

Modernising vocational education and training: MCAST's strategic plan 2019-21

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 MALTA

Timeline

2019 Implementation 2020 Implementation 2021 Implementation
2022 Implementation 2023 Implementation 2024 Implementation

ID number 37593

Background

Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST) is Malta's leading provider of vocational education and training at further and higher education. It is the VET institution responsible for governing and managing the apprenticeship system at national level in Malta.

Objectives

The rationale underlying the MCAST strategic plan 2019-21 is the determination to adapt and grow as a well-functioning VET institution in a rapidly evolving modern world. MCAST considers itself fundamental to a strong and prosperous Maltese economy that delivers jobs industry needs. In the provision of its academic and training programmes, MCAST aims to be always relevant and responsive to industry's needs, particularly with the advent of Industry 4.0, driven by cyber-physical systems. MCAST is committed to equipping its learners, through industry-based qualifications, with all the necessary skills, knowledge and competences to make them professional and employable contributors to the economy. This retains the significance of preparing learners to be flexible, specialists in vocational industry areas as required, but also in possession of transversal skills, behavioural skills and appropriate attitudes.

The MCAST Strategic plan 2022-27 builds on the previous strategy of 2019-21, taking into account the disruption brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic. Outlining a set of 20 SMART targets, to be achieved by 2027, its vision is to foster a working and learning community in which any individual or group can feel welcome, respected, supported and valued. Based on the values of inclusion, equity and excellence, its mission is to provide a universally accessible vocational and professional education and training with an international dimension, responsive to the needs of the individual and the economy. Its strategic goals are:

- (a) to provide an outstanding educational experience for every student, leading to MCAST graduates being innovators who are fully prepared for their future vocational and professional careers;
- (b) to provide students and staff with a high-quality landscaped setting while maximizing the use of investment made in the past years and ensuring financial sustainability;
- (c) to position MCAST as leaders in VET provision through internationally recognised

- qualifications valued by industry, while working in partnership with employers and other stakeholders to continuously improve the relevance of its curriculum;
- (d) to ensure that all qualifications are industry-driven and based on community-oriented curricula and impact research;
- (e) to establish an Eco Charter and become an ecologically sustainable college and a hub for education for sustainable development.

Description

The MCAST Strategic blueprint 2030 underpins its strategic direction. This is informed by the college's contextual challenges that include: meeting the ever- changing economic and industry needs, a drive towards boosting the esteem of vocational and professional education and training (VPET) in Malta and abroad, its physical infrastructure, and enhancing its autonomy and self-regulation. The college's strategic horizon for the forthcoming years is informed, aligned and directed by relevant Maltese and European policy documents.

MCAST's Strategic blueprint 2030 is focused on initiatives that achieve the desired infrastructure investment, initiatives aimed at making MCAST a more outward-looking college, and initiatives aimed at moving away from a silo mentality and working closer with industry, stakeholders and social partners.

The Strategic blueprint 2030 is built around seven strategic directions:

- (a) strategic direction 1: invest in modern infrastructure that is fit for current and future staff and students;
- (b) strategic direction 2: strengthen quality and relevance to enhance the students' learning experience;
- (c) strategic direction 3: position quality work-based learning at the heart of all professional and vocational training programmes offered by MCAST;
- (d) strategic direction 4: reinforce the image and build the esteem of vocational and professional education and training;
- (e) strategic direction 5: broaden the local and international MCAST partner network;
- (f) strategic direction 6: provide support and reinforce the management and governance structures;
- (g) strategic direction 7: incentivise the development of applied research and sustainable innovation across the college.

In order to underpin all seven strategic objectives, set for the College, which will inform its decision directions for the next six years, MCAST is keen to intertwine three transversal themes. These thematic priorities will direct the priorities which the College will set for each strategic objective:

- (a) student engagement, retention, development and involvement;
- (b) community college and a college for the community;
- (c) greener sustainability and digitalisation.

2019 Implementation

Against the backdrop of its Strategic blueprint 2030, MCAST launched the strategic plan 2019-21 in May 2019. This plan is a means of incentivising more inclusiveness, equity and excellence in vocational provision in Malta. The strategy for the college sees vocational education as a driving force behind a quality labour force in Malta by preparing learners to be flexible and specialists in vocational industry areas as required, but also in possession of transversal skills, behavioural skills and appropriate attitudes.

The 2019-21 strategic plan indicates a number of initiatives for each of the seven strategic directions, 18 in all. Similarly, for each initiative, the strategy includes a number of measures for its implementation. This three-year strategic plan includes 86 such measures.

2020 Implementation

During the year MCAST, continued with the implementation of this strategic plan, while monitoring the achievement of the planned targets. The College has already started preparing for a post-2021 strategy. It is expected that this upcoming strategic plan will cover the period 2022-27 and will be informed by the overarching principles of the Strategic blueprint 2030.

2021 Implementation

The MCAST Strategic plan 2019-21 process was wrapped up at the end of 2021. In parallel to the wrapping up process, MCAST kicked off another consultation process to draft a subsequent Strategic Plan. In Nov 2021, the College launched a new document covering 2022-27.

2022 Implementation

In the first half of 2022, MCAST straddled the two strategic plans, concluding some outstanding initiatives and kicking off additional initiative.

2023 Implementation

At the beginning of each year, the college adopts individualised action plans with key performance indicators (KPIs) cascading the organisational structure. Each action and KPI is linked back to the various measures in the strategic plan document. Monitoring and reporting happens twice a year.

A milestone achievement for the college, in terms of its strategic direction, was the launch of a new legislative framework to govern the college. In 2023, the Maltese parliament approved the new MCAST Act. This was a significant step in ensuring more autonomy for the college as a centre of excellence in VET.

2024 Implementation

During 2024, monitoring intensified and was changed to quarterly reporting to the Board of Governors.

Bodies responsible

- Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)

Target group

Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices
Young people (15-29 years old)
Adult learners

Thematic categories

Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Ensuring equal opportunities and inclusiveness in education and training

Subsystem

IVET CVET

Further reading

[Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology \(MCAST\) strategic plan 2019-21](#)

[Malta the ultimate AI launchpad - A strategy and vision for artificial Intelligence in Malta 2030](#)

[Malta's sustainable development vision for 2050](#)

[Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology Act](#)

[Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology \(MCAST\) Strategic plan 2022-27](#)

[New legal act ensures a more autonomous MCAST-Press release](#)

“ ... ” Cite as

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Modernising vocational education and training: MCAST's strategic plan 2019-21: Malta. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024 update) [Online tool].

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