

**ITC REGULATIONS FOR COURSES LEADING TO AN
ITC MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.Sc.) DEGREE
OR
ITC POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA**

– September 2008 –

1. **Range of application**
2. **Management, structure and organization of the M.Sc. and Postgraduate Diploma courses**
3. **Admission to the course and exemptions**
4. **Assessment of modules (excluding research period and final assignment)**
 - 4.1 **Organization of module assessment**
 - 4.2 **Feedback to participants and re-sits**
5. **Research orientation and research period (M.Sc. course)**
 - 5.1 **Research work and thesis**
 - 5.2 **Admission to the research period**
 - 5.3 **Supervision of the research work**
 - 5.4 **Submission of the thesis**
 - 5.5 **Thesis examination**
 - 5.6 **Access to the thesis**
6. **Final Assignment (Postgraduate Diploma course)**
 - 6.1 **Final Assignment and result**
 - 6.2 **Admission to the Final Assignment period**
 - 6.3 **Supervision of the Final Assignment**
 - 6.4 **Submission of the Final Assignment result**
 - 6.5 **Assessment of the Final Assignment**
7. **M.Sc. degree and Postgraduate Diploma assessment**
8. **Awards and certification**
9. **Early termination of the course**
10. **Student appeal procedures**

Appendix:

Bodies and persons involved in management and quality of the course

These ITC Regulations for the Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree and Postgraduate Diploma courses were approved by the Rector and the Academic Board on 17 September 2008. These regulations apply to all courses commencing September 2008 onwards and replace all former ITC Regulations for Master of Science Degree Courses and Regulations for Postgraduate Diploma courses.

1. Range of application

- 1.1 These assessment regulations apply to all courses leading to an ITC Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree or a Postgraduate Diploma (PGD) starting from September 2008 onwards and replace all previous ITC Regulations for Master of Science Degree Courses and ITC Regulations for Postgraduate Diploma courses.
- 1.2 The M.Sc. and Postgraduate Diploma course can be an ITC course only (fully taught at ITC) or a joint course (partly taught by one or more of ITC's partners and partly by ITC). The course can be taught fully face-to-face or be a combination of face-to-face and distance components. In all cases, ITC monitors and assures the quality of the whole course.
- 1.3 In most cases where the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course is taught in conjunction with a partner, the two institutes will agree upon new procedures which may take precedence over these 'ITC regulations for courses leading to an ITC Master of Science degree or ITC Postgraduate Diploma'. The Course Director of the course concerned will inform the participants which assessment regulations and procedures apply.
- 1.4 In all cases that are not dealt with in these rules, the Course Director of the course concerned will decide upon an appropriate course of action.
Disputes about the interpretation of these regulations shall be referred to the Rector of ITC, who will determine the interpretation and action that should be taken.
- 1.5 In exceptional circumstances, the Academic Board, Degree Assessment Board, Head Education, and/or Course Director may deviate from these regulations, but only with the approval of the Rector.

2. Management, structure and organization of the M.Sc. and Postgraduate Diploma course

- 2.1 The M.Sc. course is organized into four blocks with a total of 23 modules¹ and one or two starting weeks for introductory and remedial activities.

Block 1: modules 1-4
Block 2: modules 5-10
Block 3: modules 11-15
Block 4: modules 16-23

The first year of three blocks and 15 modules consists of coursework. The last 6 months (block 4; 8 modules) focus on individual research.

The Postgraduate Diploma course consists of the first two blocks (10 modules) of the M.Sc. course, one or two starting weeks and a Final Assignment of four weeks duration.

- 2.2 The duration of the M.Sc. course is 18 months fulltime. The duration of the Postgraduate Diploma course is nine months fulltime. Participants in both courses may spread the modules over a maximum of three and a half years.

¹ A module consists of related subjects and has duration of 3 weeks. Courses may contain project-oriented elements of two or more combined modules.

2.3 The formal curriculum of the M.Sc. course and the Postgraduate Diploma course has been approved by the Academic Board. Responsibility for detailed development and implementation of the approved course rests with Head Education, who delegates this responsibility to the Course Director. Responsibility for quality assurance of the course rests with the Academic Board.
The Degree Assessment Board decides on the eligibility of the M.Sc. participant to receive the M.Sc. degree. The Academic Board decides on whether the participant in the Postgraduate Diploma course will receive the Postgraduate Diploma.
(See also the appendix 'Bodies and persons involved in management and quality assurance of the M.Sc. course and the Postgraduate Diploma course').

2.4 During and at the end of the course, a participant's competence in the field of study will be assessed through tests, examinations and/or assignments (in written, oral and/or practical form) and/or based on participation. Assessments will be used to:

- Provide feedback to participants so that they may improve their performance (formative assessment), or,
- Grade participants' work with a mark or quality description on a scale which indicates their competence in the field of study (summative assessment).

Before any assessment, participants shall be told which of the above two functions applies.
These regulations describe the conditions and procedures concerning summative assessments.

2.5 At the beginning of the M.Sc. and Postgraduate Diploma course each participant shall receive a study guide that contains:

- Descriptions of the content of the course and modules
- A copy of these regulations
- The name of the M.Sc. degree / Postgraduate Diploma to be received on successful completion of the course
- The course-specific conditions relating to that M.Sc. degree / Postgraduate Diploma
- Which module assessments will result in a mark and which modules in 'completed/fail'.

