

Frequently Asked Questions

Primary, Middle, Secondary and Post Secondary Schools

When will schools reopen?

Government has announced that schools will not reopen in this scholastic year. Further announcements by Government, will be given on public TV and other communication channels.

Will annual exams take place?

No, there will be no annual exams next June for all students in all years from Year 4 to Year 10.

How will students move to the next scholastic year?

All students from Kinder 1 to Year 10 will progress to the next year group in the next scholastic year (2020-2021). Students from Kinder 1 to Year 5 will move to the next year in the same class group as set by the Head of School.

Students in Year 6 will move to Year 7 in Middle School. Classes in Year 7 will be grouped according to the marks obtained in English, Maltese and Mathematics obtained in Year 6 and Year 5, according to option language, other subjects chosen and as set by the Head of School.

Students in Year 7, Year 9 and Year 10 will also move to the next year in track/class group as set by the Head of School.

Students in Year 8 will move to Year 9 in Secondary School. Classes in Year 9 will be grouped according to the Option subjects chosen and as set by the Head of School.

Primary, Middle and Secondary School Assessments and Reports

Will the End of Primary Benchmark Assessment in Year 6 take place?

No, the Benchmark Assessment will not take place.

Will schools be publishing assessment reports on MySchool at the end of this scholastic year?

No, Annual progress reports will not be sent to parents for the rest of this scholastic year. There will not be any publication of assessment marks or ticking of broad learning outcomes on MySchool for the rest of the scholastic year.

Online Teaching and Learning in Compulsory Schooling

Will online support by teachers continue during the rest of this scholastic year?

Yes, online support by teachers in primary, middle, secondary and post-secondary will continue till the end of this scholastic year. It is important that students continue with their school work till end of scholastic year.

For queries about online learning visit digitalliteracy.skola.edu.mt or send an email to dg.dcle.mede.@gov.mt. For educational resources visit www.curriculum.gov.mt.

Secondary Education Certificate (SEC)

Will the SEC examinations start on 23 April 2020?

No, the session that is commonly known as the Main Session has been cancelled and it will be replaced by a new session in September 2020, **provided the national health authorities do not advise a postponement of this date.**

I registered as a school candidate to sit for some subjects in the Main Session. Will I be awarded the SEC Certificate?

Using the information given to the MATSEC Board by the state and non-state secondary schools, we will be able to provide you with an official SEC Certificate.

How will the MATSEC Board award the SEC Certificate?

The MATSEC Board will be requesting from your school the mark/s you obtained in the school mock examinations. We will also ask your school to submit certain documents such as examination papers, mark schemes and marked scripts of all subjects for all students. We will then apply a standardisation procedure so as to award you a *predicted level* in each subject you registered for in a manner that is fair to you and for all students.

Will I be awarded a grade within this SEC Certificate?

No. Grades will not be issued. Instead, in each subject, you will be awarded the Certificate in one of two Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) levels: Level 3 or Level 2. A Fail applies when the performance is lower than Level 2.

I applied as a private candidate. Will I be considered for the award of a certificate based on a predicted level?

No. As a private candidate, you will need to register for the new September 2020 session.

I did not register for SEC examinations but I did sit for my school mocks. Will I be given a predicted level?

No. Predicted levels will only be given to school candidates who had registered for the Main Session which was meant to be held in May 2020.

What do Malta Qualifications Framework (MQF) Levels 3 and 2 mean?

Level 3 is the expected attainment level of students completing their compulsory secondary school education. Attainment Level 2 indicates that a student is nearly at the expected level.

How are MQF Levels 3 and 2 comparable to the SEC Grades?

The first 5 grades, namely: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 are at MQF Level 3. Whereas Grades 6 and 7 are considered to be at MQF Level 2. For a student to progress to a sixth form, the expected MQF level is 3. However, there are other post-secondary institutions which accept students with passes at MQF Level 2.

Why are levels being awarded instead of grades?

Each school prepares its own mock examinations whereas the MATSEC Board has one set of examination papers per subject for all students taking the examination. Schools have different examiners marking the papers but the MATSEC Board has one set of examiners per subject. Therefore, the SEC examination set by the MATSEC Board ensures that there is

standardisation across all subjects and the grades given to students are fair and valid. The fine tuning that allows the award of grades is not possible in the current circumstances. Instead, we will issue MQF Levels (3 or 2) which will be the fairest measure to allow students to proceed with their studies uninhibited by these unfortunate extraordinary circumstances.

