Deliverable 3

Joint Degree Policy

Grant Agreement number:	101180422
Project acronym:	MEMSE
Project title:	Joint Masters in Emerging Material Science and Engineering
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Core Partners:	WUST (PL), FHM (DE)
Associate Partners:	CUB (SK), UNILIM (FR), IITM (IN), BUET (BD)

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the European Union

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Executive Summary

The Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering (MEMSE) is an Erasmus Mundus Design Measure project funded under the ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EMJM-DESIGN call (Grant Agreement No. 101180422). The purpose of this Design Measure is to develop a robust framework for the creation of a new, high-level, transnational Joint Master Degree in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering.

This Deliverable sets out the joint degree policy covering all aspects including academic requirements, enrolment, fees and clearly set out the award and sample of the joint degree parchment.

The ultimate ambition of MEMSE is to establish a sustainable, internationally competitive Joint Master programme capable of producing future-ready graduates equipped to lead innovation in emerging materials science and engineering across Europe and globally. This Deliverable facilitated that.

1. Introduction

The Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering (MEMSE) is an Erasmus Mundus Design Measure project funded under the ERASMUS-EDU-2024-EMJM-DESIGN call (Grant Agreement No. 101180422). This Deliverable sets out the joint degree policy covering all aspects including academic requirements, enrolment, fees and clearly set out the award and sample of the joint degree parchment.

2. MEMSE: Joint Degree Policy

The draft Joint Partnership Agreement is given in the Appendix along with its own Annexes.

3 Deviation from Original Plan

The submission of this Deliverable was delayed.

4 Conclusions

This Deliverable provided a joint degree policy including academic requirements, enrolment, fees and clearly set out the award and sample of the joint degree parchment.

Appendix: Joint Degree Policy of MEMSE

Joint Degree Policy

for the

Erasmus Mundus
Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering
(MEMSE)

1. The Programme

(a) MEMSE is a comprehensive 2-year (4 semesters, 120 ECTS) full-time Master programme. It combines the specific expertise and programme specializations offered by the three **Core Partners** and four **Associate Partners** of the Consortium. **Core Partners** are the degree awarding universities.

(b) MEMSE will provide advanced education and interdisciplinary training in the field of sustainable materials, advanced manufacturing technologies, and emerging material systems. It integrates expertise from multiple institutions and combines academic coursework, international mobility, research training, and industry engagement.

(c) MEMSE addresses global technological and environmental challenges through innovation in sustainable materials and technologies through an academic structure that is built on the following key principles:

- International mobility and collaborative education
- Integration of sustainability and emerging materials science
- Strong connection between academia and industry
- Interdisciplinary training across materials science, engineering, and sustainable technologies
- Joint academic oversight across partner institutions.
- Students enrolled in the Programme will benefit from access to the research infrastructure, academic expertise, and industrial networks of all Partners.

(d) **The Programme** curriculum includes three compulsory mobilities. A mobility is defined as studying a full semester and obtaining at least 30 ECTS at a University that is different than the University where the student studied in the previous semester. The mobility scheme is specified in MEMSE Programme, Grading and Graduation Specifications included as specified in the MEMSE Handbook and Regulations. Mobilities must take place in the first three semesters of the Programme within the first two academic years (AY). Students will follow the following compulsory mobility paths:

Mobility 1. Foundations and Sustainability Frameworks @ University of Limerick (UL), Ireland, Semester 1, Academic Year 1: Mobility to Wroclaw University of Science and Technology (WUST), Poland.

Mobility 2. Advanced Materials Processing and Computational Approaches @ Wroclaw University of Science and Technology (WUST), Poland Semester 1, Academic Year 1: Mobility to FH Münster, Germany.

Mobility 3. Specialisation Tracks and Applied Laboratories @ FH Münster, Germany. Semester 1, Academic Year 2. Mobility to Any Partner of the Programme for Master Thesis and Colloquium.

