

End of Primary Benchmark 2015

Report

**DIRECTORATE FOR QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA – MALTA**

**DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM MANAGEMENT
EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT UNIT**

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

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Minister's Message



Learning occurs incessantly throughout our lifelong journey in different contexts and through a myriad of encounters. Evaluating one's growth is similarly a natural process that unfolds within and amongst us. Nevertheless, when approaching education in a structured way, as in formal education, assessment of and for learning acquires an added level of importance. Assessment is first and foremost intended to better inform the learner, parent and educator on the accomplishments of the same learner, giving guidance for further development. It eventually also aids receiving educational institutions and prospectively employers, by providing a reliable gauge to better interpret the competences, knowledge, skills and dispositions achieved by an individual.

The End of Primary Benchmark is maturing and gradually evolving. The discussions with stakeholders on the adoption of the Learning Outcomes Framework as set within the National Curriculum Framework (2012), is inevitably raising justified considerations on the current predominant mode of assessment, driven by the local models of national assessment. The concept of authentic assessment, whereby greater emphasis is placed on meaningful, relevant and worthwhile experiences also during assessment, is becoming ever more significant. Whilst upholding the required validity and reliability of national assessment, the universally lauded principle of equity is to be valued and manifested more through practice.

Lessons learnt through local and international practice, the pains and gains derived from specific strategies and models of assessment, all need to help us approach this aspect of education which impacts heavily on teaching and learning, and on individuals' lives. I thank all educators and educational leaders at the various levels, who relentlessly engage in this ongoing developmental process. It is therefore my intention and pleasure to continue supporting the various stakeholders collectively pursue the development and improvement of our national assessment at the various cycles, including but not limited to the End of Primary Benchmark.

Hon. Evarist Bartolo
Minister for Education and Employment

Foreword

Assessment throughout a child's educational journey is key to a better understanding of students' achievements. This, in turn, helps students, their families and educators in fulfilling each individual's potential. The End of Primary Benchmark is a national benchmark which, through different modes of assessment, is challenging the high stakes culture which prevailed in our schools and resulting in the exploration of different forms of pedagogy in the classroom.



In the assessment of Maltese and English, students have the opportunity to express themselves orally through the Speaking tasks and the contextual real life situations of the Listening tasks. This is coupled with written communication which is required in both the Reading Comprehension and Writing tasks. In the case of Mathematics, the written assessment is complemented by a standardised oral mental test. Students are provided with the results of every single component of the Benchmark, something which they, their families, and schools appreciate in as much as it provides a much more detailed overview of each child's achievements. This approach underlines our total commitment to ensuring a fair and reliable assessment, which is also backed up by our constant efforts to provide students who need access arrangements the support they need without impacting the rigour and validity of the exercise. This is an area on which we will continue to focus, building on our evolving experience and the growing body of international research on the subject.

The Benchmark assessments, of course, also exist to give students and their schools the opportunity to identify areas that need greater focus or additional support. The performance reports written by the different subject panels and included in this report, in particular, provide a resource which all stakeholders should make use of. The Department of Curriculum Management within the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) also provides numerous online resources at www.curriculum.gov.mt

In a world driven by change and innovation, schooling can no longer be simply about academic subjects. Twenty first Century citizens need the skills to be able to adapt and succeed in an ever changing world. Our education system is increasingly geared towards giving our children these skills and empowering them to face their future with confidence and optimism, while at the same time understanding that in the modern world education is a journey that never ends.

This report is being circulated simultaneously with an important curricular project which is currently taking place. The National Curriculum Framework (2012) had proposed a Learning Outcomes Framework as the keystone for learning and assessment throughout the years of compulsory schooling. It had identified eight Learning Areas and six Cross-Curricular Themes which provide the basis for the formulation of Learning and Assessment programmes for all the stages of compulsory education. The aim of the Learning Outcomes Framework is to free schools and learners from centrally-imposed knowledge-centric syllabi, and to 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.

Finally, I must thank all those involved in the End of Primary Benchmark. The DQSE, the Directorate for Educational Services (DES), the Faculty of Education (University of Malta), Church Schools, Independent Schools and the staff at the Educational Assessment Unit, collaborate together to make Benchmark a learning experience for all. My sincere thanks also go to the Education Officers, Heads of Primary Schools and to all the teachers who help in the administration of this assessment and to the primary school teachers and other professionals who work hard to give our primary students the quality education they surely deserve.

Ian Mifsud

Director General – Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education

Executive Summary

This summary gives an overview of:

- i) the administration of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015;
- ii) the registration of the main and second sessions;
- iii) the results data of the main and second sessions.

i) Administration Information

- In the End of Primary Benchmark 2015, there were 91 schools that participated in the main session. These included all 62 State Primary Schools, 22 (out of 25) Church Schools and 7 (out of 12) Independent Schools.
- The main session, which comprises the Listening, Reading Comprehension and Writing components of Maltese and English, and the Mental and Written components of Mathematics, was held between the 28th May and 2nd June 2015. The Speaking components of Maltese and English were held on the 26th and 27th May 2015 respectively. On the 28th May, the Maltese Writing and Reading components were held, whilst the same components for English were held on the 29th May. The English and Maltese Listening Comprehension components were both held on the 1st June 2015 whilst the two components of Mathematics (Mental and Written) were held on the 2nd June 2015. All participants sat for this session in their respective schools.
- A second session was held during the week starting 15th June 2015. All candidates who were absent from one or more of the components during the main session were eligible to sit for this second session. This session was also open to children from the Non-State Schools that did not participate in the main session of the Benchmark 2015. All components in the second session were held in the afternoon at the Floriana Primary School in Malta and at the Examination Centre in Gozo.

ii) Registrations

- The total number of participants in both the main and second sessions was 3625 (1892 females and 1733 males). This represents 92.8% of the national Year 6 student cohort eligible for the End of Primary Benchmark 2015.
- The number of participants in the second session of the Benchmark varied for the different components. This was due to the fact that there were candidates who sat only for those components in which they were absent during the main session and others who sat for all components as their school (non-state) did not participate in the main session.
- In 2015, there were 819 candidates who applied for exemptions and access arrangements. After processing the applications, 80 children were exempted from all components of the three subjects and 487 were given one or more access arrangements during these assessments.

iii) Results

- Scores for Maltese ranged from 5 to 98, with a median mark of 74, (Mean=69.1, S.D.=16.7). Comparative performance data of female and male candidates showed that the middle 50% (from the 25th to the 75th percentile) of girls performed better than the middle 50% of boys in Maltese. Scores ranged from 64 to 82 for girls and from 58 to 80 for boys.
- For English, scores ranged from 2 to 98, with a median mark of 71, (Mean=67.3, S.D.=16.3). Comparative performance data of the middle 50% of candidates (from the 25th to the 75th percentile) showed that girls performed slightly better in English than boys. Scores ranged from 62 to 80 for girls and from 55 to 78 for boys.
- In Mathematics, scores ranged from 1 to 100 with a median mark of 72 (Mean=65.9, S.D.=24.8). The range of marks for girls and boys was close with the boys performing slightly better. In the middle 50% of candidates (from the 25th to the 75th percentile), marks ranged from 50 to 86 for girls and from 46 to 87 for boys.
- Detailed performance reports are included in this report. These indicate that:
 - In the Speaking component, the candidates obtained high marks in both Maltese and English. The median mark was 17 out of a maximum of 20 (Mean=16.4, S.D.=3.2) in Maltese and 17 out of 20 (Mean=16.0, S.D.=3.5) in English.
 - In the Listening component in Maltese and English, the candidates obtained high marks. The median mark for Maltese was 16 out of a maximum of 20 (Mean=15.7, S.D.= 3.3) and the median mark for English was 15 out of a maximum of 20 (Mean=14.8, S.D.=3.5).
 - In the Reading Comprehension component, candidates did better in English than in Maltese. This was reflected in the scores obtained where the median mark for Maltese was 21 out of a maximum of 30 (Mean=19.9, S.D.=5.6) and for English it was 23 out of a maximum of 30 (Mean =22.3, S.D.=5.3).
 - In the Writing component, the candidates' performance was better in Maltese than in English. In fact, in the writing component for Maltese, the median mark was 19 out of a maximum of 30 (Mean=18.3, S.D.=5.4), whilst in English the median mark was 16 out of a maximum of 30 (Mean=15.3, S.D.=4.9).
 - In the Mental Mathematics paper, the median mark was 16 out of a maximum of 20 (Mean=14.1, S.D.=5.6), whereas in the Mathematics Written paper, the median mark was 56 out of a maximum of 80 (Mean=52.1, S.D.=19.6).
- This report provides a section on Item Analysis and further statistical information which together give a more detailed picture of the performance of the candidates.

Introduction

This report provides a detailed account of the End of Primary Benchmark that was held in June 2015. It starts by giving information about the way this process was conducted and provides statistics on registrations for the two sessions that took place in 2015, including data on applications for exemptions and access arrangements. This section is followed by the performance reports of the three subjects that formed part of the Benchmark in 2015. In each of the performance reports for Maltese, English and Mathematics, details are given on the candidates' performance in the different components. These reports highlight strengths and weaknesses identified in the different components and provide suggestions for potential improvement in certain areas. The report concludes with a technical section where the results of an item analysis for each subject are presented. Together with this report, the CD includes all the resources used in both sessions of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015.

1. Information on the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

- In October 2014, the Director General of the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) set up three paper setters' panels, for Maltese, English and Mathematics. Each panel was made up of subject experts from the following: the Directorates of Education, the Faculty of Education of the University of Malta, Church Schools and Independent Schools. Each of the paper setters' panels was requested to draw up two sets of papers, one set for the first (main) session held in late May, beginning of June 2015 and another set for the second (afternoon) session held in mid-June.
- Letter Circular DCM 182/2014, dated 17th October 2014, gave details about information meetings that were to be held for parents on the 25th and 29th October 2014, and two other meetings on 8th November 2014, one of which aimed for parents whose children attend non-state schools. Meetings were held in two different primary state school halls in Malta, whilst in Gozo the meeting was held in the boys' secondary school hall. These meetings aimed to explain the Benchmark to parents, inform them about changes that were to be introduced in the End of Primary Benchmark as from that scholastic year, and answer any difficulties or queries they might have (Appendix 1). The Powerpoint presentation presented and the leaflets distributed during these sessions, together with information about the new changes and other Benchmark related material, were uploaded on the curriculum website (www.curriculum.gov.mt).
- On the 12th November 2014, three letter circulars (DCM 211, 212 & 213) were issued by the Department of Curriculum Management (DCM) to inform Heads of School on the procedures to be followed when registering for exemptions and access arrangements (Appendices 2, 3 and 4).
- On the 14th November 2014, Letter Circular DCM 217/2014 was issued by the DCM and sent to all Non-State Schools inviting Heads of School to register their school for the main session of the End of Primary Benchmark (Appendix 5).
- A Call for Applications (Letter Circular DCM 23/2015) was issued in January 2015 by the DCM for teachers who wished to act as markers in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 (Appendix 6). Applicant markers were to apply online by noon 6th February 2015.
- Letter Circular DCM 24/2015 was sent to all State and Non-State Schools on the 22nd January 2015, informing them of the timetable and guidelines to be followed during the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 (Appendix 7). The changes that were being introduced (more details on page 8) were also highlighted in this Letter Circular.
- Letter Circular DCM 42/2015 (Appendix 8) informed Heads of Schools about training sessions that were to be held. The training was specifically for the Speaking Component in the End of Primary Benchmark and intended for newly qualified teachers and teachers who were teaching Year 6 but who had not taught Year 6 classes in the past four years. But Complementary teachers and/or Assistant Heads, who may have been required to act as interlocutors or assessors for the Speaking Component for the 2015 End of Primary Benchmark, were also encouraged to attend. Training was held on Friday 27th March 2015.

- All candidates sat for the End of Primary Benchmark in their own school. The 91 Benchmark centres were distributed as follows:

Centres in State Primary Schools, Malta	51
Centres in State Primary Schools, Gozo	11
Centres in Church Primary Schools, Malta	18
Centres in Church Primary Schools, Gozo	4
Centres in Independent Primary Schools, Malta	7
Total	91

- On the 3rd May 2015, Letter Circular DCM116/2015 was sent to all Heads of State and Non-State Primary Schools with details of the second session which was to be held during the week starting 15th June 2015. Sessions would take place in the afternoon between 15:00 and 18:30 at the Floriana Primary School and at the Examination Centre in Gozo (Appendix 9).
- On the 3rd July 2015, results were sent in electronic format to the candidates' respective schools. Schools were instructed to post these results to all students on the 7th July 2015. As can be seen from the End of Primary Report Template in Appendix 10, results were given for the separate components, together with the subject total mark and the respective national median. National Performance Data and School Performance Data were also sent to all participating schools in August 2015 (Appendix 11). The Benchmark results of candidates who applied privately for the second session were sent directly to candidates' residences by the Educational Assessment Unit.
- A total of 37 requests for a review of performance were received by the Educational Assessment Unit in the five day period indicated in the Letter Circular DCM 24/2015 dated 22nd January 2015 (Appendix 7).
- A number of scripts were kept for archiving and research purposes as indicated in Table 1 below. The rest of the scripts were sent back to schools by the Educational Assessment Unit. Blind marking was used during the marking process and therefore the returned scripts were unmarked.

Table 1: End of Primary Benchmark 2015 – Archived Scripts by Subject and Component

Subject and Component	Number of Scripts
Il-Malti: Il-Fehim mis-Smigh	50
Il-Malti: Il-Fehim mill-Qari	50
Il-Malti: Il-Kitba	100
English: Listening Comprehension	50
English: Reading Comprehension	50
English: Writing	100
Mathematics: Mental and Written	100

2. Registrations for the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

This section gives information about the candidates who sat for the End of Primary Benchmark in 2015. In total, 91 schools participated in 2015: 62 State Primary Schools, 22 (out of 25) Church Schools and 7 (out of 12) Independent Schools. Table 2 below shows that the total number of students sitting for the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 was 3625 (1892 females and 1733 males), amounting to 92.8% of the whole cohort (3906) of children in Year 6.

Table 2: Participation in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

Type of School	Female	Male	Total Applicants	Total Eligible Population	Percentage Applicants
State	1048	1124	2172	2172	100 %
Church	613	472	1085	1271	85.4 %
Independent	229	129	358	463	77.3 %
Private Candidates (Second Session)	2	8	10	-	-
Total	1892	1733	3625	3906	92.8 %

Table 3 below provides information on the number of candidates who sat for the second session of the End of Primary Benchmark during week starting 15th June 2015. All candidates who were absent for one or more of the components during the first session were eligible to sit for this second session. The second session was also open to children from the Non-State Schools which did not participate in the main session of the 2015 Benchmark. The number of applications of Private candidates received from Non-State Schools totalled 10. All the components of the second session were held in the afternoon at the Floriana Primary School in Malta and at the Examination Centre in Gozo.

Table 3: Participation in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 – The Second Session

Component	Number of students who sat for the Second Session (Number of Eligible Candidates)			
	State Schools	Non-State Schools	Private Candidates	Total
Il-Malti				
It-Taħdit	4 (16)	0 (50)	10 (10)	14 (76)
Is-Smigh	16 (27)	3 (51)	10 (10)	29 (88)
Il-Qari	12 (25)	9 (67)	10 (10)	31 (102)
Il-Kitba	12 (25)	9 (64)	10 (10)	31 (99)
English				
Speaking	4 (18)	0 (42)	10 (10)	14 (70)
Listening	14 (27)	6 (42)	10 (10)	30 (79)
Reading	15 (28)	7 (50)	10 (10)	32 (88)
Writing	15 (27)	7 (49)	10 (10)	32 (86)
Mathematics				
Mental	10 (21)	5 (43)	10 (10)	25 (74)
Written	9 (20)	5 (44)	10 (10)	24 (74)

Exemptions and Access Arrangements

There were 819 applications for exemptions and access arrangements in 2015, a 19.6% increase over 2014. After processing all applications, 80 children were exempted from all components of the three subjects and 487 were given access arrangements. A total of 66 students were not eligible for the access arrangement they applied for, and one student was denied exemption requested.

