

# Establishing the learning outcomes approach in curricula

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 MALTA

## Timeline

2019 Implementation

2020 Implementation

2021 Completed

ID number 28666

## Background

Education and training provision in Malta is experiencing a significant paradigm shift towards learning outcomes. Courses accredited by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) (the name changed to Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA) in 2021) and those by self-accrediting training providers use the learning outcomes approach. Most of the course descriptions offered in Malta are described in terms of learning outcomes: this is the case for the state VET providers, MCAST and ITS, and the University of Malta. The licensed private further and higher education institutions, whose courses are accredited by NCFHE, are also described in terms of learning outcomes.

Within compulsory education, the learning outcomes framework (LOF) is a development from the national curriculum framework (NCF). The NCF addressed the gaps in Malta's learning processes where emphasis shifted from teaching the subject to teaching the learner. It also seeks to present a seamless curriculum that reflects smooth transitions, building and extending on the firm foundations in early childhood education. It proposed a LOF as the keystone for learning and assessment throughout the years of compulsory schooling to free schools and learners from centrally-imposed knowledge-centric syllabi; it will also give them the freedom to develop programmes that fulfil the framework of knowledge, attitudes and skills-based outcomes that are considered national education entitlement of all learners in Malta.

## Objectives

The EQF and MQF learning outcome descriptors promote transparency and comparability of qualifications of different national systems. This shift towards a learning outcomes orientation in education and training aims to help learners to progress in learning by facilitating flexible learning pathways and transfer across different levels and types of education and training and across national borders; this enables learners to accumulate and transfer different learning outcomes acquired in different learning contexts, including online, non-formal and informal learning. The learning outcomes approach can also facilitate the design, delivery and assessment of full qualifications or components of qualifications.

## Description

The compulsory education system has reviewed all its curricula in terms of learning

The compulsory education system has reviewed all its curricula in terms of learning outcomes and will be introducing them as from the academic year 2019-20.

### **2019 Implementation**

In October 2019, the new syllabi using learning outcomes were introduced/continued to be implemented in kindergarden 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 and Year 7 and Year 8.

### **2020 Implementation**

In line with the 2017 Council recommendation on the EQF, the NCFHE launched the Malta qualifications database in November 2020, which includes all accredited programmes including VET, and non-formal and informal learning with the respective MQF/EQF levels. The aim of this database is to provide easily accessible information on study programmes for the public. All study programmes indicate the learning outcomes related to them and these are also available publicly. This would increase visibility and understanding of the importance of defining learning outcomes for study programmes.

During 2020, the NCFHE updated the number of national occupational standards (NOS) to 80 in seven different roles. The NOSs are based on the learning outcomes approach. These are a set of job-related standards that highlight the performance expected when carrying out a specific occupation at a specific level. These standards define the main jobs that people carry out and link qualifications to the labour market; they are useful to employers, employees and in curriculum design. These national occupational standards are also available on the Malta qualifications database.

### **2021 Completed**

This PD was fully completed with its implementation.

## **Bodies responsible**

- Ministry for Education (MFED)(until 2022)
- Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA)
- Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE) (until 2020)
- National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) (until 2021)

## **Target group**

### **Thematic categories**

#### **Modernising VET offer and delivery**

Modernising VET standards, curricula, programmes and training courses

Using learning-outcome-based approaches and modularisation

#### **Transparency and portability of VET skills and qualifications**

Comprehensive national qualification frameworks

Developing and applying qualifications smaller/shorter than full

## **Subsystem**

IVET

## Further reading

[Malta Further and Higher Education Authority \(former National Commission for Further and Higher Education \(NCFHE\) until 2021\)](#)

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[The Malta qualifications database - Introduction](#)

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[The National Occupational Standards](#)

## Related policy developments

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**2025 Implementation**

### NQF referencing to EQF

In 2016, the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE) published the fourth revised edition of the referencing report that sets the parameters for all qualifications and awards that can be conferred in Malta.

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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**2025 Implementation**

### Introduction of VET subjects to compulsory education schools (My journey project)

In 2015/16, VET subjects at Malta qualifications framework (MQF) level 3 (EQF level 3) were introduced in compulsory education in all lower secondary schools: the compulsory secondary education system in Malta comprises students from age 11 to age 16 (lower secondary) and two years of upper second

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET

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**2025 Implementation**

### The National quality assurance framework

The National quality assurance framework for further and higher education was launched in

2015, covering upper secondary and higher VET (IVET) including work-based learning (WBL), CVET as well as other types of further, higher and adult formal education offered by State and private providers.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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“ ... ” **Cite as**

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