(a) To graduate from MEMSE, student must carry out research in Semester 2 of Academic Year 2 to complete and submit a Master Thesis. The Master thesis will be supervised under a structured consortium framework designed to ensure academic quality, joint ownership, and interdisciplinary perspectives.

(b) For each course/module/thesis the examination criteria of the host Partner, where the course/module/thesis is taken, apply. Examination results are transferred between/with Core Partners and fully recognized by all Partners.

(c) All marks/grades obtained by students for courses/module/thesis completed at each Core Partner institution will be converted according to the MEMSE Consortium Student Grade Conversion Table.

(d) Core Partners process respective Grade rechecks and repeat examinations students according to the local Regulations and Academic Calendar for deadlines.

(e) The Student recognizes that in the case of failure on one course, a provisional validation of

the corresponding mobility may be granted. The final validation will be subject to either a resit of the failed assessment if conditions and local rules allow and the resit takes place at the beginning of the following semester, or to a retake and successful passing of the course in the following year, which may require re-enrolling at the university offering this course, retaking the entire course and paying the tuition fees for this course. This applies also to the MEMSE spring/summer/winter schools. Resists or retakes will not be granted for the purposes of grade improvement.

(f) The Student shall select and have approval for their research topic for the Master thesis no later than 31 May of Semester 2 of the Academic Year 1. The Master thesis project will be subject to approval from the Governing Board and relevant committees at the respective University regarding its feasibility, ethical aspects and concordance with the objectives and learning outcomes of MEMSE. The Student shall express preferences for supervisor(s), thesis topics, Partner to host the research. While the student can choose from listed topics and supervisors from any of the **Partners** of the Consortium, there must be co-supervision from one of the Core Partners. Based on these preferences and the availability of supervisors, the consortium shall approve or assign research thesis. JPMB holds the ultimate discretion of the allocation of thesis topic and Partner/s.

(g) The Student shall submit and defend their master thesis in the 2nd year by the 31st of August. Student must recognise that if the thesis is not defended by this date for any reason on the Student's side, the thesis shall remain incomplete and roll into the following academic year a full fee for the following year shall be due to the student.

2. Degree award

The Programme is a 'Joint Programme' with an integrated curriculum coordinated by the University of Limerick, Ireland (the Coordinator) and offered jointly by the Core Partners leading to multiple degrees awarded by the Core Partners attesting to the successful completion of the Programme. Upon successful completion of requirements of the Programme, students will receive:

- Three individual master's degrees, each issued by one of the Core Partners in accordance with the respective national regulations and institutional procedures.

In addition to the individual institutional degrees, students will also receive:

- A joint common certificate issued by the Consortium, confirming successful completion of the MESMAT joint master programme.

The joint certificate will be signed by the authorised representatives of the three Core Partners (such as the Partner Leader, or Head of Department, programme director, or institutional leadership). The Certificate will serve as formal recognition of the collaborative nature of the Programme and the integrated curriculum completed across the Partners.

The Degree Supplement will include a transcript of records covering all the courses the student has successfully completed within **the Programme**, explanation of the joint nature of MEMSE, **the Programme** structure and content, mobility and grading scheme. This diploma supplement is designed to enhance recognition and understanding of the degree award among employers, universities and other interested organizations.

The Partner Universities will convert grades between universities to the ECTS grading scale in accordance with the following scheme:

UL	**WUST**	**FHM**	**ECTS**

A1 (First Honours)	19-20	5.0	A
A2 (First Honours)	18	5.0	A
B1 (Honours 2.1)	16-17	4.5	B
B2 (Honours 2.1)	14-15	4.5	B
B3 (Honours 2.2)	13	4.0	C
C1 (Honours 2.2)	12	3.5	D
C2 (Third Honours)	11	3.0	E
C3 (Third Honours)	10	3.0	E
D1	FAIL	FAIL	F
F	FAIL	FAIL	F

3. Participation costs

Students receiving scholarships from EACEA through the EMJM Grant do not require to pay any tuition fees. Fees are waived in the Programme for EU-students who are not in receipt of any scholarships from EACEA through the EMJM Grant. Non-EU students who are not in receipt of any scholarships from EACEA through the EMJM Grant are liable to pay a tuition fee according to the regulations of the Core Partners. All students are responsible for the cost of travel, accommodation and other living expenses.