Exemptions

There were two types of exemptions:

- Children of returned migrants and expatriates were given the opportunity to apply for an exemption in English and/or Maltese if they were not studying the subject during the last two years of Primary school in Malta or Gozo.
- Children who were following an alternative learning programme and/or were functioning at or below Year 3 Primary Level or children with a severe disability were given the possibility to request an exemption from all or particular components of the three subjects (Maltese, English and Mathematics).

Table 4 gives a breakdown of the exemptions granted in the different components. It should be noted that the number of students exempted sometimes supersedes the number of applications. This occurred because specialists assessing students identified some students who needed an exemption which they had not applied for.

Table 4: Exemptions: End of Primary Benchmark 2015

Component	Children of Returned Migrants and Expatriates (Number of Applications received)	Children with Alternative Learning Programmes and/or functioning at or below Year 3 or with Severe Disabilities (Number of Applications received)
Il-Malti		
It-Taħdit	100 (101)	91 (87)
Is-Smigh	100 (101)	110 (107)
Il-Qari	103 (104)	150 (149)
Il-Kitba	103 (104)	163 (164)
English		
Speaking	16 (16)	91 (88)
Listening	16 (16)	111 (110)
Reading	16 (16)	148 (146)
Writing	17 (17)	154 (155)
Mathematics		
Mental	4 (4)	133 (132)
Written	5 (5)	147 (146)

Table 5 below presents details of the number of candidates who were exempted, absent or present in the different components for the three subjects in the 2015 sessions.

Table 5: Participation in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 by Component (N=3625)*

Component	Exempted Candidates	Absent Candidates	Present Candidates
Il-Malti			
It-Taħdit	191	62	3372
Is-Smigh	210	59	3356
Il-Qari	253	71	3301
Il-Kitba	166	68	3391
English			
Speaking	114	56	3455
Listening	127	59	3439
Reading	164	56	3405
Writing	171	54	3400
Mathematics			
Mental	137	49	3439
Written	152	50	3423

* N represents the total number of students registered for the 2015 Benchmark.

Access Arrangements

Students with learning difficulties could request multiplication tables and/or a reader for Mathematics. Visually impaired children could request an enlarged print of the Benchmark papers while the hearing impaired could request a communicator.

As in the previous two years, *Reading Assistance* in the Maltese and English Reading Comprehension has been offered for the End of Primary Benchmark. During the Reading Comprehension, the tasks/texts and the related questions were read twice electronically, with a slightly slower reading speed than normal. This year, the reading speed was kept the same for both readings, as the much slower second reading (used in 2014) was found to be tedious and tiring for the students. Whilst being read, the text was highlighted and projected on an interactive whiteboard or on a laptop. Pauses during the reading allowed students to complete their answers. The students were also given a script which they could access any time. Those students who needed the Reading Assistance had an additional 30 minutes to complete the component.

Another access arrangement available was the *Scribe*. After the students completed their writing tasks in the Maltese and English Writing components, the scribe transcribed illegible words using a green pen. The scribe wrote words which would otherwise not be legible in order to assist markers in accessing the work of the student.

Table 6 provides information about the number of students who were given access arrangements in 2015. It should be noted that the number of students given a particular access arrangement sometimes exceeds the number of applications. This occurs because during the specialists' assessments, some students are identified as being entitled to additional access arrangements other than those they applied for.

Table 6: Access Arrangements for Children with Learning Difficulties

Provision	Number of Children granted provision (Number of Applications received)
Reader (for Mathematics)	362 (495)
Multiplication Tables (for Mathematics)	359 (416)
Enlarged Print	3 (7)
Communicator	4 (4)
Reading Assistance (Il-Malti: Il-Fehim mill-Qari)	224 (479)
Reading Assistance (English: Reading Comprehension)	367 (492)
Scribe (Il-Malti: Il-Kitba)	84 (177)
Scribe (English: Writing)	83 (176)

During the 2015 End of Primary Benchmark, four students were given amanuensis provisions due to fractures to the dominant hand.

Changes Introduced in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 Session

In order to make the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 assessment papers more student-friendly, and keeping in mind students with special learning needs, some changes were introduced.

- In the Mathematics Mental paper, a Warmer was introduced. This extra question at the beginning of the test was not awarded marks. It was aimed at helping students to focus on the speaker's voice and familiarise themselves with the test. Additional time was allocated for this question.
- In the Mathematics Written Paper, working space was introduced in questions that require working.
- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, the number of tests changed. Instead of the usual 15 sets, there were eight for the first session and two new sets for the second session. This meant that when there were more than 16 students in a class, the same task was used with two pairs of students. The two pairs should immediately follow one another.
- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, there were some additional sub-themes for the interview part. These included: Shopping, School Outings, House and Home Environment, Health and Body Care, and People Who Help Us.
- The procedure used in the electronic Reading Assistance in the Maltese and English Reading Comprehension papers was slightly different from last year. The texts were read twice at a speed slightly slower than normal speed. The rest of the procedure remained unchanged.

3. National Results of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

This section presents information on the national performance of the candidates who sat for the End of Primary Benchmark in 2015. The descriptive statistics presented include the median, the mean, the standard deviation, percentiles and cumulative frequency curves.

It is important to point out that every school received details of the performance of its candidates per component in addition to the national performance presented in this section. Secondary schools received the standardised scores of students who sat for the End of Primary Benchmark 2015. These scores would make the banding exercise more precise. Standardised scores are more useful measures than raw scores, as they enable researchers/educators to meaningfully compare or add together scores from different tests.

The glossary below is intended to assist the reader with the interpretation of the data presented in this section.

Median – the middle mark in a list of marks sorted in ascending or descending order. It is not affected by extreme mark values in the list.

Mean – another word for ‘average’. It is calculated by adding the total of the different marks in the list and dividing by the total number of candidates.

Standard Deviation – this value shows how tightly the marks are clustered around the mean (average) in a set of data. When the marks are tightly grouped together, the standard deviation is small. This means that the candidates have a similar academic ability. When the marks are spread apart, the standard deviation is large, indicating that candidates have a very different academic ability.

Percentile – an indication of a candidate’s relative position in the group in terms of the percentage of group members scoring lower than the candidate’s score.

Table 7 presents data of the different components of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015. Column 'n' indicates the number of candidates who sat for the particular component in 2015. This table gives a snapshot of the national performance of candidates in the 2015 End of Primary Benchmark.

Table 7: National Results of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

Components (Percentage Weighting)	n	Min Mark	Max Mark	Median Mark	Mean Mark	Standard Deviation
Il-Malti						
It-Tahdit (20%)	3372	0	20	17	16.4	3.2
Is-Smigh (20%)	3356	2	20	16	15.7	3.3
Il-Qari (30%)	3301	1	30	21	29.9	5.6
Il-Kitba (30%)	3391	0	30	19	18.3	5.4
Total (100%)	3373	5	98	74	69.1	16.7
English						
Speaking (20%)	3455	1	20	17	16.0	3.5
Listening (20%)	3439	3	20	15	14.8	3.5
Reading (30%)	3405	4	30	23	22.3	5.3
Writing (30%)	3400	1	29	16	15.3	4.9
Total (100%)	3464	2	98	71	67.3	16.3
Mathematics						
Mental (20%)	3439	0	20	16	14.1	5.6
Written (80%)	3423	1	80	56	52.1	19.6
Total (100%)	3433	1	100	72	65.9	24.8

Table 8 provides information about the distribution of marks in the different components. It shows the distribution of scores in terms of percentiles. For example, Table 8 shows that the top 25% of candidates obtained a score of 81 or higher in Maltese, 79 or higher in English and 87 or higher in Mathematics. The median, or 50th percentile, shows that 50% of the candidates scored 74 or less in Maltese, 71 or less in English and 72 or less in Mathematics. The bottom 25% of the candidates scored 61 or less in Maltese, 59 or less in English, and 49 or less in Mathematics.

Table 8: National Results of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015–Percentiles by Component

Components (Percentage Weightings)	Percentiles						
	5	10	25	50	75	90	95
Il-Malti							
It-Taħdit (20%)	10	12	15	17	19	20	20
Is-Smigh (20%)	9	11	14	16	18	19	20
Il-Qari (30%)	9	12	17	21	24	26	27
Il-Kitba (30%)	8	11	15	19	22	24	25
Total (100%)	35	46	61	74	81	86	89
English							
Speaking (20%)	9	11	14	17	19	20	20
Listening (20%)	8	10	12	15	18	19	19
Reading (30%)	12	15	19	23	26	28	29
Writing (30%)	6	9	12	16	19	21	23
Total (100%)	35	45	59	71	79	85	88
Mathematics							
Mental (20%)	3	6	10	16	19	20	20
Written (80%)	15	22	38	56	68	75	77
Total (100%)	18	28	49	72	87	94	96

Table 9 on page 12 provides comparative data on the performance of female and male candidates in the different components. For example, the middle 50% (from the 25th to the 75th percentile) of girls fared better than the middle 50% of boys in all the three subjects. Scores in Maltese ranged from 64 to 82 for girls compared to 58 to 80 for boys. In English, the middle 50% of girls scored between 62 and 80, whilst boys' scores ranged from 55 to 78. In Mathematics, boys fared marginally better than girls. Scores ranged from 50 to 86 for girls and 46 to 87 for boys.

In Maltese, the top 25% of girls scored 82 or higher whilst the top 25% of boys scored 80 or higher. In English, the top 25% of girls scored 80 or higher whilst the top 25% of boys scored 78 or higher. In Mathematics the top 25% of girls scored 86 or higher whilst the top 25% of boys scored 87 or higher.

In Maltese, the bottom 25% of girls scored 64 or lower whilst the bottom 25% of boys scored 58 or lower. In English, the bottom 25% of girls scored 62 or lower whereas the bottom 25% of boys scored 55 or lower. In Mathematics, the bottom 25% of girls scored 50 or lower whereas the bottom 25% of boys scored 46 or lower.

Similar comparisons are possible for the different components in the three subjects.

Table 9: National Results of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 – Percentiles by Gender

Component	Gender	Percentiles						
		5	10	25	50	75	90	95
Il-Malti: It-Tahdit (20%)	Female	11	12	15	17	19	20	20
	Male	10	12	15	17	19	20	20
Il-Malti: Is-Smigh (20%)	Female	10	11	14	17	18	19	20
	Male	9	11	13	16	18	19	20
Il-Malti: Il-Qari (30%)	Female	10	13	17	21	24	26	27
	Male	8	11	16	20	24	26	27
Il-Malti: Il-Kitba (30%)	Female	10	12	16	20	22	25	26
	Male	7	9	14	18	21	23	25
Il-Malti: Total (100%)	Female	40	51	64	75	82	87	90
	Male	31	42	58	72	80	85	88
English: Speaking (20%)	Female	10	12	15	17	19	20	20
	Male	8	11	14	16	18	20	20
English: Listening (20%)	Female	9	10	13	15	18	19	19
	Male	8	9	12	15	18	19	20
English: Reading (30%)	Female	13	16	20	24	27	28	29
	Male	11	14	18	23	26	28	29
English: Writing (30%)	Female	8	10	13	16	19	22	23
	Male	6	7	11	15	18	21	22
English: Total (100%)	Female	41	49	62	72	80	86	88
	Male	32	41	55	68	78	84	86
Mathematics: Mental (20%)	Female	4	6	11	16	18	20	20
	Male	3	5	10	16	19	20	20
Mathematics: Written (80%)	Female	16	23	39	56	67	74	76
	Male	14	21	37	56	69	75	78
Mathematics: Total (100%)	Female	20	30	50	71	86	93	96
	Male	16	25	46	72	87	94	97

Performance in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

The figures on the following pages present a series of cumulative frequency curves which give a visual representation of the performance of candidates in the different components. These figures are built on the data presented in Table 8 (page 11).

These cumulative frequency graphs provide information on each candidate's mark in comparison to the marks obtained by the whole cohort.

The graphs for the different components of Maltese show that candidates obtained their lowest mark in the writing component. This conclusion emerges from the graph in Figure 4. Schools, therefore, need to work on improving the candidates' writing skills as recommended in the Maltese performance report (page 22)..

The graphs for the different components of English show similar results to Maltese, with candidates obtaining their lowest mark in the writing component. This conclusion emerges from the graph in Figure 8. Schools need to work on improving the candidates' writing skills as recommended in the English performance report (page 31).

The graphs for the mental and written Mathematics components show that overall candidates scored higher marks in the mental than in the written component. Schools are advised to read the Mathematics performance report (page 39) for more information.

Figures 1 and 2 below can be used to calculate the percentage of candidates who obtained a particular score in the Maltese speaking (Figure 1) and listening (Figure 2) components. For example, a student who obtained 13 out of 20 marks in the Maltese speaking component falls within the bottom 20% of the student population (Figure 1). A student who obtained 15 out of 20 marks in the Maltese listening component falls approximately within the bottom 40% of the same population (Figure 2).

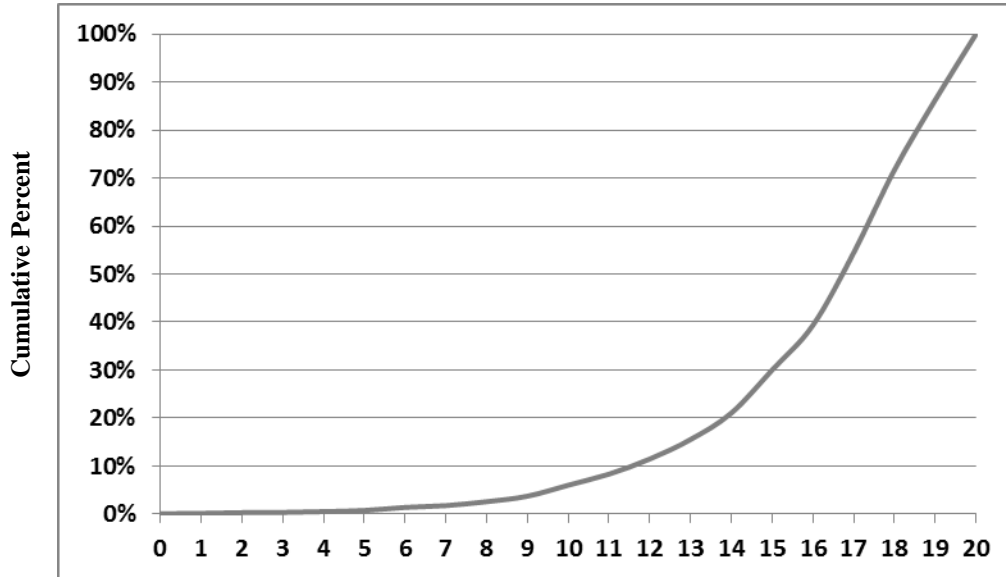


Figure 1: Il-Malti – It-Taħdit

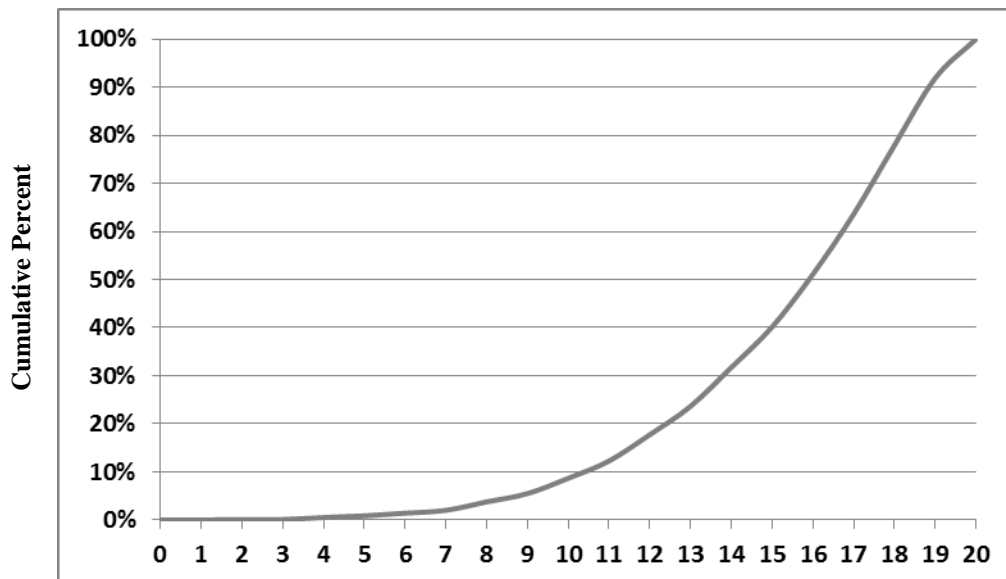


Figure 2: Il-Malti – Is-Smigh

Figures 3 and 4 below show the percentage of candidates who obtained a particular score in the Maltese reading comprehension (Figure 3) and writing (Figure 4) components. For example, a student who obtained 22 out of 30 marks in the Maltese reading comprehension component falls approximately within the bottom 60% of the student population, whereas a student who obtained 24 out of 30 marks in the writing component falls approximately within the top 10% of the same population.

