The following Regulations are issued by MCAST in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by sections 89 and 90 of the Education Act (Cap. 327) for the purpose of regulating the MCAST Foundation Certificate Courses. These regulations have been approved by the Council of Institutes.

1. Citation and interpretation

1. These by-laws may be cited as the by-laws of 2008 for the **MCAST Foundation Certificate Level 2 Course** offered in the following study areas:

> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Agribusiness
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Art & Design
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Business
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Care
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Computing
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Construction in Stone
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Electrical/Electronic Engineering
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Hairdressing
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Mechanical/Construction and Engineering Skills
> MCAST Foundation Certificate in Trowel Trades

These regulations also cover the Foundation Certificate Courses offered at the MCAST Gozo Centre.

2. Terms

2.1 Council of Institutes means the Council as established by *Section 91 (1b)* of the said Education Act.

2.2 The "course/s" means the course programme/s leading to the MCAST Foundation Certificate at Level 2.

2.3 ECVET stands for European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training.

3. Applicability

3.1 These regulations are applicable for all MCAST Foundation Certificate Level 2 courses.

4. Course Requirements for Admissions

4.1 Apart from satisfying the general course requirements for admission as specified in the Admissions Regulations, an applicant must satisfy all special course requirements including those listed below:

> – Finished compulsory education
> – Be in possession of the School Leaving Certificate
> – Attend for an assessment / interview if required and obtain a PASS mark

5. Special needs

5.1 Students with different learning requirements and/or known medical or psychological conditions are expected to seek guidance from the MCAST Inclusive Education Unit (IEU), (Director, Information and Support Services: tel. 23987128 or the Counsellors: tel:23987133/4**), prior to submitting their application.

5.2 Together with their application form these students must produce recent professional evidence of their specific needs in order to enable MCAST to carry out a fair assessment and offer professionalguidance.

5.3 Medical reports of students are confidential documents and shall only be held at the Registrar's office.

5.4 Failure to inform the MCAST Inclusive Education Unit (IEU) of a student's known medical or psychological condition prior to submitting an application, may, sooner or later, lead to problems which may be beyond MCAST's control and/or responsibility.

5.5 Failure to report known medical conditions or medical changes to MCAST (att: Inclusive Education Unit) is an act of negligence which may work against the student himself/herself.

5.6 The student, parent/s or guardian (if the student is under 18 years of age) are additionally responsible for keeping the College informed of all medical conditions or medical changes and for providing the proper medical documentation updates, specifically stating the ability and/or inability of the student to continue with his/her vocational training.

6. Course Duration

6.1 The Level 2 Foundation Certificate Course lasts 1 year.

6.2 Following an initial assessment test, applicants may be placed on a Level 1 course, if it is found that the latter course is better suited to their needs and from which they would mostly stand to benefit.

7. Course Coordination

7.1 Each institute shall assign a Deputy Director to coordinate the Foundation Programme within the institute.

8. Foundation Certificate Level 2 course content

8.1 The Foundation Certificate course at Level 2 shall consist of two components, viz., the Key Skills Component and the Vocational Component. In terms of application, the Malta Qualifications Council's weighting for these two components has been established in the proportion of 60:40 respectively.

8.2 The MQC further states that, between them, the 2 components shall carry 60 credits x 25 hours each to a total workload of 1500 hours. This works out at approximately 35 credits for the Key Skills and 25 credits for the Vocational component.

9. Key Skills

9.1 Component One is made up of the Key Skills and is common to students in all institutes. There are five Key Skills and each subject carries the following ECVET credits:

Subject	Level 2 Foundation Certificate
English (3 assignments)	9 credits
Maltese (3 assignments)	9 credits
Mathematics (3 assignments)	9 credits
IT (4 assignments)	6 credits
PSD	2 credits
	Total = 35 ECVET credits

9.2   Assignments for the Key Skills are prepared centrally by a group of lecturers teaching the subject. These are then contextualized by the lecturers attached to the various institutes to reflect the vocational calling of the respective institute.

9.3 Teaching material, such as schemes of work, lesson plans, and assignments shall be monitored by the Quality Assurance team.

9.4 The Key Skills assessment shall consist of three assignments for each of the following subjects: English, Maltese, Maths.