4. Obligations of the Partners of MEMSE

The Partner Universities are obliged to:

(a) Deliver **the Programme** as described in the MEMSE Handbook published on **the Programme** website, including academic content, calendar, structure, degree awards and participation costs.
(b) Provide well-qualified staff and high-quality resources to teach and support the Student during **the Programme**.
(c) Ensure that **the Programme** is well organized, well taught and up-to-date.
(d) Maintain robust quality assurance procedures that incorporate student feedback and external scrutiny.
(e) Apply procedures and processes for teaching and assessment in a fair, just and equitable way for all MEMSE Students
(f) Further responsibilities are summarized as follows:

Responsibility	Description
Module Delivery	Partner institutions deliver specific modules aligned with their academic expertise
Research Supervision	Academic staff supervise master's thesis projects
Curriculum Development	Institutions contribute to curriculum design and updates
Assessment	Institutions conduct examinations and assessments for modules they deliver
Credit Recognition	Institutions recognise academic credits earned during mobility

5. Obligations of Core Partners

Core Partners are responsible for student enrolment, onboarding, day to day student administration and management, pastoral care, programme delivery, learning outcomes, assessment, grading and award of degree.

6. Rights of Programme Students

(a) Each Partner University will have a Partner Leader and a Subject Expert who act as initial contact and source of advice for queries and concerns at the individual Partner University, whether academic, logistic, administrative, social or cultural.
(b) Each Partner will offer the Student all the services that are also available to local students (e.g. language courses, library access, social services, internet access, sports facilities) during their stay at the relevant university, unless restricted to do so by local law or factors beyond Partner's control.
(c) The rights and responsibilities of students during their stay at a Partner shall be the same as those of the other Master students enrolled at that university. Students will enjoy the same benefits and shall be likewise subjected to the regulations and standards of conduct which are in force at the Partner University where they are enrolled.
(d) Each Partner will offer information on local and national administrative and logistical processes, for example university enrolment, accommodation (cost of living, finding and renting flats), university facilities, Programme-related travel, visa information, registration with local authorities and residence permits. This information shall be provided to students in the MEMSE Handbook and individual university welcome brochures prior to the start of the edition of **the Programme** in which they are enrolled, and upon student's request by relevant services at each Partner. Information provided by **the Programme** about legal matters, such as national visa and

residence permit information does not replace consultation with the competent legal authorities.

(e) The Student has the right to raise complaints regarding academic and administrative aspects of MEMSE by following the procedures established in the MEMSE Handbook. Complaints should be initiated at the relevant level, generally starting at a local level with the Local Administrative Coordinator at the specific Partner University concerned. Formal complaints should be submitted by filling in the complaints form which can be obtained from the European Administrative Coordinator. Any further legal dispute between the Consortium

and the Student emerging from this agreement will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Courts of Ireland.

7. Obligations of Programme Students

The Student is obliged to:

(a) Attend and actively participate in **the Programme** (lectures, seminars, teaching and learning events including the MEMSE Summer School, assignments, etc.)
(b) Follow the compulsory mobility path to which the Student has been allocated
(c) Uphold professional and academic ethics during the study cycle
(d) Comply with the local code of conduct at any university he or she is enrolled at or organization he or she is working at
(e) Commit no fraudulent act, in particular abstain from cheating, falsification or plagiarism of academic work including those involving artificial intelligence (AI)
(f) Not abuse or misuse equipment and facilities, nor perform any unauthorized access or violation of departmental, school or university rules
(g) Deliver the expected outputs (projects, assignments, publications, etc.) in accordance with **the Programme**'s requirements
(h) Achieve the expected performance results in order to be allowed to continue participating in MEMSE
(i) Inform the Local Academic Coordinator at the university at which the Student is enrolled of any prolonged absence and justify it with official certificates whenever required. An absence of more than 28 days without justified reasons will be considered withdrawal from **the Programme**. This includes the 4th semester of **the Programme** (second semester of academic year two) until the submission of the thesis, during which the student must be present at the university of their primary supervisor, except with a justified absence communicated to and accepted by the supervisor, the university, and the consortium.
(j) Inform the Local Academic Coordinator as soon as possible at the university at which the Student is enrolled of any circumstances that impede the Student from taking an exam and/or other forms of course evaluation.
(k) Ahere to the academic regulations of the partners and the consortium.

