Sistema Educativo de Malta

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Education System - Introduction

All children between the ages of five and sixteen are entitled to free education in all state schools regardless of age, sex, belief and economic means. The national minimum curriculum and the national minimum regulations for all schools are established by the state according to the rights given by the Education Act (1988).

The education agenda of the present government works towards the ultimate aim of having flexible workers who are able to adapt and change career if necessary. This is attained through commitment for improvement of educational standards and the provision of an education system, which ensures personal development.

According to the Education Act (1988) a person or institution wishing to establish a private school is given the right to apply for a license from the Minister of Education. Private schools in Malta fall in two categories: Church schools and Independent Schools. Both provide education from pre-primary to upper secondary levels.
**Pre-Primary Education (3-5 years)**

Attendance at the pre-primary level is voluntary, about ninety five per cent of the children in the age bracket between three and five years attend. Pre-primary education is co-educational and is provided free in state schools.

At this level no formal teaching takes place. The National Minimum Curriculum states that the main educational objectives should include activities aimed towards the development of the children's social attitudes, language and communication skills in preparation for primary education. These activities should include communication by word or gesture, singing, play, painting and figure forming, exercises and rhythmic movements.

Most pre-primary centres, which are also called kindergarten centres, form part of primary schools.

Teachers who teach at kindergarten are called Kindergarten Assistants. Prior to employment kindergarten assistants have to be qualified in pre-primary education. This is a two year full time course leading to the certificate in Early Childhood Education that is provided in a part compulsory educational institution.
Compulsory Education (5-16 years)

Education is compulsory for all children between the ages of five and sixteen. Compulsory education is sub-divided into a six-year primary cycle (five to ten years) and five years of secondary education (eleven to sixteen years). The government is committed to a policy of inclusive education throughout the whole educational cycle. This ensures that children with special needs are integrated into the mainstream.

**Primary Education**

Primary education builds on early childhood education and facilitates the development of skills, attitudes and knowledge in preparation for the secondary level. Primary education is free of charge and includes school transport and textbooks. Primary schools are co-educational.

The primary cycle where classes are called years can be broadly sub-divided in two cycles. The first cycle covers *Years One, Two and Three*. During these three years education emphasises the development of social skills, literacy and numeracy skills, gradually progressing to more formal academic skills. During the second cycle that covers *Years Four, Five and Six* there is more emphasis on the academic content. Progressively as children move towards the end of primary education the amount of academic content increases in preparation for the Junior Lyceum Examination.

**Secondary Education**

At secondary level there are three different kinds of state schools. Namely the Junior Lyceums, Area Secondary Schools and schools for very low achievers. There are also church and independent secondary schools.

Admission into the state Junior Lyceums (schools offering a more intensive academic course) and into some of the church schools is controlled by a qualifying entrance examination. Pupils are examined in Maltese, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Religious Knowledge (children may be exempted from sitting for Religious Knowledge if parents object on ground of conscience). Those who fail the examination are admitted to the Area Secondary Schools. The schools for low achievers receive pupils whose levels of attainment after six years of primary education were considered still very low.
The age group of children attending secondary level schools is between eleven and sixteen years. Most schools at this level are single-sex. The organisation of secondary schools is based on year groups called Forms, so the first year of secondary education would be Form 1, the second year Form II and so on. The classification and grouping of the students in the first two years is based upon the language they choose to study at this level and on the grades acquired in the Junior Lyceum entrance examination. Beyond Form II the basis for the students' classification and grouping is the subject options chosen. In area secondary schools the students are grouped mainly on the basis of the language option and on the examination marks obtained at the end of the primary cycle.

**Teachers in Compulsory Education**

The Faculty of Education within the University of Malta confers a degree in education at bachelor's level, B.Ed (Hons). The faculty also organises a Post-Graduate certificate in Education for those students from other faculties who want to take up teaching. The duration of the Bachelor's course is four years whilst the post-graduate certificate course lasts one year. During both courses the students have teaching practice attachments in schools. Teachers may either specialise in teaching at primary level (early years or junior years) or they may specialise in a particular subject at secondary level. The faculty provides postgraduate degrees at both masters and doctorate levels.

