MQF Level 7

RI7-02-21

Master by Research

Course Specification

Course Description

The Master by Research (MRes) programme provides the student with sound practical knowledge and experience in preparation for a research career, as well as with preparation and training for doctoral research. Students will have demonstrated originality in the application of knowledge, and they will understand how the boundaries of knowledge are advanced through research. They will be able to deal with complex issues both systematically and creatively, and they will show originality in tackling and solving applied research related challenges.

Programme Learning Outcomes

At the end of the programme the learner will be able to:

1. *Identify the main concepts, issues and concerns relating to an identified research theme through secondary data;*
2. *Demonstrate an in-depth understanding of chosen research methodology and its techniques and appropriate application;*
3. *Develop and apply advanced research skills using specific tools and a select methodological approach;*
4. *Apply and synthesis a comprehensive research endeavour according to an identified research objective;*
5. *Constructively present and defend research outcomes towards an appropriate audience justifying unique contributions of research.*

Entry Requirements

A relevant MQF/EQF Level 6 degree at second class or higher.

Other Entry Requirements

An MQF/EQF Level 6 degree, which is regarded by MDC as equivalent to an Honours degree such as professional qualifications subjects, plus a portfolio evidencing relevant work experience for at least 3 years.

Key Information

Awarding Body – MCAST

Accreditation Status – Accredited via MCAST's Self Accreditation Process (MCAST holds Self-Accrediting Status as per 1st schedule of Legal Notice 296/2012)

Type of Programme: Qualification

MQF Level	Examples of Qualifications	'Qualification' Minimum Credits Required	'Award' Credits Required
Level 8	Doctoral Degree Third Cycle Bologna Process	NA	NA
Level 7	Masters Second Cycle Bologna Process	90-120	Less than 30
	Post-Graduate Diploma	60	
	Post-Graduate Certificate	30	
Level 6	Bachelor[23]/Bachelor (Hons.)[24] First Cycle Bologna Process	180-240	Less than 180
Level 5	Short Cycle Qualification	120	Less than 60
	Undergraduate Higher Diploma	90	
	Undergraduate Diploma	60	
	Undergraduate Certificate	30	
	VET Level 5 Programme[25]	60-120	
Level 4	Pre-Tertiary Certificate	30	Less than 120
	VET Level 4 Programme[26]	120	
	MATSEC Certificate	NA	
Level 3	VET Level 3 Programme[27]	60	Less than 60
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Level 2	VET Level 2 Programme[28]	60	Less than 60
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Level 1	VET Level 1 Programme[29]	40	Less than 40
	General and Subject Certificate	NA	
Introductory Level A	Preparatory Programme	30	Less than 30
Introductory Level B	Pre-entry Basic Skills Course	30	Less than 30

Table 1: Minimum number of credits for 'Qualifications' and parameters for 'Awards'

Fig.1: p56, Ministry for Education and Employment & National Commission for Further and Higher Education Malta (2016). *Referencing Report, 4th Edition*. NCFHE.

Total number of Hours: 2250

Mode of attendance: Full Time / Part Time

Duration: 18 months in the case of full-time studies; 36 months in the case of part-time studies.

The official language of instruction at MCAST is English. All notes and textbooks are in English (except for language courses which will be in the respective language being instructed). International candidates will be requested to meet English language certification requirements for access to the course.

This course will be offered at

MCAST has four campuses as follows:

MCAST Main Campus
Triq Kordin, Paola, Malta

All courses except for the Institute for the Creative Arts, Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences are offered here.

Institute for the Creative Arts
Mosta Campus
Misraħ Għonoq Tarġa Gap,
Mosta

Institute of Applied Sciences,
Centre of Agriculture, Aquatics and Animal Sciences,
Luqa Road, Qormi

Gozo Campus
J.F. De Chambray Street
MCAST, Għajnsielem
Gozo

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

The programmes offered are vocational in nature and entail both theoretical lectures delivered in classes as well as practical elements that are delivered in laboratories, workshops, salons, simulators as the module requirements dictate.

Each module or unit entails a number of in person and/or online contact learning hours that are delivered by the lecturer or tutor directly (See also section 'Total Learning Hours).

Access to all resources is provided to all registered students. These include study resources in paper or electronic format through the Library and Resource Centre as well as tools, software, equipment and machinery that are provided by the respective institutes depending on the requirements of the course or module.

Students may however be required to provide consumable material for use during practical sessions and projects unless these are explicitly provided by the College.

All Units of study are assessed throughout the academic year through continuous assessment using a variety of assessment tools. Coursework tasks are exclusively based on the Learning Outcomes and Grading Criteria as prescribed in the course specification. The Learning Outcomes and Grading Criteria are communicated to the Student via the coursework documentation.

The method of assessment shall reflect the Level, credit points (ECTS) and the schedule of time-tabled/non-timetabled hours of learning of each study unit. A variety of assessment instruments, not solely Time Constrained Assignments/Exams, 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.

Grading criteria are assessed through a number of tasks, each task being assigned a number of marks. The number of grading criteria is included in the respective Programme Specification.

The distribution of marks and assessment mode depends on the nature and objectives of the unit in question.

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

Time-constrained assignments may be held between 8 am and 8 pm during the delivery period of a Unit, or at the end of the semester in which the Unit is completed. The dates are notified and published on the Institute notice boards or through other means of communication.