8. Insurance

The Consortium shall ensure that all students are covered by an emergency travel insurance for illness, accident, death, permanent disability, and third-party liability during the entire period of studies, as specified in the MEMSE Handbook. This insurance will be paid from Erasmus Mundus Grant awarded to MEMSE in 2022, and shall have no additional costs for the students. This insurance is valid world-wide, although only for short visits to one's home country, but does not cover all expenses (such as preventative care).

Partner Universities are exonerated from any responsibility for accidents, illnesses, injuries, losses or damages to persons or goods resulting from or in any way related to the activities that are the object of the present Agreement.

9. Intermission

Intermission from studies in **the Programme** will only be granted to the student in cases of grave and exceptional circumstances, and only if such intermission is allowed by study rules of the given Partner University. Periods of intermission will not normally be granted for periods longer than 2 semesters. Applications for intermission should be made in advance to the MEMSE Governing Board,

and require the acceptance of the given Partner University, and the support of the master thesis supervisor or/and the Local Academic Coordinator.

10. Modification of the Student Agreement

Any alteration to the present Agreement must be agreed by the Consortium and the Student in writing. All alterations to the initial situation of the Student must be immediately communicated by the Student to the Consortium. Upon mutual agreement of contractual modifications, the Consortium will issue addenda to the present Agreement, in accordance with the rules of each relative Partner University.

11. Termination of the Student Agreement

This Agreement may be ceased by any of the parties. Cessation must be communicated in writing to the other party, including the reasons for ceasing the contractual relationship.

Failure to comply with obligations of MEMSE Students laid down in this Student Agreement may be a reason for the Consortium to dissolve the agreement.
Termination will be communicated in writing setting out the reasons and effective from 14 days of the dated communication.

12. Handling of Student's Personal Data

Partner Universities will store the Student's personal information and documentation securely and confidentially unless informed otherwise or legally required to disclose it. MEMSE is committed to protecting Students´ personal data. The Consortium's Data Policy is in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679. Additionally, all Quality Assurance data for **the Programme** are collected anonymously.

By signing this Student Agreement, the Student confirms that he/she has received the MEMSE handbook and understands his/her obligation to abide by the policies therein.

SIGNED AS AGREED BY:

The Coordinator Dr. Tofail Syed Department of Physics and Bernal Institute University of Limerick Limerick, Ireland Signature:	The Student: Name: Place Date: Signature: .....

ANNEX 1 : TEMPLATE OF THE MEMSE JOINT CERTIFICATE

Upon successful completion of requirements of the Programme, students will receive three individual master degrees, each issued by one of the **Core Partners** in compliance with the respective institutional procedures through multiple degree award pathway in accordance with the respective national legislation such as: Ireland: Universities Act 1997 and Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012, as amended 2019; Poland: Law on Science and Higher Education of 20 July 2018 and respective bylaws; Germany: Länder Higher Education Acts (Landeshochschulgesetze), the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) resolutions on joint programmes and the use of academic titles, and the Musterrechtsverordnung (MRVO) on accreditation, implementing the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

Parchments issued by respective Core Partners will follow their current guidelines and templates. Students will also receive a common certificate issued by the Consortium, confirming successful completion of the Erasmus Mundus Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering. The joint certificate (the Certificate here to fore) will be signed by the authorised representatives of the three Core Partners (such as the Partner Leader/Coordinator, or Head of Department, programme director, or institutional leadership). Figure below provides a pro-forma Certificate.