**Guidance and Counselling in Compulsory Education**

Guidance and counselling in primary and secondary schools is provided by the Guidance and Counselling Service found within the Department of Student Services and International Relations at the Education Division.

The main services offered are the following:

- Promoting guidance and counselling in support of the education of students
- Facilitating the transition of students from primary to secondary, from secondary to upper-secondary
- Providing curricular guidance, including subject options; choice of courses, etc
- Providing personal guidance and counselling
- Providing information through various activities/materials/seminars such as Career Orientation visits/seminars, Information leaflets etc
- Facilitating the profiling of students and the keeping of cumulative record cards
- Referring students to other specialists and agencies according to their needs
- Promoting staff development in the fields of guidance and counselling
- Participating in research projects related to guidance, e.g. Tracer study; Espad; Health Promoting Schools' Project
- Facilitating education-industry-commerce-service links
- Delivering parenting skills programmes and talks
- Organising in-service courses and professional development sessions
- Organising seminars, talks and preventive programmes on guidance related topics
- Delivering talks and/or contacting parents on personal development, educational achievements, educational issues and developments, and other specific problems

These services are co-ordinated and delivered by the Education Officer (Guidance & Counselling) together with School Counsellors and Guidance Teachers. There is a guidance teacher for every 300 pupils and he/she works in collaboration with the teaching staff.

**School counsellors** are responsible for the running of a guidance and counselling service in one large school or in a number of smaller schools. They help and support guidance teachers and other members of staff regarding any requests of counselling by pupils. School counsellors must be teachers who are in possession of a recognised qualification in counselling and have 10 years of teaching experience in state schools (in the case of school counsellors in the secondary sector, 5 years of this teaching experience should be as guidance teacher).

**Guidance teachers** work closely with the school counsellors and they are encouraged to consult with or refer to them any cases regarding pupils who require counselling. Guidance teachers offer information to pupils and parents about procedures necessary in accessing the available services, subject options and career choices. They co-operate with the school counsellors and teaching staff in the organisation of guidance and counselling activities and services at schools and at national level. Guidance teachers are offered the opportunity to follow a Diploma level course of studies at the University of Malta.
Upper Secondary Education

Upper secondary education (also known as Sixth Form) can be followed at the pre-university Junior College that is administered by the University of Malta and other upper secondary institutions administered by the church or independent organisations.

The Junior College

The major institution providing upper secondary education is the Junior College. It offers a two-year course specifically designed for future University students who are prepared for the MATSEC Certificate in accordance with the University’s General Entry Requirements. Students may choose from a wide range of subjects and must take two subjects at Advanced Level, three at Intermediate Level, as well as Systems of Knowledge. Subjects chosen should also include any Special Course Requirements needed for their prospective University course. While providing formal instruction, the College encourages students to develop their own initiative through guided self-teaching in preparation for their future University career.

All Maltese full time upper secondary students are entitled to a monthly grant. State and Church Institutions are state funded. However Independent upper secondary institutions charge tuition fees.

Teachers at this level are called lecturers and assistant lecturers. Lecturers must be in possession of a qualification at doctorate level. Assistant lecturers are qualified at masters level. Teachers are allocated by subject and level.

Junior College, Guidance and Counselling Services

Students at the Junior College are offered the services of qualified counsellors in three main areas:

a) Personal Counselling to help students find their own way to manage their difficulties and problems and to find out who they really are or want to be. Day seminars are held to help students to get to know each other, develop a positive self-image and learn to form, keep, and sometimes end, relationships.

b) Educational Guidance and Counselling to help students choose the course of studies that will lead them to decide what they want to do in life. During this course, through seminars and individual counselling, students are helped to improve their study habits, prepare themselves for exams, and manage time and stress.

c) Vocational Guidance to help students orientate themselves to a future career by means of vocational interest questionnaires; orientation talks by specialised guest speakers, and visits to various places of work.
Vocational Upper Secondary Education

A. MCAST - Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology

The Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is the main provider of all post-compulsory, post-16 vocational education and training in Malta and Gozo except for tourism studies and health care. Its mission is to provide universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, responsive to the need of the individual and the economy.

