universities as agreed among them; or

(b) in the case of a double degree, separately by each partner university.

## **Requirements for Admission to the Degree**

5. (1) The Sub-Committee shall consider applications for the Degree from applicants who shall possess a Master's degree of this or another university, in an area of study relevant to the Programme. For the purpose of this regulation, a Master's degree shall have been obtained following the award of a first cycle qualification. In

certain cases, the Sub-Committee may also consider other qualifications if deemed to be appropriate.

(2) Applicants are required to be in possession of appropriate qualifications to demonstrate that their standard of English is satisfactory. The offer of a place to read for the Degree may be made subject to the applicants obtaining such proficiency qualifications prior to the commencement of their studies.

(3) In addition to the qualifications specified in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this regulation, applicants shall also possess such qualifications and satisfy such other conditions as the Board may from time to time establish for the purpose and which shall be approved by Senate in the form of bye-laws.

### **Applications for the Degree**

6. Applications may be submitted on the prescribed form at any time of the year but students shall be registered with effect from October.

7. The Faculty Doctoral Committee shall consider applications for the Degree and shall make its recommendations to Senate, through the Board and the Sub-Committee.

### **Ethical Approval of Research Programmes**

8. Any research undertaken by students which involves direct contact with patients or healthy participants, whether clinical, biomedical or social research, or the secondary use of existing human materials or specimens, or involving animals must be subject to ethical review. Such review must be undertaken by the Research Ethics Committee appointed by Senate for the purpose. These research proposals shall first be considered by the Board who shall submit the proposal to the Research Ethics Committee for approval.

### **Place of Study**

9. Where applicable, applicants shall be required to be resident in Malta for specified parts of the taught component of the Programme as indicated by the Board of Studies. The Board of Studies may approve that studies be carried out away from the University, provided that:

(a) the facilities at the place in which applicants will be carrying out their studies shall be equivalent to, or better than, those of the department or complementary to those of the department and are essentially required for the work, and the department concerned shall provide written evidence of this to the Board;

(b) during the research component applicants shall normally spend a reasonable period on the Malta campus during which period they shall hold meetings with the Dissertation Supervisor; and

(c) an on-site adviser is appointed to follow the student regularly at the off-campus place of study.

### **Duration of Studies**

10. (1) Studies for the Degree shall extend over a period of not less than three years of full-time study or the equivalent in part-time study. If the research component so demands, the Sub-Committee may recommend to Senate a longer period to complete this component.

(2) On the recommendation of the Board and the Sub-Committee, Senate may grant students an extension of studies of up to two years in order to enable them to complete their studies, irrespective of whether they are registered on a full-time or a part-time basis.

11. Full-time students may not engage in employment which is likely to interfere with the progress of their studies and must inform the University about the extent of any employment commitments.

### **Attendance**

12. Students are expected to attend for all lectures, seminars, practical and other teaching sessions. Lecturers may bar students whose attendance in a study-unit is not satisfactory from being assessed in that study-unit.

### **Suspension of Studies**

13. On the recommendation of the Board and of the Sub-Committee, the Senate may allow students, for a good and sufficient reason, to suspend their studies for a maximum period of 12 months, irrespective of whether they are registered on a full-time or a part-time basis, provided that the continuation of their studies shall depend on the availability of the Programme in the following years. In such cases, the period of suspension of studies shall not be taken into consideration for calculating the period of registration for the Degree in terms of the duration requirement.

### **Change of Mode of Study**

14. Senate may allow students to change their mode of study from full-time to part-time or from part-time to full-time, as feasible. The period of registration shall be recalculated on the basis of the proportion of time during which the students were studying in each mode.

## **Annual Enrolment**

15. (1) Students are required to enrol at the beginning of each academic year throughout their period of study.

(2) Such enrolment shall be allowed only if the students are making satisfactory progress in their studies.

## **Programme of Study**

16. (1) The Programme for the Degree shall comprise (a) a taught component, comprising study-units to which between 60 and 120 ECTS credits are assigned; and (b) a research component, comprising a dissertation study-unit.

(2) A supervised professional practice component, which shall span over a significant period of the Programme, may also be included as specified in the bye-laws for the Course.