memse.eu

Erasmus Mundus
Master in Emerging Materials Science and Technology

Awarded to

[Full Name of the Graduate]

for successfully completing a programme of study of 120 ECTS credits of which 30 ECTS credits of *MSc in Applied Physics* at the University of Limerick (Ireland); 30 ECTS credits of *Master in Materials Engineering*, at Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) ; 30 ECTS credits of *Master in Materials Science* FH Münster (Germany), and 30 ECTS credits of Thesis at the University of Limerick (Ireland)/Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) and FH Münster (Germany) with placement hosted at Comenius University of Bratislava (Slovakia)/University of Limoges, France/Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET), Bangladesh/ Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras, India/ University of Limerick (Ireland)/Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) and FH Münster (Germany) in accordance with the standards of the European Higher Education Area

By

Coordinator/Partner Leader	Partner Leader	Partner Leader
University of Limerick, Ireland	**Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Poland**	**FH Münster, Germany**
UNIVERSITY OF LIMERICK OLLSCOIL LUIMNIGH	Wrocław University of Science and Technology	FH MÜNSTER University of Applied Sciences

complementing respective certifications of Master of Science in Applied Physics from the University of Limerick (Ireland), Master in Materials Engineering, from Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) and Master in Materials Science FH Münster (Germany)

The Certificate will serve as formal recognition of the collaborative nature of The Programme and the integrated curriculum completed across the Partners.

ANNEX 2: DRAFT OF THE DEGREE SUPPLEMENT

Erasmus Mundus

Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering (MEMSE)

DEGREE SUPPLEMENT

Valid with University of Limerick Parchment No. [xxxxx]

Awarded on [Date]

Contents

Co-funded by the European Union

DEGREE SUPPLEMENT

This degree supplement follows the model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. The purpose of the supplement is to provide sufficient independent data to improve the international 'transparency' and the fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas, degrees, certificates etc.). It is designed to provide a description of the nature, level, context and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed by the individual named on the original qualification to which this supplement is appended. It is free from any value judgements, equivalence statements or suggestions about recognition.

1. *INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE HOLDER OF THE QUALIFICATION*

1.1 Family name(s):

1.2 Given name(s):

1.3 Date of birth (day/month/year):

1.4 Country of birth:

1.5 Student identification number at the University of Limerick, Ireland:

2. *INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE QUALIFICATION*

2.1 Name of qualification and title conferred (in original language):

Master of Science in the Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering is a 120 Credit Erasmus Mundus Joint Master programme delivered by a consortium through multiple degree award pathway.

This Degree and supplement are signed by the three (3) universities as Core Partners where the student has completed at least 30 ECTS credits.

As an international degree, each university indicates how this title is accredited in accordance with their respective national educational rules and regulations and the standards of the European Higher Education Area.

Titles conferred by the respective Core Partner institutions are:

MSc in Emerging Sustainable Materials and Technology by the University of Limerick (Ireland);

Master in Materials Engineering, by Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) and

Master in Materials Science by FH Münster (Germany), in accordance with

2.2 Main field(s) of study for the qualification: Materials Science, Physics, Engineering.

2.3 Name and status of awarding institutions (in English and original language):

University of Limerick/Ollscoil Luimnigh, public university

Wrocław University of Science and Technology (Poland) and

FH Münster (Germany).

3. *Language(s) of instruction/examination: English*

4. *INFORMATION ON THE LEVEL OF THE QUALIFICATION*

4.1 Level of qualification:

Ireland: Master of Science, Level 7, European Qualifications Framework, Level 9, National Framework for Qualifications (QQI)

Poland: Magister, Level 7, Polish Qualifications Framework (confirmed by a separate Degree)

Germany: Master of Science (M.Sc.), Level 7, European Qualifications Framework, Level 7, German Qualifications Framework (DQR)

4.2 Official length of programme: 2 years (four semesters)/120 ECTS credits

4.3 Entrance requirement(s):

Applicants must hold a Bachelor's degree or equivalent qualification in a relevant field, such as: Materials Science, Physics, Chemistry, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Nanotechnology, Applied Sciences related to materials and engineering. The degree should normally correspond to three to four years of undergraduate study or an equivalent qualification recognised by the consortium. Applicants with degrees from closely related fields may also be considered if they demonstrate sufficient background knowledge in relevant scientific subjects.