The Institutes that make up the College are the following:

1. Institute of Art and Design
2. Community Services Institute
3. Maritime Institute
4. Institute of Information and Communications Technology
5. Institute of Mechanical Engineering
6. Agribusiness Institute
7. Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineering
8. Institute of Business and Commerce
9. Institute of Building and Construction Engineering

Each institute offers a variety of courses related to its area of study. The majority of programmes offered by the institutes are either attended by students on full-time basis, or by apprentices, who combine College-based activities with work experience with an appropriate employer (sponsor). Programmes are offered at all levels from pre-foundation (entry level 0) to Higher National Diploma (level 4). Each Institute has a variety of courses for all entry-level requirements in order to provide a progression route for those who would not otherwise be able to continue with their studies. The Foundation courses, which are at Level 1, provide a progression route into the higher level certificate and diploma courses. Between them the nine Institutes cover most of the vocational areas. Courses vary in duration according to the level and whether it is part of the apprenticeship scheme. Courses lead to appropriate certification either College-based or through an external examination body. The full array of assessment methods is used including written examinations, course work and portfolios. Achievement at one level can lead to progression to a higher level programme.

The College also offers a programme of part-time evening and day courses throughout the year for adults who are in employment and/or who would like to update their skills. The College year extends from September until the middle of July and is made up of three terms.

Student Support
In addition to providing tuition for vocational training, support is also given to those students who have a low level of general education and basic skills, through the Basic Skills Unit of the Learning Support Centre. Students who have learning difficulties or disabilities are helped through the Inclusive Education Unit. This unit provides support to students who require additional help while studying on qualification courses. It also helps students with mild learning disabilities through its Pathway to Independent Living course. The Learning Support Centre runs Pre-foundation courses for students whose level of general skills is below entry level. The centre also offers a wide variety of part-time day and evening course for adults.

**Guidance and Counselling**

The College has an Information and Support Service that provides information about courses offered at the different Institutes of MCAST on a full-time or part-time basis.

A service of guidance and counselling is also offered to potential students especially those in their last year in compulsory education. Students who are still undecided or uncertain as to which route of vocational study they would like to pursue are encouraged to ask for the assistance of a Counsellor before they enroll for a course. MCAST students who would like help with personal difficulties or problems are encouraged to use the Counselling service of the College.

**B. ITS - Institute of Tourism Studies**

The Institute of Tourism Studies prepares students for the hospitality and tourism industry. The hospitality and tourism industry provides work placements for students. One of the current programmes of study (*Higher Diploma in Hospitality Management*) enables graduates to join a degree course in tourism offered by the University of Malta. Foreign universities and Hotel Schools accredit programmes of study organised by the institute. The Institute is also accredited by the Hotel and Catering International Management Association. The courses offered at the institute range from operational to managerial levels.
The Institute of Tourism Studies offers guidance and counselling services to all its students. Besides having its own counsellors who offer personal counselling to students seeking this service, there are also course tutors /industrial mentors who support the students in their vocational and career choices. These tutors/mentors support the students throughout their stay at the institute including the Local Industrial Trade Practice and the Overseas Internships which form an integral component of the programmes of studies at the Institute of Tourism Studies.

C. Institute of Health Care

Apprenticeship Training, Initial Vocational Training

Students following technical/vocational upper secondary education are eligible to enroll in apprenticeship schemes. These schemes are the Technician Apprenticeship Scheme (TAS) and the Extended Skills Training Scheme (ESTS).

The organisation responsible for work placements and follow up is the Employment Training Corporation (ETC) which falls under the Ministry of Education. Vocational courses are linked with industry through the two training schemes available (TAS and ESTS). The ETC offers a wide range of training opportunities for persons willing to learn a trade or skill and thus improve their chances of finding and retaining full time employment.
Tertiary Education

The University of Malta

Higher education in Malta is offered at the undergraduate and post-graduate levels at the University of Malta that is totally funded by Government and is autonomous and self-governing. Courses of studies last between one and six years.

Students normally join university courses at the age of 17/18 years although some mature applicants are admitted mostly to part-time and evening courses.