2.6 The relationship between mark ranges, 'completed / fail' and grades is as follows:

Mark:	Grade:
90 - 100	Excellent
80 - 89	Very good
70 - 79	Good
60 - 69	Pass
00 - 59	Fail
'completed'	Pass or higher
'fail'	Fail

3. Admission to the course and exemptions

3.1 Applicants who meet the entry requirements for the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course, as stipulated in the current course brochure, may be registered for the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course at the discretion of the Course Director.

3.2 Participants in the Postgraduate Diploma course who wish to take the whole M.Sc. course have to re-apply for the (second part of the) M.Sc. course. In such cases the maximum time between the starting date of the Postgraduate Diploma course and the graduation date of the M.Sc. course is three and a half years (see rule 3.4).

3.3 Participants may be given exemption for a module of the course when they have shown they have already mastered the content of the module. An exemption for a module may lead to direct admission to the next module or to exchange of the module for a module in another course. Exemptions are subject to the approval of the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or the Academic Board (PGD course) and, in case of exchange for a module in another course, approval of the Course Director of that course.

3.4 Exemption for a module will be given when this module was successfully completed by the participant:

- (1) As part of another course in the same ITC domain as the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course and
- (2) No longer ago than three and a half years before the participant is expected to complete the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course.

At least 50% of the M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma course has to be taken to be eligible for the M.Sc. degree / Postgraduate Diploma. Therefore, exemption can be given for a maximum of 11 modules of the M.Sc. course and for a maximum of five modules of the Postgraduate Diploma course.

Requests for exemption that do not meet these conditions will be considered on an individual basis, at the discretion of the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or the Academic Board (PGD course). In such cases, exemption can be given for a maximum of eight modules in the M.Sc. course and four modules in the Postgraduate Diploma course.

Exemption can never be given for (part of) the research work or Final Assignment.

3.5 In exceptional cases, a participant may also exchange a module of which the content has not been mastered for a module given in another course, provided that the Course Director of that course approves. Such an exchange is up to a maximum of two modules and subject to the approval of the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or Academic Board (PGD course).

3.6 Rules 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4 concerning exemptions do not apply to joint courses and other cases where ITC has an agreement with a partner institute that participants who have successfully completed a specific curriculum in the partner institute can be given direct admission to a later part of the M.Sc. or Postgraduate Diploma course.

4. Assessment of modules (excluding research period and final assignment)

4.1 Organization of module assessment

4.1.1 Each module will be assessed by means of a test, examination, assignment and/or based on participation. More than one assessment per module is allowed but must result in a single module mark (0 - 100) or 'completed / fail'. For combined modules (e.g. core modules, thesis), one overall assessment is allowed.

Up to three of the first 11 modules in the M.Sc. course may be assessed by 'completed / fail'. The other module assessments must result in a mark.

The assessment of modules 12 and 13 may not be based on participation only and must result in a mark.

4.1.2 For admission to the research part (see rule 5.3.1) and for the calculation of the average of all modules (see rule 7.2), the result obtained for combined modules will be given to each separate module.

4.1.3 Participants shall be informed of the date, subject, objectives and form of the assessment (practical, written, oral or computer-based, open or closed book), at least one week before an assessment.

4.1.4 The maximum duration of each assessment shall be as follows:

Written theoretical exam	3 hours
Computer-based theoretical exam	2 hours
Practical assignment	determined by the Course Director
Oral theoretical or practical exam	45 minutes

Participants shall be informed at the start of each assessment of:

- the duration of the assessment;
- if there is a choice, the number of questions to be answered;
- the weight of each question;
- whether books and/or notes may be used.

Two staff members must be present at an oral assessment.

4.2 Feedback to participants and re-sits

4.2.1 Participants shall be informed, individually, of the results of an assessment by the staff responsible for the assessment or by the Course Secretary, normally within two weeks of an assessment. The marks awarded for each question or assignment shall be made known to each participant.

4.2.2 Marked scripts shall be shown to participants so that they may know the strengths and weaknesses of their answers. Answers to questions and results of assignments shall be reviewed in a class session, through the distribution of answer sheets or through comments on scripts. Staff responsible for the assessment is required to give an explanation of the marks awarded.

Scripts will be retained for at least one year after the results are officially recorded.

4.2.3 The following rules apply to re-sits:

- (1) Only those participants who fail an assessment at the first attempt (i.e. who achieve a mark less than 60 or 'fail') may re-sit that assessment. Only one re-sit per assessment is allowed.
- (2) Participants who re-sit an assessment may obtain only a maximum mark of 69 (or PASS grade) or 'completed'.
- (3) The previous mark or 'fail' will only be superseded when participants achieve a higher mark or 'completed' in the re-sit.
- (4) Only the final grade will be shown on the Course Record or Certificate, without any indication whether the final grade was obtained through a re-sit or not.
- (5) Participants who have failed due to serious circumstances (at the discretion of the Course Director) can apply for a new assessment, provided they have reported their circumstances in writing to the module coordinator or staff member responsible for the assessment before the scheduled assessment time.

4.2.4 In the case of practical assignments of long duration (practical exercises, a case study with fieldwork) the possibility of repetition can be considered only in exceptional circumstances and subject to approval by the Course Director.

