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General Programme Regulations





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Instructions for Document Users

All IDEA Academy employees can access current, controlled and approved documents related to the Quality Management System via the IDEA Academy website link: <u>https://ideaeducation.com.mt/</u>

Continuous Improvement

Procedures are meant to be 'living' documents that need to be applied, executed, and maintained. If the procedure does not reflect the current, correct work practice, it needs to be updated. Please contact us on: +356 2145 6310



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1. Aim

The purpose of this document is to describe the IDEA Academy programme regulations pertaining to the teaching, learning, assessment, and support processes.

It is in the Student's interest to ensure that s/he has access to, and is familiar with, the content of this Regulations including its supporting documentation mentioned in this document.

2. Scope

These programme regulations cover all accredited study programmes offered by IDEA Academy, from MQF / EQF Level 4 to MQF / EQF Level 7.

These regulations are equally applicable to IDEA Academy students, faculty members and administrative staff.

These regulations apply to the programmes commenced from October 2019.



3. The Learning Framework and Study Programmes Structure

IDEA Academy offers study programmes structured as indicated below:

3.1 MQF / EQF Level 4

- Level 4 Award (4 to 15 ECTS)
- Level 4 Certificate (30 to 60 Credits)

3.2 MQF / EQF Level 5

- Level 5 Award (6 ECTS)
- Level 5 Certificate (30 ECTS)
- Level 5 Diploma (60 ECTS: 30 + 30)
- Higher Diploma (120 ECTS: 30 + 60 + 30)

3.3 MQF / EQF Level 6

- Level 6 Award (6 ECTS)
- Bachelor's Degree (180 ECTS: 120 at Level 5 + 60 at Level 6)

3.4 MQF / EQF Level 7

- Award (6 ECTS)
- Post-Graduate Certificate (30 ECTS)
- Post-Graduate Diploma (60 ECTS: 30 +30)
- Master's Degree (90 ECTS: 30 + 30 + 30)



4. Acronyms

ECTS	European Credit Transfer System
MQF	Malta Qualifications Framework
EQF	European Qualifications Framework
BoS	Board of Studies
	l

5. Definitions

Administrators	IDEA Academy Administrators include IDEA Academy staff who are involved in the running and implementation of a study programme.
Assessment Criteria	Assessment criteria are statements describing what the student is expected to know and be able to do in order to demonstrate that a learning outcome has been achieved.
Assessment Feedback	Assessment feedback is formally provided by lecturers in a written format through the online learning platform. Assessment feedback informs students about their current level of achievement and aims to support future learning.
Assessment Rubrics / Marking Scheme	These refer to the assessment tool designed to help both the student and the assessor, indicating achievement criteria across the components of the student coursework. The assessment tool: *helps the assessor to mark consistently and effectively, identifying strengths and weaknesses and makes providing feedback easier. *helps the student to understand the required expectations and standards, maximising learning and results.
Assignment Brief	Assignment Brief refers to the assignment task sheet assigned by the faculty member, together with the corresponding rubric/marking scheme and any other relevant and essential material pertaining to the evidence required from the students for their assessment.
Board of Studies (BoS)	The Board of Studies is primarily responsible for the management of the running study programmes, including the management of the quality and standards of these programmes.
Dissertation/thesis	IDEA Academy defines 'thesis' and 'dissertation' as interchangeable terms. A dissertation is a research study that is carried out under supervision