Will the SEC levels issued in July 2020 be accepted as entry requirements to the University of Malta?

A SEC Level 3 in the three compulsory subjects (English Language, Maltese and Mathematics) will satisfy the entry requirements to the University of Malta.

What happens if I was sick for one or more school mock examinations or if the school did not hold mock examinations due to the pandemic?

The MATSEC Board will be in a position to issue a predicted level only if you have actually sat for the mock examination. If you missed mock examinations for any reason you will be eligible to sit for the September 2020 session if you had registered for the same subject/s in the Main Session. However, should you obtain a Level 3 in your Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P), for this year only, post secondary institutions will admit you as a student until the September results are published in November 2020. Should you obtain at least 3 passes at Grade 5 or better in any subject, you will be able to continue the course as a probationary student. Otherwise you will be withdrawn from the course.

When will I receive the results?

The MATSEC Board intends to publish the predicted levels as planned on 15 July 2020.

I have completed the practicals for those subjects which include a practical component in the SEC syllabus. Will these marks be included in the award given?

Yes, the mark for the completed practicals will be included in the predicted level award.

Will I be able to appeal if I am not happy with the Level that I am awarded?

No. An appeal on the Level awarded is not possible. However, if you are not satisfied with the predicted level, you can choose to sit for the session in September 2020, when you will be able to obtain a grade from 1 to 5 or 4 to 7 depending on your performance.

Can I resit if I am unhappy with the result obtained during the September 2020 session?

No, there will be no resit session after the new September session.

Do I need to register for the new September 2020 session?

Yes, if you wish to sit for one or more examinations in September, you will need to register during the registration period after the results of the predicted levels are published by the MATSEC Board.

Who can sit for the new September 2020 session?

Anyone who registered to sit for the Main Session can apply to sit for the new September session.

Can I sit for a Paper IIA in September 2020?

Yes. You will be given the option to sit for a Paper IIA or Paper IIB in September.

How long will the September 2020 session be?

It will be 6 weeks long as opposed to the usual 12 weeks. Unlike the normal September resit session, all subjects will be offered. The examinations are planned to start on 31 August 2020 and end on 10 October 2020.

Will the SEC Oral and Listening Comprehension components and Practical examinations be held during the September 2020 session?

No, these components and practical examinations will not be held in order to ensure that all written examinations of all subjects can be offered and for results to be published by not

later than 6 November 2020. However, candidates will be awarded the full marks usually allocated to these components.

Where can I find SEC past papers and marking schemes?

SEC past papers are available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/pastpapers/S>

SEC marking schemes for some of the subjects are available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/matsec/assessment/markingscheme>

Admission to the National Sports School

How will admission to the National Sports School take place?

The admission criteria used in previous years will be applied again for the next scholastic year. There will be no Benchmark examination results this year and thus these will not be considered for entry to these schools in the next scholastic year. However, an entrance examination in Mathematics, English and Maltese will be held at the end of August or beginning of September for applicants. This exam will be based on the Year 6 syllabus taking into consideration the disruption created by school closures this year. Further details will be sent to applicants in due course. Thus the same criteria will continue to be applied for the next intake and the result of the entrance examination will replace that of the benchmark

The same procedure will also apply for NSS entry into Year 9.

Admission to the Malta Visual and Performing Art School

How will admission to the Malta Visual and Performing Art School take place?

The admission criteria used in previous years will be applied again for the next scholastic year based on an audition and interview. Further details about the dates when these will take place will be communicated to applicants in due course.

Admission to ALP, ALP+ and GEM 16+

Entry to ALP, ALP+ and GEM 16+ will take place next year as usual. Further details of amended timeframes for entry will be announced in the future.

Admission to Giovanni Curmi Higher Secondary (GCHSS) - Academic Year 2020/21

What are the requirements for admission to GCHSS?

You must be in possession of five passes in the Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) at Grade 5 or better or at Level 3 (as awarded in July 2020). The subjects must include: Maltese, English Language, Mathematics and any other two subjects. If you are in possession of these qualifications, you will be accepted as a regular student.

What if I do not obtain the required qualifications?

