Master of Networks & Security FAQs

Course Structure and Background Knowledge

1. **Do I need to have a background in information technology (IT) to successfully complete the MNS?**

   No. The MNS has been designed to cater for students who come from a variety of backgrounds, including students with a background in IT, information systems (IS) or a non-IT area.

   For students without undergraduate experience of IS or IT, you will complete a semester of 'foundation' units that give you the necessary knowledge to be able to complete the rest of the course. These units are roughly equivalent to undergraduate study in terms of knowledge gained.

   The four foundation units for the MNS are:
   - FIT9131 Programming foundations in Java or FIT9133 Programming foundations in Python
   - FIT9132 Introduction to databases
   - FIT9134 Computer architecture and operating systems
   - FIT9135 Data communications

2. **Where do I get information about units and the course structure?**

   The first place you should look for information about the course and units is the Monash Handbook: http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/

   The course page in the handbook describes the course structure and which units you need to study. The unit pages provide a brief summary of the unit, as well as specifying any pre-requisite requirements that you need to meet before enrolling.

   The Faculty of Information Technology website also has links to more detailed unit guides for each unit that outlines assessment requirements, lecture topics, and other detailed information.

3. **Do I have to study the course in any particular order?**

   There is a general structure to the course that you should follow. The course has three parts: A, B and C and you should generally follow them in order.

   Part A comprises of the **four foundation units** for advanced network and security units. You might receive credit or exemptions for some or all of these units if you have a relevant background in information technology. The foundation units should be completed first if you need to study them.

Part B consists of **two core units** comprising of **FIT5057** Project Management and **FIT5163** Information and computer security **and six MNS** elective units. Most students should study these eight units after completing Part A.

Part C is the capstone to the course. There are **two options**: the industry experience **(IE)** program or the **minor thesis** research program. For students doing the industry experience program, this must be completed in the final semester, after Parts A and B and take **FIT5136** Software Engineering with the **IE units** which consists of **FIT5120** Industry experience studio project (12 credit points) and **FIT5122** Professional practice.For students doing the research program, though, this will be completed over the final two semesters, which means that the final four units in Part B will be completed at the same time as the Part C units (ie. in your final two semesters).

Note the pre-requisite requirements for MNS units, and also note that Part A units are compulsory: you have to pass them or receive credit/exemption for them. The earlier you attempt them, the less likely you will run into problems with enrolment if something goes wrong and you have to repeat.

4. What happens if I need to leave the course early?

Depending on how much of the course you've completed, you may qualify for a **Graduate Certificate** or **Graduate Diploma in Networks and Security**. See the alternative exit section of the Monash Handbook entry for the course for details (http://www.monash.edu.au/pubs/handbooks/).

Unit Selection, Study Mode and External Electives

1. Which units should I enrol in first?

In your first two semesters, you should have the four foundation units for the first semester, and FIT5057 Project management and FIT5163 Information and computer security and two MNS elective units for your second semester.

If you've been granted credit or exemption for any of these units, replace them with MNS electives. If appropriate, move FIT5057/FIT5163 from your second semester to your first, so that you complete it as soon as possible.

2. Which MNS electives should I choose?

MNS elective list consists of two streams:
  I.   Network stream units consisting of
       a. FIT5010 Network protocol standards
       b. FIT5011 Network design and performance
       c. FIT5034 Quality of service and network management
       d. FIT5083 Network infrastructure
  II. Security stream consisting of:
       a. FIT5003 Software security
       b. FIT5037 Network security
       c. FIT5124 Advanced topics in security
       d. FIT5129 Enterprise IT security planning, operations and management
  A. You should choose 2 electives from each stream and
  B. A set of 2 electives from either streams or
  C. one elective from any of the units from the network/security streams and one FIT Level 5 unit

3. Can I study part time?

> If you're a domestic student, yes you can. You can enrol in 1, 2, 3 or 4 units per semester. Note that you have a maximum of 6 years to complete the course, though.
> If you're studying on an international student visa, you are required to be enrolled in full-time study.

4. Can I overload (study more than a full-time load)?

> Generally, no. In some circumstances, you can apply to overload and study five units in a semester. Overloading is to enrol in more than the standard number of units in each year. It is usually limited to students who have: completed 48 credit points in one calendar year and achieved a 60% credit average or higher in the previous year.