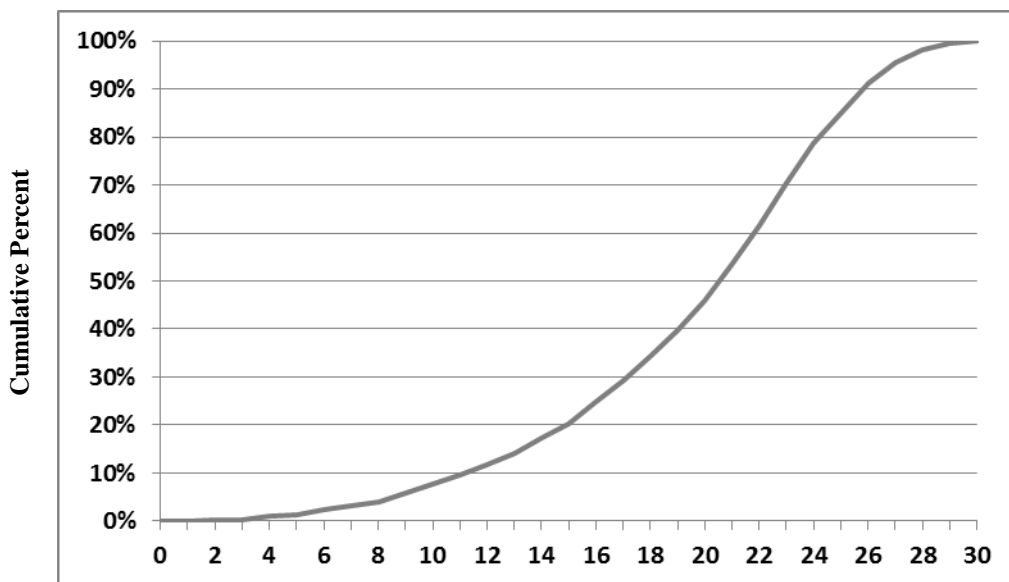


Figure 3: Il-Malti – Il-Fehim mill-Qari

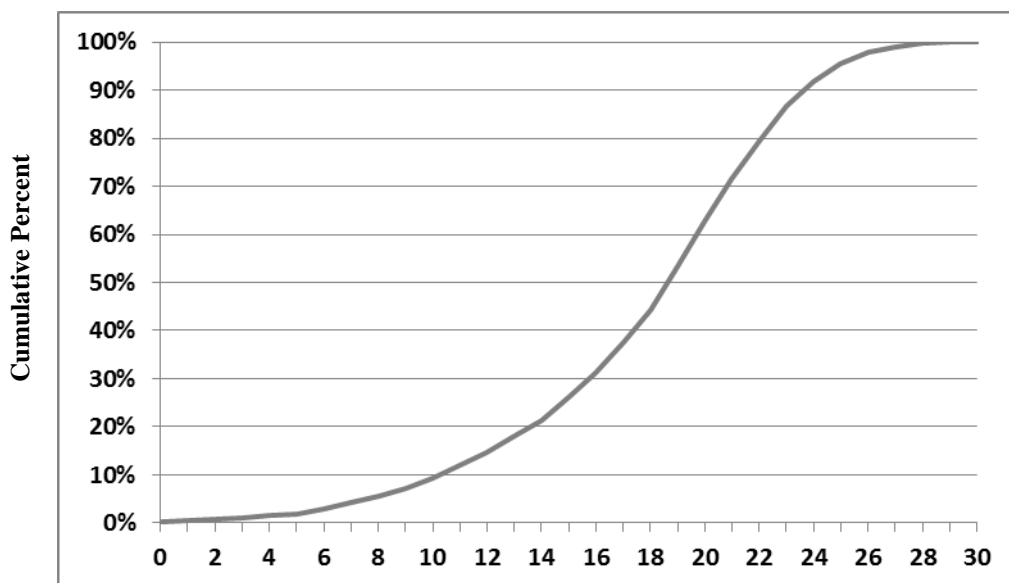


Figure 4: Il-Malti – Il-Kitba

Figures 5 and 6 below can be used to calculate the percentage of candidates who obtained a particular score in the English speaking (Figure 5) and listening (Figure 6) components. For example, a student who obtained 12 out of 20 marks in the English speaking component falls within the bottom 15% of the student population (Figure 5). A student who obtained 18 out of 20 marks in the English listening component falls approximately within the top 15% of the same population (Figure 6).

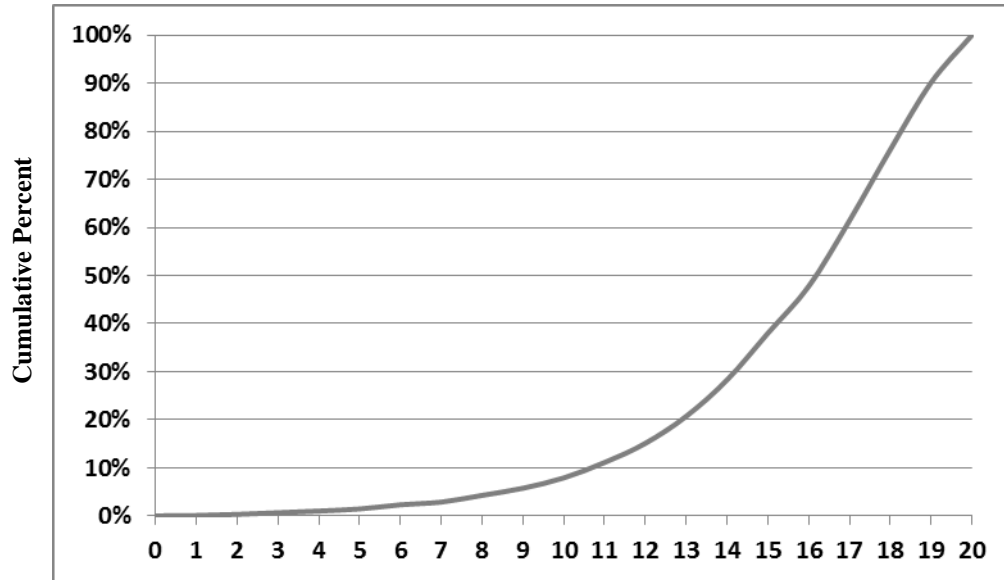


Figure 5: English – Speaking

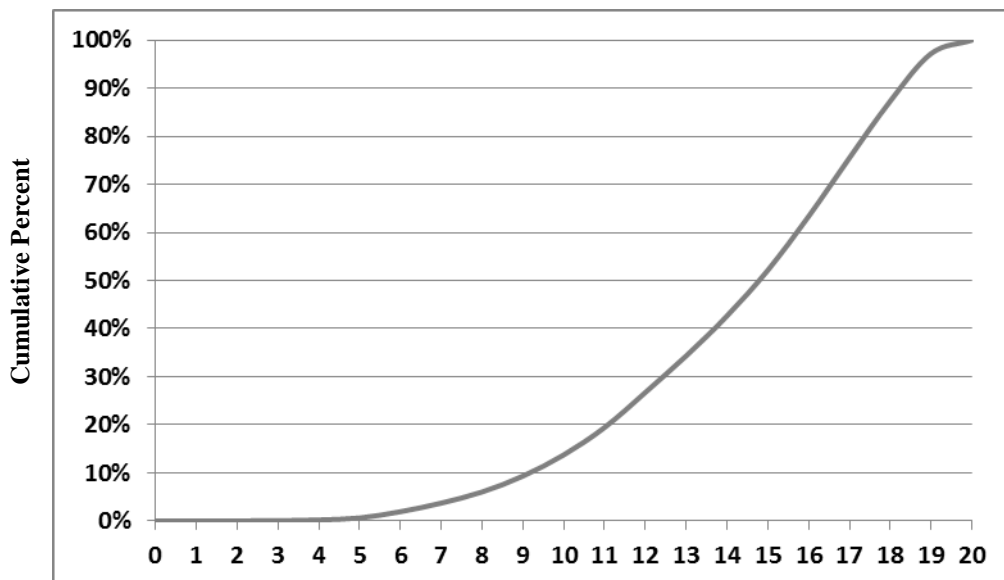


Figure 6: English – Listening

Figures 7 and 8 below show the percentage of candidates who obtained a particular score in the English reading comprehension (Figure 7) and writing (Figure 8) components. For example, a student who obtained 24 out of 30 marks in the English reading comprehension component falls approximately within the top 40% of the student population, whereas a student who obtained 17 out of 30 marks in the writing component falls approximately within the top 30% of the same population.

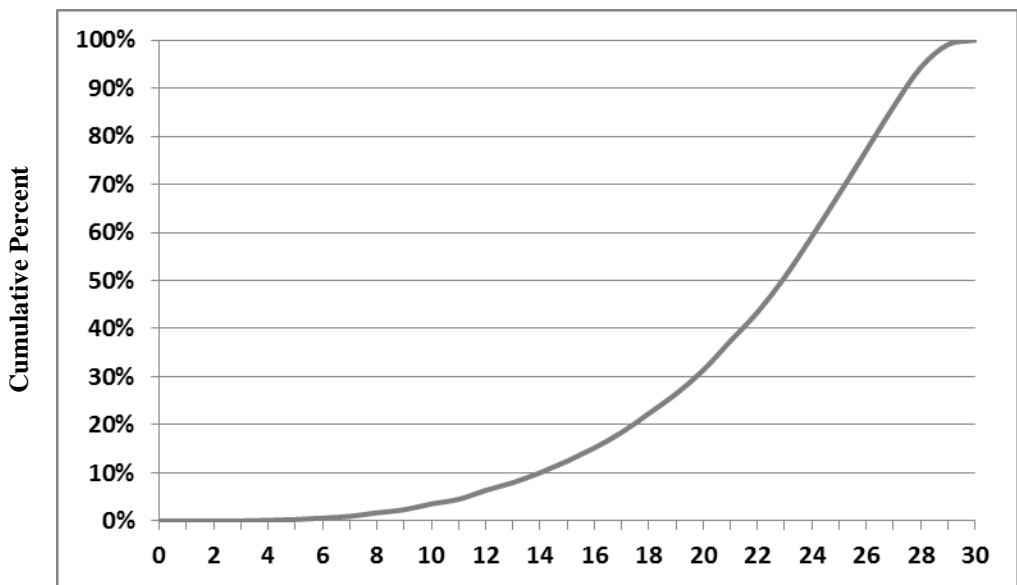


Figure 7: English – Reading Comprehension

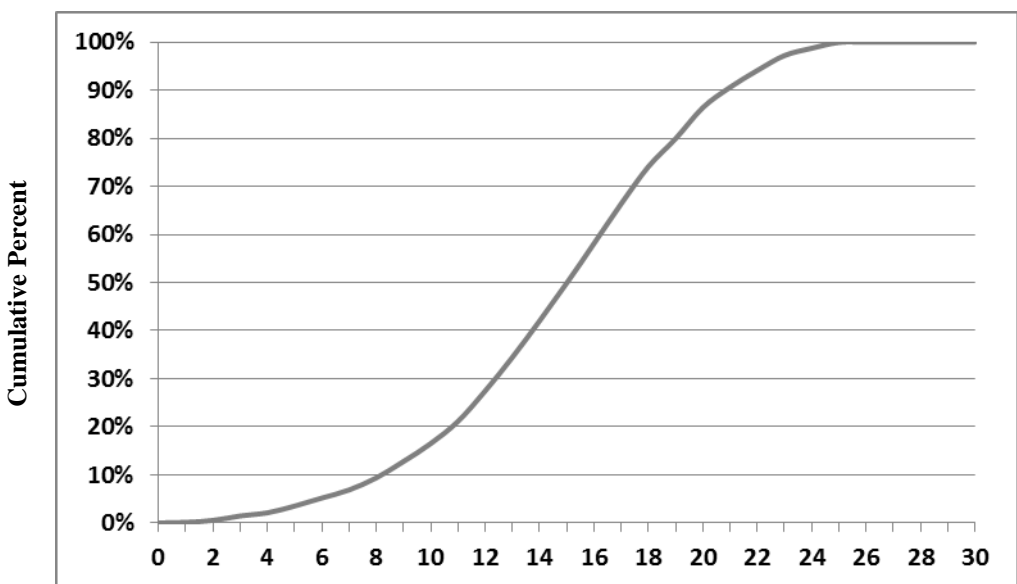


Figure 8: English – Writing

Figures 9 and 10 below show the percentage of candidates who obtained a particular score in the Mathematics mental (Figure 9) and written (Figure 10) components. For example, a student who obtained 8 out of 20 marks in the Mathematics mental component falls within the bottom 20% of the student population, whereas a student who obtained 70 out of 80 marks in the written component falls approximately within the top 20% of the same population.