For this year only, if you obtain at least any three of the five passes required, you will be accepted as a probationary student. The institutions will help you make a sound decision on whether to join the course depending on your actual qualifications. However, you will be the one to decide whether to join as a probationary student or not.

What happens if I was sick for one or more secondary school mock examinations or if the school did not hold mock examinations due to the pandemic?

If you missed your school's mock examinations for any reason you will still be eligible to sit for the September SEC 2020 session if you had registered for the same subject/s in the Main Session. However, should you obtain a Level 3 in your Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P), for this year only, GCHSS will admit you as a student until the September results are published in November 2020. Should you obtain at least 3 passes at Grade 5 or better in any subject, you will be able to continue the course as a probationary student. Otherwise you will be withdrawn from the course.

What does it mean to be a probationary student at GCHSS?

This means that you would be required to be successfully promoted to Year II on the basis of your GCHSS results and performance in Year I at the end of academic year 2020/21 ; otherwise, you will need to re-join Year I but with full entry requirements (i.e. passes in five and not just in three subjects).

How can I change from probationary to regular student?

You will either have to obtain the missing passes in the new September 2020 session or be successfully promoted to the Second Year of the course.

Will GCHSS accept other (overseas) qualifications instead of SEC qualifications?

Yes, the institutions will accept comparable overseas qualifications for admission as a regular or (for this year only) probationary student.

Will the University of Malta require me to obtain passes in SEC Maltese, English Language and Mathematics?

Yes. These passes are required for admission to the University of Malta, even though you might have obtained the Matriculation Certificate.

When will GCHSS start operating during scholastic year 2020/21?

GCHSS will start on the date state schools will be asked to re-open.

A note for students with a disability

Prospective students whose qualifications fall short of those required due to a significant disability may submit a request to the Director General , Curriculum and Lifelong Learning at the Ministry for Education and Employment, dg.dcle.mede@gov.mt, for consideration.

Admission to Sir Mikielang Refalo Sixth Form (Gozo) (SMARSF) - Academic Year 2020/21

What are the requirements for admission to SMARSF?

You must be in possession of six passes in the Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) at Grade 5 or better or at Level 3 (as awarded in July 2020). The subjects must include: Maltese, English Language, Mathematics and at least one of the following: Physics, Chemistry or Biology. If you are in possession of these qualifications, you will be accepted as a regular student.

What if I do not obtain the required qualifications?

For this year only, if you obtain at least any three of the six passes required, you will be accepted as a probationary student. The institutions will help you make a sound decision on whether to join the course depending on your actual qualifications. However, you will be the one to decide whether to join as a probationary student or not.

What happens if I was sick for one or more secondary school mock examinations or if the school did not hold mock examinations due to the pandemic?

If you missed your school's mock examinations for any reason you will still be eligible to sit for the September SEC 2020 session if you had registered for the same subject/s in the Main Session. However, should you obtain a Level 3 in your Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P), for this year only, SMARSF will admit you as a student until the September results are published in November 2020. Should you obtain at least 3 passes at Grade 5 or better in any subject, you will be able to continue the course as a probationary student. Otherwise you will be withdrawn from the course.

What does it mean to be a probationary student at SMARSF?

This means that you would be required to be successfully promoted to Year II on the basis of your SMARSF results and performance in Year I at the end of academic year 2020/21 ; otherwise, you will need to re-join Year I but with full entry requirements (i.e. passes in six and not just in three subjects).

How can I change from probationary to regular student?

You will either have to obtain the missing passes in the new September 2020 session or be successfully promoted to the Second Year of the course.

Will SMARSF accept other (overseas) qualifications instead of SEC qualifications?

Yes, the institutions will accept comparable overseas qualifications for admission as a regular or (for this year only) probationary student.

Will the University of Malta require me to obtain passes in SEC Maltese, English Language and Mathematics?

Yes. These passes are required for admission to the University of Malta, even though you might have obtained the Matriculation Certificate.

When will SMARSF start operating during scholastic year 2020/21?

SMARSF will start on the date state schools will be asked to re-open.

A note for students with a disability

Prospective students whose qualifications fall short of those required due to a significant disability may submit a request to the Director General, Curriculum and Lifelong Learning at the Ministry for Education and Employment, dg.dcle.mede@gov.mt, for consideration.

Admission to the Junior College (JC)

What are the requirements for admission to the Junior College?