- 4.2.5 A participant not attending a scheduled assessment, not completing an assignment or not presenting the required work within the specified time, will be considered as having failed. The participant will be given a 'fail' or a mark of 40 (or the lowest mark, if lower than 40, scored by the other participants on this assessment). If an acceptable reason (at the discretion of the Course Director) can be offered, the participant can apply in writing for a new assessment or extension of the deadline for submission of the assignment.
- 4.2.6 In case of plagiarism or other types of fraud, the participant(s) concerned will be considered to have failed and a mark 0 (zero) will be given (see also rule 9.5).
- 4.2.7 The grade sheets managed by the Course Secretary are the official record of the results of assessments. In case of discrepancies between this official record and marks and grades presented to participants in other ways, the marks and grades in the official record apply.

5. Research orientation and research period (M.Sc. course)

5.1 Research orientation (block 3)

5.1.1 At a specified date before the start of Module 11 participants must submit:

- (1) A motivated choice of modules 12 and 13,
- (2) The research theme they will join, and
- (3) The preliminary title of the individual M.Sc. research topic and its main thrust.

The choices will be assessed by the Course Director and the research theme leader concerned (or delegate).

Approval of these choices leads to admission to the research theme and two M.Sc. supervisors will be appointed (see rule 5.4.1).

5.1.2 The final M.Sc. research proposal (approximately 8 pages) must be presented in module 15.

5.1.3 Participants have freedom to choose from the advanced subjects on offer in modules 12 and 13, with the limitation that modules will only be given when sufficient participants will participate.

5.2 The individual research period and thesis (block 4)

5.2.1 The M.Sc. research period focuses on individual research. The research requires that the M.Sc. participant carries out the research and reports on progress to the supervisors according to an agreed schedule for the research and preparation of the thesis.

5.2.2 The research work will be assessed on three occasions:

- (1) The detailed research proposal and presentation, leading to admission / no admission to the research period (end of module 15).
- (2) The mid-term presentation. No mark is given. The participant receives feedback from the supervisors. In the case of weak performance, the participant will receive a written warning from the Course Director (see rule 9.1).
- (3) The assessment and oral examination of the thesis.

In addition to these formal assessments, the participant will receive feedback on his/her performance from the supervisors throughout the research period.

- 5.2.3 A participant not presenting the (draft) research proposal, not making the mid-term presentation, not submitting the thesis or not attending the final oral examination within the specified time, will be considered to have failed. Only in exceptional cases, and for reasons beyond the control of the participant (at the discretion of the Course Director), the participant may apply in writing for a new opportunity to meet the above requirements.
- 5.2.4 The thesis, approximately 50 pages of text (approximately 350 words per page and presented in the standard ITC format for theses), excluding appendices, shall constitute an ordered, logical and critical description of the research and should afford evidence of reasoning power, critical attitude, competence in the scientific discipline (application and/or development of knowledge and skills), and knowledge of relevant literature.
- 5.2.5 The thesis may describe work done in conjunction with a supervisor or any other person, but the extent of the participant's personal contribution must be certified by the supervisor concerned.
- 5.2.6 With the explicit approval of the supervisor, a participant may be permitted to incorporate in his/her thesis a limited amount of unpublished work undertaken by the participant prior to the start of the research. A participant may not incorporate in his/her thesis material which has been submitted for achieving the award of a degree from any other educational institution.
- 5.2.7 The source of any photograph, map, or other illustration shall be indicated, as shall the source, published or unpublished, of any material not resulting from the participant's own work.
If material from other work is incorporated verbatim, without proper acknowledgement of the source (plagiarism), the Thesis Assessment Board will decide not to assess the thesis. This means that the M.Sc. degree cannot be awarded (see also rule 9.3 and 9.5).
- 5.3 Admission to the research period
- 5.3.1 For admission to the research part of the course, at least all but two of the previous modules (see rule 7.2 to see which modules are to be included) must have been successfully completed and no mark below 50 is allowed.
The second requirement for admission to the research part, which is as important as the marks obtained in previous modules, is the ability to undertake independent research. This ability will be developed and assessed during the first 15 modules and finally assessed on the basis of the detailed, written and orally presented, research proposal (end of module 15).
- 5.3.2 The Course Director will nominate, and the Degree Assessment Board will approve, a Thesis Admission Committee. This Committee will assess the proposal and the presentation by the participant. The Thesis Admission Committee is accountable to the Course Director.
- 5.3.3 Each Thesis Admission Committee has 3 to 4 members: the research theme leader or delegate (chair), the first supervisor and the second supervisor (or delegate). The Course Director and involved PhD students or AiO's (see 5.4.1) may be present as advisors.
- 5.3.4 The oral defence of the research proposal is open and will be announced as such.
In exceptional cases the Course Director can decide to have the oral defence of individual participants closed to observers other than ITC staff.

