



**UNIVERSITÉ
DE GENÈVE**

CENTRE INTERFACULTAIRE
EN DROITS DE L'ENFANT

Masculine terms are used in their generic sense and refer to both men and women.

**Study regulations
for the
Maîtrise universitaire d'études avancées en droits de l'enfant
Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (MAS)**

Article 1 Purpose

- 1.1 The Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights is conferred by the Centre for Children's Rights Studies (CCRS) of the University of Geneva. The English title of the qualification "Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights" also appears on the certificate.
- 1.2 The MAS programme is organised in conjunction with the International Institute for the Rights of the Child (IDE).

Article 2 Objectives

- 2.1 The general objectives of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights (hereafter MAS) are primarily to:
 - a) offer participants the opportunity to acquire specialised knowledge in children's rights in their theoretical and practical dimensions through the introduction of different concepts and approaches;
 - b) deepen understanding of the role of international instruments on children's rights in the implementation and monitoring of children's rights, with a particular focus on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
 - c) focus on an international and interdisciplinary approach to children's rights;
 - d) promote critical thinking concerning the effective practical application of the concepts and principles underlying the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- 2.2 The programme aims to develop specific knowledge and skills in addition to the general objectives, notably to:

- a) acquire detailed knowledge of children's rights in the fields of law, sociology, psychology, culture and economics, including differences in gender and culture;
- b) adopt a critical approach to understanding the origins, nature, limits and implementation of children's rights from an international and interdisciplinary perspective;
- c) increase skills in collaborative and independent learning via the resolution of intellectually challenging tasks in order to improve problem-solving and critical-thinking skills;
- d) learn relevant theoretical, methodological and analytical techniques and develop skills in order to identify and contribute to resolving issues and problems relating to the realisation of children's rights;
- e) practise presentation and advocacy skills via the production of seminar presentations, discussion papers, essays and project work dealing with particular issues in children's rights;
- f) develop the necessary tools to use human rights standards and mechanisms at a national and international level.

Article 3 Programme organisation and management

3.1 Programme organisation and management for the MAS in Children's Rights are the responsibility of a Steering Committee reporting to the Director of the CCRS at the University of Geneva. The same Steering Committee manages the CAS in Children's Rights.

3.2 The Steering Committee consists of a minimum of three people, including

- a. a professor from the CCRS at the University of Geneva, in principle an ordinary professor, Programme Director and academic supervisor for the MAS;
- b. a professor or teacher at the University of Geneva;
- c. a field expert as programme coordinator.

A majority of the Steering Committee must be teaching staff at the University of Geneva.

3.3 The Programme Director and members of the Steering Committee are appointed by the College of Professors of the CCRS. The programme director and members of the Steering Committee are appointed for a two-year renewable term. The Steering Committee is chaired by the Programme Director.

3.4 The Steering Committee is responsible for the study programme from an academic and pedagogical perspective. Its main role is to oversee the design and implementation of the MAS in Children's Rights study programme along with the process of assessing the skills acquired by students. It approves the academic programme and choice of contributors proposed by the programme coordinator. It also produces the study regulations and submits them to the relevant bodies for adoption.

3.5 The Steering Committee may be assisted by a scientific advisory board, which provides expertise and advice on the MAS and CAS in Children's Rights. The scientific advisory board is made up of three to six members. Members are appointed for a two-year renewable term. Members of the scientific advisory board are appointed by the Steering Committee. The scientific advisory board meets at least once a year at the invitation of the Programme Director.

Article 4 Admissions criteria

4.1. Applicants for admission to the MAS must:

- a. hold a master's degree in the field of social and human sciences conferred by a Swiss university or a qualification deemed to be equivalent by the Steering Committee
- b. provide evidence of at least two years' professional experience in a field linked to the course
- c. and have a level of proficiency in English deemed sufficient to follow the teaching and participate in the programme and discussions.

4.2 The information required to submit an application and the period for enrolment on the MAS are defined by the Steering Committee.

4.3 Applicants must also pay an administration fee of CHF 150.00 by the required deadline and attach a copy of their payment to their application form. The administration fee is non-refundable, regardless of whether the applicant is admitted.

4.4 The decision to admit is made by the Steering Committee.

4.5 Students enrolled in a previous cohort who have taken a break from their course may seek readmission in a new cohort. Once their readmission has been confirmed, they may submit a written request to the Management Committee for recognition of credits obtained previously, within a maximum of four years from completing the module or modules concerned. The Management Committee will notify applicants who are accepted of the number of credits awarded, the number of credits to be completed, the deadline for completing the programme and the remaining enrolment fees.

4.6 Applicants admitted to the MAS who have taken the CAS in Children's Rights conferred by the CCRS at the University of Geneva prior to applying for enrolment may submit a written request to the Steering Committee for recognition of a maximum of 12 ECTS credits, within a maximum of four years from completing the CAS. The Management Committee will notify applicants who are accepted of the number of credits awarded, the number of credits to be completed, the remaining enrolment fees and the deadline for completing the programme. A reduction of 25% on the enrolment fees for the MAS will be granted.

- 4.7 Successful applicants must formally accept or reject their place on the programme by the deadline notified by the Programme Director.
- 4.8 Applicants admitted to the programme are registered at the University of Geneva and enrolled as continuing education students respectively in the MAS in Children's Rights provided they have paid the programme enrolment fees by the deadline stipulated by the Steering Committee. Applicants must have paid their enrolment fees in full in order to be awarded the MAS in Children's Rights.
- 4.9 If an applicant is unable to pay the enrolment fees for the MAS programme by the required deadline, they may submit a written statement to the Management Committee, requesting staged payment of their enrolment fees and setting out the reasons for their request. If their request is accepted, the Steering Committee will inform the applicant of the new payment terms and deadlines. Applicants must have paid their enrolment fees in full in order to be awarded the MAS in Children's Rights.
- 4.10 The total amount of enrolment fees for the MAS is set by the Steering Committee each time the programme is run. This amount applies to the maximum period of study as set out in article 6.1 below. In the case of the period of study being extended as set out in article 6.2 below, a fee of CHF 1,000.00 per additional semester will be due.
- 4.11 In principle, the MAS course is delivered every two years. The Steering Committee can decide otherwise, in particular if it deems the number of students enrolled to be insufficient.
- 4.12 Those who do not wish to take the entire MAS in Children's Rights course can apply to take one or more modules. The programme's Steering Committee will decide on their request. Their enrolment will be confirmed provided they have paid the enrolment fees for the module(s) concerned by the deadline stipulated by the Management Committee. The number of such participants is limited per module and for each cohort and is set by the Steering Committee. Priority is given to applicants enrolled on the MAS in all cases.

Article 5 Withdrawal of application or from the programme

- 5.1 Successful applicants who have confirmed their participation in the MAS can withdraw their application before the deadline for payment of the programme enrolment fees. They must inform the Programme Director of their intention by the deadline. The administration fee remains payable.
- 5.2 Students who wish to withdraw from the programme must inform the Programme Director of their intention as soon as possible.

The following supplementary fees are payable in addition to any fees for the modules taken:

- in the case of withdrawal before the third module, the student concerned must pay an amount equivalent to 25% of the enrolment fee
- in the case of withdrawal after the third module and before the sixth, the student concerned must pay an amount equivalent to 15% of the enrolment fee
- in the case of withdrawal after the sixth module, all enrolment fees are payable.

5.3 Students who withdraw from the programme receive a statement of participation in the module(s) concerned, provided they have settled the fees for the modules taken and the additional fees for withdrawal from the course in accordance with art. 5.2 above.

5.4 Any decision concerning the withdrawal of an application following notification of admission or withdrawal from the course and the corresponding additional fees is subject to appeal in accordance with art. 21 below.

Article 6 Period of study

6.1 The period of study for the MAS is a minimum of four and a maximum of five semesters.

6.2. The Director of the CCRS may, subject to the opinion of the Steering Committee, grant exceptions to the period of study for the MAS if there are valid reasons for so doing. The student must submit a request in writing, setting out their reasons. If the application relates to the maximum period of study, the maximum period of any extension granted is one semester.

Article 7 Study programme

7.1 The study programme runs over two years. It equates to 60 ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) credits. The programme is taught in English.

7.2 The Steering Committee provides all the requisite information on the study programme in a timely manner, in particular themed module dates, assessment dates and dates for submitting individual and group work. Students receive this information in the MAS student's guide.

7.3 The study programme uses a range of teaching and learning methods. It includes, among others, classroom teaching, individual tasks at home, group activities and academic writing.

Producing the MAS dissertation provides an opportunity to incorporate the knowledge acquired and is based on carrying out a piece of original, interdisciplinary academic research on a specific topic related to children's rights.

7.4 The programme is organised in three interdependent sections.

- a) Themed modules, including:

- a. Classroom teaching
- b. Module-related work
- b) Individual and group work
 - a. Paper
 - b. A group project
 - c. Participation in external seminars and/or conferences
 - d. Internship (optional)
- c) MAS dissertation.

7.5 The MAS study plan sets out the duration and titles of the themed modules, as well as the arrangements for individual and group work and for the MAS dissertation. It also stipulates the corresponding number of ECTS credits.

The MAS study plan is initially approved by the College of Professors of the CCRS and adopted by its Participatory Assembly.

Article 8 Themed modules

8.1 *Classroom teaching*: The programme consists of seven compulsory thematic modules. The first three modules provide a theoretical framework to address the field of children's rights from an interdisciplinary point of view. Modules four to seven focus on particular themes.

Students who are unable to attend a module must submit a written request to the programme's secretarial office explaining the reasons for their absence, in principle one month before the start of the module.

If there are reasonable grounds for their absence as defined in article 11.5 below, the student will be asked to provide a piece of written work covering the topics addressed in the module, meeting the learning objectives and representing the same volume of work for the module concerned (teaching and individual work).

The nature of the written work, arrangements for its completion and deadlines for submission will be decided and approved by the programme coordinator and notified to the student.

Students who are absent from more than one module during the programme will be removed from the course. The Steering Committee may depart from this rule in the case of exceptional circumstances as defined in article 11.5 below.

8.2 *Module-related work*: This includes preparatory work at home for classroom teaching and reading. Detailed information, particularly on the activities required for preparation for modules and compulsory reading materials are sent to students at the appropriate time during the course.

Article 9 Individual and group work

- 9.1. *Paper*: Students produce a paper on a theme related to the programme during the first year of the course.
- 9.2. *Group project*: Students produce a project in small groups during the course. Each group completes the project assigned to it in a creative and collaborative manner. The project is used to analyse an issue related to children's rights and to simulate implementation of a number of solutions that might be applicable in the field.
- 9.3. *Seminar and conference*: All students are required to take part in a seminar or conference related to the content of the MAS programme by agreement with the programme coordinator, and provide an analytical report of the event.
- 9.4. *Internship*: Students have the opportunity to complete an internship of at least 15 days in the field of children's rights during their course. Internships are optional. Students are responsible for researching and securing their own internship. The internship is written up in an internship report. The internship and internship report are assessed and combined in a single score.

If successful, the name of the internship completed on an optional basis and the corresponding number of ECTS credits are mentioned on the diploma supplement. The mark for the internship appears in the student's transcript.

Article 10 MAS dissertation

- 10.1 During their course, all students must produce a dissertation (hereafter the MAS dissertation) in the form of a piece of research focusing on an issue related to children's rights. The MAS dissertation is a piece of individual work and must be addressed from an international and interdisciplinary perspective. The choice of subject and title for the dissertation is decided by agreement between the students and their tutor, who also acts as their dissertation supervisor (hereafter the tutor).

The MAS dissertation must be completed within the required timescales.

- 10.2 The MAS dissertation must be written in English or French.

It is defended at an *oral* examination.

Students must comply with the dissertation regulations set out in the MAS student's guide, particularly with regard to issues such as the choice of topic, writing, methodology, structure, style, formatting and rules for the use of citations.

- 10.3 Each student is supported by a tutor, who helps to define and organise their dissertation work.

The Programme Coordinator appoints a tutor in conjunction with the Programme Director.

The tutor should, in principle, have the rank of professor, or be a member of teaching staff in the CCRS at the University of Geneva.

They must be an expert in the field of children's rights chosen by the student and be proficient in the language in which the dissertation is going to be written.

In exceptional cases, an external expert may also be appointed as a tutor for very specific topics identified as such by the Programme Coordinator in conjunction with the Programme Director.

10.4 Working meetings are organised between each student and their tutor after the fourth module.

These are arranged during the module at times defined in advance. If the students and their tutor are unable to meet at these times, they must agree another schedule. In exceptional cases, a face-to-face working meeting may be arranged, at their convenience, at another time and place.

Tutors and students must decide how they intend to contact each other between modules (notably by e-mail, phone, videoconference or face-to-face meetings).

10.5 The Programme Coordinator supervises the process of setting up and writing the dissertation. The Programme Coordinator may be contacted with regard to any questions about the dissertation, particularly anything regarding the relationship between student and tutor. In exceptional cases, the student may request a change of tutor by sending a written request, setting out their reasons, to the Programme Director. The Programme Director will reach a decision in close consultation with the Steering Committee.

Article 11 Assessment

11.1. Information on assessment methods is given to students at the start of the course. These include written examinations, a paper, group work and work completed for the MAS dissertation.

Assessments must be completed within the required timescales.

11.2 The Programme Director ensures that students receive regular feedback from teaching staff on their learning and the results they achieve in their assessments.

11.3. Assessments are scored on a scale of 0 (fail) to 6 (excellent). Quarter points may be awarded. Students must obtain a minimum score of 4, or an average of 4 if the assessment consists of a series of tests, on the assessment for each module. The relevant credits will be awarded on successful completion of the various assessments.

- 11.4. Students who score less than 4 on any of the assessments or an average of less than 4 if the assessment consists of a series of tests may apply to repeat the relevant assessment or tests on which they have scored less than 4 for a second and final time. The second assessment will be organised as soon as possible.
- 11.5 Students who fail to attend an assessment for which they are registered will be considered to have failed that assessment unless there is a valid reason for their absence. Illness and accidents, in particular, are considered to be valid reasons. Students must inform the Programme Coordinator in writing, with a copy to the programme secretarial office, immediately, i.e. in principle within a maximum of three days of their failure to attend. The Steering Committee will decide if the reason is valid. Students may be required to produce a medical certificate and any other information considered appropriate.
- 11.6 Students are required to participate actively and on a regular basis during the modules and other educational activities, in particular lectures, group discussions, role plays, practical exercises, documentary films, field visits, poster sessions and round-table discussions. Participation of this kind is an integral part of the assessment method for the modules and other educational activities.

Article 12 First year of studies

- 12.1 The first year consists of modules 1 to 4. Each module is assessed by means of a written examination held on the first day of the following module. No materials (in particular books, personal notes, tablets or smartphones) are allowed in the room during the examination. Assessments are prepared under the supervision of the Programme Director. The assessment for the first year also includes producing a paper.
- 12.2 Students must have obtained a score of 4 or above in the assessment for each module (1 to 4) and the paper for the Steering Committee to allow them to enrol for the second year.
- 12.3 Students who have not obtained a score of 4 or above in the assessment of one of modules 1 to 4 or the written paper may attempt the assessment concerned for a second and final time. The Programme Director will inform them of the new assessment arrangements, which may take the form of a written examination or written paper.

Students who fail the second attempt at an assessment will be removed from the programme.

Article 13 Second year of studies

- 13.1 The second year consists of modules 5 to 7. Each module is assessed by means of a written examination, in principle organised remotely, within three to five

weeks of the end of the module concerned. Students may use their course material and information provided during teaching. Assessments are prepared under the supervision of the Programme Director. The assessment of the second year also includes the presentation of the group project and the written report of the conference or seminar.

13.2 Students must have obtained a score of 4 or above in the assessment for each module (5 to 7), the group work and the written report of the conference or seminar.

13.3 Students who have not obtained a score of 4 or above in the assessment for each module, the group work and the written report of the conference or seminar may attempt the assessment concerned for a second and final time. The Programme Director will inform them of the new assessment arrangements, which may take the form of a written examination or written paper.

Students who fail the second attempt at an assessment will be removed from the programme.

Article 14 Assessment of the MAS dissertation

14.1 Assessment of the MAS dissertation includes an *oral* examination. The panel consists of at least two members, at least one of whom must be a member of faculty, teaching and research fellow, lecturer or teacher at the University of Geneva. The panel may include a third member who is an expert in the field.

14.2 The panel assesses both the written dissertation and the oral presentation. A single score is given.

The *oral* examination is held on a date communicated in advance, in principle on the same day for all the students' dissertations.

The main assessment criteria are:

- a) the importance and originality of the research in the international field of children's rights;
- b) the methodology used for the analysis of the data and research material, taking the international dimension of the research into account;
- c) the general coherence of the presentation and structure of the dissertation;
- d) the value of the general conclusions;
- e) the interdisciplinarity, international scope of the research and pertinence of the bibliography;
- f) the quality of the presentation and discussion with the panel.

14.3 A student who obtains a score below 4 in the assessment must make the corrections requested or carry out additional work before being entitled to resubmit their dissertation. The panel will send its comments and conditions to the student accordingly.

The student may attempt the assessment concerned for a second and final time.

14.4 The student must send the corrected version of the dissertation to the panel within two months of their oral examination at the latest. The panel will assess the dissertation within four weeks of receipt. There is no *oral* examination for the second version of the MAS dissertation.

Article 15 Award of the MAS qualification

15.1 The Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights is conferred on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, subject to fulfilment of the conditions set out in articles 11, 12, 13 and 14 above.

15.2 A student who does not complete the MAS programme on which they are enrolled and is not removed from the programme may request a certificate listing the modules they have completed successfully, the results obtained and ECTS credits awarded.

15.3 In order to avoid cumulative awards, and insofar as the CAS in Children's Rights awarded by the CCRS at the University of Geneva is an integral part of the study programme for the MAS in Children's Rights, people who hold the MAS may no longer claim the CAS qualification. The CAS awarded must be surrendered for them to be awarded the MAS.

15.4 People who attend one or more modules without being enrolled on the full MAS programme receive a statement of participation.

Article 16 Fraud and plagiarism

16.1 Any duly reported fraud, plagiarism, attempted fraud or attempted plagiarism shall result in a failure of the assessment concerned.

16.2 Depending on the gravity of the behaviour observed or its premeditated nature, the Director of the CCRS may, on the recommendation of the Steering Committee, decide to remove the student from the programme.

16.3 The Management of the CCRS may refer a case to the University's Disciplinary Committee:

- a) if it believes a disciplinary procedure may be necessary;
- b) in all cases where the failure of the assessment concerned is final and would entail the student's exclusion from the MAS course.

16.4 The Director or Management of the CCRS, respectively, must have first spoken to the student, who is entitled to see their file.

Article 17 Removal from the programme

17.1. Students will be removed from the MAS if they:

- a) fail the assessment for any course or other educational activities in the first year for the final time or fail to complete them within the prescribed deadlines, as set out in articles 11 and 12;
- b) fail the assessment for any course or other educational activities in the second year for the final time or fail to complete them within the prescribed deadlines, as set out in articles 11 and 13;
- c) fail the assessment for the dissertation for the final time or fail to complete it within the prescribed deadlines, as set out in articles 11 and 14;
- d) fail to participate actively and on a regular basis in the module teaching, as set out in articles 8.1 and 11.6;
- e) do not obtain all the ECTS credits required under the MAS programme within the maximum period of study as set out in article 6.

17.2. Cases of fraud, plagiarism, attempted fraud or attempted plagiarism may also result in removal from the MAS, in accordance with article 16.

17.3 Removals are decided by the Director of the CCRS on the recommendation of the Steering Committee.

17.4. Removal from the programme has no effect on the fees due and does not create any entitlement to reimbursement, whenever the decision to remove is taken.

17.5 Students who withdraw from the course must inform the Programme Director in writing immediately, i.e. in principle within a maximum of three days of their failure to attend. Withdrawal from the programme has no effect on the fees due and does not create any entitlement to reimbursement, whenever the decision to withdraw from the course is taken, unless there is a valid reason for the withdrawal as defined in article 11.5.

Article 18 Objections and appeals

18.1. An appeal may be lodged against any decision taken under these study regulations with the body that made the decision within 30 days of the day following the notification.

18.2 The regulations on appeals procedures of 16 March 2009 (RIO-UNIGE) shall apply.

18.3 Decisions on appeals may be referred to the Administrative Chamber of the Geneva Court of Appeal within 30 days of the day following their notification.

Article 19 Entry into effect and transitional arrangements

- 19.1 These study regulations come into effect on 1 January 2015. They replace the course regulations of the Master of Advanced Studies in Children's Rights of 5 February 2013 issued by the IUKB and the University of Fribourg, subject to the provisions of paragraph 3 below.
- 19.2. They apply to all new students commencing their MAS course after the date on which they come into effect.
- 19.3 Students who are already studying at the point at which these regulations come into effect and taking an MAS course that began before 1 January 2015 remain subject to the study regulations for the MAS at the IUKB and University of Fribourg.