You must be in possession of six passes in the Secondary Education Certificate (SEC) at Grade 5 or better or at Level 3 (as awarded in July 2020). The subjects must include: Maltese, English Language, Mathematics and at least one of the following: Physics, Chemistry or Biology. If you are in possession of these qualifications, you will be accepted as a regular student.

What if I do not obtain the required qualifications?

For this year only, if you obtain at least any three of the six passes required, you will be accepted as a probationary student. JC will help you make a sound decision on whether to join the course depending on your actual qualifications. However, you will be the one to decide whether to join as a probationary student or not.

What happens if I was sick for one or more school mock examinations or if the school did not hold mock examinations due to the pandemic?

If you missed your school's mock examinations for any reason you will still be eligible to sit for the September 2020 session if you had registered for the same subject/s in the Main Session. However, should you obtain at least three subjects, each one at Level 3, in your Secondary School Certificate and Profile (SSC&P), for this year only, the JC will admit you as

a student until the September results are published in November 2020. Should you obtain at least 3 passes at Grade 5 or better in any subject, you will be able to continue the course as a probationary student. Otherwise you will be withdrawn from the course.

What does it mean to be a probationary student at the JC?

This means that you would be required to be successfully promoted to Year II on the basis of your College results and performance in Year I; otherwise, you will need to re-join Year I but with full entry requirements (i.e. passes in six and not just in three subjects).

How can I change from probationary to regular student?

You will either have to obtain the missing passes in the new September 2020 session or be successfully promoted to the Second Year of the course.

Will JC accept other (overseas) qualifications instead of SEC qualifications?

Yes, JC will accept comparable overseas qualifications for admission as a regular or (for this year only) probationary student.

Will the University of Malta require me to obtain either SEC Grades (1-5) or SEC Level 3 in SEC Maltese, English Language and Mathematics?

Yes. These passes are required for admission to the University of Malta, even though you might have obtained the Matriculation Certificate.

When will lectures at JC start?

Both Year I and continuing students of Year II will commence lectures on 15th October 2020, **provided the national health authorities do not advise a postponement of the date.**

A note for students with a disability

Prospective students whose qualifications fall short of those required due to a significant disability may submit a request to the Admissions Board who, on the advice of the Access Disability Support Committee (ADSC), will consider each application on its own merit.

Matriculation Examinations - Advanced (AM) and Intermediate (IM)

Will AM and IM examinations start on 23 April 2020?

No, the First Session has been postponed to September 2020.

Do I need to register for this September 2020 session?

No. Registrations for the May 2020 First Session of examinations will be automatically transferred to the September session. A new timetable will be sent to all candidates.

I had planned to register for one or more examinations in the Second Session of 2020. Can I apply for these examinations in the new September Session?

Yes. Students may register for examinations during the registration period which will open in July 2020. No late registrations will be accepted.

Will I be able to resit if I am not successful during the September 2020 session?

Only candidates that had applied for the May 2020 session (First Session 2020) may apply for the December resit session. Candidates who had not registered for the May 2020 session will not be eligible to sit for the December resit session.

The MATSEC Board plans to publish resit results around mid-January 2021.

How long will the September 2020 session be?

It will be 6 weeks long as opposed to the usual 12 weeks. The examinations are planned to start on 31 August 2020 and end on 10 October 2020.

Will the Oral component of the AM and IM Language examinations and Practical examinations for other subjects be held during the September 2020 session?

No, these will not be held so as to ensure that all written examinations of all subjects can be offered and for results to be published by not later than 6 November 2020. However, the MATSEC Board will ensure that there will be no adverse effect on grades students are awarded.

Will the December resit be like the Second Session that is normally held in September?

No, it will be a 'resit' session and not a Second Session. Timeliness is of utmost importance and only candidates who were originally registered for the First Session 2020 can apply for the December resit session.

Can I sit for more subjects in the December session?

You may only sit for subjects that you applied for in the First Session. You will be able to sit for a total of six subjects: one AM, four IM [one from each group] and Systems of Knowledge.

Will the December resit include the Oral component of the AM and IM Language exams and Practicals?

No, the same examination conditions as those for the postponed session in September will apply.

Admission to the Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)

What changes have taken place in the entry requirements for prospective (new) students for the new academic year, 2020-2021?

Prospective students are to refer to the MCAST prospectus or website (<https://www.mcast.edu.mt/full-time-programmes/>) for specific entry requirements to courses.