9.5 The ICT study unit shall be comparable to modules 2, 3, 4 and 7 of the ECDL.

9.6 Internal Verification of contextualised assignments shall be carried out by suitable lecturers within the same institute whenever possible. Where this is not possible the subject coordinator shall also act as internal verifier.

9.7 The Coordinators shall ensure harmonization of key skills, by reviewing samples of assignments across all institutes.

9.8 An External Verifier shall be appointed by the Deputy Principal (QA) to ensure overall quality is maintained in all institutes.

10. Vocational Skills

10.1 Component Two is the vocational element of the Foundation Certificate Course and is relevant to the students' chosen area. The Vocational Skills component consists of FIVE units of equal value and carries a total of 25 ECVET credits.

10.2 Each of the Vocational study units shall consist of **70 guided learning hours** and shall be assessed by three assignments.

10.3 Students who join the Foundation Certificate course with less than four passes in as many ECDL modules, shall be required to achieve the number of modules necessary to make a total of four passes by the end of the Foundation Course. Such study modules shall be delivered by MCAST and shall be comparable to ECDL modules numbers 2, 3, 4, 7.

10.4 Students who are in possession of an ECDL module or modules may be eligible for exemption.

11. Certification

11.1 Candidates who successfully complete both Component One (Key Skills) and Component Two (Vocational Skills) of the programme will be awarded the full MCAST Foundation Certificate at Level 2.

11.2 Candidates who succeed in passing the Vocational component only shall be awarded the MCAST Foundation Certificate at Level 2 in the vocational area studied. Similarly, candidates who pass the Key Skills component but not the Vocational Practice component shall be awarded the MCAST Foundation Certificate at Level 2 in the Key Skills.

12. Submission of assignments and re-sits

12.1 Students may only attempt an assignment or an assigned task **two times** during the course of his/her studies. After the first attempt the candidate may achieve either a **PASS** or a **REFERRAL**. If the candidate fails the second attempt the study unit shall be marked **FAIL**.

12.2 Assigned tasks which have not been responsibly attempted or work which has been left to accumulate for days cannot possibly be covered during the relatively short period of time prior to the student taking the re-sit.   Students who fail to hand in a substantial amount of the work expected when first due shall not be allowed an extension.

12.3 Students shall only be allowed to progress to a higher level course if they achieve a Pass in a minimum of 85% of assigned course tasks and provided that a Pass is obtained in a minimum of 70% of the tasks assigned for each individual study unit.

12.4 Students who are unsuccessful may re-apply to repeat the whole programme the following year without any exemption. This means that, if their application is successful, students shall be expected to satisfy all programme study units in both Keyskills and Vocational Practice.

12.5 Unsuccessful students will be allowed one further opportunity to apply for a Foundation course in any institute. However, no preference will be given to such applications and applicants will need to satisfy all conditions of entry including any *initial assessment test* and/or *interview* where applicable .

13. Progression

13.1 Students who are in possession of the FULL certificate may apply to continue with their studies and to progress to any other course of their choice where the entry requirement for the new programme is the MCAST Foundation Certificate at Level 2. The candidate may need to satisfy any further course requirements as indicated for the new programme. This can include an interview/portfolio of evidence and a selection test.

13.2 For the purpose of progression, candidates must obtain a Pass grade in the Key Skills component and a Pass grade in the Vocational practice component. Furthermore, they must have attended 80% of the lectures in Personal & Social Development.

14. LSU support

14.1 Students on Foundation Level 2 courses in all institutes who require support in key skills may benefit from additional LSU support.

15. Monitoring

15.1 The Learning Support Unit shall monitor the Foundation Course in Key Skills.

APPENDIX 1

Additional information

1. SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS

1. If students happen to be absent during the week an assignment is issued, it is their responsibility and in their interest to collect the assignment from the lecturer concerned as early as possible on their return to the Institute.

2. Assignments shall only be presented on the submission date. If students know they are unable to be present on the submission date, they are expected to make all necessary arrangements for somebody else to present the work on their behalf.

3. All assignments should be handed in on the due date and at the time prescribed by the lecturer.

4. The director of Institute shall ensure that an appropriate record is kept of all assignments received.

5. For all written assignments, students shall make and retain a photocopy before parting with their work.

6. For courses where 3D experimental work, 3D outcomes or practical work are expected, students should keep an appropriate photographic record of the work they present for assessment.