	completed as part of an undergraduate (MQF/EQF 6) or postgraduate degree (MQF 7/EQF 7).
ECTS	European Credit Transfer System - it is a method of measuring study programme as academic currency.
EQF	European Qualifications Framework, a common European reference framework whose purpose is to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems.
Exclusion from studies	This is when the Academy deems fit that the student is requested to leave IDEA Academy.
Exit Award/Qualification	In cases where the student does not complete his/her studies, where the study programme specifications allow for an exit award/qualification, as per MFHEA accreditation, the student will be eligible to receive the award / qualification once the established criteria are met.
Extenuating Circumstances	Extenuating circumstances are defined as significant factors which are beyond the student's control, which could not have reasonably foreseen or prevented, and which would substantially impact on the ability to attend lectures, contribute to the online discussions and/or complete or submit an assessment on time.
Faculty Members	Faculty Members refer to all the educators involved in the teaching and learning of the IDEA Academy students which includes teaching and learning face-to-face and online. Thus, these may also be referred to as Teaching Staff / Lecturers / Supervisors / Mentors / Tutors and other terms as applicable to the study programme.
Formative Assessment	 Students are given the opportunity, through graded tasks: To critically engage with literature/material identified by the lecturer, peers or through self-study; To build and share their views with peers contributing towards building a community of practice; To develop, and enhance their knowledge, skills and competences in the area of study, with the help of constructive feedback from the lecturer in preparation for the final assignment.
Interruption of studies	This is a temporary suspension of studies.
Learning Outcomes	Learning outcomes are the specific objectives of a programme or study unit / module. They describe what a student should know, understand, or be able to do and develop at the end of the programme or study unit.
MQF	Malta Qualification Framework The MQF assists in making the Maltese qualifications system easier to understand and review, and more transparent at a national and international level. The MQF is also a referencing tool that helps to describe and compare both national and foreign qualifications to promote quality, transparency and mobility of qualifications in all types of education.

MQF/EQF	The MQF is referenced to the EQF in a process that can be used to reference national qualifications to the National Qualifications
Pre-Requisites	Frameworks in Europe and beyond. IDEA Academy sets requirements for entry to a course to ensure the student has the right skills and knowledge to successfully complete the course.
Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive	Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive is primarily responsible for student affairs and smooth running of the programmes.
Programme/Course	The academic education provided by IDEA Academy in preparing its students to achieve the established and required objectives and learning outcomes.
Student	An applicant who has gone through the enrolment process, has been registered in a chosen programme of study and is active on the Learning Management System.
Student Coursework	Student Coursework refers to work performed and required of a student. Coursework may encompass a wide range of activities which may include but not limited to e.g., writing (e.g., assignments, reports, dissertation), research, practices, discussions, presentations etc Student Coursework: *shall be expected to fulfil the learning outcomes of a study module/programme; *where applicable, shall be submitted by a pre-established deadline; and * is often graded.
Student Progression	The advancement in studies of a student through his/her study journey.
Study Unit / Module	It is a self-contained study component. IDEA Academy study programmes are usually made up of a number of study units / modules, some of which are compulsory while others might be electives.
Summative Assessment	Summative assessment is an evaluation of the student's achievement and performance taking place at the end of a unit/module.
Teaching/Lecture Session	Teaching-learning activities led by a faculty member of IDEA Academy. These include face-to-face and online learning activities.
Withdrawal from studies	This is a voluntary decision by the student to terminate their studies at IDEA Academy.



6. Student Support

It is acknowledged that students may, at various instances throughout the academic programmes, require guidance or support. IDEA Academy shall maintain an open-door policy for learners and assist them in their enquiries.

6.1 Principles of Student Support

IDEA Academy seeks to:

- 6.1.1 Provide a quality student learning experience, appropriate to the age, profession, and abilities of a diverse student population regardless location.
- 6.1.2 Promote the development of interactive communities in each course, online or in-class, by using web and video conferencing and the learning management system (LMS).
- 6.1.3 Ensure that IDEA Academy is free from discrimination of all kinds, and that it is a place of diversity acceptance and understanding.
- 6.1.4 Support all students to settle into the IDEA Academy community, assist their successful transition into a course of study, or between units, and encourage integration into IDEA Academy activities.
- 6.1.5 Ensure that all courses promote the recognition, understanding and development of ethical, moral, collaborative, and professional behaviour.
- **6.1.6** Promote to develop a strong, enduring and beneficial relationships with the alumni of IDEA Academy.

Refer to Doc_018_22: Student Support Policy Statement

6.2 Student Learning Resources

6.2.1 Student Learning Management System

IDEA Academy uses LMS e.g., CANVAS to plan, implement and assess the students' learning process.

The LMS serves as the main interface between Faculty Members, Students and Administrators:

- It provides students with the ability to use interactive features such as discussion forum promoting the development of peer learning communities.
- It provides the faculty members space for supporting the students with the learning resources, feedback and assessment.
- It provides administrators to support both the students and the faculty members.

6.2.2 Libraries: physical and online

A physical library is hosted at IDEA Academy campus and an online library is hosted on LMS Canvas platform.

