

MCA - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PREAMBLE

In order to maintain uniformity and ensure a high quality of Post Graduate Programmes, the University-Level Committee for Post Graduate Programmes (UL-CPGP) proposes the following Policies and Procedures for MCA programme.

1. The word "University" means "Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham University under section 3 of the UGC Act 1956", unless context otherwise requires.
2. For the purpose of this document, Department/Department Chairs also include Centre/Centre Heads, except when the context otherwise requires.
3. MCA Programmes may be offered only by Departments that have received explicit approval to do so. The intake of MCA programme will be decided by the University.
4. An MCA Programme will be known as: *Master of Computer Applications*. The name of the Department offering the programme is not included in the name of the degree.
5. The Dean of Post Graduate Programmes or similar academic rank, as appointed by the Vice Chancellor, hereafter referred to as PGP Dean, has primary responsibility over MCA programme, and shall report all major actions to the Vice Chancellor for approval.
6. Each campus offering MCA Programme shall have a PGP Chair with primary responsibility for the conduct of the programme in that campus in accordance with the policies and procedures outlined in this document.
7. The PGP Chairs shall work closely with their respective Department Chairs to ensure the successful conduct of the programme, and shall report all major actions to the PGP Dean for approval.
8. The award of MCA degree shall be in accordance with the Policies and Procedures outlined in this document as well as other ordinances, rules, and regulations of the University.
9. An MCA student may petition the PGP Chair for a waiver/substitution of any requirement. The petition

may be escalated to the PGP Dean and the Vice Chancellor, whose decision will be final and binding.

10. The Board of Management alone will have the power to make amendments to these rules and regulations from time to time as they deem appropriate.

MCA at a Glance

1. MCA students are admitted normally as full-time students. In order to be eligible for admission, the applicant should have a pass with a minimum average of 60% in Bachelor's Degree of minimum 3 years duration from a recognised University with at least one subject in Mathematics at Degree level.

Lateral Entry (2-year MCA): Eligibility consists of a recognized Bachelors Degree of minimum three years duration in BCA or B.Sc. (IT/Computer Science) and with at least 60% marks in Mathematics at the Bachelors or at the '10+2' level.

2. The MCA degree consists of 92-93 credits of prescribed course-work and 17 credits of Dissertation research, for a total of 109-110 credits. For Lateral Entry, the MCA degree consists of 57-58 credits of prescribed course-work and 17 credits of Dissertation research, for a total of 74-75 credits

3. All courses shall be university-approved courses. A credit-based continuous assessment pattern will be followed, with one credit for each lecture period per week, one credit for each tutorial period per week, and one credit for each laboratory course of two or three periods per week.

4. Every student is required to write, based upon their Dissertation, a scholarly research paper targeted at a Scopus-indexed conference or journal. The submission to the conference/journal should be made by the student's Dissertation Advisor after written consent by the Department Chair.

5. The duration of the MCA program shall normally be six semesters (3 years) for regular students and four semesters (2 years) for lateral entry students.

6. Students are expected to carry out all work with academic integrity and should abide by the code of conduct expected of all students of the University.

7. The medium of instruction shall be English.

The remainder of this document is divided into three main sections:

- (I) General policies that govern MCA Programmes, primarily of interest to PGP Chairs, Department Chairs and Faculty;
- (II) Academic Requirements to be fulfilled by students; and
- (III) Code of Conduct expected of students.

I. PROGRAMME POLICIES

This section deals with Admission Procedure, Board of Studies, Course Committees and Chief Mentor.

I.1 Admission

The advertisement for admission should clearly indicate the minimum qualification for the different programmes, dates for the commencement of the issue of application and receipt of completed application, date for entrance examination and possible venues for the entrance examination.

Applications will be issued and received until the last date notified for the receipt of completed application. The short-listed candidates will have to appear for entrance examinations. Based on the performance in the entrance examination, candidates will be called for the personal interview. The merit list for admission will be based on the following guidelines:

- i) Career Analysis 10%
- ii) Entrance Examination 60%
- iii) Interview 30%

The Selection Committee will consist of a minimum of three persons and chaired by the Chair/Vice Chair of the Department. Depending on the minimum qualifications specified.

I.2 Board of Studies

The curricula and course syllabi for an MCA programme shall be formulated initially and updated once in two years based upon recommendations from the Board of Studies for the programme concerned.

The Board of Studies consists of 10-12 members, with at least one member from each of the following groups:

an international expert from a university outside India; an expert from a leading Indian university (such as IIT, IISc, NIT); an expert from industry; a faculty member from each campus offering the programme or a closely related programme; and an alumnus who excelled in the programme.

Elective courses may be added to the curricula by faculty at any time with the approval of the PGP Dean.