- 5.3.5 When the Thesis Admission Committee is of the opinion that the research proposal is not of a level required for the start of the individual research period, the participant will receive feedback and will have a second opportunity to defend a revised proposal within two weeks. In case the second proposal presentation is not satisfactory, the candidate will not be admitted to the individual research period.
- 5.3.6 A participant who is not eligible for admission to the individual research period of the course but has completed modules 1 to 14 of the M.Sc. course successfully (see rule 8.1) will receive a Postgraduate Diploma.
- 5.4 Supervision of the proposal phase and the research work
- 5.4.1 In module 11, based on the research pre-proposal, in consultation with the research theme leader and the M.Sc. participant, the Course Director shall recommend a primary and secondary supervisor to the supervisor's department(s). PhD students and AiO's may be involved in the supervision as advisor and support the work of the supervisors. Supervisors and advisors are appointed by the management team of the department.
- 5.4.2 The two supervisors and, if applicable, the advisor shall divide the supervision tasks and make a supervision plan and meeting schedule with the participant.
- 5.4.3 Supervisor(s) shall:
- (1) Guide the M.Sc. participant in the formulation of a detailed research proposal.
 - (2) Establish a schedule of regular supervisory meetings with the M.Sc. participant (on an average once per fortnight). Additional meetings may be arranged by agreement.
 - (3) Provide general advice and guidance on the execution of the research.
 - (4) Provide feedback on draft written work, normally within 10 days of receipt.
 - (5) Where appropriate, forward any comments on the performance of the participant to the Course Director.
 - (6) Inform the Course Director when the progress of a participant gives cause for concern so that action can be taken in accordance with these regulations (see rules 9.1 and 9.2).
- 5.4.4 If a M.Sc. participant considers that he/she is not receiving the quality of supervision required in the regulations, the participant should report this to the Course Director.
- 5.4.5 Replacement of a supervisor may be considered if the research is found to be outside a supervisor's area of expertise, or at the request of the supervisor and/or of the participant.
- 5.5 Submission of the thesis
- 5.5.1 The participant must submit a well-organized copy of all digital files associated with the research work on DVD, and a hard-copy of graphic output, at least two weeks before the examination date or as specified by the Course Director.
- 5.5.2 ITC will produce sufficient printed copies of the thesis, including two for the participant. The participant must bring one of his/her copies of the thesis to the oral examination.
- 5.5.3 One copy of the thesis will be sent to each member of the Thesis Assessment Board. The Institute will retain two bound copies if a degree is awarded, one of the copies being lodged with the Institute Librarian and the second copy in the course archive.

5.5.4 Where work submitted has been done in cooperation with others, the supervisor must submit a written statement to the Thesis Assessment Board indicating the extent of the participant's share of the work.

5.6 Thesis examination

5.6.1 For the thesis examination, the Course Director nominates and the Degree Assessment Board approves a separate Thesis Assessment Board for each participant. The Thesis Assessment Board is accountable to the Course Director.

Each Thesis Assessment Board has 3 to 5 members: one or both supervisor(s), an ITC professor or associate professor in a relevant discipline, an external examiner and, if necessary, other staff members of the ITC. The involved AiO or PhD student (see 5.4.1) and the Course Director may advise. In many cases, the external member comes from outside ITC, preferably being an academic staff member of a university. In the remaining cases, the external member comes from an ITC department that does not play a major role in the course and research theme.

The Thesis Assessment Board is chaired by the ITC (associate) professor. In exceptional cases one of the other members, but not the first supervisor, can be the chair.

5.6.2 The thesis examination consists of the assessment of the thesis and the oral examination that includes a presentation and defence. The oral examination has a maximum duration of one and a half hours.

5.6.3 The Course Director assigns a date for an oral examination and informs the participant at least one month in advance of this date.

5.6.4 All members of the Thesis Assessment Board shall read and assess the quality of the thesis as an ordered, logical and critical exposition of research work in the approved field.

A minimum of three members of the Thesis Assessment Board must be present at the oral examination. (In case the ITC (associate) professor cannot attend, Head Education will appoint another ITC (associate) professor to replace him or her.) These members of the Thesis Assessment Board will assess the participant's reasoning power, critical attitude, competence in the scientific discipline, and knowledge of the relevant literature, will raise questions concerning the thesis and will decide on the mark.

5.6.5 The oral examination is open and will be announced as such. In exceptional cases the Course Director can decide to have the defence of individual participants closed to observers other than ITC staff.

5.6.6 On the basis of the assessment of the participant the Thesis Assessment Board shall take one of the following decisions:

- (1) The thesis is satisfactory. One single mark is given.
- (2) Subject to minor corrections (that can be implemented within three working days and implemented before the official end of the course) in the thesis, the thesis is satisfactory. One single mark is given, subject to the corrections in the thesis being made.
- (3) The thesis is not satisfactory and is given the FAIL grade.

5.6.7 No changes may be made in the thesis after submission for the thesis examination, only an errata list may be added. If the Thesis Assessment Board requires minor corrections to the thesis, these, and only these, corrections must be made and must be checked and approved by one of the supervisors. In all other cases changes can only be made when the thesis is to be re-examined by the Thesis Assessment Board.

5.6.8 Extensions to the research period can be given before the thesis is submitted and/or as result of the thesis examination. In case the participant does the research work at a distance, extension can only be given before the thesis is submitted.

Extensions will be given only when:

- (1) Funding for the extension is available,
- (2) The main cause of the unsatisfactory level of the thesis has been beyond the control of the participant (at the discretion of the Course Director),
- (3) The extension could lead to an acceptable thesis and re-examination (at the discretion of the Thesis Assessment Board)

The participant will take the initiative and apply in writing for extension. If the Course Director is of the opinion that the second and third conditions are met, he/she will forward the request to Head Education for decision.

5.6.9 The maximum total duration of extensions to the research period is three months. Extensions are allowed only when the participant stays at ITC or, in the case of a joint course, at the institute of the partner.