6.2.3 Teaching Material

The Lecturer forwards material e.g., teaching material and reading list to IDEA Academy Administrator who uploads on the LMS e.g., CANVAS.



6.3 Student Rights and Responsibilities

The student, as a member of the community of learning, has both rights and responsibilities. Within IDEA Academy community, the student's most fundamental right is the right to learn.

IDEA Academy seeks to:

- 6.3.1 Provide for the student the best opportunities promoting learning. The student in turn is responsible for learning and demonstrating mastery of content and skills of a study programme while participating actively and respectfully as a member of the community of learning.
- 6.3.2 Respect the principles of diversity, inclusion and respect for all the members of its learning community.
- 6.3.3 Provide a safe environment for all students with zero-tolerance for acts of bullying, harassment, victimization, discrimination and aggression (physical, emotional and psychological).

The student is responsible to:

- 6.3.4 Show accountability in own learning and demonstrates mastery of content and skills of a study programme.
- 6.3.5 Participate actively and respectfully as a member of the IDEA Academy community of learning.
- 6.3.6 Comply with IDEA Academy regulations, behave respectfully towards all staff and the community of learning.
- 6.3.7 Act with academic integrity and honesty in all areas of learning and assessment.

Refer to Doc_031_22: Student Rights and Responsibilities

6.4 Equal Opportunities

IDEA Academy upholds the principle of inclusivity and fairness.

IDEA Academy endeavours to:

- 6.4.1 Provide equal opportunities irrespective of gender, marital status, family responsibilities, physical abilities, sexual orientation, political or religious beliefs.
- 6.4.2 Adopt a zero-tolerance approach to any discriminatory or intimidating behaviour and strives to provide the right environment conducive to learning and working in the most ethical manner.



6.5 Equality and Inclusivity

IDEA ACADEMY values and celebrates diversity and works to recruit and develop employees and students from a wide range of backgrounds and promote an inclusive culture.

IDEA Academy is committed to:

- 6.5.1 Provide a supportive and inclusive learning, working and social environment where everyone feels that they are valued and can work to achieve their potential.
- 6.5.2 Offer opportunities that are open to everyone, and decisions are based on merit and are free from bias.
- 6.5.3 Ensure that all students, employees and visitors, as well as prospective applicants and personnel, are treated fairly and with dignity and respect, and do not face discrimination.
- 6.5.4 Provide equality for everyone, regardless of:
 - Age;
 - Physical ability;
 - Ethnicity (including race, colour and nationality);
 - Sex;
 - Gender reassignment;
 - Religion or belief;
 - Sexual orientation;
 - Marriage and civil partnership; and
 - Pregnancy and maternity

Refer to Doc_010_22: Equality and Inclusivity Policy

6.6 Complaints

IDEA Academy is committed to providing a high-quality educational experience, fully supported by a range of academic and administrative processes.

IDEA Academy:

- 6.6.1 Recognises that while some grievances may result from misunderstandings, others are genuine cases of unfair treatment or misconduct.
- 6.6.2 Encourages students to come forward with their complaints and communicate with Lecturers, other Faculty Members, Administrators, or to the Director of Studies for Support.
- 6.6.3 Provides a clear procedure where students are able to voice and register their dissatisfaction and to know how complaints are addressed.
- 6.6.4 Provides students a fair grievance procedure where their complaints are heard and treated as valuable student feedback.

Refer to: Document 008_22: Grievance Policy and Procedure.



7. General Features of a Study Programme

7.1 IDEA Academy Website

A full list of MQF accredited study programmes offered at IDEA Academy is shown at: https://ideaeducation.com/

7.2 Main Features of a Study Programme / Course

The link provides the following details of a study programme:

- Course Qualification Title;
- Course MQF / EQF Level;
- Name of Awarding Body;
- ECTSs: Programme study workload in terms of credits;
- Course Description
- Fees;
- Entry Requirements/Prerequisites (academic, others);
- Career Paths;
- Target Audience;
- Mode of Delivery and Assessment;
- Titles of Study Modules; and
- Module description, level, and credits.
- Additional information as applicable.

7.3 Other Information

All of the programmes are delivered in English as an instruction language.