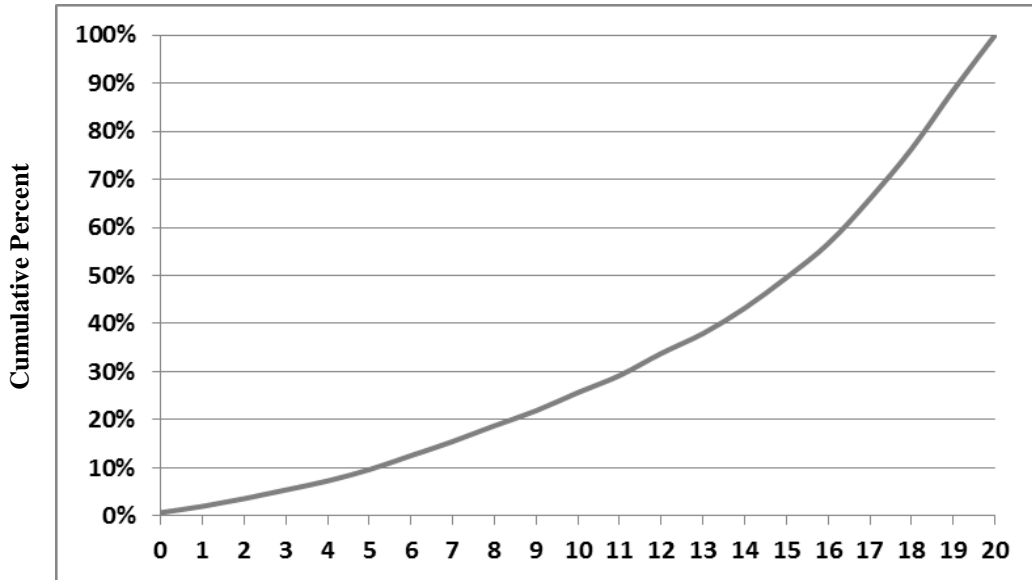


Figure 9: Mathematics – Mental

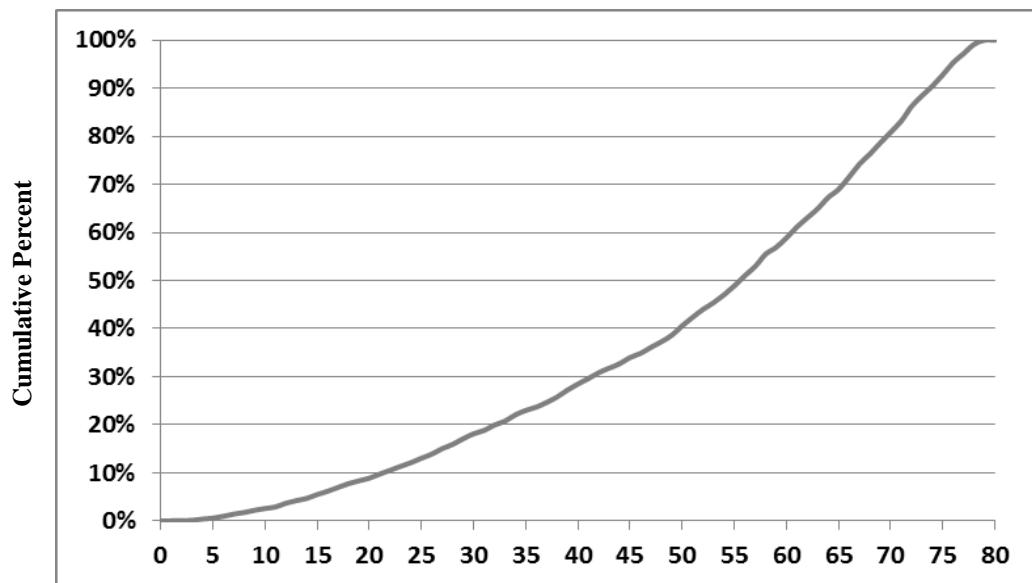


Figure 10: Mathematics – Written

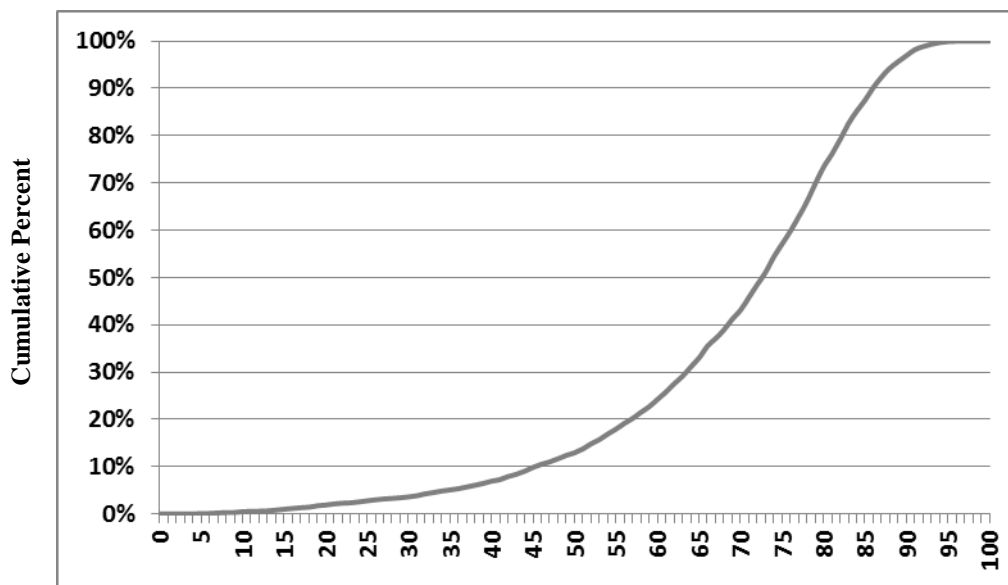


Figure 11: II-Malti – Total

Figure 11 above shows that approximately 60% of the student cohort obtained 76 marks or more whilst 10% of the cohort obtained 45 marks or less in Maltese. Figure 12 below shows that approximately 50% of the students scored 71 marks or less in English. In total, about 10% of the student cohort obtained 44 marks or less.

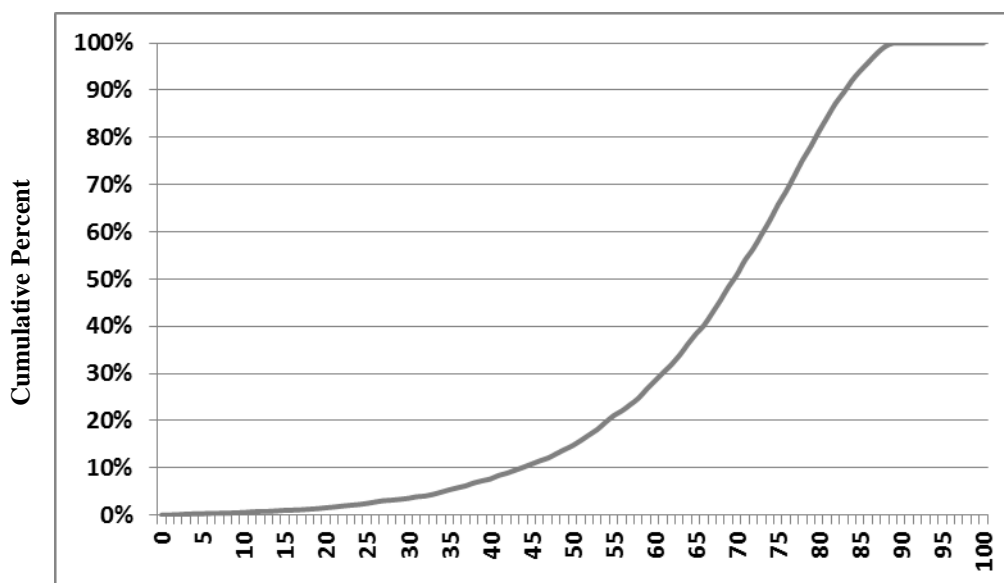


Figure 12: English – Total

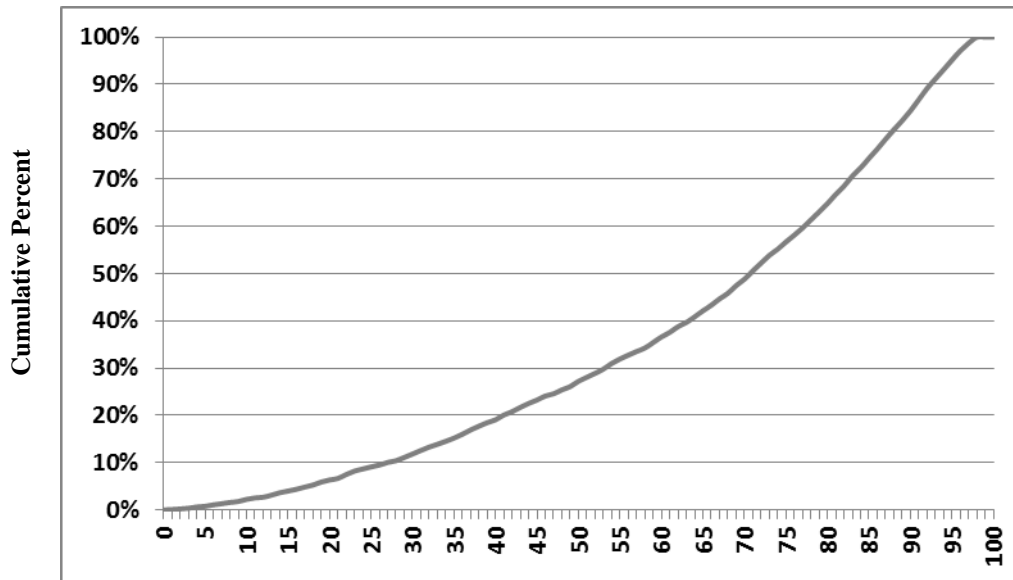


Figure 13: Mathematics – Total

Figure 13 above shows that in Mathematics approximately 10% of the student cohort obtained 27 marks or less whilst approximately 80% of the cohort obtained 88 marks or more.

4. Performance Reports

This section presents the performance reports of the three subjects included in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015. These reports are intended for classroom use as they provide valuable feedback that informs the teaching and learning processes. For Maltese and English, feedback is given on the four components: speaking, listening, reading comprehension and writing whereas for Mathematics feedback is given on both the mental and written papers.

4.1 Il-Malti

A. Dahla

L-iskop tal-Benċmark huwa l-assessjar tal-iżvilupp edukattiv tal-istudenti fl-aħħar tal-livell primarju. Bis-saħħa tiegħu l-edukatur ikollu:

1. stampa reali ta' fejn jinsab l-istudent, u
2. stampa reali ta' fejn il-komunità edukattiva nazzjonali tagħna tinsab.

L-edukatur jista' juża r-riżultati tal-Benċmark biex jirfina t-tagħlim tiegħu.

B. Harsa ġenerali fuq il-Benċmark tal-Malti tal-2015

It-tabella t'hawn taht turi t-taqsimiet kollha tal-Benċmark tal-Malti tal-2015.

It-Taqsimit	Il-Marki	Il-Fin
It-Taħdit	20%	10 min.
Il-Fehim mill-Qari	30%	50 min.
Il-Fehim mis-Smigh	20%	30 min.
Il-Kitba	30%	60 min.
B'kollox	100%	150 min.

It-taqsimiet kollha tal-Benċmark inhadmu minn bord ta' edukaturi li jispeċjalizzaw fl-ilsien Malti.

Il-bord hadem il-karti fuq dawn il-prinċipji:

- Il-kitbiet kollha li jidhru jkunu originali.
- Ikun hemm gradazzjoni fil-mistoqsijiet.
- It-testi kollha, fosthom ir-ritratti, ma joffendu lil hadd.

Ċ. Kummenti u analiżi ta' kull komponent tal-Benċmark

Fit-taqsimi li ġejja se nħarsu lejn kull komponent u taħriġ li kien hemm fil-Benċmark tal-Malti. L-analiżi saret mill-eżaminaturi u l-markaturi tal-karti tal-Benċmark, u l-Uffiċjali Edukattivi tal-Malti li kienu inkarigati mill-istess Benċmark.

L-istruzzjonijiet huma maħsuba għall-ghalliema kollha tal-Primarja.

Ċ1. It-Taħdit

Dan il-komponent kien fih erba' taqsimiet:

1. **It-Thejjija** (minuta, bla marki): L-ewwel taqsima kien fiha sett ta' mistoqsijiet ġenerali. Ghaliha l-istudenti ma ngħatawx marki għax l-għan tagħha huwa li l-istudenti jingħataw hin joqogħdu u jhollu l-sienhom.
2. **L-Intervista** (3 minuti): It-tieni taqsima kien fiha mistoqsijiet fuq żewġ temi differenti, u l-istudenti kellhom iwieġbu il-mistoqsijiet li sarulhom.

3. **Staqsin Inti** (3 minuti): It-tielet taqsima kien fiha ritratt, u l-istudenti ntalbu jsaqsu mistoqsijiet fuqu lill-interlokutur.
4. **Stampa Storja** (3 minuti): Ir-raba' u l-aħħar taqsima kien fiha sett ta' erba' stampi originali, u l-istudenti kellhom jirrakuntaw l-istorja li toħroġ mill-istampi.

L-interlokuturi għamlu l-mistoqsijiet tagħhom skont l-iskript. Kull sessjoni damet 10 minuti.

Kummenti ġenerali dwar it-Taħdit

Hawnhekk se nħarsu lejn xi kummenti tal-intelokuturi u l-markaturi flimkien ma' xi istruzzjonijiet għall-għalliema.

1. Xi studenti ma kinux kapaċi jgħidu n-numri bil-Malti u għalhekk ġew ippenalizzati. L-istudenti għandhom ikunu jafu n-numri bil-Malti, kif jistipula s-sillabu ufficjali tal-Malti.
2. Xi studenti ma kinux kapaċi jwieġbu mistoqsijiet li jitolbu raġuni. Għaldaqstant, l-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom iħarrġu aktar lill-istudenti b'mistoqsijiet li jkun fihom "għaliex", filwaqt li jibqgħu dejjem konsistenti.
3. Xi studenti thawdu bil-mistoqsijiet ipotetiċi. L-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom iħarrġu aktar lill-istudenti b'sitwazzjonijiet ipotetiċi u jsaqsuhom mistoqsijiet bil-kelma "kieku".
4. Xi studenti waqfu meta ġew biex isaqsu l-mistoqsijiet huma fit-taħriġ Staqsin Inti. Dan ifisser li l-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom jagħtu aktar spazju lill-istudenti biex ikunu kurjużi u analitiċi, u dak li jaraw u dak li jingħatalhom jistaqsuh b'mod edukat.
5. Xi studenti sabu t-taħriġ Stampa Storja diffiċli. L-istudenti kienu fil-libertà li jinterpretaw l-istejjer kif iridu huma, imma kien hemm minnhom li jew ma kinux jafu x'se jaqbd u jgħidu, jew inkella qatgħu fil-qasir wisq. Dan ifisser li l-istudenti, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom jingħataw aktar taħriġ bħal dan u jiġu meġhuna jampifikaw u jimxu kemm jista' jkun b'sekwenza.
6. Għadd kbir ta' studenti użaw kliem u espressjonijiet sħaħ bl-Ingliż flok bil-Malti. L-għalliema għandhom jishqu li meta l-istudenti jkunu qed jikkellmu bil-Malti, jikkellmu bil-Malti biss. Barra minn hekk, l-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom ikunu ta' mudelli lingwistiċi fil-klassi u fit-taħdit tagħhom jużaw Malti tajjeb u sabiħ il-hin kollu.
7. Fl-aħħar nett, fil-bidu tat-Taħdit xi studenti poġġew bilqiegħda mingħajr ma sellmu lill-interlokutur u l-markatur. L-etikett jitlob li l-istudent isellem lil min ikun hemm quddiemu, billi jgħid 'Bongu' jew 'L-għodwa t-tajba'. L-istess jgħodd għal tmiem is-sessjoni, fejn l-istudent huwa mistenni li jgħid 'Grazzi u l-gurnata t-tajba'. Xi studenti użaw espressjonijiet bl-Ingliż u qalu 'Good morning' u 'Thank you'. Għalkemm dawn huma forom tajbin ta' etikett, madankollu fit-taħdit bejn il-Maltin huwa mistenni li jintużaw l-espressjonijiet bil-Malti.

Ċ2. Il-Fehim mis-Smigh

Il-komponent tas-smigh kien fih żewġ taqsimiet. Kull taqsima kien fiha silta u żewġ taħriġiet. L-istudenti semgħu s-siltiet minn diska kompatta li nħadmet apposta għall-Benċmark.

Kummenti ġenerali dwar il-Fehim mis-Smigh

1. Taħriġ A tal-Ewwel Silta (*Veru, Falz, jew Ma Ssemmietx*)

Numru ta' studenti żbaljaw fit-tielet mistoqsija. Jidher li dawn ma qagħdux attenti għall-frazi “esperjenza unika”, li nqrat fit-test, u li tfisser li l-għaddas ma kienx jara l-fkieren “sikwit”, kif tniżżel fil-mistoqsija.

Numru ta' studenti żbaljaw ukoll fil-ħames mistoqsija. Għalkemm is-silta ma ssemmix direttament kemm in-nies jibzġħu għall-baħar, jissemma b'mod ċar l-iskart fil-baħar.

Dan ifisser li l-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom jagħfsu mal-istudenti tagħhom fuq il-ħtieġa li meta jisimgħu lil xi hadd qed jithaddet, jew jirrakkonta grajja, joqogħdu attenti għall-messaġġi diretti u indiretti.

2. Taħriġ B tal-Ewwel Silta (*Aqta' linja taht it-twegiba t-tajba*)

Numru ta' studenti wiegħbu ħazin it-tielet mistoqsija. It-tliet għazliet li ngħatawllhom issem mew kollha fis-silta u għalhekk ħafna minnhom qabdu u mmarkaw l-ewwel waħda.

Dan ifisser li l-għalliema għandhom ikomplu jishqu mal-istudenti kemm huma importanti li jifhmu sew il-mistoqsija qabel ma jwiegħbu.