5. *INFORMATION ON THE CONTENTS AND RESULTS GAINED*

5.1 Mode of study: Full-time studies in a joint programme with three compulsory mobility between universities.

5.2 Programme requirements:

The Programme addresses global technological and environmental challenges through innovation in sustainable materials and technologies through an academic structure that requires three compulsory mobilities. A mobility is defined as studying a full semester and obtaining at least 30 ECTS at a University that is different than the University where the student studied in the previous semester. The Programme involved three (3) compulsory mobilities along with its own curriculum and is composed of compulsory advanced courses in sustainability, emerging materials, processing, technology, and research methods:

Mobility 1. Foundations and Sustainability Frameworks @ University of Limerick (UL), Ireland, Semester 1, Academic Year 1: Mobility to Wroclaw University of Science and Technology (WUST), Poland.

Mobility 2. Advanced Materials Processing and Computational Approaches @ Wroclaw University of Science and Technology (WUST), Poland Semester 1, Academic Year 1: Mobility to FH Münster, Germany.

Mobility 3. Specialisation Tracks and Applied Laboratories @ FH Münster, Germany. Semester 1, Academic Year 2. Mobility to Any Partner of the Programme for Master Thesis and Colloquium.

To graduate from MEMSE, student must carry out research in Semester 2 of Academic Year 2 to complete, submit and defend a Master Thesis that carries 30 ECTS. The Master thesis has been supervised under a structured consortium framework designed to ensure academic quality, joint ownership, and interdisciplinary perspectives.

5.3 Programme details:

Academic Year 1 Semester 1: UL

	Course	ECTS Credits	Contact Hours	Partner Grade	UL Grade
Compulsory Courses					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Elective Courses					
4.					
5.					

Academic Year 1 Semester 2: WUST

	Course	ECTS Credits	Contact Hours	Partner Grade	UL Grade
Compulsory Courses					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Elective Courses					
4.					
5.					

Academic Year 2 Semester 1: FHM

	Course	ECTS Credits	Contact Hours	Partner Grade	UL Grade
Compulsory Courses					
1.					
2.					
3.					
Elective Courses					
4.					
5.					

Academic Year 2 Semester 2: Host Partner, Sender

	Course	ECTS Credits	Contact Hours	Partner Grade	UL Grade
Compulsory Components					

1.	Master Thesis	30			
2.					

Final Award Classification:
Final QCA::

5.3 **Grading scheme used by the MEMSE Programme**

All grades obtained within the MEMSE programme are expressed in national scales of the Core Partners Universities. They are converted to the UL Grading Scale, and the final QCA/GPA calculated according to Irish law, and associated with the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) as per the table below.

University of Limerick (UL)	WUST	FHM	ECTS
A1 (First Class Honours)	19-20	5.0	A
A2 (First Class Honours)	18	5.0	A
B1 (Second Class Honours 2.1)	16-17	4.5	B
B2 (Second Class Honours 2.1)	14-15	4.5	B
B3 (Second Class Honours 2.2)	13	4.0	C
C1 (Second Class Honours 2.2)	12	3.5	D
C2 (Third Class Honours)	11	3.0	E
C3 (Third Class Honours)	10	3.0	E
D1	FAIL	FAIL	F
F	FAIL	FAIL	F

5.4 Overall classification of the qualification according to the University of Limerick.

The award of the Master's degree is made at honours level.