IDEA Academy adopts a student-centred learning outcome approach in all its study programmes.

IDEA Academy is responsible for the provision of appropriate and ragogical approach facilitating the teaching, learning and assessment processes, reflecting the curriculum specifications, the level of study and the audience.

Programmes are reviewed regularly to ensure that the objectives and learning outcomes of the programmes are relevant and responsive to the needs of the diverse stakeholders.



8. Attendance

- 1. Attendance is obligatory to achieve the required award/qualification but is not normally a direct component of any method of assessment.
- 2. In specific study programmes attendance maybe a mandatory component for assessment e.g. assessment for work placements or for other pre-determined programme activity.
- 3. While students are expected to attend all teaching sessions, all students of IDEA Academy need to ensure a minimum of 80% participation in their lectures.
- 4. Students must undertake all assessments as per programme specifications to be eligible for formal assessment and/or continuation / progression of their studies.
- 5. It is the responsibility of each Lecturer/Faculty Member to complete the Attendance Record Sheet and forward it to the Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive at the end of each teaching session.
- 6. It is the sole responsibility of the student to monitor his/her attendance on the Learning Management System (e.g., Canvas).
- 7. The Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive takes the necessary action in case of any irregular absenteeism.
- 8. Irregular absenteeism is one that does not fit into the criteria outlined in the document for Extenuating Circumstances Regulation.
- 9. If a student decides to withdraw from a study programme and continue at a later stage, there is no guarantee that the study programme will be available.

Refer to

Document 082_22: Interruption, Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies

Document 096_22: Request for Concessions and Extension Regulation



9. Extenuating Circumstances

1. The students have as an individual responsibility to manage their learning by attending lectures and meeting submission deadlines for their assignments.

2. If students are unable to complete assessments to the best of their ability, unable to attend lectures or unable to meet a submission deadline due to serious circumstances beyond their control, it is possible to make a request to the Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive for consideration of an extension of assessment deadlines under the extenuating circumstance clause.

3. All extenuating circumstances requests will be considered by the Programme Coordinator/Programme Operations Executive who forwards requests to the Director of Studies for Support for final approval of decisions.

4. Students who due to extenuating circumstances (including illness) absent themselves from teaching sessions and/or class assignments are required to fill-in the Request for Consideration - Extenuating Form.

5. The information that students provide under this process will be treated confidentially.

Refer to

Document 096_22: Request for Concessions and Extension Regulation

FRM 097_22: Concession-Extension Request Form



10. Teaching and Assessment Strategy

IDEA Academy Teaching and Assessment strategies are built on an adult learning model as promoted by Malcolm Shepherd Knowles in his Andragogical model. The two main drivers of this model are:

- The adult learner is self-directed; and
- The adult learner is expected to take responsibility for decisions.

IDEA Academy study programmes adopt these two fundamental principles in adult learning by providing an appropriate and ragogical approach facilitating the teaching, learning and assessment processes, reflecting the curriculum specifications, the level of study and the audience. They aim to empower and inspire adults to pursue and achieve their goals, enhance graduate attributes and employment opportunities, and allow progression for further study.

10.1 Teaching Strategy

- 10.1.1 IDEA Academy is responsible for the provision of appropriate and ragogical delivery approaches towards promoting and developing communities of inquiry and learning.
- 10.1.2 IDEA Academy promotes a blended learning approach focusing on an interactive strategy which combines lectures face-to-face sessions, online learning activities and independent study. While ensuring that the classroom experience remains a significant point of contact, the online learning spaces support and consolidate the classroom activity.
- 10.1.3 Application of knowledge contextualised to the work sector is driven by a problem-solving approach rather than content oriented. Strengthening and enhancing this approach is the involvement of the adult learner with his/her experience that becomes an increasing resource not only for own learning but also as a contributor to the peer-to-peer learning community.
- 10.1.4 Thus, to name a few, IDEA Academy promotes an engaging teaching approach using diverse techniques of active and participatory teaching strategies for example: interactive lectures, discussion generation, simulations, case studies and workshops, synthesis and reflection, online discussions and contributions, and peer-to-peer learning and feedback as applicable to the programme specifications.