3. Taħriġ A tat-Tieni Silta (*Imla l-vojt b'kelma waħda*)

F'dan it-taħriġ l-istudenti ma ġewx ippenalizzati għal nuqqasijiet bażiċi tal-ortografija, imma ġew ippenalizzati kull darba li naqsu minn waħda minn dawn:

- kitbu kliem li ma jingħarafx,
- kienu grammatikament skorretti,
- bil-mod kif kitbu l-kliem biddlu tifsirietu, jew li
- il-kliem li kitbu ma kienx jagħmel sens fil-binja tas-sentenza.

Fit-tieni linja numru ta' studenti kitbu “Anna”. Madankollu t-twegiba kellha tkun “l-aġenzija”, għax it-test (i) ma tax l-isem tal-aġenzija, u (ii) wera lis-semmiegħ li Ramona u Manwel ma kinux jafu min hi l-aġenta.

Fil-ħames linja ħafna studenti kitbu “erbgha”, “erba” jew “erbgha”. Għalkemm dawn ma ġewx ippenalizzati, madankollu l-għalliema għandhom jagħfsu aktar fuq it-tagħlim tar-regola ta' meta għandha tinkiteb “erbgha / sebgħa / disgħa” u “erba' / seba' / disa'”. L-istudenti li kitbu “4”, ġew ippenalizzati.

4. Tahriġ B tat-Tieni Silta (*Aqta' linja taht it-twegiba t-tajba*)

Hafna studenti żbaljaw it-tielet mistoqsija, fejn il-gwida tal-lokal kellha tiltaqa' mal-familja Zammt fi Franza stess. Hafna minn dawn wieġbu li l-gwida tal-lokal kellha tiltaqa' mal-familja l-ajruport ta' Malta.

Diversi studenti oħrajn żbaljaw ukoll ir-raba' u l-hames mistoqsija. Dan minhabba l-fatt li t-twegibiet possibbli kienu pjuttost twal. Dan ifisser li l-għalliema għandhom jagħtu aktar tahriġiet bhala dawn, bi twegibiet possibbli li ma jkunux sempliċiment kelma waħda biss.

Numru ta' studenti żbaljaw l-aħħar mistoqsija, li kienet titlob it-tfissira tal-espressjoni popolari “iġġibu għajnejkom wara widnejkom”. Dan ifisser li l-istudenti għandhom jingħataw aktar tahriġ fejn jintalbu jfissru espressjonijiet f'kuntest.

Ċ3. Il-Fehim mill-Qari

Il-komponent tal-qari kien fih żewġ taqsimiet. L-ewwel taqsima kien fiha attività qasira tal-qari u t-tieni taqsima kien fiha silta ta' madwar 500 kelma b'sett ta' mistoqsijiet magħluqin u miftuħin fuqha.

L-istudenti ntalbu jlestu dan il-komponent f'50 minuta.

L-Ewwel Taqsima

Din it-taqsima kien fiha riklam fuq teleskopju. Wara, l-istudenti kellhom iwieġbu:

- Tahriġ A: Immarka hux veru, falz jew ma ssemmietx (erba' mistoqsijiet)
- Tahriġ B: Immarka t-twegiba t-tajba (erba' mistoqsijiet)
- Tahriġ Ċ: Immarka t-tifsira t-tajba tal-espressjoni (żewġ mistoqsijiet)

Kummenti Ġenerali

F'dawn l-eżerċizzji l-istudenti kienu mitluba jimmarkaw it-twegibiet it-tajbin. Ghalkemm eżerċizzji bħal dawn jistgħu jidhru hfief mad-daqqa t'għajn, xorta waħda kien hemm għadd ta' studenti li żbaljaw f'xi twegibiet li taw. Dan minhabba l-fatt li t-twegibiet possibbli li kellhom, kienu jixxiebh, u għaldaqstant l-istudenti kellhom jifhmu sew it-test sħiħ u l-mistoqsijiet qabel ma jimmarkaw.

Nghidu aħna, fl-ewwel mistoqsija numru ta' studenti mmarkaw “ma ssemmietx”, flok “veru”. Jidher li dawn l-istudenti ma tawx kas la tat-titlu u lanqas tat-test, fejn kien hemm it-twegiba għall-mistoqsija. Għaldaqstant l-għalliema għandhom jishqu iktar mal-istudenti tagħhom li jaqraw kollox, inkluż it-titlu.

Fit-tmien mistoqsija numru ta' studenti wieġbu li r-riklam jagħti “deskrizzjoni biss tat-teleskopju”. Ghalkemm mad-daqqa t'għajn din it-twegiba setgħet tidher tajba, madankollu t-twegiba kellha tkun “deskrizzjoni tat-teleskopju u kif tixtrih”. Dan ifisser li l-għalliema għandhom jishqu aktar mal-istudenti li f'eżerċizzji bħal dawn, l-ewwel għandhom jaqraw sew il-mistoqsija, jixtarru t-twegibiet possibbli u fl-aħħar jimmarkaw dik li toqgħod eżatt skont it-test.

L-aħħar tahrig talab lill-istudenti jagħzlu t-tifsir ta' żewġ espressjonijiet li ntużaw fit-test. L-iktar li żbaljaw kien fid-disa' mistoqsija, fejn intalbu jfissru "Dan it-teleskopju jiswa mitqulu deheb". Ghadd ta' studenti fessru din l-espressjoni bħala li "jiswa aktar mid-deheb". Ghaldaqstant l-ghalliema għandhom ifiehemu iktar lill-istudenti tagħhom li l-espressjonijiet tagħna m'għandhomx jittiehdu b'mod litterali, imma b'mod figurattiv.

B'mod ġenerali, l-ghalliema għandhom iħarrġu aktar lill-istudenti fuq kif iwieġbu b'mod xieraq il-mistoqsijiet li jingħatawlihom biex (i) jifhemu sew it-test, u (ii) jirriflettu sew qabel ma jwieġbu. Bi fteit aktar attenzjoni setgħu jigu evitati għadd ta' żbalji.

It-Tieni Taqsima

Din it-taqsima kien fiha storja fuq l-animali. Wara, l-istudenti kellhom iwieġbu:

- Tahrig A: tmien mistoqsijiet fuq l-ewwel parti tal-istorja
- Tahrig B: tmien mistoqsijiet fuq it-tieni parti tal-istorja
- Tahrig C: żewġ mistoqsijiet fuq l-istorja shiħa

Kummenti ġenerali

F'din it-taqsima nnutajna li bosta studenti ma esprimewx ruħhom fit-tweġibiet li taw. Bosta markaturi saħqu li l-istudenti m'għamlux distinzjoni bejn l-espressjoni bil-fomm u dik bil-kitba. Rajna tweġibiet "tajbin", miktubin b'Malti hażin fl-ortografija, fil-punteggjatura u fis-sintassi.

Dawn huma xi tweġibiet li taw xi studenti. Fihom wiehed jinnota żbalji gravi fl-użu tal-Malti miktub.

- *Mar jighxel il-kompjuter ghax fl-internet bies isib tagħrif fuq l-animali li hlomt bihom.*
- *Imma irridu jiftiehm.*
- *L-awtur rrid jfisser huwa li għal gurilla boċċa tal-ħadid hafifa rixa.*
- *Ried ifisser b'din l-espressjoni hija li il-ħin jghaddi malajr.*
- *Il-ħuta biex tghum aktar veloci tagħlaq ix-xewka biex tigri iktar.*

Innutajna wkoll li l-istudenti tilfu l-marki minħabba li :

- ma kinux preċizi u speċifiċi fit-tweġibiet li kitbu,
- irrepetew il-kliem tal-mistoqsija, mingħajr ma taw it-tweġiba mitluba,
- ma interpretawx sew l-informazzjoni li ta t-test,
- ma kinux ċari biżżejjed meta ġew biex ifessru l-espressjonijiet, u
- ma kinux ċari għal min kienu qed jirreferu.

Ċ4. Il-Kitba

Il-komponent tal-kitba kien fih żewġ taqsimiet. Fl-ewwel taqsima l-istudenti ntalbu jiktbu messaġġ ta' bejn 50 u 60 kelma. Fit-tieni taqsima ntalbu jfasslu pjan u jiktbu djalogu f'mhux inqas minn 140 kelma u mhux aktar minn 200 kelma. Il-hin għal din it-taqsima kien ta' siegħa.

Kummenti fuq il-Kitba

Tahriġ A: Il-kitba ta' messaġġ

B'mod ġenerali l-istudenti għarfu jiktbu l-messaġġ. Madankollu numru minnhom ma kitbux min kien qed jikteb il-messaġġ. Kien hemm ukoll xi studenti li flok l-isem fittizju li ngħata fl-istruzzjoni, iffirmaw isimhom stess. Għaldaqstant, l-għalliema għandhom jishqu iktar fuq il-binja tal-ġeneru tal-messaġġ, u li dan jinkludi l-persuna indirizzata, l-introduzzjoni, ir-raġuni għaliex qed jinkiteb il-messaġġ, il-konkluzjoni u l-isem ta' min qed jikteb il-messaġġ.

Il-maġġoranza tal-istudenti għazlu l-ewwel titlu. Hafna mill-istudenti kitbu messaġġ tajjeb u l-ideat kienu tajbin, imma kien hemm min fassal l-argument ewlieni tiegħu fuq Keith li tmur għandu biex jgħinek meta jkollok bżonn xi parir. Għaldaqstant ingħata r-rwol ta' *counsellor*, meta fil-fatt kien jieħu hsieb l-indafa tal-iskola.

Mill-ftit studenti li għazlu t-tieni titlu, numru minnhom hargu barra mis-sugġett. Kien hemm min qies lis-Sinjura Galea bħala l-għalliema tiegħu, u għalhekk kitbilha messaġġ ta' hajr għas-sena li fiha għallmitu. Kien hemm min għamel stedina lis-Sinjura Galea biex tiġi tkellimhom fl-iskola. Il-fatt li l-istudenti ma tantx għazlu dan it-titlu, u li numru minnhom hargu barra mis-sugġett, juri li hemm bżonn li l-għalliema jesponu lill-istudenti għal iktar firxa ta' ideat. Għaldaqstant l-iskejjel għandhom jinvestu f'aktar kotba ta' qari bil-Malti halli l-istudenti jkollhom aktar x'jaqraw bil-Malti. Barra minn hekk fil-klassi l-għalliema għandhom jesponu iktar lill-istudenti tagħhom b'titli differenti tal-istess ġeneru ta' kitba.

Fl-ewwel messaġġ innutajna hafna espressjonijiet sbieħ, bħal: "nadif tazza", "iżzomm kullimkien pupilla", u oħrajn. Madankollu bosta studenti m'għamlux differenza bejn il-Malti mitkellem u l-Malti miktub. Barra minn hekk innutajna hafna żbalji tal-ortografija u tal-grammatika. Kien hemm bosta messaġġi bla ebda sinjal tal-puntegġjatura.

L-għalliema għandhom ikomplu jheggu lill-istudenti jużaw espressjonijiet sbieħ u xierqa f'kitbiethom. Fl-istess hin għandhom jishqu iktar fuq il-bżonn li meta jiktbu, josservaw ir-regoli tal-kitba għal dak li għandu x'jaqsam mal-istruttura tas-sentenza, l-għazla tal-kelma, l-ortografija u l-puntegġjatura. Bosta għalliema fis-sekondarja qed jigbdulna l-attenzjoni li għadd ta' studenti qegħdin jitolgħu għandhom mingħajr ma jkun jafu jibnu sentenzi tajbin jew jiktbu tajjeb kliem bażiku u komuni.

Dawn huma xi sentenzi miktubin hazin li sibna waqt li konna qed nikkoreġu.

- *Qed nikteb din il-messaġġ biex niringrazzja għal-taħdita li tagħtni.*
- *Jien nixtieq niringrazzja lil inti għax l-iskola tiegħi hija zghira.*
- *Il-lezzjonijiet huwa qasir.*
- *Hadit gost meta inti staqsietni xi ftit mistoqsijiet fuqi.*
- *Inti kien liebes liebsa vera sabiħa fuqek u inti hija persuna tal-qalb.*
- *Tista' tagħmel dan il-messaġġ għall-mayor?*

Tahriġ B: Id-djalogu

Il-pjan

Hafna studenti huma ppreparati tajjeb biex jagħmlu pjan. Kien hemm diversi tipi ta' pjanijiet u li rajniehom jagħmlu sens u li setgħu jgħinuhom fil-kitba tagħhom. Madankollu xorta waħda kien hemm għadd ta' studenti li kkupjaw kelma b'kelma l-għajnuniet li ngħatawllhom fil-karta. Oħrajn sempliċiment kitbu f'tit kelmiet li għewhom f'moħħhom mingħajr ma tawhom struttura. Kien hemm min fil-pjan għamel id-djalogu u mbaġhad reġa' kkupjah. Kien hemm studenti li kellhom pjan tajjeb u qassmuh b'introduzzjoni, żvilupp u konkluzjoni. Xi wħud minn dawn imbaġhad għamlu kitba ta' komponiment minflok djalogu.

Minkejja li fil-karta jingħataw għajnuniet, madankollu dawk ma jistgħux jitqiesu bħala pjan. Għaldaqstant l-għalliema għandhom jishqu aktar li l-istudenti għandhom jibnu pjan skont it-titlu li jkunu għażlu biex dan jgħinuhom fit-tqassim tal-kitba proprja.

Il-kitba tad-djalogu

Qrajna djalogi sbieħ hafna u wħud minnhom kienu saħansitra brillanti, kemm għall-ideat kif ukoll għall-mod ta' kif l-istudenti esprimew lilhom infushom. Madankollu kien hemm numru mhux hażin ta' studenti li kitbu komponiment flok djalogu. Barra minn hekk xi studenti ma żammewx man-numru minimu tal-kliem u għalhekk għew ippenalizzati.

L-aktar djalogu li ntgħazel mill-istudenti kien dak ta' bejn l-istudent u gganta. Kien hemm min beda d-djalogu donnu qed jiltaqa' ma' xi haħiba tiegħu. Innutajna djalogi li fihom ma tindunax li hemm djalogu bejn tifel/tifla u gganta.

L-istudenti li għażlu t-tieni titlu marru generalment tajjeb. Madankollu kien hemm studenti li rrakkuntaw kazijiet ta' snin ilu, meta huma kienu mitlubin jirakkuntaw l-aħħar każ taz-ziju Manwel.

Fid-djalogu nnutajna hafna żbalji tal-ortografija, nuqqas ta' punteggjatura u żbalji oħrajn grammatikali. Innutajna li hemm studenti li jsibuha diffiċli jesprimu ruħhom tajjeb bil-Malti. Dawn huma xi sentenzi li qbadna waqt li konna nikkoreġu:

Għandi l-guħ u memx ikel biex niekol. Għandek xi f'tit ikel għalini?

L-akbar salvatgġ li kellna saret it-tnejn.

Domna tliet siegħat nitfu.

Konna għoxrin pumpiera.

Iva! Għal jien biss.

Għaldaqstant, l-għalliema għandhom jishqu aktar biex fil-kitbiet tagħhom l-istudenti jsegwu kemm jista' jkun ir-regoli ufficjali tal-kitba. Mhux biżżejjed li l-istudenti jitgħallmu jikkomunikaw. L-għalliema, sa mis-snin bikrin, għandhom jgħallmu lill-istudenti tagħhom jesprimu lilhom infushom tajjeb u sabiħ.

D. Implikazzjonijiet għat-tagħlim

D.1 It-Taħdit

Sa mis-snin bikrin, l-istudenti għandhom jingħataw l-ispazju biex ikunu jistgħu jiddiskutu ma' studenti oħrajn u quddiem udjenzi differenti. Fil-klassijiet tal-primarja d-diskussjoni għadha nieqsa. Jidher li għadd ta' għalliema qed isaqsu mistoqsijiet li jitolbu tweġibiet magħluqin biss. Għaldaqstant, huma għandhom isaqsu mistoqsijiet diretti u oħrajn li jitolbu aktar hsieb. L-istudenti għandhom jiġu mgħallma jwieġbu b'Malti sabiħ u korrett, u meta dan ma jseħx, jikkoreġuom.

D.2 Il-Fehim mis-Smigh

Hafna jaħsbu li huwa ovvju għall-istudenti li jirkellmu bil-Malti, li jifhmu testi differenti li jisimgħu. Madankollu dan mhux minnu. Sa mis-snin bikrin, l-għalliema għandhom iħarrġu lill-istudenti jaqbd u t-tagħrif ewlieni f'testi li jisimgħu, jisiltu messaġġi importanti u jifhmu tifsiriet moħbija. Dan jitlob hafna taħriġ fil-klassi u l-għalliema għandhom jużaw riżorsi differenti biex iħarrġu lill-istudenti tagħhom jinnutaw tipi differenti ta' taħdit, xi skopijiet għandhom il-kelliema, x'udjenzi għandhom f'moħħhom, u l-espressjoni li qed jużaw.

D.3 Il-Fehim mill-Qari

Bhalissa għaddej sforz kbir fl-iskejjel tagħna biex jissahħaħ il-qari. L-għalliema għandhom jagħtu importanza kbira lil din il-ħila sa mis-snin bikrin. Għad hemm studenti fl-iskejjel tagħna li ma jafux jaqraw sew, u li jaqtgħu qalbhom malli jaraw ktieb quddiemhom. Fil-klassi għandu jingħata hafna aktar ħin għall-qari. Il-qari għandu jinbidel f'esperjenza ta' gost, b'diskussjonijiet fuq it-testi li jkunu nqraw. L-imħabba lejn il-qari titnissel bil-mod il-mod meta l-istudenti jiġu esposti f'ambjenti ta' kotba sbieħ, interessanti u divertenti.

D.4 Il-Kitba

L-espressjoni bil-kitba hija aktarx l-itqal ħila fil-lingwa. Għaldaqstant, sa mis-snin bikrin l-għalliema għandhom iħarrġu lill-istudenti tagħhom jiffornulaw il-ħsibijiet tagħhom bil-kitba fi struttura u skont ir-regoli standard. Dan għandu jitwettaq pass pass skont is-sillabu ufficjali tal-Malti. Fl-istess ħin l-għalliema għandhom inisslu mħabba lejn il-kitba, għax f'din il-ħila wkoll, b'xorti ħazina, għad hemm studenti li jiddeju jew jibzgu jktbu. Din il-ħila għandha titnissel b'hafna taħriġ divertenti, u filwaqt li tissahħaħ il-kompetenza grammatikali tal-istudenti, huma jesprimu ruħhom b'mod korrett u sabiħ mal-udjenzi li jkollhom.

4.2 English

A: General comments about the Benchmark papers

The 2015 English End of Primary Benchmark assessed the candidates' receptive and productive language skills. The Listening and Reading components tested their comprehension skills, whilst items set in the Speaking and Writing components measured their linguistic competence and performance.

The Specification Grid focused on the oral, listening and reading comprehension, and writing aspects of language learning that are reflected in the objectives and standards set by the Primary English Syllabus (2006).

The weightings of marks were distributed as follows: The Speaking and Listening Benchmark papers each carried 20% of the global mark; and the Reading and Writing Benchmark papers were allotted 30% of the marks respectively.

The Benchmark Board for English sought to provide for the widest possible range of ability within the age-group by setting graded tasks in the four components during the planning and design phases of the Benchmark 2015.

The choice of text types was consistent with the End of Primary Benchmark Guidelines 2015. Besides, the Board took great care to ensure that the visual prompts used in the Speaking component were age-appropriate; deliberately avoided using promotional material in the design phase, and eschewed gender and racial bias in the selection of visual, audio and reading texts.

The length, structure and language of the authentic texts for the Listening and Reading components were modified to suit the competence level of Year Six students. The listening texts and tasks were professionally recorded on CD to ensure that candidates would follow them easily. Moreover, the reading texts and questions were recorded for access arrangement purposes.

B: Comments regarding the candidates' performance

This section of the report delineates the items set, focusing on the candidates' performance and the different levels of attainment in the four Benchmark papers.

B1: The Speaking Component

20% of the global mark; time allotted – 10 minutes

Tasks 2, 3 and 4 of the Speaking Component assessed the candidates' oral competences. The assessment criteria comprised the candidates' ability to use a range of vocabulary (0 – 5 marks), interact and speak fluently (0 – 5 marks), use a range of grammatical structures (0 – 4 marks), achieve tasks set (0 – 2 marks), and make good use of pronunciation, intonation and stress (0 – 2 marks). Additionally, candidates' performance in task specific criteria (0 – 2 marks), pegged to tasks 3 and 4, included their ability to hypothesize and use appropriate qualifiers to describe points of comparison and contrast.

The 8 oral tests consisted of 4 tasks: the Warmer; Interview; Single Picture, and Compare and Contrast. The oral tests were administered in primary schools and each test was of 10 minutes duration. The following is a brief outline of each task:

Task 1: The Warmer

Time allotted: 1 minute

The purpose of the Warmer was to assist the interlocutor in establishing the proper conditions for the candidates to feel at ease from the onset and then produce language to the best of their ability. This task did not carry any marks. Questions were simple and candidates could be prompted if they hesitated.

Task 2: The Interview

Time allotted: 3 minutes

The Interview assessed the candidates' ability to respond to questions by narrating, describing and giving opinions. Four topics, two per candidate, were predetermined for each test during the planning and design phase. The topics were in accordance with the Benchmark Guidelines 2015 and included: the weather, free time and entertainment, shopping, places, house and home environment, school activities, school life, school outings, helping at home, people who help us, sports, food and drink, health and body care, you and others, pets and animals, and the environment.

Task 3: Single Picture

Time allotted: 3 minutes

A single picture depicted a topic or situation familiar to candidates. The candidates were asked a number of questions. They had to describe the picture and the people in it, the event portrayed and the activity people in the picture were engaged in. They also had to hypothesize and give an opinion about the picture.

Task 4: Compare and Contrast

Time allotted: 3 minutes

The candidates had to compare and contrast two pictures. They took turns to answer set questions about each pair of pictures, describing similarities and differences of the activities shown in the pictures.

Most of the candidates did generally well in the Speaking Component.

B2: The Listening Comprehension Component

20% of the global mark. Time allotted: 30 minutes

Markers considered the listening texts age-appropriate and the tasks and items set in the Listening Component highly suitable. Candidates, who had mastered listening comprehension skills, performed exceptionally well in this component.

The following comments give an overall view of the listening tasks and highlight the candidates' strengths and weaknesses.

Listening Task 1

Candidates had to listen to two short texts with instructions on how to use two pieces of equipment. The first text was on how to use a toaster and the second on how to play a DVD.

Questions 1 to 8

Candidates were asked to complete a multiple-choice exercise. They had to choose and underline the correct word or phrase in brackets.

The task was graded with three questions set at a low level of difficulty and five at a medium level of difficulty. The task assessed the candidates' ability to understand spoken language, listen for specific information, understand key words, follow instructions accurately, comprehend the main ideas, follow a sequence, deduce meaning from context, recognize cohesive devices, and understand referring words.

Most of the candidates performed well in this task. However, a number of candidates found questions 5, 6 and 7 quite challenging. Some candidates did not know the meaning of “*manually*” in item 5. Candidates, who chose the wrong answer in item 6, did not understand the subordinate clause “*If nothing happens,*” in the text and failed to select the correct adverb of frequency. Some candidates did not follow the sequence of instructions carefully and chose the wrong preposition of time in item 7 and lost the mark. A few of the candidates failed to listen for detail and selected the wrong option in item 8.

Listening Task 2

The second text was a scene from a play. Candidates listened to a conversation about an invention between a visitor and statues of two inventors who come alive in a museum.

Questions 1 a-d

Candidates had to read and underline the correct word or phrase in each bracket. The items were graded with one item set at a low level of difficulty, two items set at a medium level of difficulty and one item at a high level difficulty. The exercise assessed the candidates' ability to listen for specific information, understand key words, and follow a sequence.

The majority of candidates completed this task successfully. However, some candidates did not connect “*relatives*” in item 1b to “*brothers*” in the text and lost the mark. A few of the candidates failed to select the correct location of the experiments in item 1c, and some chose the wrong time reference in item 1d.

Questions 2 a-e

This exercise was made up of five statements and candidates had to show whether each statement was True, False or No Information Given by ticking the correct box. Two items were set at a medium level of difficulty and three items at a high level of difficulty. In this exercise candidates had to demonstrate that they could infer from context, listen for specific information, and follow a sequence.

Most candidates successfully accomplished this exercise but some encountered difficulties in answering items 2c, 2d and 2e correctly. These candidates could not distinguish between False and No Information Given statements.

Questions 3 a-e

Exercise 3 required candidates to complete sentences, using only one word. This task was graded with one item set at a low level of difficulty, three items set at a medium level of difficulty, and one item set at a high level of difficulty.

Candidates generally did well in this task, responding correctly to the set items. They were able to understand the text, listen for specific information, comprehend the main ideas, deduce meaning from context, recognize cohesive devices, infer from context and follow instructions carefully. However, some of the candidates did not write the correct noun from the text and lost the marks in items 3b and 3c. Others disregarded the instruction and lost marks because they wrote a phrase instead of the required word.

B3: The Reading Comprehension Component

30% of the global mark; time allotted – 50 minutes

Markers considered the tasks set as well graded and the quality and layout of the paper as student-friendly. They also commented positively on the choice of text types and their age appropriateness.

The reading comprehension texts included the relevant information to answer set questions. The texts of the first reading comprehension – correspondence via email between two students on a school incident – presented the candidates with a situation they could relate to. Similarly, the second reading comprehension appealed to the candidates' interests. The text, a recount from a blog, was divided into two sections and accompanied by three sets of questions based on each of the two sections and on the whole text. The questions targeted a range of abilities and assessed a variety of comprehension skills, including questions that required inferential and evaluative responses.

The focus of the assessment was on comprehending the set texts. Although language inaccuracies in constructed responses did not forfeit the mark, provided the written answers demonstrated that the candidate had correctly grasped the meaning of the text, some marks were lost when candidates quoted parts of the text inaccurately.

Candidates, whose reading comprehension skills were well developed, were able to answer the higher-order questions and performed exceptionally well in the Reading component. Conversely, candidates, who had not mastered reading comprehension skills, were unable to give relevant and accurate responses and did not perform well in the component.

The comments that follow give an overall view of the reading comprehension questions, highlighting the candidates' strengths and weaknesses.

Reading Comprehension 1

The candidates had to follow written instructions carefully to complete the set tasks. The tasks consisted of reading statements and ticking to show whether they are True, False or No Information Given; and, underlining the correct answer in a multiple-choice exercise.

The exercises were set at a low to medium level of difficulty and assessed the candidates' ability to locate specific information, identify main ideas and key words, recognize cohesive devices, and identify the writer's purpose and attitude. Candidates also had to follow written instructions, use prior knowledge, respond to literal questions, follow a sequence, deduce meaning from context, and make inferences.

Questions 1 a to f

In the True, False or No Information Given task, two items were set at a low level of difficulty and four items at a medium level of difficulty.

Most of the candidates did well in this task. Some considered the No Information Given statement as False and lost the mark.

Questions 2 a-b

In the multiple-choice exercise, three questions were set at a low level of difficulty and three at a medium level of difficulty.

The majority fared well in this task. A few of the candidates confused the sender of the email with the recipient and selected the wrong name from the options in items 2a and 2c.

Reading Comprehension 2

Section 1

Candidates had to read the introduction and first part of the recount in the first section of the text, and answer the set questions.

The questions, which were balanced and set at low, medium and high levels of difficulty, targeted the candidates' ability to locate specific information, use prior knowledge, identify main ideas and key words, make literal, inferential and evaluative responses. They also had to follow written instructions, follow a sequence, deduce meaning from context, recognize cohesive devices, and identify the writer's purpose.

Many candidates answered most of the questions correctly. Some of the candidates found question 6 quite challenging. They failed to read beyond the lines and wrote literal and irrelevant answers. Furthermore, a few of the candidates answered "*receptionist and nurse*" instead of "*nurse*" in question 1 and lost the mark. Some of the candidates ignored the instruction and gave the synonym of "*sick*", "*ill*", instead of the opposite of "*healthy*" in item 2b. Some of the candidates erroneously considered item 5d as a False statement and lost the mark.

Section 2

Candidates had to read the second part of the recount, and answer the set questions. The questions were set at low, medium and high levels of difficulty. Candidates had to locate specific information, identify main ideas and key words, recognize cohesive devices, and make inferences. They also had to follow written instructions, use prior knowledge, respond to literal questions, and deduce meaning from context.

Most of the candidates gave suitable answers to questions 7, 8, 11, 13 and 14. Some of the candidates gave the wrong answer, "*3 pm*" instead of "*4 pm*" in question 9 and lost the mark. Many candidates, who did not follow the instructions given in questions 10, 12a and 12b carefully or who did not distinguish between a sentence, a phrase and a word, copied irrelevant parts of the text and lost the marks. Moreover, some of the candidates lost part of the marks in these items, because they did not copy the words from the text correctly. Besides, a few of the candidates mistakenly identified "*stressful*" instead of "*hard*" as the synonym of "*difficult*" in item 12a.

Questions on the two sections

Candidates had to refer to both sections of the text to answer questions 15a, 15b and 16. These questions were set at low, medium and high levels of difficulty and candidates had to locate specific information, follow a sequence, and make evaluative responses. They also had to follow written instructions, use prior knowledge, identify main ideas and key words, follow a sequence, deduce meaning from context, recognize cohesive devices, infer from context, and identify the writer's purpose.

Many candidates answered questions 15a and 15b correctly. However, some of the candidates found it difficult to justify their answer to the multiple-choice question in item 16 by referring to relevant parts of the text and identifying the source of information, consequently they lost the mark.

B4: The Writing Component

30% of the global mark; time allotted – 60 minutes

The Writing component included writing an advertisement which carried 10 marks and planning and writing a story for the school magazine that carried 20 marks. All the candidates were expected to produce the same text type in each writing task as stipulated in the Benchmark Guidelines 2015. Candidates had to choose and write about a title from the two different content areas offered in both the short and long writing tasks. Markers commented favourably about the titles offered. They found the tasks very suitable for the age-group.

The level attained in the writing tasks was subject to each candidate's linguistic competence and ability in performing the tasks. The writing paper assessed the candidates' ability to plan their writing, write coherently and cohesively, write accurately, vary sentence structure, organize writing in paragraphs, write for different purposes with a sense of audience, use task-appropriate presentational features, use a range of vocabulary effectively and write relevantly.

Markers noted that candidates adopted a variety of planning techniques, comprising organized bulleted points with ideas grouped in a logical sequence and detailed mind maps. Some of the plans had a word and phrase bank, which very often included a list of memorized expressions that were not always relevant to the title. Excellent planning was characterized by thorough planning with relevant details. Poor planning included plans with listed question prompts and insufficient relevant details, which failed to assist candidates in producing well-structured narratives. Some of the candidates did not attempt the task.

The following comments give an overall view of the writing tasks, highlighting the candidates' strengths and weaknesses.

Task 1 – Write between 50 and 60 words

The first option, writing an advertisement to encourage people to buy a mask created during an art lesson, was a more popular choice than the second option – writing an advertisement to encourage people to buy a pencil case made from recycled material. The task assessed the candidates' ability to use language to describe an item on sale and persuade the audience to buy it.

Candidates, who have mastered the ability to give vivid descriptions and to use language to persuade, produced excellent advertisements. They used the appropriate style to fit the genre with appealing headings, enticing callouts, engaging questions, and convincing statements. Some of the

candidates were able to describe the item on sale effectively but failed to induce the audience to buy it.

Candidates, who failed to achieve the task, wrote a very poor description of the item on sale, a paraphrase of the rubric itself, a recount of an event, a letter or a note. Some candidates ignored the instructions and wrote about the sale of more than one mask / pencil case, or about *a pencil* instead of *a pencil case*. Some of the candidates did not adhere to the short writing task's range of words, mostly because they included irrelevant information and wrote longer than 60 words. Moreover, a good number of candidates made gross grammatical and spelling errors. Some candidates used the wrong question formation; omitted necessary punctuation marks; or used lexical items inappropriately.

Task 2 – Write between 140 and 200 words

The second writing task offered the candidates two titles: *Caught in a trap* and *When I got lost*. The candidates had to write a story about one of the titles which would be published in a school magazine. Markers noted that most of the candidates opted to write about the second title.

Writings which scored high marks were excellent, imaginative, creative and pleasant to read narratives with vivid descriptions of settings and characters; or, recounted first-hand experiences with well-expressed feelings, which made interesting reading. Candidates who performed very well made good use of reported speech in stories and demonstrated excellent command of the language and very good knowledge of paragraph writing. They wrote coherent and cohesive paragraphs characterized by good use of compound and complex sentences, and used an excellent range of vocabulary and accurate structures, spelling and punctuation. However, the main difficulty for some candidates was that they did not adhere to the title and their writing bordered on the irrelevant. One other stumbling block was the fact that some wrote a lengthy narrative introduction and relegated only a few lines to the actual story.

The writings of less able candidates were hardly comprehensible. Omission of words, errors in syntax, and inappropriate use of memorized words and expressions rendered the writing incoherent. Weak pieces of writing were marked by irrelevance, disjointed sentences, poor paragraph construction and development of ideas, limited vocabulary, repetition of the same linking word, gross spelling errors, punctuation mistakes and omissions, incorrect and inconsistent tense usage, inaccurate sentence structure, and misuse of prepositions. Besides, negative interference of the mother tongue was significantly evident in the writings. Failure to adopt the appropriate style to fit the genre was also noticeable in weak pieces of writing composed only of a dialogue instead of a dialogue blended in narrative.

C: Implications for teaching and learning

Primary teachers have a significant role in promoting enjoyment in English language learning and in helping learners become more confident users of English.

- Identifying difficulties through continuous assessment of oral skills is essential to help learners develop competences which they need to master through differentiated activities and appropriate support. In addition, engaging learners in using language for a range of purposes, audiences and situations; encouraging learners to reflect on and respond to a range of oral,

visual and written texts; and, involving learners in group discussions across the curriculum would stimulate active listening and productive talk in English.

- Learners' comprehension skills can be enhanced when they engage with listening or written texts to achieve particular purposes, such as to identify main ideas and put ideas into a meaningful sequence; to respond to inferential questions; and to retell a story in their own words. Additionally, learners need to discuss a range of text types, such as stories, poems, and information texts; participate in critical reading; generate self-questions about text; and answer higher-order questions about text, including evaluative questions.

Furthermore, emphasis should be on modelling and discussing the use of a variety of reading strategies for understanding vocabulary in unfamiliar texts, for example by using semantic and context cues.

- Effective grammar teaching takes place through meaningful contexts. Learners need to develop their syntactic awareness so as to make sense of the grammar of texts. This can be accomplished through listening to read-aloud stories in idiomatic English; and listening or reading a text, identifying unusual expressions and retelling the sense in their own words.

Besides, grammar can be taught as an integral part of writing; for instance, by adopting sentence manipulation learners can be actively engaged in improving the quality of pieces of writing. Learners need to practise revising writing and changing ideas at paragraph level, where necessary; editing writing to clarify meaning at sentence level; and, carrying out a final check of spelling and punctuation.

- Learners also need to be made more aware of the importance of following instructions carefully and shown how to respond appropriately to set tasks and questions. For instance, the title and instructions in writing tasks determine the genre, therefore selecting the appropriate form of text to communicate meaning purposefully to the intended audience is essential before generating ideas and composing a piece of writing.

Opportunities for learners to explore different forms of writing as well as learn how to make use of supportive and flexible frameworks to guide their writing are important aspects of learning to write. Teaching learners how to record ideas, in detailed and relevant planning that fits such frameworks, would further help learners to develop a more structured approach to composing pieces of writing.

Moreover, appropriate modelling of how to apply writing skills to the ideas and how to link paragraphs logically is essential in helping learners produce ideas as meaningful sentences that go well together to make coherent paragraphs, and use appropriate linking words to form cohesive texts.

4.3 Mathematics

A: General comments about the Benchmark papers

In the 2015 Mathematics End of Primary Benchmark mathematical knowledge and skills, conceptual understanding and application were assessed through a Mental Paper and a Written Paper.

As in previous years, 15 minutes were allocated for the Mental Paper. This paper tested mental mathematical strategies, however candidates were not penalised when they resorted to written methods to support their reasoning. For the second year round the questions of the Mental Paper were recorded, thus were not read by the class teacher. All feedback in relation to last year's Mental Paper was evaluated and consequently an improved version of the Mental Paper was presented. In fact, a practice question (a warmer question) was included in the 2015 Mental Paper. This was an extra question at the beginning of the test which was not awarded any marks. The practice question was included to help students focus on the speaker's voice and familiarise themselves with the test. Additional time was allocated for this question. Furthermore, the paper setters have taken the decision to include some pictures and numerical information to support the candidates further and to help them focus solely on what the questions are set out to assess (reference to questions 4, 9, 10 and 17).

On the other hand, the Written Paper was allocated 1 hour and 30 minutes. The Written Paper tested the candidates' competences across the four strands outlined in the Revised Primary Mathematics Syllabus, namely: Number and Algebra; Measurement; Shape and Space and Data Handling. The Revised Primary Mathematics Syllabus views problem solving as the connection between the four strands outlined above. Accordingly, problem solving was given its due importance in the questions set and the Written Paper gave credit to those candidates who were able to reason mathematically. Credit was also given to those candidates who were able to solve non-routine problems (within the parameters of the syllabus) related to their everyday experience. This year, in the Written Paper, a working space was introduced in questions that required working. Candidates were encouraged to use this space for their working. However, the use of this space was not compulsory.

Questions in both the Mental and the Written Papers also assessed understanding of mathematical vocabulary which plays an integral role in the understanding and learning of mathematics. In both papers the candidates had the opportunity to answer questions by applying any strategies, methods or procedures with which they felt most comfortable. A marks' scheme which rewarded every attempt toward a solution supported the candidates' effort.

The marks were distributed as follows:

1. MENTAL PAPER – carrying 20% of the global mark
2. WRITTEN PAPER – carrying 80% of the global mark

The examiners used a specification grid when drawing up the Mathematics Paper in order to ensure both content and face validity. The use of a specification grid ensures that the test items, as a whole, will be constructed in such a way that provides a representative sampling of a range of syllabus outcomes and that allows demonstration of performance across all levels in the performance scale. The candidates were therefore presented with a graded Mathematics paper with questions that catered for a wide range of abilities. In preparation, each question was mapped

against syllabus outcomes, mainly those at Year 6 level. The marks for each strand were actually distributed as follows:

- Number & Algebra (inc. problem solving) 45% ± 2%
- Measures (inc. problem solving) 30% ± 2%
- Shape & Space (inc. problem solving) 20% ± 2%
- Data Handling (inc. problem solving) 5% ± 2%

In order to make the questions more accessible to candidates the choice of pictures and diagrams in questions was given due consideration during the planning and designing phase of both papers, as were the use of the words and the construction of sentences and questions. The examiners preferred the use of simple and clear language in the wording of questions so that students understand clearly what they are expected to do. Questions and parts of questions were sequenced in order of difficulty and allowed the candidates to demonstrate what they know, understand and are able to do. Furthermore examiners were careful to present a selection of questions which are free of any culture or gender bias, stereotyping, tokenism or any promotional material.

Detailed comments about each of the components

B: The Mental Paper

The markers have described the Mental Paper as a well-balanced paper. They have remarked that the level of difficulty was adequate. Questions were clear and straightforward. Consequently the questions in the Mental Paper were tackled successfully by the majority of candidates. Questions were meant to be worked out mentally, but candidates were given the possibility to jot down working on the answer sheet for which they were not penalised.

In response to feedback received from different stakeholders, as described above, a practice question was introduced at the beginning of the mental test to serve as a warmer. Some markers suggested that the answer box for the practice question should not be placed exactly above the other answer boxes to avoid candidates getting confused. It is to be noted that no particular questions were outlined by markers as posing particular common difficulties to the candidates.

C. The Written Paper

Question 1: This set of questions involved routine numerical calculations. While the majority of candidates obtained full marks in Question 1, some candidates encountered difficulty in working out part (d). These candidates were still not able to use a written method for $HTU \div TU$ successfully, as outline in the Learning Outcome in the national syllabus.

Question 2: The majority of the candidates answered this question correctly (completely or in part). Nonetheless, the markers have identified some common errors. For example, a number of candidates failed to understand the instruction given and added 150 to the given numbers. A few markers remarked that this question could have possibly been asked at a later stage, as answering this question must have been too time consuming (though not difficult) for some candidates.

Question 3: The markers have remarked that this was a good question which assessed whether candidates were able to work out the area of a right-angled triangle by considering it as half a

rectangle (ref. *Mathematics, A Revised Syllabus for Primary Schools*, p. 72, learning outcome G.6.6.). The grid was intended to support all candidates further. In fact, many candidates used the grid (counted squares) to work out the area of the triangle. Evidence of this are pen/pencil marks done on the grid. On the other hand a few candidates opted for the formula Area of a right-angled triangle = $\frac{1}{2}$ (length \times breadth). However, it is to be noted that a substantial number of the candidates gave 20 cm^2 as an answer, i.e. they worked out the area of the rectangle but stopped there.

Question 4: This question was quite straightforward and the majority of the candidates got the answer correct (completely or in part). A common error was noted mainly in calculating the number of women. Some students worked out $\frac{1}{4}$ of 54 instead of $\frac{1}{4}$ of 108. Should candidates have checked their solutions once ready, by working backwards, they would have realised that their answers were not correct. Drawings, such as the one below, are commendable as a problem solving strategy.

men	women	children
$\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{4}$?

108 people

Question 5: A number of markers remarked that the way in which this question was presented, and the fact that the candidates could relate to it, helped many candidates score full marks. Consequently, the majority of the children did not encounter any difficulties in solving this problem. Most common error identified by markers was that of adding 5cent instead of 500cent (for $\text{€}1 \times 5$ coins) when calculating the total amount of money Keith had.

Question 6: While a good number of candidates were able to calculate the mean (average) correctly, many candidates stopped at working out the total. However, it was noted that some of the candidates who did not calculate the mean (average) correctly were still able to obtain a correct answer for part (b).

Question 7: Despite its friendly format, as described by many of the markers, a substantial number of candidates failed to obtain full marks in this question. For example, a common mistake in part (d) was that of writing 0.4 as the decimal number equivalent to $\frac{1}{4}$. Others identified $\frac{1}{5}$ as equal to 0.5 and $\frac{1}{2}$ as equal to 0.2 as common mistakes.

Question 8: This question turned out to be one of the most difficult questions in the paper. It targeted direct proportion and the quantities used were quite simple and straightforward. However, many candidates failed to take note of the given information and thus did not use the knowledge that the illustrated recipe made 10 muffins.

Question 9: This question was well within the grasp of many candidates.

Question 10: The most common difficulty noted was converting from litres to millilitres. In fact, part (c) seemed to be the most difficult part of the question, as the students found it difficult to convert 1.05 litres into millilitres (gave 105 millilitres as an answer). Some candidates were unable to give a valid reason for their thinking in the last part of the question. For example some of the candidates who said that the ‘girls’ drank most in the first part (a), later confirmed that the statement in (d) was true (the boys drank more than girls). This is quite contradictory.

Question 11: It was noted by markers that many candidates encountered difficulties in reading the timeline. Most common mistake was noted in part (d) where candidates multiplied 8 hours 30 minutes by 5 (or sometimes even by 7) treating it as a decimal number (8.30).

Question 12: Most of the candidates fared rather well in this question. While many candidates managed to answer all of it correctly, some encountered difficulties in part (e).

Question 13: No major difficulties were noted in this question.

Question 14: The markers noted that the most challenging part of the question was part (a). Some candidates multiplied 1.7 kg by 5 without adding the 500 g after. Others added the 500 g to the 1.7 kg. Many candidates also got confused because quantities were not presented in the same unit.

Question 15: This question was both non-routine and challenging. In part (a) many candidates did not understand that they had to multiply the breadth by 4 in order to work out the length. In part (c) although many candidates divided 144 cm^2 by 4 correctly, then they divided the answer (36 cm^2) by 4 giving an incorrect answer of 9 cm. This shows that calculating the length of a side of a square given the area is quite a complex learning outcome for students at this level. It is also evident that area and perimeter are often confused.

Question 16: The ability to reason coupled up with a strong number sense was key in answering this question. A substantial number of candidates managed to find the right combination (5 cards) without much difficulty. The markers remarked that the marking scheme for this question was very fair as it allowed candidates to gain marks for each step they achieved successfully.

Implications for Teaching and Learning

Drawing on the candidates' performance in the 2015 Mathematics End of Primary Benchmark, it is recommended that the suggestions below are taken into consideration.

- **It is recommended that learning environments (wherever the learning is taking place) are rich in number and mathematical contexts.** Such learning environments would convey the fact that the school community values mathematics and recognises that mathematical skills and mostly importantly understanding are key to being a successful learner.
- **Educators are encouraged to share the learning outcomes with students.** This would help students understand the purpose of learning and see how skills can be transferred and applied within mathematics and across the curriculum.
- **A problem solving approach should be at the core of effective learning and teaching of mathematics in our primary classrooms.** Problem solving is embedded within the outcomes and opportunities in the *Primary Mathematics Syllabus* and should not be viewed as a separate strand of mathematics.
- **Educators need to offer the possibility to all the students in their classrooms to be actively engaged, thus empowering students to challenge themselves.** It is thus recommended that students are given the opportunity to experience rich, routine and non-routine tasks. Planned interdisciplinary projects which extend mathematical skills and allow their application in new contexts can also serve as relevant and exciting contexts to engage and motivate students.
- **It is nonetheless important that interdisciplinary projects and rich tasks in which students are asked to collaborate and working groups do not only engage students emotionally and socially, but also cognitively.** While such tasks are very effective for teaching processes such as communicating, problem-solving and decision-making, while fostering positive attitudes, we need to be careful that attention is not taken away from the fundamental mathematical concepts, from mathematics itself.
- **Furthermore, educators are encouraged to support students learn how to learn.** Thus, they are encouraged to provide students with various opportunities to analyse, initiate inquiry, direct investigations, make decisions, explain their thinking, synthesise aspects of their existing skills, manage time and use technology.
- **Students should thus be encouraged to do mathematics independently, on their own and with others, in an environment that encourages listening, questioning and mathematical reflection.** Such environment helps students develop and deepen mathematical knowledge. Independent learning puts learners at the centre of their own learning. This can include choices about resources, pace and level of challenge and evaluating their own progress.
- **Students need to feel secure in class and valued for the effort they put into their learning.** At all stages in their mathematical journey, students need to know what they have done well and also be clear about what they need to do as next steps for improvement.

- **It is recommended that extension work for higher-achieving learners should always lead to new learning.**
- **Success (in small steps) and new learning should always be celebrated.**
- **Good use of the lesson plenary can also help students see connections and think about how they could apply their learning in mathematics.**

5. Item Analysis

This section presents the results of the process conducted for the item analysis. The purpose of item analysis is to check whether the different question items functioned as intended in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015. This section allows the reader to observe which items were deemed easy, moderate or difficult by the candidates. The data may be used diagnostically as well as formatively by classroom teachers. Eventually, this technical analysis may provide insight on change in trends. However, it is important to acknowledge that items used in the Benchmark cannot be pre-tested and therefore the standard is being calibrated progressively. In order to make sense of this section, it is important to use the resources that are presented in the CD together with this report.