### **Applicable as from 1 October 2018 onwards:**

16. (1) The Programme for the Degree shall comprise (a) a taught component, comprising study-units to which between 60 and 120 ECTS credits are assigned; and (b) a research component, comprising a dissertation study-unit to which 60 ECTS credits are assigned.

(2) A supervised professional practice component, to which 60 ECTS credits are assigned, and which shall span over a significant period of the Programme, may also be included as specified in the bye-laws for the Course.

(3) Senate, on the recommendation of the Board, shall approve the programme of study which shall include the taught, research and professional practice components, as applicable.

## **Board of Studies**

17. The Board of Studies shall: (a) implement the Professional Doctorate Degree Course Regulations; (b) monitor and evaluate the programme of study; (c) propose to the Board the programme of study, the bye-laws and any revisions as necessary and (d) monitor the procedures used in the assessment of the students' performance.

18. The Board of Studies shall consider annual reports from students regarding the progress of their studies, which shall include any problems that they may be encountering.

## **Faculty Doctoral Committee**

19. (1) The Faculty Doctoral Committee shall follow, as it deems fit, the progress of students during the entire duration of the Programme, provided that it shall meet at least once a year to review the progress of each student. The Faculty Doctoral Committee shall consult with the Board of Studies when conducting such a review.

(2) Dissertation Supervisors and Professional Practice Supervisors shall be required to submit regular written progress reports on their students, with regard to the progress of the dissertation and the professional practice component respectively. These reports are to be submitted to the Faculty Doctoral Committee, in consultation with the Board of Studies. Students shall have a right to view the reports and to make their own comments.

(3) The Faculty Doctoral Committee, through the Board of Studies, shall periodically inform the Board, in writing, on the general performance of students.

(4) The Faculty Doctoral Committee, in consultation with the Board of Studies, may either:

(a) recommend to Senate, through the Sub-Committee, that a student be granted an extension of the study period in order to enable the student to complete the dissertation, provided that the period of extension of studies shall be according to regulation 10; or

(b) recommend that studies be terminated prematurely if this is deemed to be proper in the circumstances, provided that the student can appeal his/her case before Senate within 15 days from the notice of termination of studies.

## **Supervision of Dissertations**

20. (1) Senate, on the recommendation of the Board and the Sub-Committee, shall appoint a Dissertation Supervisor from among the members of the academic staff of the University in accordance with the provisions of regulation 3. Such a member of staff shall have appropriate qualifications, including extensive knowledge and research experience in the broad subject area of the student and current involvement in research groups.

(2) Senate may also appoint a co-supervisor or adviser to provide the link if the research is of an interdisciplinary nature or if the research is being undertaken in collaboration with another organisation or in the student's place of work or if the research will benefit from the input of a particular expertise.

## **Supervision of Professional Practice**

21. Senate, on the recommendation of the Board and the Sub-Committee, shall appoint a Professional Practice Supervisor in accordance with the provisions of regulation 3. Bye-laws for the Course shall define who shall act as a Professional Practice Supervisor for the professional practice component.

### **Change of Dissertation Supervisor or Professional Practice Supervisor**

22. If a Dissertation Supervisor or a Professional Practice Supervisor leaves the University or is otherwise unable to supervise, the Faculty Doctoral Committee, in consultation with the Board of Studies, shall arrange for appropriate alternative advice and take steps to ensure that the student's research or professional practice component is not hindered or impeded. If the absence is of a permanent nature, the Faculty Doctoral Committee shall propose a new Supervisor to the Sub-Committee and Senate, through the Board.

23. Students who wish to change their Dissertation Supervisor or their Professional Practice Supervisor should discuss this matter with the Chairperson of the Board of Studies who shall recommend to the Faculty Doctoral Committee that adequate provisions are made to rectify the situation if reasonable grounds are shown to exist and, where applicable, funding arrangements permit.

### **Roles of Professional Practice Supervisors, Dissertation Supervisors, Co-Supervisors, Advisers**

24. (1) Professional Practice Supervisors shall provide guidance to students during their professional practice in order to enable students to integrate theory with practice, demonstrate professional and interpersonal skills and build confidence in their practice skills.