10.2 Assessment Strategy

- 10.2.1 IDEA Academy uses assessment as a process of gathering and analysing student's evidence to make judgments about the student's performance and achievement in relationship to the course objectives and the learning outcomes of the curriculum.
- 10.2.2 IDEA Academy employs both formative and summative modes of assessment according to the nature and needs of the study programme.
- 10.2.3 The method of assessment reflects the level and the ECTSs points of each of the study modules.
- 10.2.4 The assignment tasks assigned are aligned to the learning outcomes and the assessment criteria which are communicated to the student accordingly. The assessment tasks are feasible allowing every student to produce evidence of performance which meets the targeted learning outcomes.
- 10.2.5 The assessment mode and the distribution of marks depends on the nature, objectives and level of the study module. The method of grading and confirmation of the standard of the student performance and achievement is aligned to the established learning outcomes and determines the student's progression route.
- 10.2.6 Assignment Brief refers to the assignment task sheet assigned by the faculty member, together with the corresponding rubric/marking scheme and any other relevant and essential material pertaining to the evidence required from the students for their assessment.
- 10.2.7 The Assessment Cover Sheet shall typically include the following information:
 - The task/s;
 - Rubric / Grading Marking Scheme;
 - Date of issue of the Assignment Brief;
 - Deadline for submission of student coursework;
 - Student's signature of authenticity; and
- 10.2.8 The assessor uses IDEA Academy's Assessment Rubrics to assess the student's work, grade and provide feedback for improvement.



10.3 The Authenticity of Work

- 10.3.1 The work submitted by the student shall be authentic, genuine, not false or copied. An authenticity declaration is signed by the student on the Assessment Cover Sheet.
- 10.3.2 IDEA Academy defines plagiarism as: The act of using/borrowing someone else's intellectual work as one's own. Plagiarism is further defined as committing literary theft, that is to present ideas as one's own original piece of work without crediting the original source.
- 10.3.3 Plagiarism may preclude students from assessment, and lead to further sanctions and/or penalties as established by the IDEA Academy policy.
- 10.3.4 Students are advised to be familiar with the relevant plagiarism document referred to below.
- 10.3.5 All assignments are to be submitted online via the Learning Management System Canvas. IDEA Academy uses software to generate a similarity report describing the extent of plagiarism e.g., Turnitin.

10.4 Successful Completion of Work

- 10.4.1 For each assignment, the assessor shall provide feedback on the student's performance as well as the total marks achieved in the assignment.
- 10.4.2 For successful completion of a study module the student is required to achieve a minimum of the established percentage pass mark in every assignment(s), as applicable to the specific study programme.
- 10.4.3 The overall mark achieved in the 'taught' component is worked out by calculating the average mark obtained in the 'taught' modules.
 In calculating the average mark obtained in the taught component of a study programme, the individual mark obtained for each Module is weighted according to its credit value. The total resultant marks are added and divided by the total number of credits to give the average mark. The average shall be recorded correct to the nearest whole number.
- 10.4.4 The final overall total mark achieved in a Study Programme is worked out by summing a stipulated percentage of all the weighted marks obtained for the taught component and a stipulated percentage of the weighted dissertation mark as per Programme Specification. Both percentage marks are added to make the final mark which determines the classification of the qualification. Classification of Qualification may be: Pass with Distinction, Pass with Credit, Pass with Merit, Pass and Fail.



10.4.5 For successful completion of a programme of study, the student is required to achieve a minimum of the established percentage pass mark as applicable to the specific study programme.

10.5 Unsuccessful Completion of Work

- 10.5.1 In cases when a student fails to achieve a minimum of the established percentage pass mark in a study module, as applicable to the specific study programme, the student is considered to have failed the Module, but shall however, be eligible to resubmit the assignment for that Module on one occasion only.
- 10.5.2 Students are offered support and guidance in preparation for the resubmission.
- 10.5.3 If a student does not achieve a minimum of the established percentage pass mark in the resubmission of the assignment of the failed module(s) the student is considered to have failed the study programme.
- 10.5.4 Students who fail a module or a number of modules after resubmission may be considered by the Board of Studies to repeat the outstanding modules, with attendance, with the following cohort, assuming space on the course permitting and subject to the same module is delivered in the following cohort.
- 10.5.5 The Board of Studies cannot guarantee that any of the modules delivered during one cohort period will feature again in any subsequent programmes.

