

Master degrees for teachers

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

PRACTICAL MEASURE/INITIATIVE

 MALTA

Timeline

2015 **Approved/Agreed** 2016 **Implementation** 2017 **Implementation**
 2018 **Implementation** 2019 **Implementation** 2020 **Implementation**

ID number 28428

Background

In 2014, the Faculty of Education decided that a master degree, the Master in teaching and learning, at MQF/EQF level 7, was the best training programme to access the teaching profession and the warrant to teach within compulsory education in Malta. This decision was taken following a review of research on the best initial teacher-training programmes which equip newly graduated teachers with the best possible competences to tackle the challenges to teach current young generations.

Objectives

The Master in teaching and learning (MTL) caters for different subject areas taught in compulsory education. The main driver behind this policy development was that of improving the quality of teachers through higher quality teacher-training programmes. The faculty of education felt that there was a need to revise its programmes such that it could provide initial teacher-training programmes which equipped teachers with competences which enable them to tackle the new challenges which teaching brings.

The MTL was consequently developed as a framework with a core component coupled with a section focusing on subject-specific pedagogical training. The MTL programme was extended to VET subjects in order to address the implementation of the *MyJourney* reform that introduced of a number of VET and applied subjects in compulsory secondary education.

Description

Due to the requirement that teachers need to have completed a master degree to enter the teaching profession, several master degrees in teaching and learning (MTL) were introduced: in October 2016 the Faculty of Education at the University of Malta started a two-year Master in teaching and learning (MTL) for first-cycle degree graduates. From September 2017, the Faculty of Education introduced MTL initial teacher training courses in 11 vocational subjects. In order to ensure that it provides the education sector with the required number of VET teachers within compulsory education, the Faculty of Education has extended its training to cover all the VET subjects offered in schools, as well as giving

students the option to study either on a full-time or part-time basis. In order to support students and work-life balance, parts of the MTL course are also offered online.

The first MTL VET teachers graduated in November 2019, and were qualified to teach as the government introduced the applied subjects as part of the MyJourney reform in compulsory education.

To develop specialisations for teaching VET subjects, a working group was set up with experts from the University of Malta, MCAST, the ITS, the institute for education, as well as Haaga-Helia university of applied sciences (Finland). In 2018, a number of VET teaching qualifications were developed and accredited by the institute for education on agribusiness, engineering technology, textiles and fashion, media literacy and hospitality. They started to be offered as of 2019/20. Since October 2016, ITS has been developing and putting in place a master degree in hospitality management in conjunction with the Haaga-Helia University of Applied Sciences (Finland) to upskill its academic staff. The specific objectives of this qualification are to: ensure compliance with European quality assurance standards in relation to quality of teaching and learning; develop curriculum programmes at a degree level (MQF/EQF level 6); implement, manage and review degree level programmes in the near future; enable ITS teachers to equip existing and the future workforce in tourism and hospitality with appropriate competences and underpinning knowledge. Upskilling staff through the degree programme in hospitality management developed by Haaga-Helia university made it possible for ITS to offer bachelor degree programmes in the hospitality and tourism sector as from 2017.

2015 Approved/Agreed

2016 Implementation

2017 Implementation

2018 Implementation

As from October 2018, the Faculty of Education started offering part-time modality certificate (30ECTS), diploma (60ECTS) and master (90ECTS) courses in the following areas of vocational specialisation: textiles and fashion, health and social care, hospitality, and engineering technology.

In 2018, the Faculty of Education offered the first cohort in the Master of arts in vocational education, designed to have three exit points at MQF Level 7. The aim of this degree is to retrain current teachers in vocational subjects close to their current subject specialisation so they can also teach the new vocational subjects. Participants following this course have the opportunity to acquire both pedagogical approaches within vocational education and industry-based experience within their related subject area.

2019 Implementation

The Institute for Education continued offering the Master of education in hospitality, and agribusiness. It also launched a Bachelor of education in fashion and textiles and in engineering technology. Postgraduate certificates in education (in engineering technology, hospitality, agribusiness and fashion and textiles) were added to the postgraduate course offerings of the Institute. The Institute also offers Master of education in hospitality, engineering technology and agribusiness. The Institute offers Bachelor of education degrees in a variety of streams including agribusiness, hospitality, fashion and textiles, engineering technology and hair and beauty.

During the academic year 2018/19, the Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) launched an MBA in international hospitality management in academic affiliation with The Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management (EAHM). EAHM will also provide quality assurance to current ITS study programmes while assisting in the introduction of an MBA master degree programme. This collaboration will also give the opportunity to train up to 15 lecturers in interactive and problem-based teaching and learning and providing effective classroom management skills.