Certain circumstances (such as but not limited to the Covid 19 pandemic) may lead Institutes and Centres to hold teaching and assessment remotely (online) as per MCAST QA Policy and Standard for Online Teaching, Learning and Assessment (Doc 020) available via link https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/

The Programme Regulations referenced below apply. (DOC016 available at: link
https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/

Total Learning Hours

The total learning hours required for each unit or module are determined as follows:

Credits (ECTS)	Indicative contact hours	Total Student workload (hrs)	Self-Learning and Assessment Hours
1	5 – 10 hrs	25 hrs	20-15 hrs*
2	10 – 20 hrs	50 hrs	40-30 hrs*
3	15 – 30 hrs	75 hrs	60-45 hrs*
4	20 – 40 hrs	100 hrs	80-60 hrs*
6	30 – 60 hrs	150 Hrs	120-90 hrs*
9	45 – 90 hrs	225 hrs	180-135 hrs*
12	60 – 120 hrs	300 hrs	240-180 hrs*

* The 'Self-Learning and Assessment Hours' amount to the difference between the
contact hours and total student workload.

Grading system

All MCAST programmes adopt a learner centred approach through the focus on Learning
Outcomes. The assessment of MCAST programmes is criterion-referenced and thus
assessors are required to assess learners' evidence against a pre-determined set of
Learning Outcomes and assessment criteria.

For a student to be deemed to have successfully passed a unit, a minimum of 50% (grade
D) must be achieved. In case of part time programmes, the student must achieve a
minimum of 45% to successfully pass the unit.

All units are individually graded as follows:
A* (90-100)
A (80-89)
B   (70-79)

C   (60-69)
D   (50-59)
Unsatisfactory work is graded as 'U'.

Work-based learning units are graded on a Pass/Fail basis only.

Detailed information regarding the grading system may be found in the following document: DOC 016 available at: link https://www.mcast.edu.mt/college-documents/

Intake Dates

•MCAST opens calls for application once a year between July and August of each year for prospective applicants residing in MALTA.
•Applications to full-time courses from international students not residing in MALTA are accepted between April and Mid-August.
•For exact dates re calls for applications please follow this link
https://www.mcast.edu.mt/online-applications-2/

Course Fees

MCAST course are free for Maltese and EU candidates. International candidates coming from outside the EU need to pay fees for the respective course. Course fees are set on a per-level and course duration basis. For access to course fee structure and payment methods please visit https://www.mcast.edu.mt/fee-payments-for-non-eu-candidates/.

Method of Application

Applications to full-time courses are received online via the College Management Information System. Candidates can log in using Maltese Electronic ID (eID) or European eIDAS (electronic identification and trust services) to access the system directly and create an account as the identity is verified electronically via these secure services.

Non-EU candidates need to request account creation though an online form by providing proof of identification and basic data. Once the identity is verified and the account is created the candidate may proceed with the online application according to the same instructions applicable to all other candidates.

Non-EU candidates require a study visa in order to travel to Malta and joint the course applied for. For further information re study-visa please access https://www.identitymalta.com/unit/central-visa-unit/.

For access to instructions on how to apply online please visit https://www.mcast.edu.mt/online-applications-2/

Contact details for requesting further information about future learning opportunities:

MCAST Career Guidance
Tel: 2398 7135/6
Email: career.guidance@mcast.edu.mt

Current Approved Programme Structure

Unit Code	Unit Title	ECTS
CDRSH-706-1803	Basics of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods	6
CDRSH-706-1804	Research Methodology related to the Chosen Research Topic	6
Research Project		78
Total ECTS		90

Unit: CDRSH-706-1803- Basics of Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods

Unit Level (MQF/EQF): 7

Credits: 6

Delivery Mode: Fully Face-to-Face Learning

Total Learning Hours: 150

Unit Description

This unit will give the candidate core research skills and insights into correct research practices and methods of data enquiry. It provides the student with the opportunity to understand and master excellently the main basic concepts in applied research and development methods. The processes learned will direct the student to collect and analyse data in quantitative and/or qualitative research. This course is linked to the student's design and piloting of the research project.

Learning Outcomes
On completion of this unit the learner will be able to

1. *Identify a research theme;*
2. *Carry out an early literature review on existing research/knowledge on the theme;*
3. *Suggest research objective/s and possibly a research question;*
4. *Recommend a suitable research methodology and justify own choice.*

Unit: CDRSH-706-1804 - Research Methodology related to the Chosen Research Topic

Unit Level (MQF/EQF): 7

Credits: 6

Delivery Mode: Fully Face-to-Face Learning

Total Learning Hours: 150

Unit Description

This unit will give the candidate core research skills and insights into general research design, correct methods of data enquiry such as survey methodology or in depth-interviews and methods of data analysis such as multivariate analysis or grounded theory method. This unit provides the student with the opportunity to understand and master the main basic concepts in applied research methods. In particular, the student has to demonstrate deep reading into at least two of the three methodology domains: general research methods; method of enquiry; quantitative or qualitative research methodology. For this Module students will also be tasked with undertaking out a critical literature review on their selected research topic by reviewing a reaction of peer academic journals. Students shall be expected to be able to confidently interpret the rationale and applicability of the chosen research methodology in front of an audience.

Learning Outcomes
On completion of this unit the learner will be able to

1. *Identify and define essential issues for general research methods; method of data enquiry; quantitative or qualitative research methodology*
2. *Evaluate methods of data enquiry for the constructivist/qualitative and positivist/quantitative research philosophies.*
3. *Evaluate methods of data analysis for the constructivist/qualitative and positivist/quantitative research philosophies.*
4. *Evaluate the suitability of secondary data for answering research question(s) and meeting objectives in terms of coverage, validity, reliability and measurement bias for the chosen (qualitative or quantitative) research methodology.*