

Legal Notice 291 of 2012 – Malta Government Gazette No. 18,963 – 7 September 2012  
Amended by:  
Legal Notice 121 of 2014 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,235 – 11 April 2014  
Legal Notice 42 of 2022 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,778 – 2 February 2022

**EDUCATION ACT  
(CAP. 327)**

**Bye-Laws of 2012 in terms of the  
General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2021  
for the Degree of Master of Science - M.Sc. -  
under the auspices of the Institute of Earth Systems**

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 Institute of Earth Systems in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by article 8 (b) (v) of the Statute for the Institute, which bye-laws have been approved by the Senate of the University of Malta:

**Citation and Interpretation**

1. (1) These bye-laws may be cited as the Bye-Laws of 2012 in terms of the General Regulations for University Postgraduate Awards, 2021 for the degree of Master of Science - M.Sc. - under the auspices of the Institute of Earth Systems.

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

"the Board" means the Board of the Institute of Earth Systems;

"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 Director" means the Director of the Institute of Earth Systems;

"the Institute" means the Institute of Earth Systems; 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 2011 or later.

## **Areas of Study**

3. The Course shall be offered in any area of study related to Earth Systems in which the Institute can offer expert guidance and supervision, and subject to the availability of resources. The areas of study shall be approved by the Board before the commencement of the Course.

## **Requirements for Admission**

4. (1) The Course shall be open to applicants in possession of a first cycle degree obtained with Second Class (Honours) or better, in a discipline related to Earth Systems, or in any other area of study which the Board considers as relevant, and obtained within the ten years previous to registration for the Course.

(2) The Board may, at its discretion, recommend the admission of applicants in possession of a first cycle degree obtained with Third Class (Honours), in an area of study which the Board considers as relevant, and obtained within the ten years previous to registration for the Course, provided that the applicants have obtained other qualifications, including relevant experience, following their first cycle degree. The Board may, at its discretion, require such applicants to follow a supplementary or preparatory programme as specified in bye-law 5.

### **For courses commencing in October 2022 or later:**

(2) The Board may, at its discretion, recommend the admission of applicants in possession of a first cycle degree obtained with Third Class (Honours), in an area of study which the Board considers as relevant, and obtained within the ten years previous to registration for the Course. Such applicants shall become eligible to join the Master's course on successful completion of the Preparatory Programme with an average mark of at least 55%.

(3) Applicants whose first degree was obtained more than ten years previous to registration for the Course may also be admitted, provided that they produce sufficient proof of their competence to follow the Course. The Board may, at its discretion, require such applicants to follow a supplementary or preparatory programme as specified in bye-law 5.

(4) All applicants may be asked to demonstrate competence in those skills required by the nature of the proposed research via an extended interview and/or the submission of appropriate documentation. In cases where significant deficiencies are identified, the Board may, at its discretion, require applicants to follow a supplementary and/or preparatory programme as specified in bye-law 5.

### **Supplementary and Preparatory Programmes**

5. (1) The supplementary programme shall comprise study-units at level 4 or lower, to which not more than 10 ECTS credits shall be assigned.

(2) The preparatory programme shall comprise study-units at level 4 or lower, to which not less than 30 ECTS credits and not more than 60 ECTS credits shall be assigned.

(3) Students required by the Board to follow and complete a supplementary and/or preparatory programme shall be required to pass with an average mark of 55% or better, prior to their registration for the Course.

### **Course Duration**

6. The Course shall extend over a period of three semesters of full-time study, or their equivalent in part-time study.

### **Programme of Study**

7. The programme of study shall comprise study-units to which a total of 90 ECTS credits shall be assigned, and shall be mainly by research. The programme shall comprise taught study-units to which 20 ECTS credits are assigned, and a dissertation study-unit to which 70 ECTS credits are assigned.

### **Assessment and Progress**

8. The assessment of each taught study-unit shall be completed by the end of the semester in which the teaching of the study-unit is held.

9. (1) Students who, in any academic year, fail in the assessment of not more than two study-units (if following the Course on a full-time basis) or one study-unit (if following the Course on a part-time basis) shall be given the opportunity to re-sit the failed study-units.

(2) Students who fail more than the number of study-units permitted under paragraph (1) 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.

## **Dissertation**

10. Students shall be required to submit an individual dissertation of approximately 50,000 words, in accordance with the guidelines issued by the Board.

11. A provisional title for the dissertation and a detailed research proposal shall be submitted to the Board for approval at the time of application.

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

13. (1) Each student shall be assigned a principal supervisor, and where appropriate, a co-supervisor, who shall provide guidance and advice on a regular basis during the period of study.

(2) Students shall be required to have regular contact with their supervisor, and are required to report to their supervisors at least once every two months, and in addition, as often as the principal supervisor and/or co-supervisor deems necessary.

(3) If students have serious and valid reasons to request a change in their supervisory team (principal and/or co-supervisor), such requests shall be addressed to, and considered by, the Board.

14. (1) The Board shall appoint a Panel of Supervision for each student, normally composed of three members as follows: the Director, as Chairman, or his or her delegate, and two other members, one of whom shall be the research supervisor, provided that when the Director is the supervisor, he/she shall not be appointed Chairman.

(2) The Panel of Supervision shall follow, as it deems fit, the progress of students throughout the Course, and shall meet at least three times a year to review such progress.

(3) Students shall seek approval from the Panel of Supervision for any substantial modification in the title or content of the dissertation; the Panel of Supervision shall also be responsible for reviewing requests for extensions of studies and/or suspension of studies.

(4) Supervisors shall submit to the Panel of Supervision progress reports for the students under their supervision at the end of each semester of study, whether the student is following the Course on a full-time or a part-time basis. Such reports 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:

(i) the extension of the study period referred to in (a) shall be in accordance with 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 appeal.

(5) Should the principal supervisor become unable to provide the student with the necessary time and guidance for an extended period of time for any reason, the Panel of Supervision shall be responsible for identifying an alternate supervisor.

15. Students shall be required to present the work performed during the course of their research, at internal seminars organised by the Institute.

16. Following approval of the dissertation by the Board of Examiners, students shall be required to present three hard bound copies of the dissertation to the Institute, one of which shall be retained in the University Library, and another one at the Library of the Institute, as well as one copy in digital format as an electronic file.

### **Classification of the Degree**

17. The Final Weighted Average Mark for the classification of the Degree shall be based on the results obtained in all components of the programme of study, all components 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.