7. Assignments shall be marked by the lecturer within three working weeks of the published submission date.

8. Individual feedback will be given to students on the Assignment Feedback Form.

9. Lecturer's feedback will state what has been achieved and possible areas for development.

10. Assignment work will then be returned to students, usually during the next individual or group tutorial, when a personal or general verbal feedback will be given.

11. Grades are always subject to Internal Verification.

12. If students receive a REFERRAL grade they will be entitled to arrange a referral tutorial in order to clearly establish what work still has to be completed.

14. Another submission date for the additional work to be completed and handed in will be agreed in writing. Students must note that there will be only ONE referral opportunity per assignment.

15. If students are absent when assignments are returned, it is their responsibility and in their interest to collect their assignment from the lecturer next time they are at the Institute.

2. ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION EXTENSIONS

1. Students who cannot hand in an assignment for any unit by the deadline set, owing to extenuating circumstances**,** must seek approval from the director for an extension.

2. The official Assignment Extension Application Form (Appendix A, available from the Institute Secretary's Office) must be completed explaining the reasons why the student wishes to submit work after the submission date.

3. An extension will only be granted if the student can provide evidence of an extenuating circumstance which is considered valid by the Institute Director or his representative. An extenuating circumstance shall consist of the recording of one or more personal difficulties over which the student had no control.

4. It is the responsibility of the student to provide the necessary evidence to support such claims.

5. Extenuating circumstances shall not include:
(a) proximity or number of examinations or assessments;
(b) pressure of work;
(c) misreading of examination or assessments timetables;
(d) poor time management;
(e) scheduling of holidays or time abroad;
(f) time restrictions due to the student undertaking (part-time) employment.

6. Assignment extensions shall not be given on the day the assignment is due to be submitted. One must apply for an extension a minimum of three working days before the submission date. Extensions shall only be considered if reasons are considered valid by the Director of Institute.

7. If students are ill within three working days of the submission date, they can telephone or e-mail the Director of Institute, requesting an extension. In the case of illness, a doctor's medical certificate shall be required. This is to be presented to the Institute's administration upon return to the institute.

8. A copy of the Assignment Extension Application Form will be kept in the students' personal file held by the tutor. The original should be attached to the assignment when it is submitted. If an extension is agreed, the assignment will then be marked in the normal way.

3. LATE SUBMISSION

1. Assignments which are handed in after the submission date without this form shall not normally be assessed. In all cases, it will be deemed to be, and recorded as, a late submission.

2. Late work shall not be marked. Provided it is the first time that a student is presenting work after the deadline, the work will be held by the tutor. It will only be marked when the student has demonstrated an ability to meet a deadline by submitting the next piece of work on time. This is a one-time concession and cannot be granted a second time.

3. If, during the course of their studies, students again fail to submit another assignment by the agreed date, there shall be no further extensions and the students' work shall not be assessed.

4. In the case of para. 3 above, students shall be asked to attend a meeting where the available options will be explained to them.

4. REFERRALS

1. If a student's assignment fails to achieve a pass at the first attempt, it will be marked "REFERRED".

2. Students are expected to make arrangements with their tutor to attend a Referral Tutorial to define what still needs to be achieved to gain a Pass.

3. Details of the Referral Tutorial will be kept in the student's personal file. The student will be allowed one opportunity per assignment to re-submit work within the negotiated time.

4. If the work submitted following the tutorial is still not of a Pass standard, the student will have failed that assignment.

Appendix A

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION EXTENSION FORM

COURSE TITLE:	

STUDENT'S NAME:		**SUBJECT:**	
UNIT NUMBER:		**ASSIGNMENT TITLE:**	

LECTURER'S NAME:
ORIGINAL SUBMISSION DATE:

HAS AN EXTENSION BEEN AGREED? Write YES or NO in the space alongside			
Length in days (maximum TEN) if an extension has been agreed:		**If agreed, indicate DATE when work must be presented:**	
		TIME:	

Reasons for late submission [to be completed by the student]

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Comments [to be completed by the Tutor]

Medical Certificate: yes/no

Other evidence [give details]:

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 Student's Signature   **Director's/Deputy's Signature**

 Date: **Date:**