(2) Dissertation Supervisors shall be responsible for providing guidance to students under their care by offering ideas and providing help and encouragement on the planning and progress of research, submission of the dissertation and publication of the research results.

(3) Dissertation Supervisors shall also ensure that the students are aware of the manner in which research results are to be reported and that they understand the implications of plagiarism and other unbecoming academic practices.

(4) Dissertation Supervisors and Professional Practice Supervisors shall meet students regularly to review their progress. These meetings shall occur at least six times a year for full-time students. Meetings may be substituted by other means of communication.

(5) The supervisory role of Dissertation Supervisors, co-supervisors and advisers in the research component shall cease when the dissertation is submitted for examination. The role may be re-assumed, on the advice of the Board of Examiners, in order to provide guidance to students whose dissertation is referred back for significant correction pending final acceptance.

(6) Dissertation Supervisors, co-supervisors and advisers are not responsible for proof-reading dissertations. Neither is it their responsibility to ensure that dissertations do not contain plagiarised parts.

(7) A Dissertation Supervisor, Co-supervisor, Adviser or Professional Practice Supervisor shall not be related to a student by consanguinity or by affinity to the third degree inclusive or have a dual relationship with the student.

(8) If plagiarism is detected by a supervisor in drafts or in the final version of a dissertation prior to formal submission for examination, the Dissertation Supervisor shall use discretion as to whether to reprimand the student and demand corrective action or report the matter to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board, depending on the gravity of the offence.

(9) The total number of doctoral and professional doctorate students accepted for supervision at any time by any single full-time academic shall be limited to five, provided that if the academic can demonstrate to the Sub-Committee that:

(a) he/she disposes of a research management structure which facilitates communication and interaction between supervisor and individual researchers; or

(b) he/she has less teaching commitments than normal,

then the Sub-Committee may authorise the supervision of a larger number of students.

25. A Co-supervisor may be appointed in order to provide guidance and supervision when the nature of the research work makes it necessary or expedient to do so; the Co-supervisor is to act on a regular basis as consultant to the research project.

26. One or more advisers may be appointed when it is anticipated that particular aspects of the research work will necessitate occasional significant consultation with one or more experts. An adviser is an expert who is appointed to provide advice on a particular aspect of the research work.

27. When Co-supervisors and/or Advisers are appointed, the Dissertation Supervisor shall retain the ultimate responsibility of leadership in supervision.

### **Assessment of Taught Study-Units - Marking and Grading**

28. Taught study-units shall be assessed at the end of the semester in which they are taught.

29. Examiners shall express the students' performance in the assessment of all taught study-units as a percentage mark and grade as indicated in the table below. Both the percentage mark and the letter grade shall be recorded in the students' academic record. The percentage mark only is used for the purpose of calculating the students' progress.

<b>Descriptor</b>	<b>Mark Range</b>	<b>Grade</b>
Work of excellent quality Superior performance showing a comprehensive understanding and application of the subject matter. Evidence of considerable additional reading/research/work.	80% - 100%	A
Work of very good quality Performance is typified by a very good working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of a considerable amount of reading/research/work.	70% - 79%	B
Work of good quality Average performance, with a sound working knowledge of the subject matter. Evidence of sufficient reading/research/work.	60% - 69%	C
Work of fair but below average quality Considerable but incomplete understanding of the subject matter. Evidence of a fair amount of reading/research/work.	55%-59%	D
Pass – when assessment is based on a pass/fail basis, as may be applicable to placement, practical work or similar work.	Not applicable	P
Unsatisfactory, failing work in any study-unit.	0% - 54%	F
Unjustified absence for an assessment, or failure to hand in assigned work in time, or ineligibility to take assessment due to unapproved absence from lectures. Shall be considered as F with 0 marks in the calculation of the average mark.	0%	F
Temporary grade for Incomplete work due to justifiable reasons (illness, approved absence, etc.) for which the assessment date has been postponed or the deadline for submission of work has been extended.		I

### **Assessment of Dissertation and Professional Practice**

30. The dissertation and the professional practice study-units shall be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis.

### **Re-assessment of Study-Units**

31. (1) A failed taught study-unit may be re-assessed once only, under those conditions as provided for in the bye-laws for the Degree. If successful, the maximum mark/grade that can be awarded shall be 55% / Grade D.