Award Classification	Cumulative QCA/GPA
First class honours	3.40
Second class honours grade 1 (2.1)	3.00
Second class honours grade 2 (2.2)	2.60
Third class honours	2.00

6. *INFORMATION ON THE FUNCTION OF THE QUALIFICATION*

6.1 Access to further study: Doctoral studies, postgraduate studies

6.2 Professional status: Graduates of MEMSE have qualifications to conduct scientific research, as well as qualifications to deliver work as an engineer or scientist in areas of materials science and engineering.

7. *ADDITIONAL INFORMATION*

7.1 Additional information:

The Erasmus Mundus Master in Emerging Materials Science and Engineering (MEMSE) is a Master programme providing students with knowledge and skills to address global technological and environmental challenges through innovation in sustainable materials and technologies.

The original degree and transcripts for this programme are issued in English.

7.2 Further information sources:

MEMSE website: www.MEMSE.eu University of Limerick

8. *INFORMATION ON THE NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEMS*

8.1 The National Higher Education System in Ireland

The Irish system of higher education and training comprises a range of higher education institutions. The universities (including linked colleges and colleges of education), Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), and the Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland (RCSI), are each established in law as autonomous awarding bodies. Institutes of Technology make awards under delegated authority from Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI). A range of private and other education and training institutions also deliver programmes leading to QQI awards. A list of recognised Higher Education Institutions can be accessed on www.qqi.ie.

Government Agencies

While overall responsibility for the education and training system lies with the Department of Education and Skills (www.education.ie), there are several state agencies with responsibility for specific functions in higher education. The Higher Education Authority (www.hea.ie) is responsible for furthering the development and assisting in the co-ordination of State investment in higher education and training, including research and international education. Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) (www.qqi.ie) is responsible for the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) and for the external quality assurance of further and higher education and training (including English language provision).

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ):

The types and expected learning outcomes of national awards made by higher education institutions at undergraduate and postgraduate level are described in the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ). The Framework has ten levels, which include awards made by schools, further and higher education and training institutions. Awards in the NFQ are nationally and internationally recognised and are underpinned by legislative quality assurance arrangements. There are overarching level indicators at each of the 10 levels of the Framework with associated sub-strands of knowledge, skill and competence appropriate to the achievement of an award at each of these levels. The NFQ is aligned with the Bologna Framework (Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area) and is referenced to the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF).

Higher Education and Training Awards

There are two overall groups of classes of awards in the NFQ: Major and Non-Major. Major awards are the principal class of awards made at each level. They have a larger volume and breadth associated with them than non-major awards. There are sixteen Major award-types included across the ten levels of the Framework including eight higher education and training

award-types which are made from levels 6 - 10. There are three classes of Non-Major award: minor, special purpose and supplemental. Non-major award types facilitate the provision of a wide range and variety of programmes. The volume associated with higher education and training awards is expressed in terms of the allocation of European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) compatible credit.

Access to initial higher education and training is largely on a competitive basis following successful completion of the Leaving Certificate examinations. Access may also be gained through a range of alternative progression mechanisms, including those for mature entrants (23 years of age +); for holders of further education and training awards; or through the recognition of prior learning. Each Major Higher education and training award is described below: Higher Certificate (NFQ Level 6/ EQF Level 5)

The Higher Certificate is normally awarded after completion of a programme of two years duration (120 ECTS credits). Entry to these programmes is generally for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. The Higher Certificate is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna First Cycle.

Ordinary Bachelor Degree (NFQ Level 7/ EQF Level 6)

The Ordinary Bachelor Degree is normally awarded after completion of a programme of three years duration (180 ECTS credits). Entry to a programme leading to an Ordinary Bachelor degree is typically for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. In addition, there are transfer arrangements in place across higher education and a number of programmes of one year duration leading to the Ordinary Bachelor Degree for holders of the Higher Certificate. The Ordinary Bachelor Degree is compatible with the Bologna First Cycle descriptor, though holders of this award do not generally immediately access programmes leading to Second Cycle awards in Ireland.

