

# The Work-based learning and apprenticeship Act

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

REGULATION/LEGISLATION

 MALTA

## Timeline

2016 Legislative process

2017 Legislative process

2018 Approved/Agreed

ID number 28417

## Background

The scope of apprenticeship has been extended. Since 2015, apprenticeship has been introduced in finance, business administration and marketing, electronics, electrical and mechanical engineering, agriculture, construction, applied science, hairdressing, beauty and sports sectors, and others.

## Objectives

- (a) setting definitions and operational parameters for work placements, apprenticeships and internships;
- (b) outlining responsibilities and governance structures (such as National Skills Council, sector skills units);
- (c) defining rights and obligations for VET providers, employers and learners;
- (d) highlighting the role of employers as responsible learning partners;
- (e) setting a compulsory minimum number of hours for all forms of work-based learning and linking remuneration to the minimum wage;
- (f) using ECVET/ECTS in all forms of work-based learning;
- (g) introducing a single EQF-based apprenticeship qualification replacing the dual certification currently in place;
- (h) launching a register of training agreements to support data collection and policy-relevant analysis by the national skills council.

## Description

Following consultation in 2016, a draft act was proposed by the education ministry on a framework for developing quality work placements, apprenticeships and internships. It was enacted as a law on 6 March 2018, providing regulations, governance and administration of accredited training programmes for work placements, apprenticeships and internships in VET. The governance of the apprenticeship system was changed as a result of the reform. Subsequently, the system has since been governed at national level by MCAST, under the supervision of the education ministry. These two cooperate with national and European stakeholders in developing policies and measures for quality apprenticeships in local industry. MCAST ensures relationships with sector and employer representatives and brings the education and business world closer together. The act includes provisions (outlined in schedule 2) for a training agreement for work placements, apprenticeships and internships.

These agreements have to be signed before the commencement of the training programme by the sponsor, the learner and the VET provider. The duration of apprenticeship programmes is now restricted to two years (instead of the three- or four-year programmes previously offered). This makes a programme more compact in nature, incorporating the summer period as its integral part. An apprentice now has the legal status of a paid employee rather than of an unpaid learner. Learners on apprenticeship programmes have the right to an income equivalent to the national minimum wage per hour for the hours spent at the workplace as stipulated in the training programme plan. The income per hour is calculated as the income derived from the sponsor and from the student maintenance grant. The VET provider has to establish a work-based learning operational board to:

- (a) adapt, where possible, existing curricula into training programmes, including a work-based learning component;
- (b) review training programmes;
- (c) set up a board of examiners for each training programme;
- (d) establish regulations and policies for the board of examiners which shall include admission of learners for the assessment, the structure of the assessment and the criteria for the assessment;
- (e) oversee the operation of the boards of examiners;
- (f) establish regulations for the assessment of the training programmes.

### 2016 Legislative process

### 2017 Legislative process

### 2018 Approved/Agreed

In 2018, the Work-based learning and apprenticeship Act was approved.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry for Education (MFED)(until 2022)
- Ministry of Education and Employment (MEDE) (until 2020)
- Malta College of Arts, Science and Technology (MCAST)

## Target group

### Learners

Learners in upper secondary, including apprentices

## Thematic categories

### Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Coordinating VET and other policies

Engaging VET stakeholders and strengthening partnerships in VET

### Modernising VET offer and delivery

Reinforcing work-based learning, including apprenticeships

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Financial and non-financial incentives to learners, providers and companies

## Subsystem

## Further reading

[The public consultation document \(of the Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship Act\)](#)

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[The legal text](#)

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[Cedefop \(2015\). Apprenticeship review: Malta. In pursuit of quality and relevance: revitalising apprenticeship](#)

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[The Work-based learning and apprenticeship Act \(CAP 576 Laws of Malta\)](#)

## Related policy developments

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**2025 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

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#### **Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2020 Completed**

### **The National vocational and training policy (2015)**

The National vocational and training policy mapped the VET sector in Malta and identified areas for future actions.

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#### **Type of development**

Strategy/Action  
plan

#### **Subsystem**

IVET CVET

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**2021 Discontinued**

### **Requirements for trainer qualifications and competences**

The in 2018 Work-based Learning and Apprenticeship Act stipulates that the VET provider is responsible for identifying and supervising the suitability of sponsors and trainers and ensuring that trainers must have sufficient technical experience, technical qualifications and personal competences.

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**Type of development**

Regulation/Legislation

**Subsystem**

IVET

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**2025 Implementation**

**Supporting stakeholder involvement in work-based learning**

Measures have also been taken to strengthen the involvement of social partners and companies:

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**Type of development**

Practical  
measure/Initiative

**Subsystem**

IVET CVET

“ ... ” **Cite as**

Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). The Work-based learning and apprenticeship Act: Malta. In Cedefop, & ReferNet. (2026). *Timeline of VET policies in Europe* (2025 update) [Online tool].

<https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/tools/timeline-vet-policies-europe/search/28417>