This does not apply to participants who study part-time. They are allowed to work on the thesis in the home organization and since the M.Sc. course may be spread over a period of maximum three and a half years (see rule 2.2) they may work on the thesis until about a month before the end of the three and a half year period. In such cases, no extensions are possible.

5.7 Access to the thesis

5.7.1 The primary function of the Institute is the development and dissemination of knowledge. Theses are lodged with the Institute Librarian and shall be made available for consultation, inter-library loan and photocopying.

Theses that meet the following criteria will also be made available in digital format at the ITC website:

- (1) Have been awarded a mark of 75 or more
- (2) Contain no material of which the copyright rests with third parties
- (3) Contain no confidential data or information.

5.7.2 Any staff member who publishes results from M.Sc. research work or the related thesis is obliged to make a proper reference to the M.Sc. participant's work.

6. Final Assignment (Postgraduate Diploma course)

6.1 The Final Assignment and result

6.1.1 The Final Assignment period focuses on the application of knowledge, methods and techniques in the subject of the course to the task performed or to the topic investigated. Depending on the course, the Final Assignment will be done individually or in small groups.

- (1) At the start of the Final Assignment period, participants will receive terms of reference from supervising and coordinating staff.
- (2) Subsequently, participants will have to plan and carry out the assignment according to the terms of reference.

- (3) Part of the output of the assignment will be a final report and a documented database.
- (4) The output of the assignment will be presented and discussed in public.

6.1.2 A participant or group not completing the Final Assignment within the specified time, will be considered to have failed. Only in exceptional cases and for reasons beyond the control of the participant/group (at the discretion of the Course Director), the participant/group may apply in writing for a new opportunity to meet the above requirements.

6.1.3 A participant or group may not incorporate material that has been submitted for achieving certification from any other educational institution, in the Final Assignment result.

6.1.4 The source of any photograph, map, or other illustration shall be indicated, as shall the source, published or unpublished, of any material not resulting from the participant/group's own work.
If material from other work is incorporated verbatim, without proper acknowledgement of the source (plagiarism), the Course Director may decide that the Final Assignment will not be assessed. This means that the Diploma cannot be awarded.

6.2 Supervision of the Final Assignment

6.2.1 The coordinator of the Final Assignment period, in consultation with the Course Director, will set up a scheme indicating which staff is available for consultation and supervision throughout the Final Assignment period. The supervising staff have to be appointed by the management team of their department.

6.2.2 The supervising staff shall:

- (1) Provide the participant/group with clear terms of reference.
- (2) Establish a schedule of supervisory meetings with the participant/group.
- (3) Provide general advice and guidance on the execution of the Final Assignment.
- (4) Provide feedback on work, normally within three days of submission.
- (5) Forward, where appropriate, any comments on the performance of the participant(s) to the Course Director.
- (6) Advise the Course Director when the progress of a participant gives cause for concern so that action can be taken in accordance with these regulations (see 9.1 and 9.2).

6.2.3 If a participant/group considers that he/she is not receiving the quality of supervision required in the regulations, the participant/group should seek action from the Course Director.

6.3 Submission of the Final Assignment result

- 6.3.1 The participant/group must submit a well-organized copy of all digital files associated with the Final Assignment work on DVD, and copies of hard-copy graphic output, to the supervising staff on the date of the Final Assignment assessment or as specified by the coordinator of the Final Assignment period in consultation with the Course Director.
- 6.3.2 Where the Final Assignment has been executed in groups or where individual Final Assignment work submitted has been executed in cooperation with others, the supervisor(s) must provide a written statement, indicating the extent of the share of the work that each participant has done.

6.4 Assessment of the Final Assignment

- 6.4.1 Participants will be assessed individually based on the output of and the presentation of the Final Assignment.
- 6.4.2 The Course Director assigns a date for the Final Assignment assessment and informs the participant/group of this date at least two weeks in advance.
- 6.4.3 Criteria for the assessment of the Final Assignment will be provided at the start of the Final Assignment period, i.e. at the time of providing the participants with the terms of reference for the final assignment.
- 6.4.4 The Final Assignment result will be assessed by two or three staff members: at least one (associate) professor in a relevant discipline and at least one staff member who has been involved in the supervision during the execution of the Final Assignment.
- 6.4.5 The presentation of the Final Assignment is open and will be announced as such. In exceptional cases the Course Director can decide to have the presentation of individual participants closed to observers other than ITC staff.
- 6.4.6 On the basis of the assessment of the participant(s) the assessing staff shall take one of the following decisions:
 - (1) That the Final Assignment is satisfactory. One single mark is given.
 - (2) That subject to minor corrections (that can be implemented within three working days and implemented before the official end of the course) in the Final Assignment result, the Final Assignment is satisfactory. One single mark is given, subject to the corrections in the Final Assignment result being made.
 - (3) The Final Assignment is not satisfactory and is given the FAIL grade.
- 6.4.7 In exceptional cases extension may be given for the Final Assignment work, but only before the Final Assignment assessment and only when:
 - (1) Funding for the extension is available, and
 - (2) The main cause of the unsatisfactory level of the Final Assignment has been beyond the control of the participant/group, at the discretion of the Course Director.The participant will take the initiative and apply in writing for extension. If the Course Director is of the opinion that condition 2 is met he/she will forward the request to Head Education for decision.
- 6.4.8 Extensions have a maximum duration of 50% of the standard duration of the Final Assignment. Extensions are only allowed when the participant/group stays at ITC.