MCAST's Centre for Professional Development continued to organise CPD workshops for all staff. In February 2019, it launched the Master in vocational education applied research 4.0 that provides its own lecturers with a pedagogical training qualification in VET at master level. This is a three-year qualification of 120 ECTS with three exit points: either after one year with a postgraduate certificate; after the second year with a postgraduate diploma; or after the third year, which is the dissertation year, with a master degree.

The Faculty of Education within the University of Malta continued offering the Master in teaching and learning (MTL) degree in textiles and fashion, health and social care, hospitality and engineering technology. The number of students continue to increase steadily each academic year. In order to attract persons from industry, the Faculty of Education offers its MTL VET courses as full-time or part-time courses. It has also implemented blended approaches, with some modules delivered online. It has also used the University of Malta's policy on the recognition of prior learning, to validate informal and nonformal prior learning of persons who do not possess a bachelor degree but wish to be considered for the MTL VET courses. The faculty is also offering a preparatory programme in the case of candidates who are considered as not yet having achieved the equivalent of a Bachelor degree level. This part-time programme offers access to the MTL VET. These actions have offered learners alternative routes to teacher training and the paths have led to a steady increase in the number of students enrolling for MTL VET. The Faculty of Education now offers MTL in the following subjects: ICT; technical design and engineering; health and social care; beauty and hairdressing; retail; fashion and textiles.

2020 Implementation

In 2020, the Institute for Education, developed and started delivering the Master of education in engineering technology. It also started offering the Bachelor of education in hair and beauty. The Institute is developing more streams to meet the need for qualified teachers in these areas.

At MCAST, the second cohort of academic staff started the postgraduate certificate in February 2020 when 40 participants started their journey. From the first cohort, 15 continued their studies at postgraduate diploma level.

The final preparations are under way for the third cohort to start their formal learning journey. Meanwhile 10 participants will proceed to the second postgraduate diploma year and 14 participants will proceed to their third and final master year.

MCAST was in discussions with the Council for the Teaching Profession for Master in vocational education and training applied research (MVEAR) graduates to be eligible to a permanent teaching warrant. Changes were made to the course structure in this regard mainly through an increase in the contact hours and more emphasis on the relevant area specialisation, as well as more emphasis on the teaching practice component.

In 2020, MCAST launched a new programme of studies intended for all individuals who are interested in embarking on a vocational education and training teaching or mentoring career. The three-year full-time programme of study at bachelor level aims to provide practitioners or intending practitioners in VET settings with the knowledge, skills and competences to work effectively, efficiently and confidently as professional teachers, supervisors, mentors, education designers and agents of change in the fast changing reality of Industry 4.0. It includes a balance between VET pedagogies; technical specialised area modules; psychology, sociology and philosophy of vocational education and training; personal, transversal and professional development; as well as teaching and industry practice. The programme will be of particular interest to those who wish to mentor apprentices in real work environments. MCAST's Centre for Professional Development team is constantly adopting an action research attitude to make the feedback received an indispensable tool to continue improving the programme in process.

With the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Faculty of Education within the

University of Malta, shifted the Master in teaching and learning (MTL) courses to the online mode. This was also the case with MTL VET students with online methods for theoretical modules and face-to-face for practical sessions. The University of Malta had the IT infrastructure in place prior to March 2020, so it was relatively easy for teaching to shift seamlessly and completely to online learning, though practical aspects such as teaching practice were affected to a degree. Second year MTL VET students are completing their teaching practice in schools, in compliance with COVID-19 pandemic restrictions. In the case of first year students, the MTL programme of studies has been temporarily restructured to have online learning this year and teaching practice postponed as an extended teaching practice next year. The COVID-19 pandemic has also seen another increase in students opting for teacher training.

Bodies responsible

- University of Malta
- Institute for Education (IfE)
- Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS)
- Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)

Target group

Thematic categories

Teachers, trainers and school leaders competences

Systematic approaches to and opportunities for initial and continuous professional development of school leaders, teachers and trainers

Attractiveness of the teaching and training profession/career

Supporting teachers and trainers for and through digital

Subsystem

IVET

Further reading

[Faculty of Education - Postgraduate courses](#)

[Institute for Education - Prospectus 2020/21](#)

[MCAST Centre for Professional Development \(CPD\)](#)

Related policy developments

2024 Implementation

Institute of Tourism Studies (ITS) international cooperation in further and higher education

The rationale for ITS international collaboration efforts and activities is that the cooperation with top international universities and institutions provides students with the possibility to graduate from a reputable institute and also get the opportunity to study for a period of time within the

Type of development

Practical
measure/Initiative

Subsystem

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). Master degrees for teachers: Malta. In
Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2025). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2024
update) [Online tool].

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