Honours Bachelor Degree (NFQ Level 8/ EQF Level 6)

The Honours Bachelor Degree is normally awarded following completion of a programme of three to four years duration (180-240 ECTS credits), although there are examples of longer programmes in areas such as architecture, dentistry and medicine. Entry is generally for school leavers and those with equivalent qualifications. In addition, there are transfer arrangements across higher education, and a number of programmes of one year duration leading to Honours Bachelor Degrees for holders of the Ordinary Bachelor Degree. The Honours Bachelor Degree is a Bologna First Cycle qualification

Higher Diploma (NFQ Level 8/ EQF Level 6)

The Higher Diploma is normally awarded following completion of a programme of one year duration (60 ECTS credits). Entry to a programme leading to a Higher Diploma is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees but can also be for holders of Ordinary Bachelor Degrees. It is of note that the Higher Diploma is typically in a different field of learning than the initial award. The Higher Diploma is a qualification at the same level as completion of the Bologna First Cycle.

Masters Degree (NFQ Level 9/ EQF Level 7)

There are two types of Masters Degree in Ireland: taught Masters Degrees and research Masters Degrees. The taught Masters Degree is awarded following the completion of a programme of one to two years duration (60-120 ECTS credits). Entry to a programme leading to a taught Masters Degree is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees. In some cases, entry to such programmes can be permitted for those with Ordinary Bachelor Degrees or equivalent. Research

Masters Degree programmes are typically of two years duration (120 ECTS credits) though not all such programmes are credit rated. The Irish Masters Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna Second Cycle.

Post Graduate Diploma (NFQ Level 9/ EQF Level 7)

The Postgraduate Diploma is normally awarded following completion of a programme of one year duration (60 ECTS credits). Entry to a programme leading to a Postgraduate Diploma is typically for holders of Honours Bachelor Degrees but can also be for holders of Ordinary Bachelor Degrees. The Post-graduate Diploma is an intermediate qualification within the Bologna Second Cycle.

Doctoral Degree (NFQ Level 10/ EQF Level 8)

Possession of an Honours Bachelor Degree is normally required for entry to a doctoral programme. In some disciplines, a Masters Degree is also preferred. Normally those entering a doctoral programme with an Honours Bachelor Degree initially register for a research Masters Degree or provisional doctoral candidature. Upon successful completion of this initial stage, the candidate acquires full doctoral candidature. Doctoral programmes are between three and four years in duration. ECTS credits are used in doctoral programmes for taught elements only. Varying doctoral programmes now exist, including professional and performance/practice based doctorates. The Irish Doctoral Degree is compatible with completion of the Bologna Third Cycle.

Higher Doctorate (NFQ Level 10/ EQF Level 8)

This award largely recognises excellent and distinguished contributions to learning. It may be used for career progression to advanced levels of academia and research. This award is never based on a provider's programme and, as such, is not subject to validation but is assessed by the awarding body for each individual provider. Normally, the learner already holds a first doctorate or equivalent for some period of time prior to becoming a candidate for the higher doctorate. The Irish Higher Doctorate is compatible with completion of the Bologna Third Cycle.

8.2 Legal Bases for Awarding a Joint Master Degree

Joint Master degrees is possible based on the following laws and regulations:

- Ireland: Universities Act 1997 and Qualifications and Quality Assurance (Education and Training) Act 2012;
- Poland: Act of 20 July 2018 - Law on Higher Education and Science and respective bylaws;
- Germany: Master of Science (M.Sc.), Level 7, European Qualifications Framework, Level 7, German Qualifications Framework (DQR)

9. *CERTIFICATION OF THE SUPPLEMENT*

University of Limerick

9.1 Date:

9.2 Signature:

9.3 Name and capacity: **Prof. Shane Kilcommins Acting President**

9.4 Official stamp or seal:

WUST

7.1 Date:

7.2 Signature:

7.3 Name and capacity: **Prof. Dr. Maria de Lurdes Rodrigues, Rector**

7.4 Official stamp or seal:

FHM

7.1 Date:

7.2 Signature:

7.3 Name and capacity: **Prof**. **Roman Cieślak, Rector**

7.4 Official stamp or seal: