

MSC status for Institutions of Higher Learning

In December 1997, the MSC status Scheme for Institution of Higher Education (the Scheme) was launched with three objectives. The first is to encourage and support local institutions of higher education to become world-class IT training centres; second is to increase the local supply of IT knowledge workers, particularly to meet the requirements of the MSC companies; and third is to make Malaysia a regional hub for IT education and training.

Guidelines for MSC status application

The Government of Malaysia recognises that both public and private sector institutions are strategic in developing human resources for the Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) and can provide education and training for knowledge workers in Malaysia. With this in mind, new laws have been introduced to liberalise the Government's education policy, to promote a healthy growth of educational services and to ensure the provision of quality private sector education.

MSC status may be given to institutes of higher learning (IHLs) that offer internationally recognised standard of higher education in multimedia, information technology, engineering, the sciences and other related fields that will contribute to the development of human resources for the MSC. Suitable applicants for the MSC status who locate their businesses or activities in the MSC or one of the designated Cybercities, will also reap the full benefits of the incentives that are offered under the Bill of Guarantees.

Financial incentives

All IHLs, both public and private, granted the MSC status will be eligible for:

- Duty-free importation of multimedia equipment;
- At the option of the applicant, choose to enjoy either tax exemption or investment tax allowance; and
- MSC R&D grants.

Non-financial incentives

In addition to financial incentives, applicants granted MSC status would enjoy the following non-financial incentives:

- Employment of foreign knowledge workers;
- Freedom of ownership;
- Freedom to source capital funds globally; and
- Other benefits including intellectual property protection under the framework of the Cyberlaws, etc.

Eligibility under the Scheme

Institutions eligible for the Scheme are as follows:

- Public higher education institutions
- Private higher education institutions
- Proposed institutions of higher education

Eligibility criteria

These guidelines apply to (i) companies offering higher education; (ii) institutions of higher education; and (iii) qualified faculties in institutions of higher education that are developers or heavy users of multimedia and information technology products and services.

For full list of criteria, please go to www.msc.com.my/mdc/cs/hecsu/default.asp.

Submission of application forms

Application forms can be requested by phone (603 8315 3000) or fax (603 8318 8499) or downloaded in Microsoft Word document or Acrobat Portable Document format from the website www.msc.com.my/mdc/cs/hecsu/default.asp.

Applicants will need to submit a completed application form, a business development plan, and a non-refundable service fee of RM2,000. Within 15 days, the applicant will be contacted to confirm whether or not the application submitted is complete. Once completed, a letter of completeness will be issued to the applicant.

Applicants will be notified on the outcome of their application within 30 working days from the date of the letter of completeness. If an application is not approved, the applicant may re-apply six months after the date of the rejection.

For further inquiries and assistance, please contact the Higher Education Client Service Unit of the Multimedia Development Corporation at telephone number (603) 8315 3000, fax (603) 8318 8499. ●