Refer to

Document 017_22: Recognising and Avoiding Plagiarism Policy and Procedure



11. Continuation of Studies, Progression, Certification

11.1 Continuation of Study

- 11.1.1 Continuation within the study programme from one stage to another shall be automatic for students who:
 - a. Have passed all modules at one stage as required by the programme specification; and b. Have attended a minimum of 80% of the course lecture hours.

11.2 Progression to a Higher Level of Study

- 11.2.1 Upon successful completion of a course of study, if the student, wishes to progress to the next level they must apply and follow the admissions procedure.
- 11.2.2 As per Admission Policy:

a. To ensure that a suitable foundation has been achieved, all students wishing to progress to the next level are required to meet IDEA Academy's published entry requirements for the course of study they are applying for.

b. In cases when students do not meet the general entry requirements of the study programme other criteria may be considered as per:

- Recognition of Prior Learning
- Maturity Clause

11.3 Certification

- 11.3.1 Students who have met the academic requirements for course completion of the defined course of study in which they are admitted, are confirmed as graduands.
- 11.3.2 Once confirmed, graduands will have their Certificate conferred by IDEA Academy and are referred to as graduates of IDEA Academy.

Refer to

- Document 075_22: Admission Policy and Procedure
- Document 076_22: Certification & Graduation Policy
- Document 077_22: Progression Policy and Procedure
- Document 007_22: Recognising Prior Learning Policy and Process



12. Interruption, Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies

- 1. 'Interruption of Study' refers to those cases when the student is given an authorised temporary suspension of studies.
- 2. 'Withdrawal from Studies' refer to those cases when the student voluntarily decides to terminate his studies at IDEA Academy.
- 3. A student may withdraw from his/her studies at IDEA Academy at any point in the course. However, a student may not voluntarily withdraw after IDEA Academy has decided to exclude the student.
- 4. 'Exclusion from Studies' refers to those cases when the student is required to leave IDEA Academy for academic, professional, clinical practices or other reasons because s/he has failed to satisfy the criteria for continuing his/her studies.

Refer to

Document 082_22: Interruption, Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies Procedure

13. Dissertation

1. A dissertation is a research study that is carried out under supervision completed as part of an undergraduate (MQF/EQF 6) or postgraduate degree (MQF 7/EQF 7).

2. A dissertation provides a learning opportunity for the student to identify and propose a question or a proposition in the context of the study programme, to carry out research and present own findings in response to the proposal.

3. Dissertation Guidelines and Grading Rubrics are available to students as referenced below.

Refer to:

Document 061_22 Research Code of Practice

Document 062_22 Research Ethics Policy and Procedure

Document 063_22 Research Proposal and Ethical Considerations

Document 064_22 Assessment of Dissertation

Document 059_22 Student Dissertation Manual

Document 074_22 Viva Voce Guidelines

Level 6 Dissertation Rubric

Level 7 Dissertation Rubric

Level 7 Viva Voce Assessment Rubric



14. Supporting Documents

- Doc_008_22 Grievance Policy and Procedure
- Doc_010_22 Equality and Inclusivity Policy
- Doc_017_22 Recognising and Avoiding Plagiarism Policy and Procedure
- Doc_018_22 Student Support Policy Statement
- Document 096_22: Request for Concessions and Extension Regulation
- Doc_031_22 Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Doc_059_22 Student Dissertation Manual
- Doc_061_22 Research Code of Practice
- Doc_062_22 Research Ethics Policy and Procedure
- Doc_063_22 Research Proposal and Ethical Considerations
- Doc_064_22 Assessment of Dissertation
- Doc_074_22 Viva Voce Guidelines
- Doc_075_22 Admission Policy and Procedure
- Doc_076_22 Certification and Graduation Policy
- Doc_077_22 Progression Policy and Procedure
- Doc_082_22 Interruption, Withdrawal and Exclusion from Studies
- Doc_100_22 Assessment Policy and Procedure
- Level 6 Dissertation Rubric
- Level 7 dissertation Rubric
- Level 7 Viva Voce Assessment Rubric

Forms

- FRM 097_22: Concession-Extension Request Form
- The Assessment/Examination Appeal Form
- Interruption of Study Request Form
- Withdrawal Form





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