Admission and requirements

The admission requirements to Tertiary level education are the University Matriculation Certificate and the Secondary Education Certificate examinations. Corresponding levels of other overseas examinations may be accepted as equivalent.

Courses of studies may specify special requirements for admission to that course. The University Admissions Board may also accept graduates of another university or candidates with other qualifications. Applications from local students are normally received in July and August of each year. Overseas students can apply through the International Office of the University up to the end of August each year.

Fees/Financial Support for Students

Local students do not pay fees and are given maintenance grants by Government during their course of studies. All Maltese students following a full-time degree at the University of Malta who are under the age of thirty years receive a stipend. A limited number of scholarships are available in terms of bilateral agreements with some countries. Overseas students are charged fees.

Academic Year

The academic year is divided into two semesters - 1st October to 31st January and 1st February to 31st May. The summer recess is between the middle of July and the end of September of each year.

Testing is held during the last week of January and May whilst final examinations are held in June of each year. Lectures, seminars and workshops are normally held between October and May.
Courses

The University of Malta offers a number of courses in various faculties leading to a Bachelor's degree at the end of three to four years, depending on the course followed. First-degree course in Dental Surgery, Engineering and Architecture and Medicine and Surgery take five years whilst the course leading to doctor of law lasts six years.

Most undergraduate courses at the University are based on modular or credit system. A credit is obtained by completing a study unit comprising a total of 50 hours of study. Lectures are supplemented by tutorials and where appropriate clinical teaching, practical demonstrations and laboratory work. Post-graduate degrees at Master's levels are also offered and require between one and four years of full-time or part-time study through course work and/or research work. Post-graduate doctoral degrees are awarded and are based on research.

Books and other educational material have to be obtained by the students. However the university library houses nearly half a million volumes.

Institute of Health Care (IHC)

The Institute of Health Care within the University of Malta was set up specifically to develop courses in Health Care on an academic level. For many years, the University has provided education for future doctors, dentists and pharmacists. However, today it is recognised that health care involves the efforts of a multidisciplinary team of caring professionals who meet, discuss and plan together the health care needs of individuals and specific client groups.

The Institute of Health Care provides the knowledge and skills for the professional carer, so that s/he may contribute to effective decision making and policy setting. The Institute is also involved in continuing updating exercises, thereby keeping professionals abreast with recent developments in health care.

The Institute of Health Care offers undergraduate courses at Diploma and Bachelor levels.

Malta Centre for Restoration (MCR)

The Malta Centre for Restoration has been set up with the aim to advise Government on policies related to conservation and restoration, including the identification of priority areas and special needs.
The Centre's premises contain Malta's main diagnostic science and restoration laboratories complemented by a fully-resourced documentation division incorporating photography, photogrammetry and laser scanning facilities for the documentation of artefacts, archaeological sites and historic buildings.

Through its Institute for Conservation and Restoration Studies, MCR trains its students on internationally recognised professional standards in various conservation and restoration techniques. Apart from degree programmes carried out together with the University of Malta, MCR also provides post-secondary vocational courses in conservation and preservation of Maltese and cultural property.

These objectives are consistent with the vision of developing and promoting MCR as a centre of excellence with a distinct Euro-Mediterranean dimension and as a hub in the field of teaching and research activity in conservation and restoration at the heart of the Mediterranean region.
**Adult Education**

The **Department for Further Studies and Adult Education** is responsible for the provision of adult education under the Ministry of Education. The Adult Education and Evening Course Section within this department provides various services including vocational, academic, craft and leisure subjects as well as courses in drama, music and art. The section provides centres for adult basic literacy and also a day centre, the Adult Education Centre also provides courses in a number of subjects at secondary level particularly aimed at returnees. Courses are also organised for various entities including other government departments and private entities.

Courses are generally held on a one-year basis, but there are also short thirteen-week courses and others tied up with certification.

Courses for adults are also held by the ETC, Employment Training Corporation (ETC) which provides basic literacy classes and training for the unemployed. The ETC also set up the Night Institute for Further Education providing further opportunities for adults wishing to pursue various vocational courses, including IT and Computer Practice.

**Fonte:** [http://www.education.gov.mt/edu/edu_01.htm](http://www.education.gov.mt/edu/edu_01.htm)