This rule does not apply to participants who study part-time. They are allowed

to work on the Final Assignment in the home organization until the end of the period of three and a half years counting from the official starting date of the course (see rule 2.2). In such cases, no extensions are possible.

7. M.Sc. degree and Postgraduate Diploma assessment

- 7.1 On the basis of the assessment results of the participant, the Degree Assessment Board decides whether the participant will be awarded the M.Sc. degree.

On the basis of the assessment results of the participant, the Academic Board decides whether the participant will be awarded the Postgraduate Diploma.

In case the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or Academic Board (PGD course) decides that the M.Sc. degree or Postgraduate Diploma will not be awarded, the Course Director will decide whether the participant will be awarded a Certificate or Certificate of Attendance.

- 7.2 For the award of a M.Sc. degree the average of all module marks (including the thesis that counts for 8 module marks) must be at least 60, no more than 2 modules may have a mark below 60 and no module mark below 50 is allowed. This implies that the thesis must have a mark of at least 60.

The criteria for the award of a Postgraduate Diploma are:

- (1) The average of all final module marks must be at least 60. When a module is assessed with 'completed' or 'fail': a 'completed' will not be included in the average, a 'fail' will be counted as a mark of 50. In case of one overall assessment for combined modules, the overall mark will be given to each separate module, before calculation of the average.
- (2) No more than two of the modules may have a mark below 60. No final module mark below 50 is allowed.
- (3) The final assignment must have a mark of at least 60.

Only results of modules that are part of the formal curriculum of the M.Sc. or Postgraduate Diploma course are included in the calculation of the average and counted for the number of marks below 60 and below 50. Therefore results of a module that is taken in addition to the formal curriculum or in exchange for a module of the formal curriculum for which exemption was given, will not be included. However, a module that was taken in exchange because of a reason other than exemption (see rule 3.4), is (only for the application of this rule 7.2) considered as part of the formal curriculum.

When a module is assessed with 'completed', this will not be included in the average. When a module is assessed with 'fail', this will be counted as a mark of 50.

If results of modules were obtained more than three and a half years before the end of the course, then the validity of these modules must be confirmed by the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or Academic Board (PGD course). (See rule 3.4.)

- 7.3 To be entitled to receive a M.Sc. degree or Postgraduate Diploma with distinction the average of all module assessments (see rule 7.2 which modules are to be included) must be 80 or above. The thesis or Final assignment must have a mark of 80 or above. No marks below 70 or 'fails' are allowed.

Participants who have made changes in the formal curriculum of their M.Sc. or Postgraduate Diploma course (exemptions or exchanged modules) that affect more than four (M.Sc. course) or two (PGD course) modules are not entitled to receive a M.Sc. degree or Postgraduate Diploma 'with distinction'.

- 7.4 The Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) / Academic Board (PGD course) shall take one of the following decisions:
- (1) That the thesis / final assignment and overall course performance of the participant are satisfactory. The degree of M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma shall be awarded.
 - (2) That the thesis / final assignment and overall course performance of the participant are such that the M.Sc. degree / Postgraduate Diploma shall be awarded "with distinction".
 - (3) That subject to minor corrections in the thesis / final assignment, the thesis/ final assignment and overall course performance are satisfactory. The degree of M.Sc. / Postgraduate Diploma shall be awarded subject to the corrections in the thesis / Final Assignment result being made before the official end of the course.
 - (4) For M.Sc. candidates: That the research work / final assignment and/or overall course performance are not satisfactory. The degree of M.Sc. shall not be awarded. The participant will receive a Postgraduate Diploma.
For Postgraduate Diploma course participants: That the final assignment and/or overall course performance are not satisfactory. The Postgraduate Diploma shall not be awarded. The participant will receive a Certificate.

8. Awards and certification

- 8.1 A “**Master of Science Degree**” will be awarded to a participant who has been officially admitted to a M.Sc. course (as approved by the Academic Board) and has fulfilled the assessment requirements of that course.

A “**Postgraduate Diploma**” will be awarded to a participant who has been officially admitted to a PGD course (as approved by the Academic Board) and has fulfilled the assessment requirements of that course.

A “Postgraduate Diploma” (‘with distinction’ will not be possible in this case) will also be awarded to a participant who (1) has been officially admitted to a M.Sc. course, (2) has not been admitted to the research period or has failed the thesis, and (3) has completed modules 1 to 14 of the M.Sc. course successfully (average of all module marks is at least 60, not more than two marks between 50 and 60 and no marks below 50).

A “**Certificate**” will be awarded to a participant who (1) has been officially admitted to a M.Sc. course or Postgraduate Diploma course but has not fulfilled all assessment requirements for that course, and (2) who has fulfilled the assessment requirements of at least one summatively assessed module of that M.Sc. or Postgraduate Diploma course.

The Certificate will mention that the participant ‘has followed a course in Geo-information Science and Earth Observation’ and the study load. Only the modules that have been completed and the modules in which the participant has participated for at least 80%, will be included in the study load.

A “**Certificate of Attendance**” will be given to participants who have been officially admitted to a M.Sc. course or Postgraduate Diploma course, but have not fulfilled the assessment requirements of any summatively assessed module.