I.3 Course Committees

While the Board of Studies oversees the overall MCA curriculum and course syllabi, each course that is offered is monitored by a Course Committee and Chief Mentor. This committee will consist of mentors, one from each campus, nominated by the respective Chairs of the campus Departments. The Chief Mentor is nominated by the PGP Dean and could be one of the campus mentors for the course or could be an additional person. In addition, there will be student representatives, one for each Campus, who will be invited for all meetings except those dealing with question papers and other confidential matters.

All campuses offering a course will be governed by the same syllabus and the course offering will be monitored by a Course Committee and chaired by a Chief Mentor. The Course Committee shall meet at the beginning of the semester to finalise the teaching program as well as evaluation pattern.

Campuses will have a common question paper for each periodical test and final exam, and obtain prior approval from the Chief Mentor is required before any question paper can be given at any campus. Campus-level course mentors should prepare question papers in advance so that the Chief Mentor is given adequate time for review and providing feedback. After a question paper is finalized, the Chief Mentor will forward the same to the Deputy Controller at each campus who in turn will oversee the duplication and distribution of the question paper.

II. ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS

All students are expected to conform to the regular academic requirements of the University. This involves registering for courses, attending classes regularly, doing assignments in a timely manner, appearing for examinations, etc., and also conforming to the rules, regulations and practice accepted in the University.

II.1 Course Registration

Upon admission, every student will be assigned a Faculty Advisor by the Chairman of the Department concerned. The faculty advisors will advise the students in all academic activities including registration, selection of electives, projects, etc.

Students are required to register for courses (including Dissertation Research) within the stipulated time by filling up the required form and getting it approved by the faculty concerned. Any violation may lead to non-acceptance of the course registration.

A student is permitted to register for courses if and only if he/she has:

- Paid all fees and has no dues to the University
- Has maintained the progress as required by the University
- Has completed pre-requisite courses, if prescribed
- Has no disciplinary action pending against him/her

Every student will be given access on the Amrita intranet to MCA Programme, including the relevant policies, procedures, curricula, and course syllabi.

Except for the first semester, registration for a given semester shall be done during a week specified before the end-semester examination of the previous semester. The consent of the faculty advisor and the course instructor are necessary for registration.

II.2 Duration of Programme

The normal duration of the MCA Programme is 3 years (6 semesters) and for lateral entry it is 2 years. In the exceptional case of the students who are not in a position to complete the requirements within three/two (lateral entry) years, an extension of stay by one or two semesters, as needed, may be granted by the PGP Chair. Such students need to pay the fees like any other student, once again register for the course(s) and successfully complete them as per the normal requirements.

II.3 Attendance and Leave

Class attendance will be marked by the teacher during every period of a course. Finalization of attendance for every course shall be done three working days before the last instruction day of the semester. Any student

failing to secure a minimum of 90% attendance in a course will not be eligible to appear for the end semester examination in that course. The names of students not eligible to appear for the examination will be published.

If the attendance of a student falls short of 90% in any course due to continuous absence caused by accident, prolonged illness, or unforeseen circumstances, such case may be considered by the concerned PGP Chair/Principal for condonation of absence based on the request of the student and supported by required documents and recommendation of the class advisor and Department Chair. However, in such cases, the student must have duly applied for leave in time and got it sanctioned. The overall attendance of a student in such a case shall not fall below 75%. Condonation will be considered only in the case of those students who have proved themselves to be otherwise regular by attending at least 90% of the class during the semester excluding the period of long leave. Any student who has missed classes for genuine reasons (including on duty leave) will have to submit the missed assignments (possibly on holidays or late evenings) as prescribed by the faculty, to make up for the missed classes. The students will be eligible for the waiver / on duty leave if and only if they complete the extra work load to the satisfaction of the faculty concerned and, the faculty concerned certifies accordingly in the final leave application of the student.

Leave. It is mandatory that students apply in the prescribed form before proceeding on leave. A leave letter recommended by the class advisor shall be submitted to the Department Chair who may normally grant the leave. Unauthorized absence will be treated as breach of discipline. Request for leave for more than three consecutive days on medical grounds must be supported by a proper medical certificate. In non-medical cases, requests for leave for more than three consecutive days must be countersigned by the parent/guardian. Leave granted will not be counted as attendance.

Students going on official duties such as representing the School for sports and cultural activities, or presenting papers in seminars will be eligible for "duty leave" on the recommendation by the faculty advisor and the concerned Department Chair. Duty leave will be counted as equivalent to attendance for administrative purposes which will be limited to five working days per semester, provided the information is sent to all the faculty members concerned at least one week in advance.