(2) Students shall not be allowed to be re-assessed for a study-unit if they have already been awarded credit for it.

(3) Students who, after reassessment, fail to obtain credit for any study-unit shall be required to withdraw from the Programme.

### **Progression**

32. In order to remain registered on the Programme, students must:

(a) maintain an average mark of 60% in the taught study-units, which average mark shall be computed at the end of the academic year; and

(b) where applicable, obtain a pass in the professional practice component in a yearly assessment, irrespective of whether their studies are being carried out on a full-time or part-time basis.

33. In order to progress to the dissertation study-unit, students are required to obtain an overall average mark in the taught study-units as specified in the bye-laws for the Course.

34. Bye-laws may specify that progression to the dissertation study-unit is conditional to an average mark that is higher than the one specified in regulation 32.

35. Students who obtain at least 60 ECTS credits for taught study-units and either opt not to proceed with the Course, or having proceeded, do not complete the full programme of study, shall be eligible for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma.

36. Students shall not be allowed to submit their dissertation for examination before all the assessments of the taught study-units and, where applicable, of the professional practice study-unit/s are successfully completed, as specified in regulation 32.

37. Bye-laws may provide that students who wish to discontinue the Course may be eligible for the award of a Master's degree provided that certain conditions, as specified in the Faculty's bye-laws, are met.

38. Bye-laws may also provide for the award of a Master's degree to students who having successfully completed all the requirements of the professional doctorate fail to

produce a dissertation of a doctoral quality, under those conditions as may be stipulated by the Board of Examiners and the Board.

39. In the event that the dissertation also does not reach the standard required in a Master's degree, students shall be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

### **Submission of Dissertation Proposals and Dissertations**

40. Bye-laws shall specify when students are required to submit their dissertation proposal. Senate, on the recommendation of the Sub-Committee, shall consider dissertation proposals following advice from the Board.

41. Dissertation proposals shall, in the first instance, be considered by the Faculty Doctoral Committee, following advice from the Board of Studies.

42. Not less than three months before the intended date of submission of the dissertation, students shall signify their intention to the Faculty Doctoral Committee and the Board of Studies to present their dissertation stating its exact title. The Faculty Doctoral Committee, after ascertaining that the period of study conforms with that stipulated in these regulations, and that the Dissertation Supervisor has given his opinion to the student regarding the submission of his/her dissertation for examination, shall advise the Board to recommend to Senate the appointment of a Board of Examiners.

43. (1) When presenting a dissertation for examination, students shall submit:

(a) a signed declaration that the dissertation is their own personal work, and that the greater portion of the work has been done after their registration for the Degree; and

(b) a form signed by the Dissertation Supervisor signifying that he/she is aware that the student is submitting his/her dissertation for examination by the Board of Examiners.

(2) Students shall not discuss their work with the examiners during the period between their appointment as examiners and the oral examination.

44. The dissertation shall be written in the prescribed format and shall have a word count as specified in the Faculty bye-laws, and shall conform with established scholarly standards of the appropriate discipline.

### **Boards of Examiners for Taught Study-Units and the Dissertation**

45. (1) Boards of Examiners shall be appointed by Senate on the recommendation of the Board composed as follows:

(a) for taught study-units: a chairperson, who shall normally be the Head of the Department academically responsible for the study-unit, and not less than two other examiners, including the lecturer of the study-unit; and

(b) for the dissertation study-unit: not less than three examiners, one of whom shall act as chairperson and including an external examiner. The members of the Board of Examiners shall be academics experienced in research in the general area of the student's dissertation and, where practicable, shall have experience as specialists in the topic to be examined, provided that two of the examiners, including the external examiner, shall be academics who command authority within the area of research concerned.

(2) The oral examination of the dissertation shall be conducted by at least three examiners including the external examiner.

(3) Dissertation supervisors, co-supervisors and advisers shall be precluded from being examiners for the dissertation but the dissertation supervisor shall be invited to attend as an observer during the oral examination. He may contribute if invited to do so by the members of the Board of Examiners but must withdraw prior to the final deliberations of the Board of Examiners.