The Certificate of Attendance will mention that the participant ‘has attended a course in Geo-information Science and Earth Observation’ and the study load. Only the modules in which the participant has participated for at least 80% will be included in the study load.

No qualification other than “with distinction” will be indicated on any M.Sc. degree or Postgraduate Diploma.

- 8.2 M.Sc. degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas are issued under the responsibility of the Rector. Certificates and Certificates of Attendance are issued under the responsibility of the Course Director.

- 8.3 M.Sc. degrees and Postgraduate Diplomas are signed by the Rector of the ITC and Head Education.
Certificates and Certificates of Attendance are signed by the Course Director.
- 8.4 M.Sc. degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates are accompanied by a Course Record, signed by the Course Director. The Course Record will show the period of study, the study load, the titles of and marks or grades obtained for the modules that have been finished successfully or that the participant has participated in for at least 80% but not finished successfully.

The assessments 'completed' or 'fail' will appear as such in the Course Record.

- 8.5 Only the names and marks and/or grades of the modules that are taken are mentioned on the Course Record.
In case of exemption the number and not the name of the module will be mentioned (e.g. "Modules 1-3: exemption"). In case a new module was taken in exchange of a module for which exemption was given, the name of the new module will be mentioned also (e.g. "Module 3: exemption. Extra module: Database design"). In case of exchange of a module for another reason than exemption only the name of the new module will be mentioned (e.g. "Module 3: Database design").
The names of modules (and the results obtained) that are taken in addition to the formal curriculum of the course are also listed on the Course Record (e.g. "Extra module: Database design").

9. Early termination of the course

- 9.1 Where a Course Director and/or Head Education are/is of the opinion that a participant's progress gives cause for concern the participant shall be informed of the situation by the Course Director. Where a participant's performance is such that she/he is unlikely to obtain a M.Sc. Degree / Postgraduate Diploma without a significant improvement in performance, the participant shall be advised in writing by the Course Director of the situation and the implications.
(Oral or written advice by the Course Director may not be given when the concern arises after the mid-term presentation of the thesis or after the approval of the Final Assignment plan.)

- 9.2 In cases of obvious non-performance, a Course Director and/or Head Education may decide at any time that a participant must discontinue his/her course. Such a decision will not be taken without consulting the Degree Assessment Board (M.Sc. course) or Academic Board (PGD course) and the participant having received one written warning and being given time to improve performance.

- 9.3 In case of fraud during an exam or in assignments, the participant(s) concerned will be considered to have failed and a mark 0 (zero) will be given.

In case of plagiarism in the submitted thesis, the Thesis Assessment Board will decide not to assess the thesis. Extensions of the thesis period are then not possible. This means that the M.Sc. degree cannot be awarded. The participant will get a Postgraduate Diploma.

In case of plagiarism in the submitted final assignment of the Postgraduate Diploma course, the Course Director may decide that the final assignment will not be assessed. This will mean that the Diploma cannot be awarded, the participant will get a Certificate.

- 9.4 In case of other types of misbehaviour, the Course Director will consider expulsion from the course.

- 9.5 In case of severe or repeated fraud, plagiarism or other types of misbehaviour, the Course Director, in consultation with the Academic Board, will decide that the

participant is expelled from the course.
Expulsion from the course means that the participant will not receive any certification.

- 9.6 ITC will use plagiarism detection software or other tools to detect fraud.

In submitting a text, the participant implicitly consents to the text being entered in the database of the detection software concerned.

10. Student appeal procedures

- 10.1 In case of problems of a general or structural nature in the course, the Student Association Board (SAB) may be consulted.
- 10.2 In the event that a participant disagrees with decisions taken by a staff member or Thesis Assessment Board, he/she may present this decision for reconsideration to the Course Director.
Where a participant finds that he/she is not receiving the quality of thesis / final assignment supervision required in the regulations, the participant should also seek action from the Course Director.

Only in the event that a M.Sc. participant disagrees with decisions taken by the Degree Assessment Board he/she may present this decision for reconsideration to Head Education directly (see rule 10.3)
- 10.3 If not satisfied with the decision of the Course Director, the participant can seek action from Head Education. If Head Education rejects the complaint of the participant he/she will respond in writing describing the reasons.
- 10.4 If still not satisfied, participants have a final right of appeal with the Student Appeals Board. An appeal will only be accepted if:
- The formal methods of dealing with complaints (see rules 10.2 and 10.3) have not led to agreement;
 - The appeal concerns the implementation of these 'ITC Regulations for Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree and Postgraduate Diploma courses' or the assessment of the thesis / Final assignment and
 - The appeal has been made before the official end of the course. Appeals concerning the assessment of the thesis can be made later up to a maximum of four weeks after the mark was received.
- Appeals should be addressed in writing to the Chairman of the Student Appeals Board, through the Rector, and be accompanied by the argued written response to the appeal by Head Education.
- 10.5 Where unequal treatment of participants is claimed, copies of all relevant scripts shall be made available for review by those investigating the appeal.
- 10.6 The Student Appeals Board consists of three staff members to be appointed by the Rector. These staff members should not have been involved in the situation leading to the appeal. For appeals concerning the assessment of the thesis, staff members representing fields related to the subject of research will be invited to sit on the Student Appeals Board.
- 10.7 After having heard all parties involved (including the Course Director) for relevant information, the Student Appeals Board will take a final decision on the appeal. The decision on an appeal will be passed on to the Rector only if the Appeals Board cannot reach consensus. No further appeal will be possible.
- 10.8 The Student Appeals Board can reject the appeal or support it. In the latter case, the Student Appeals Board shall suggest remedial actions, which may include extension of the fellowship.