II.4 Course Evaluation

In theory courses, which are taught primarily in the lecture mode, 50% weightage will be given to continuous assessment (sessionals) and 50% for the end-semester (final) examination. For continuous assessment, there will be two tests, whose dates will be given by the Controller of Examination and published in the handbook, in addition to a number of assignments.

In the case of laboratory courses and practicals, 70% weightage will be given to continuous assessment and 30% for end-semester examination. The weights for the components of continuous assessment will be decided by the course committee at the beginning of the semester.

It is mandatory that students appear for the end-semester examination for the completion of a course.

The pass minimum for all courses shall be 50%.

II.5 Supplementary Examination

Students who fail on a course can appear for a supplementary examination. In addition, those students who could not appear for the end-semester examination due to illness or reasons beyond their control will be also permitted to appear for the supplementary examination(s). Students who have passed the examination are not permitted to appear for the supplementary examination for improving their grades. If the student fails in the supplementary examination as well, he/she has to re-register for the course and satisfy all the requirements expected of fresh registrants. The student may also re-register for the course during the summer, if the university is able to offer the course at that time.

The grade FA (Failed due to lack of Attendance) once awarded stays on the student's record; it is not deleted even after the student completes the course successfully later. Those who fail due to lack of attendance will not be allowed to appear for the supplementary examination and will have to re-register for the course.

In re-registering for courses, it is mandatory to successfully complete the same core course. However, in the case of electives, if the student fails in the supplementary examination, the PGP Chair may approve an equivalent course on the recommendation of the faculty advisor and Department Chair.

II.6 Dissertation Research and Research Paper

Every MCA student is required to register for a total of 17 credits of Dissertation Research, which will be divided as 5 credits in semester V and 12 credits in semester VI. The Dissertation Research must be carried out under an Amrita faculty member, either within or outside the student's department, and that faculty member will be referred to as the student's Dissertation Advisor.

Students are not permitted to commence their Dissertation Research if they have any arrears on courses related to their Dissertation Research and not more than two courses unrelated to the Dissertation Research.

Towards the end of completing the Dissertation Research, the student is required to submit a Dissertation Report, documenting all results, including system design, implementation, theory, experiments, and performance evaluation, as applicable. The Dissertation Report is submitted to the Dissertation Advisor. Where applicable, an evaluation (qualitative or quantitative) by a Dissertation co-Advisor will be also taken into account by the Dissertation Advisor.

An **important requirement** of Dissertation Research is the submission of a Research Paper to a Scopus-indexed conference proceedings or journal. A research paper describes the motivation and significance of the problem being addressed; the background and related literature for the research; the proposed approach, concepts, and system design; experimental results and contributions; conclusions and directions for further research; and references cited.

Submission of the Research Paper to a Scopus-indexed conference/journal should be made by the Dissertation Advisor only after obtaining written consent from the Department Chair. Students should not submit papers on their own to conferences/journals without approval from their Advisor and Department Chair. It is acceptable for MCA students to work in a team of two in preparing their research paper.

All publications based upon the Dissertation research should list the name of the Dissertation Advisor and Co-Advisor (if any), with their consent, in addition to the MCA student's name. The Amrita affiliation in conference/journal papers should be written as follows:

Names of Authors
 Name of Department/Centre/School
 Name of Campus
 Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham (University)

The Department Chair will invite external experts to help the final evaluation of dissertations. The Chair will assign the MCA student reports to a Committee consisting of all Dissertation Advisor(s) and senior faculty of the Department. The Department Chair will normally serve as Chair of this Committee, unless he/she is also an Dissertation Advisor, in which case the Vice Chair of the Department will head the Committee.

There are two parts to the evaluation. In the first part which is open to public, all MCA students are required to briefly present their work. In the second, which is a closed-door (with only the Committee members present), a thorough discussion about the dissertation will take place, at the conclusion of which, for each student, the Committee will assign a numerical score out of a maximum of hundred.

After completing the evaluation of all MCA students in a specialization, all Dissertation Advisors in that specialization and the Department Chair will meet and assign every student a letter grade. If a dissertation is not satisfactory, the student will be asked to continue the dissertation and appear for the assessment later and an "I" grade will be given.

II.7 Grading

Based on the performance in each course, a student is awarded, at the end of the semester, a letter grade in each of the courses registered, in a ten point scale.

The letter grades, the corresponding grade points and the ratings are as follows:

Letter Grade	Points	Ratings
A+	10	Outstanding
A	10	Excellent
B+	9	Very Good
B	8	Good
C+	7	Above Average
C	6	Average
D	5	Pass
F	0	Fail
FA	0	Failed due to lack of a attendance
I	0	Incomplete
W	-	Withheld

Notes:

1. The I grade may be given for Laboratory courses, Seminars, and Dissertation Research. It will be subsequently changed to an appropriate grade when the student passes the supplementary examination.
2. A+ shall be given by the PGP Chair only for exceptional performance based on the recommendation of the course instructor. The student should typically have secured an A grade in all other courses.

Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA)

On completion of a semester, each student is assigned Semester Grade Point Average (SGPA) which is computed as below for all courses registered by the student during that semester.

$$SGPA = \frac{\sum (C_i \times GP_i)}{\sum C_i}$$

where C_i is the number of credits for i^{th} course in that semester and GP_i is the grade points earned by the student for that course.

Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA)

The overall performance of a student at any stage of the MCA program is evaluated by the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) upto that point of time.

$$CGPA = \frac{\sum (C_i \times GP_i)}{\sum C_i}$$

where C_i is the number of credits for i^{th} course in any semester and GP_i is the grade points earned by the student for that course. The summation is over all the courses registered by the student and evaluated during all the semesters up to that point of time, including the failed courses. The CGPA is rounded off to two decimals. The ranking of the students in a batch at any intermediate or final stage is based on CGPA.

II.7 Revaluation of Answer Papers

When the semester results are published, in case any student feels aggrieved, he/she can request for revaluation of answer scripts of the end semester examination. For this purpose, the student has to submit a request in the prescribed form to the Controller of Examination within five working days from the publication of results through the Department Chair along

with the revaluation fee. The answer paper will be shown to the candidate in the presence of the faculty who valued the answer script and the concerned Department Chair. After going through the answer book and the marks awarded, if the candidate desires revaluation, it will be done by the Chair along with the faculty who valued the answer paper. When the revaluation is completed, the results will be published and the revised grade will be awarded to the student. Revaluation will be allowed only for theory-based courses.

II.8 Award of Degree

In order to be eligible to receive the MCA degree, all candidates must complete a Research Paper (based upon the Dissertation Research) which can be submitted to a Scopus-indexed conference/journal.

There are three levels of passing, as outlined below.

(i) In order to earn the **MCA Degree with Distinction**, a candidate must:

pass all courses in the first attempt within three years obtaining a CGPA of 8.5 and above;

OR

pass all courses in the first attempt obtaining a CGPA of 8.5 and above completing the program within four years (up to one more year) provided officially permitted to break the programme;

OR

pass all courses in the first attempt obtaining a CGPA of 8.5 and above, and complete the Dissertation Research work before the end of the seventh semester (up to one semester extension) provided the extension is officially permitted by the PGP Chair due to administrative reasons.

Students who do not meet the above criteria for distinction will be considered for graduation with First Class.

(ii) In order to earn an **MCA Degree with First Class**, a candidate must:

pass all courses in the first attempt within the specified period of three years obtaining a CGPA between 7.00 and 8.49;

OR

pass all courses obtaining a CGPA of 7.0 or above, but taking one semester extra due to failures, etc.;

OR

pass all courses obtaining a CGPA of 7.0 or above, but redoing the Dissertation Research within one extra semester.

(iii) Students who are not covered under Distinction or First Class and who secure a CGPA of 5.0 or above will be awarded the MCA Degree without any class or distinction.

III. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR STUDENTS

III.1 Residence Requirement

MCA Programme is residential, and it is necessary that students stay in the hostel and abide by the code of conduct expected of all Amrita residential students.

III.2 Discontinuation of Studies

Based on academic, discipline or other reasons of serious nature, a student may be asked to discontinue from the programme to which he or she was admitted. A student may also, for extraneous reasons, withdraw from the course of study for which he or she admitted. In all such cases, the student will forfeit the fees paid until the end of academic year concerned but will be issued a Transfer Certificate.

III.3 Authenticity of Documents

During the course of the study in the University, if any information (proof of age, qualification for admission, etc.) furnished by a student is found to be wilfully misrepresented or forged, the student will be dismissed from the University. He or she will forfeit all fees paid up to the end of concerned academic year. The onus of proof for authenticity of all the certificates rests with the student. If such cases are detected after completion of the course, the degree conferred by the University will be withdrawn.

III.4 Malpractice and Plagiarism

Malpractice of any sort in laboratories, assignments and examinations, will be referred to the Disciplinary Action Committee for suitable punishment.

Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's ideas or work and calling them one's own without due attribution (acknowledgment or citation). This is also academic malpractice and will be treated by the Disciplinary Action Committee.

When writing their Dissertations and Research Papers, students should never reproduce material verbatim from published conference or journals papers, text books or other sources such as the web documents. It is important to express in one's own words the salient points from related literature rather than copying verbatim what someone else has written.

III.5 Ragging

Students are seriously cautioned that any act of ragging is a criminal offence, which may attract punishment including criminal prosecution and/or dismissal from the University with a mention in the Transfer Certificate to this effect.