### **Examination of Dissertations**

46. (1) The examination of dissertations shall take place in two stages:

(a) submission by the student and preliminary assessment by the Board of Examiners; and

(b) oral defence of the dissertation.

(2) In assessing a dissertation, the Board of Examiners shall require:

(a) evidence that it represents a significant contribution to knowledge in a particular field of study or in the relationship between theory and professional practice;

(b) evidence of originality;

(c) evidence of the ability of the student to relate the subject matter of the dissertation to the existing body of knowledge and to current professional practice;

(d) evidence of the ability of the student to apply research methods appropriate to the subject; and

(e) a satisfactory level of literary presentation.

(3) Each examiner shall submit an independent preliminary report to the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners. In the report, each examiner shall consider whether the dissertation provisionally satisfies the requirements for the award of the Degree and, where possible, make an appropriate provisional recommendation subject to the outcome of the oral examination.

(4) The Board of Examiners shall admit the student to an oral examination after either approving the dissertation unconditionally or subject to the correction of minor errors to the satisfaction of the Dissertation Supervisor.

(5) If the Board of Examiners is not satisfied with the quality of the dissertation, it shall not admit the student to the oral examination and shall either:

(a) refer the dissertation back to the student for major revision and resubmission within six months in revised form to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners; or

(b) not permit the student to resubmit in a revised form but award the student a Master's degree instead; or

(c) not grant permission to resubmit and state that the student has failed the dissertation study-unit.

47. (1) Students shall be required to defend their dissertation orally before the Board of Examiners, including the external examiner. The oral examination shall cover the subject of the dissertation and matters relevant thereto.

(2) The oral examination shall take place at the University of Malta for all students.

48. Students shall be informed of the date of the oral examination at least three weeks before the scheduled date.

49. (1) Following the oral examination, the Board of Examiners shall either:

(a) submit to the Faculty Doctoral Committee and Senate a joint final report regarding the dissertation study-unit; or

(b) refer the dissertation back to the student for major revision and re-submission within six months in revised form to the satisfaction of the Board of Examiners, and to admit the student to a second oral examination, if the Board of Examiners so decides.

(2) The joint final report shall provide sufficiently detailed comments on the scope and quality of the work as apparent from the written dissertation and the oral defence. In addition to general remarks about the strengths and any weaknesses of the dissertation, the report should include, as an annex, an itemised list of remarks about any specific improvements or minor mistakes requiring correction. This list shall be relayed to the student for guidance in improving the document. It shall be the responsibility of the Chairperson to ensure that any required corrections and amendments to the dissertation have been properly executed.

(3) The Board of Examiners shall advise the Board of Studies about the outcome of the examination of the dissertation as follows:

(a) the student has completed the work successfully; or

(b) the student is required to amend the dissertation to the satisfaction of the Chairperson of the Board of Examiners, which work has to be completed within three months of the official notification to the student by the Board of Examiners; or

(c) the student has failed to satisfy the examiners on the dissertation study-unit.

(4) Where examiners are not in agreement, they shall follow the relevant procedures as described in the University Assessment Regulations. In any event, the separate reports of each examiner shall be submitted to the Sub-Committee and Senate.

(5) When the disagreement cannot be resolved, and the decision is taken by a majority vote, the Chairperson shall so record it in the joint final report, provided that any disagreeing member may submit a minority report giving reasons for the disagreement. In such circumstances, Senate shall either agree to accept the majority report or take any other measures it seems appropriate.

### **Examination of Professional Practice Component**

50. Bye-laws for the Course shall specify the process, procedures, conditions and the method of examination of the Professional Practice Component.

51. The Board of Examiners shall be composed of not less than three members including the Professional Practice Supervisor.

### **Award of Degree**

52. The Board, on the recommendation of the Board of Studies and the Faculty Doctoral Committee, and after taking into consideration the student's performance in

the taught component, the professional practice, if applicable, and the dissertation, shall recommend to Senate the award of the Degree.

### **Classification of Postgraduate Awards**

53. (1) There shall be an Award Classification Board for the classification of Postgraduate Diplomas and Master's degrees awarded in terms of regulations 35, 37 and 39.