Entry grades will however be amended as follows due to COVID19 since SEC results will be based on MQF levels rather than grades:

Applicants with SSC&P Track 1 & 2 subjects or SEC predictive assessment results at Level 2 will be accepted to MCAST Level 1 or 2 study programmes following Initial Assessment Tests.

Applicants with SSC&P Track 3 subjects based on their performance from Year 7-Year 10 or with SEC Level 3 subjects based on the predictive assessment as performed by MATSEC, will be provisionally accepted either to MCAST Level 3 or to Level 4 study programmes, depending on specific entry requirements. In cases where a grade higher than 5/C at Level 3 is required, the student will be deemed eligible if his predictive results by MATSEC are issued at MQF level 3.

I have planned to sit for my MATSEC examinations. How is this going to impact on my entry opportunities to join MCAST degree programmes?

MCAST will provisionally accept students studying at Matriculation level to MCAST Level 6 programmes, depending on specific entry requirements.

Moreover, students who fail to obtain the necessary requirements by re-sit session in December 2020 will be offered an undergraduate certificate during the 2nd semester.

Admission to the University of Malta (UM)

By when can I apply for a course at the University of Malta starting next academic year?

The deadline for applications for all University courses is 23 July 2020. Applications for some courses are accepted according to extended late deadlines in August and September. Please refer to additional information on the University Admissions website.

Since this year the Matriculation Examinations are being postponed to September 2020 and results will not be available until the 6th November 2020, when will lectures at UM commence?

Most of the courses at UM are planned to commence on 15 October 2020, **provided the national health authorities do not advise a postponement of the date.**

However, courses which have Special Course Requirements (SCR) that need to be obtained in One Sitting (that is, Doctor of Medicine and Surgery and Master of Dental Surgery) or those which accept only a limited number of students will commence on 9 November 2020.

What will be my status as a student when I start the course in October 2020 before my Matriculation result is published?

You will be admitted to the course as a probationary student.

Will I remain as a probationary student for the duration of the first year?

No. Your status will change to that of a regular student if, having received your Matriculation results in November 2020, you satisfy UM's entry requirements.

What if I do not satisfy UM's entry requirements upon receipt of the results?

You may continue with your first year studies as a probationary student as long as you obtain at least 36 points in your Matriculation Certificate. As a probationary student, you will be required to complete successfully the first year of the course and obtain all the 60 ECTS credits in the programme of study by the September 2021 resit session. If so, you will continue with your second year as a regular student.

Alternatively, you may decide to resit in December 2020 the Matriculation subjects in which you did not obtain the required grade. If you are successful and thereby achieve the 44 points required for the Matriculation Certificate, including (where needed) any Special Course Requirements, your status will change to a regular student.

What is the difference between a regular and a probationary student?

A regular student will be allowed to progress conditionally to the second year of the course if they fail to obtain not more than 12 ECTS credits of the 60 ECTS credits by the September 2021 resit session. The student will need to re-take examinations in the failed study-units during the second year. On the other hand, a probationary student will not be able to progress to the second year if they fail to obtain the required 60 ECTS credits by the September 2021 resit session and will be withdrawn from the course.

When do the courses which fall under the category of Special Course Requirements in One Sitting or courses with limited numbers start?

These courses are scheduled to start on 9 November 2020 following the publication of Matriculation results.

If I already have or obtained the Matriculation Certificate during the September 2020 sitting but I am still missing one or more of the SCRs. Would I still be able to start and continue on my course?

Yes. You will start your course on 15 October 2020 and may proceed to the end of the first year as a probationary student, if you so decide. However, you may use the December 2020 resit session in order to obtain the missing SCR/s; by so doing, you will become a regular student. This does not apply to courses with limited number of students or to those that require SCRs to be obtained in One Sitting.

Does this mean that one cannot be accepted as a probationary student on courses which fall under the category of Special Course Requirements in One Sitting (such as Medicine or Dentistry) or those with limited numbers (such as radiography or physiotherapy)?

Yes. For these courses, you have to have the full course requirements by 6 November to be able to join or be considered for these programmes.

A note for students with a disability

Prospective students whose qualifications fall short of those required due to a significant disability may submit a request to the Admissions Board who, on the advice of the Access Disability Support Committee (ADSC), will consider each application on its own merit.