5. Can I study electives from outside of the course?

> Yes, you are permitted to study 6 credit points (one FIT level 5 unit) from outside of the course in Part B.
>
> You have to meet the normal pre-requisite requirements for any unit that you wish to enrol in.

Professional Accreditation and Specialisations

Which professional bodies accredit the MNS?

> MNS Graduates are eligible for membership of the Australian Computer Society (ACS). This is the peak industry body for the IT industry in Australia, and all graduates from the course can be recognised as IT professionals.

Credit and Exemptions for Previous Study

1. What is the difference between credit and exemption?

> Credit and exemption are similar concepts and are assessed in exactly the same way. The purpose of credit is to use previous study to contribute to your completion of the MNS, where that study covers the same material as material in the MNS. If you are granted credit for a unit, you will receive 6 credit points towards the course, the same as if you had studied and passed the unit at Monash. This reduces the amount of study you need to complete to finish the course (a total of 96 credit points is required for the MNS).
>
> The purpose of exemption is to free you from the requirement to complete a specific unit in the MNS, and replace it with an elective unit that will be of more interest to you. Exemptions, therefore, only apply to foundation units within the course: the four foundation units in Part A of the course. Credit or exemption cannot be used for PART B or Part C. With an exemption, you are given 0 credit points, but are free to study an elective unit instead. You can enrol in any unit that has the exempted unit as a pre-requisite requirement, too.

2. I've completed an undergraduate degree in IT or IS. What credit or exemption can I apply for?

> In general, you cannot use undergraduate study for credit in a postgraduate course. The exception is the foundation units, which are equivalent to undergraduate knowledge. This means that if you've studied material that covers one or more of the four foundation units, you can apply for credit or exemption even if your study was at an undergraduate level.

3. I've completed a postgraduate degree. What credit or exemption can I apply for?

> You can apply for exemption for the foundation units, as well as FIT5057 Project management and FIT5136 Software engineering. You can apply for credit for any unit in Parts A of the course.

4. I've completed study that's not a Bachelor or Master's degree (e.g. a diploma, or other course). Can I apply for credit or exemption?

> In most cases, no. You can't generally use diploma or certificate study at a TAFE or polytechnic college, or similar, for credit in a postgraduate course. Similarly, professional education courses, or other non-university education is ineligible.
>
> The exception is in the case of diplomas or graduate certificates/diplomas where the course is a subset of a broader Bachelors or Masters-level course. If the subjects/units are the same as those studied by Bachelors or Masters students, then we can consider an application based on that study.

5. I completed my previous study more than 10 years ago. Can I use it for credit or exemption?

> Usually no. If, however, you've been actively employed in the area since graduation and can demonstrate that you've used the knowledge in a professional setting, ensuring that the knowledge is up to date and fresh in your mind, then we may grant an exemption to the 10-year limitation.

6. Which parts of the course can I use credit or exemption for?

> Credit can be granted for any units in Parts A or B of the course, for previous postgraduate study. Undergraduate study can be used for Part A.
>
> Exemption only applies to mandatory units in Parts A or B or C. This means the four foundation units, or FIT5057 Project management or FIT5136 Software engineering.

7. Can I change my credit to an exemption (or vice versa)?

> Yes. You can request this change via the online credit system.

8. How similar to the Monash unit does my previous study need to be?

> You need to be roughly as familiar with the Monash unit material as someone who has just studied and passed the unit. Units studied at different institutions differ, though, so the general rule of thumb we use is that the previous study should cover 80% of the content of the Monash unit.
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> This coverage can be based on more than one unit. For example, you might have completed two different programming units, and you can demonstrate coverage of 80% of FIT9131 by including both previously studied units in your application.

9. What documents do I need to provide for a credit/exemption application?

> You need to provide documentation that proves you successfully completed the previous study. This means an original or certified copy of your testamur and transcript (list of subjects or units completed and your mark/grade).
>
> You also need to provide documentation that allows us to compare the content of the subjects or units that you studied and the Monash unit. The documentation can be a copy of a subject

description web page, or similar, that outlines the topics covered by the subject or unit. A lecture schedule or weekly topic list would be ideal.

You should read the detailed unit guide for the unit(s) for which you are applying for credit or exemption. Make sure that the documentation for your previous study addresses the learning outcomes or weekly topics covered in the Monash unit. Do not include previous study in your application that doesn't directly address the Monash unit.