(2) The Board of Examiners appointed as in regulation 45 shall act as the Award Classification Board.

(3) The classification of Postgraduate Diplomas and Master's degrees shall be determined by the Award Classification Board on the basis of a Final Weighted Average Mark obtained by taking into account the individual marks obtained in each study-unit as well as the credit value of the study-units.

(4) The Award Classification Board shall consult the following guidelines when deciding upon the final classification of Postgraduate Diplomas and Masters' degrees:

<b>Final Weighted Average Mark</b>	<b>Classification</b>
80 - 100%	Pass with Distinction
70 - 79%	Pass with Merit
55 - 69%	Pass.

### **Copyright and Intellectual Property**

54. Students must abide by the University of Malta Intellectual Property Policy.

### **Open Access**

55. In line with the University of Malta's Institutional Repository Policy, the University Library shall provide in open access the electronic copies of the dissertations and shall make them publicly available on the University of Malta's Institutional Repository.

### **Confidentiality Agreements**

56. (1) Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, training know-how, information, methodologies and manuals; workbooks; statements of operating practice; specifications; drawings; designs; formulae; discoveries; inventions; technical information; know-how generally; lab notebooks; manuscript papers; software; information about the methods, concepts and techniques on which software is based;

samples; finances; financial models; pricing and other commercial information; business plans; marketing plans; and any information considered to be sensitive by the University Research Ethics Committee.

(2) Students are bound not to disclose any confidential information which may come into their possession and/or which they are exposed to and/or which they have access to. Furthermore, students may be asked by the University to sign specific confidentiality agreements should it be deemed necessary.

(3) Subject to the provisions of sub-paragraph (1) of this regulation, information shall not be considered as confidential information if:

(a) it was already known to the student and it was not subject to any obligation of confidentiality by the student to the University;

(b) it is or becomes publicly known without an act or omission of the student;

(c) it is obtained by the student from a third party with a valid right to disclose such confidential information, provided that said third party is not under a confidentiality obligation to the University;

(d) it is approved for release in writing by an authorised representative of the University; or

(e) the student is specifically required to disclose pursuant to a law or order of any Court of competent jurisdiction.

### **Confidentiality of Assessable Student Work**

57. (1) Where the student considers that assessable student work should remain confidential during or after completion of the programme of study or research, a request for it to be embargoed must be made to the Library Committee. The period of confidentiality approved shall not normally exceed two years from final submission of such work to the University. However, in cases where publication of the Assessable student work would prove detrimental to the student or the University or the sponsor or the funding body or the persons referred to in such work, a further period may be approved.

(2) In any case and without prejudice to paragraph (1) of this regulation, the University retains the right to request the embargo of assessable Student Work. In the event that Assessable student work is embargoed, the student shall be bound to treat the contents of such work as confidential. Prior to any publication, the provisions about publication and exploitation, in the Intellectual Property Policy shall apply in every case.

### **Final Version of Dissertation**

58. (1) Following successful defence of the dissertation and prior to the conferment of the Degree, students are required to present two hard bound copies of the dissertation to the Faculty, and one electronic version for the University Library, which shall include a signed declaration of authenticity. The electronic version must conform to the standards set up by the University of Malta Library.

(2) Dissertations shall each be assigned a dissertation identifier by the Registrar, consisting of a set of digits and letters, in order to act as unique identifiers for the works.

### **Bye-Laws**

59. The Senate may, on the recommendation of each Board, approve bye-laws governing the Degree to regulate matters not covered by these regulations.

### **General Provision**

60. In matters not provided for by these regulations, the Board and Senate shall be guided by the provisions of the Doctor of Philosophy - Ph.D. - Degree Regulations, 2008, published as Legal Notice 293 of 2008, as applicable.

**These regulations were published as:**

Legal Notice 242 of 2014 - Malta Government Gazette No. 19,277 – 9 July 2014

**and amended by:**

Legal Notice 165 of 2015 - Malta Government Gazette No. 19,427 – 19 May 2015

Legal Notice 14 of 2017 - Malta Government Gazette No. 19,711 – 11 January 2017

Legal Notice 379 of 2018 - Malta Government Gazette No. 20,086 – 13 November 2018