10.9 The Student Appeals Board should deal with the case within two weeks of receipt of the appeal. If necessary the fellowship will be extended for the duration of the appeal procedure. In case of an appeal concerning the assessment of the thesis, the fellowship may only be extended when the appeal is made before the official end of the course.

10.10 Support to a request for reconsideration or appeal concerning the assessment of the thesis cannot lead to overruling the assessment of the thesis by a Thesis Assessment Board that is composed according to these regulations. Acceptable remedial actions do include a re-sit for the oral part of the thesis examination (only when a reason beyond the control of the participant has caused underperformance in the oral part) or an extension to the research period (only when the main cause of unsatisfactory level of the thesis has been beyond the control of the participant) in combination with a full re-examination.

Support to a request for reconsideration or appeal concerning the assessment of the final assignment in the Postgraduate Diploma course cannot lead to overruling the assessment of the final assignment, carried by (a) supervisor(s) according to these regulations. Acceptable remedial actions do include a re-examination (only when a reason beyond the control of the participant has caused underperformance in the oral part) by the supervisor(s) or two other ITC staff members with sufficient expertise in the subject of the Final Assignment.

Bodies and persons involved in management and quality assurance of the M.Sc. course and the Postgraduate Diploma course

The mentioned tasks and responsibilities must be carried out in accordance with these 'ITC Regulations for the Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree and Postgraduate Diploma courses'.

Rector

The Rector has the overall responsibility for all tasks of ITC. The Rector has delegated the academic, quality and policy aspects of the educational programmes and courses to the Academic Board and the implementation of the programmes and courses to Head Education. The Rector appoints the Head Education, Course Director, Director Graduate Programme and Student Appeals Board.

Scientific Council

The Scientific Council advises the Rector and Academic Board on the quality of education and research of the ITC. This responsibility includes:

- Advice on degrees offered by the ITC
- Advice on course curricula, including admission and thesis examination criteria.
- Advice on ITC's quality assurance system
- Advice on degree and assessment regulations, including these 'ITC Regulations for the Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree and Postgraduate Diploma courses'

The Scientific Council is a mainly external body; two third of the members are professors of Dutch universities.

Academic Board (AB)

The Academic Board is responsible for the quality of ITC's courses and for development of policy on education. This responsibility includes:

- Advice on the degrees offered by the ITC
- Approval of the curricula of M.Sc. and Postgraduate Diploma courses
- Approval of ITC's quality assurance system and monitoring of the implementation
- Advice on course-specific elements of the quality assurance system
- Approval of policy on education
- Approval of degree and assessment regulations, including these 'ITC Regulations for the Master of Science (M.Sc.) degree and Postgraduate Diploma courses'
- Acting as Degree Assessment Board
- Decision on deviation of the formal curriculum by individual participants in the Postgraduate Diploma course.
- Decision on award of the Diploma to individual participants in the Postgraduate Diploma course.

The Academic Board consists of the Rector (chair) and all full and visiting professors of ITC.

Research theme leader

The Research Theme leader is responsible for all research carried out by the scientific staff and participants connected to that theme. This responsibility includes:

- Approval of the research pre-proposal; admission of the participant to the research theme
- Monitoring of the quality of the research supervision given to M.Sc. participants under the theme

Research theme leaders are ITC professors.

Head Education

Head Education is responsible for:

- Monitoring of the implementation of the M.Sc. course and Postgraduate Diploma course, ITC's quality assurance system and ITC's educational policy as approved by the Academic Board and the Rector. Head Education delegates the actual implementation to the Course Director
- Coordination and implementation of supra-course aspects. Head Education delegates the coordination of supra-course aspects of block 3 and block 4 of all M.Sc. courses to the Director Graduate Programme

Course Director (CD)

The Course Director is responsible for:

- Implementation of the M.Sc. course and Postgraduate Diploma course, ITC's quality assurance system and ITC's educational policy, as delegated by Head Education
- Implementation of decisions taken by Head Education
- Day-to-day co-ordination and execution of the course
- Counselling of participants in matters concerning their studies

Director Graduate Programme

The Director Graduate Programme is responsible for:

- Coordination of the development and implementation of supra-course aspects of block 3 (research orientation) and block 4 (individual research period) of the M.Sc. course

Degree Assessment Board

The Degree Assessment Board assures that participants who are awarded the M.Sc. degree have the required level.

This responsibility includes:

- Decision on deviation of the formal curriculum by individual participants
- Appointment of the Thesis Admission Committee
- Appointment of the Thesis Assessment Boards
- Decision on award of the degree to individual participants

The Academic Board acts as Degree Assessment Board.

Thesis Admission Committee

The thesis Admission Committee is responsible for assessment of the thesis proposal and admission to the research part of the M.Sc. course.

Thesis Assessment Board

Responsible for assessment of the thesis and oral examination of the participant on completion of the research.

Student Appeals Board

The Student Appeals Board is a semi-permanent committee, which will be appointed by the Rector when an appeal from a participant is received.