The Facility Index

The *facility index* for an item is a value that indicates the proportion of students that get the item correct. Since the mean (average) mark should roughly be half of the marks available, a facility level of 0.5 is desirable, particularly if a question carries a good number of marks (e.g. an essay). Lower or higher facility levels are desirable for other items. Facility levels greater than 0.85 or below 0.15 should be avoided.

The facility index for an item is calculated by dividing the mean (average) mark on the item by the maximum mark that can be scored on the item.

$$\text{Facility Index of Item} = \frac{\text{Mean Mark on Item}}{\text{Maximum Mark on Item}}$$

For example, for an item that carries 5 marks, and the average score earned on the item is 3.6, the facility index then works out as $\frac{3.6}{5}$, that is, 0.72 or 72%.

The Discrimination Index

The *discrimination index* for an item is a measure of how the candidates perform on the item as opposed to another measure of performance. In other words, it measures how well the question distinguishes between learners. This is usually found by measuring the correlation (relationship) between the score on the item and the total test score.

Item discrimination can vary from +1 (a perfect relationship between those who score high marks on the item and those who score high marks on the test) to –1 (a perfect *inverse* relationship between those who score high marks on the item and those who score low marks on the test).

Ideally, the discrimination index should always be *positive*. The higher the discrimination index, the better the item is. In general, values below 0.2 are weak whereas values above 0.4 are desirable.

The discrimination index may be computed as follows:

$$d = p(\text{UG}) - p(\text{LG})$$

where $p(\text{UG})$ and $p(\text{LG})$ are the proportions of correct answers by Upper Group (top 27%) and Lower Group (bottom 27%) respectively. The maximum value of d is 1.0 and this occurs when all the candidates in the Upper Group reply correctly and all the candidates in the Lower Group fail on the item.

The following is an item analysis of the question papers used in the End of Primary Benchmark 2014. The analysis consists of the study of a sample of 200 scripts in Maltese, English and Mathematics. The analysis is limited to the objective items only.

The facility and discrimination indices for the Maltese and English listening and reading with understanding components are shown in Tables 10 and 12 below. In each case, the analysis is carried out per question. Since the speaking and the writing components are subjective, item analysis is inappropriate. Table 14 below presents the results of the same analysis carried out for the Mathematics mental and written papers.

Tables 11, 13 and 15 below indicate the accessibility of the different questions per subject to the candidates in 2015 in terms of the level of difficulty. These tables also show the extent to which the questions discriminated among candidates in 2015.

Table 10: Il-Malti – A List of Items and their Facility and Discrimination Indices

Item		Indices	
		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)
Il-Fehim mis-Smigh			
1A	2	92%	0.18
	3	65%	0.21
	4	78%	0.21
	5	73%	0.23
	6	91%	0.20
1B	2	93%	0.25
	3	66%	0.29
	4	93%	0.14
	5	94%	0.29
	6	87%	0.21
2A	2	78%	0.28
	3	49%	0.27
	4	63%	0.23
	5	94%	0.25
	6	53%	0.10
2B	2	84%	0.19
	3	63%	0.32
	4	79%	0.18
	5	73%	0.26
	6	95%	0.21
Fehim mill-Qari			
1A	1	73%	0.45
	2	88%	0.31
	3	82%	0.11
	4	90%	0.36
1B	5	70%	0.29
	6	87%	0.35
	7	80%	0.40
	8	59%	0.38
1C	9	82%	0.30
	10	89%	0.39
2A	1	67%	0.14
	2	84%	0.36
	3	75%	0.53
	4	77%	0.30
	5	47%	0.48
	6	34%	0.32
	7	24%	0.32
	8	70%	0.44

Item		Indices	
		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)
2B	9	83%	0.45
	10	74%	0.39
	11	44%	0.39
	12	75%	0.44
	13	62%	0.48
	14	79%	0.54
	15	57%	0.32
	16	59%	0.23
2C	17a	60%	0.23
	17b	42%	0.23
	18a	65%	0.26

Table 11: Levels of Difficulty and Discrimination (II-Malti)

	No. of items
F = 40% - 60%; D = 0.4 or more (correct levels of difficulty and discrimination)	1
F = 40% - 60%; D = more than 0.3 but less than 0.4 (correct levels of difficulty and discriminated sufficiently)	3
F = less than 40%; D = 0.3 or more (on the difficult side but discriminated sufficiently)	2
F = more than 60%; D = 0.3 or more (on the easy side but discriminated sufficiently)	17
F = 40% - 60%; D = below 0.3 (facility level correct but item did not discriminate sufficiently)	5
F = less than 40%; D = below 0.3 (on the difficult side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	0
F = more than 60%; D = below 0.3 (on the easy side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	22
Total	50

The above values show that students found questions rather easy. Some of these questions managed to differentiate well between different ability students, but a number of questions did not provide evidence to differentiate well between students of different abilities. Since in Malta we do not have the facility to pilot the questions beforehand, this is bound to occur.

Table 12: English – A List of Items and their Facility and Discrimination Indices

Item		Indices			
		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)		
Listening Comprehension					
Task 1	1	91%	0.26		
	2	97%	0.15		
	3	97%	0.28		
	4	89%	0.37		
	5	44%	0.36		
	6	72%	0.38		
	7	62%	0.34		
	8	84%	0.33		
Task 2	1	a	97%	0.33	
		b	72%	0.42	
		c	67%	0.50	
		d	69%	0.29	
	2	a	76%	0.30	
		b	90%	0.25	
		c	62%	0.32	
		d	58%	0.41	
		e	67%	0.34	
	3	a	82%	0.44	
		b	47%	0.45	
	Reading Comprehension				
	Task 1	1	a	86%	0.34
			b	93%	0.35
c			79%	0.33	
d			84%	0.51	
e			75%	0.29	
f			86%	0.18	
2		a	93%	0.40	
		b	95%	0.38	
		c	84%	0.38	
		d	82%	0.46	
		e	98%	0.25	
		f	93%	0.46	
Task 2		1		81%	0.56
		2	a	79%	0.39
	b		80%	0.55	
	3	a	97%	0.30	
		b	97%	0.28	
	4	a	82%	0.35	
		b	86%	0.45	

Item		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)
5	a	94%	0.38
	b	79%	0.52
	c	62%	0.13
	d	49%	0.16
	e	76%	0.34
	f	94%	0.17
6		33%	0.43
7		79%	0.44
8		51%	0.49
9		48%	0.50
10		29%	0.45
11		57%	0.47
12	a	73%	0.36
	b	62%	0.53
13		73%	0.33
14	a	77%	0.43
	b	96%	0.32
	c	82%	0.43
	d	57%	0.54
	e	44%	0.31
	f	69%	0.23
15	a	87%	0.38
	b	64%	0.25
16	a	80%	0.43
	b	58%	0.55

Table 13: Levels of Difficulty and Discrimination (English)

	No. of items
F = 40% - 60%; D = 0.4 or more (correct levels of difficulty and discrimination)	8
F = 40% - 60%; D = more than 0.3 but less than 0.4 (correct levels of difficulty and discriminated sufficiently)	2
F = less than 40%; D = 0.3 or more (on the difficult side but discriminated sufficiently)	2
F = more than 60%; D = 0.3 or more (on the easy side but discriminated sufficiently)	39
F = 40% - 60%; D = below 0.3 (facility level correct but item did not discriminate sufficiently)	1
F = less than 40%; D = below 0.3 (on the difficult side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	0
F = more than 60%; D = below 0.3 (on the easy side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	14
Total	66

The values above show that students found many of the questions relatively easy, but simultaneously these questions managed to differentiate well between different ability students. As for the case of Maltese paper, a number of students found a number of questions easy but these questions did not discriminate sufficiently students with different ability levels.

Table 14: Mathematics – A List of Items and their Facility and Discrimination Indices

Item		Indices	
		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)
Mental Paper			
1		93%	0.34
2		92%	0.44
3		94%	0.41
4		81%	0.62
5		67%	0.67
6		56%	0.69
7		66%	0.63
8		60%	0.58
9		63%	0.70
10		83%	0.60
11		82%	0.64
12		67%	0.72
13		62%	0.57
14		85%	0.58
15		65%	0.59
16		52%	0.65
17		68%	0.61
18		64%	0.75
19		46%	0.51
20		38%	0.57
Written Paper			
1	a	88%	0.59
	b	90%	0.34
	c	83%	0.67
	d	62%	0.61
2		42%	0.57
3		27%	0.45
4		53%	0.64
5	a	75%	0.64
	b	84%	0.62
6	a	66%	0.65
	b	78%	0.49
7	a	68%	0.75
	b	66%	0.75
	c	88%	0.56
	d	69%	0.68
	e	77%	0.65
8	a	35%	0.63
	b	35%	0.52
	c	37%	0.52
9	a	66%	0.51
	b	55%	0.68
10	a	69%	0.58
	b	61%	0.64
	c	47%	0.70
	d i	43%	0.69
	d ii	43%	0.69

Item		Indices	
		Facility (F)	Discrimination (D)
11	a	57%	0.54
	b	30%	0.51
	c	73%	0.45
	d	34%	0.41
12	a	97%	0.24
	b	83%	0.61
	c	65%	0.61
	d	89%	0.50
	e	77%	0.69
13	a	95%	0.27
	b	95%	0.32
	c	67%	0.42
	d	65%	0.64
14	a	39%	0.60
	b i	45%	0.66
	b ii	61%	0.63
15	a	40%	0.53
	b	58%	0.63
	c	16%	0.35
16		38%	0.59

Table 15: Level of Difficulty and Discrimination (Mathematics)

	No. of Items
F = 40% - 60%; D = 0.4 or more (correct levels of difficulty and discrimination)	14
F = 40% - 60%; D = more than 0.3 but less than 0.4 (correct levels of difficulty and discriminated sufficiently)	0
F = less than 40%; D = 0.3 or more (on the difficult side but discriminated sufficiently)	10
F = more than 60%; D = 0.3 or more (on the easy side but discriminated sufficiently)	40
F = 40% - 60%; D = below 0.3 (facility level correct but item did not discriminate sufficiently)	0
F = less than 40%; D = below 0.3 (on the difficult side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	0
F = more than 60%; D = below 0.3 (on the easy side and did not discriminate sufficiently)	2
Total	66

The above values show that students found many of the Mathematics questions relatively easy, but at the same time these questions managed to differentiate well between students of different abilities. A number of questions were neither too easy nor too difficult, yet they differentiated well between students of different abilities. Only a small number of questions were on the difficult side and yet they differentiated well between students of different abilities.

6. Conclusion

The 2015 End of the Primary Benchmark Report provides information directly related to the teaching and learning processes in schools. The rationale for the End of Primary Benchmark is to inform the learners as well as their teachers and parents and other stakeholders, about performance in the different skills at the end of the Primary Education cycle. This transition period is crucial for all children and such information should prove useful at the end of one cycle and the beginning of another. The information presented in this report is in line with the underlying principle of the End of Primary Benchmark and should be used to support our mission that all children in Malta and Gozo benefit from a quality education and develop skills that help them become lifelong learners.

Feedback on the content of this report as well as recommendations for improvement are welcome and will be received by the Educational Assessment Unit within the Department of Curriculum Management on the following email address (eau@gov.mt). Any clarifications may also be addressed to the same unit.

The Educational Assessment Unit personnel, upon invitation by schools, is willing to provide further support and information about the End of Primary Benchmark, other summative assessments, and assessment of learning.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 17th October 2014

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 182/2014

To: All Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Director, Curriculum Management

Subject: The End of Primary Benchmark 2015 – Public Meetings for Parents

The Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education is organising meetings for parents who have children sitting for the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 as follows:

<i>Date:</i>	Saturday 25 th October 2014	Parents of children attending Primary Schools in the following Colleges are invited: St Benedict College St Ignatius College St Margaret College St Thomas More College
<i>Venue:</i>	St Ignatius College, Siggiewi Primary School Hall	
<i>Time:</i>	9.00am – 10.30am	
<i>Date:</i>	Saturday 8 th November 2014	Parents of children attending Primary Schools in the following Colleges are invited: Maria Regina College St Clare College St Gorg Preca College St Nicholas College St Theresa College
<i>Venue:</i>	St Clare College, San Gwann Primary School Hall	
<i>Time:</i>	9.00am – 10.30am	
<i>Date:</i>	Saturday 8 th November 2014	Parents of children attending Non-State schools in Malta
<i>Venue:</i>	St Clare College, San Gwann Primary School Hall	
<i>Time:</i>	10.45am – 12.15pm	
<i>Date:</i>	Wednesday 29 th October 2014	For parents of children attending in all Primary Schools (State and Non-State) in Gozo
<i>Venue:</i>	Gozo College, Boys' Secondary School, Victoria	
<i>Time:</i>	5.00 – 6.30pm	

The meetings will focus on the different components of the End of Primary Benchmark, as well as the Access Arrangements that will be available in the End of Primary Benchmark 2015.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

APPENDIX 2



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 12th November 2014

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 211/2014

To: All Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Director, Curriculum Management

Subject: End of Primary Benchmark, June 2015:

1. Request for Multiplication Tables and/or Reader in Mathematics
2. Request for Enlarged Print for Visually Impaired Children
3. Request for Communicator for Hearing Impaired Children
4. Request for Electronic Reader in Maltese and/or English Reading with Understanding
5. Request for Scribe in Maltese and/or English Writing

-
1. The Educational Assessment Unit, in collaboration with the Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD) Unit and the School Psychological Service (SPS), invites schools to apply for the above requests according to the following regulations. Heads of School are to bring these regulations to the notice of teachers and parents of children sitting the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark.
 2. Heads of School are therefore requested, in conjunction with the school INCO and the class teacher, to identify those children in Year 6 who, for any of the above requests, have been assessed by SpLD, SPS or other professional bodies and have a relevant report identifying a learning difficulty.
 3. Requests for Readers apply for children who have scored below the 8-year reading level on a recognized standardized reading test carried out after 31st December 2013.
 4. In the case of children with hearing impairment, Heads of School may apply for the service of a Communicator for all components in Maltese, English and Mathematics.
 5. Heads of School are to include children in Year 6 who have been referred to SPS and SpLD before December 2014 for an assessment in connection with the above requests but have not yet been assessed.
 6. Heads of School are to note that the Readers for Mathematics and the Scribes for Maltese and English will have to be provided by the school. In the case of the Reading with Understanding (in both Maltese and English), a CD will be provided by the Educational Assessment Unit but the school needs to provide the personnel to operate the equipment and invigilate the students.

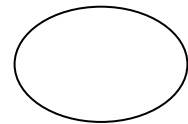
7. All requests, duly entered on Application Form A, should be addressed to:
Ms M. Quattromani, Support Teacher
Educational Assessment Unit
c/o San Ġorġ Preca College
Girls' Secondary School
Joseph Abela Scolaro Street
Hamrun
8. All schools are kindly requested to email a list of all the students (Name, Surname, ID Card Number) who have applied for Access Arrangements (Form A) to marina.quattromani@ilearn.edu.mt. A hard copy of this list should also reach Ms Quattromani together with the applications.
9. All application forms are to reach the Educational Assessment Unit by not later than **Friday 12th December 2014**.
10. In all cases, the decision of the Reviewing Board for Requests for Access Arrangements is final.

The application form (**Form A**) with guidelines for its completion, a consent form and declaration are available online at:

http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/bm_2015.aspx

Thank you for your collaboration.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management



For office use

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT UNIT

FORM A: APPLICATION FORM to REQUEST:

- MULTIPLICATION TABLES AND/OR A READER IN MATHEMATICS
- AN ENLARGED PRINT FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED CHILDREN
- A COMMUNICATOR FOR HEARING IMPAIRED CHILDREN
- AN ELECTRONIC READER IN MALTESE AND/OR ENGLISH READING WITH UNDERSTANDING
- A SCRIBE IN MALTESE AND/OR ENGLISH WRITING

Examination for which application is made: End of Primary Benchmark 2015
(Refer to Letter Circular DCM211/2014)

Examining Authority	Session	Level
Educational Assessment Unit	June 2015	Year 6

Please refer to the guidelines on page 5 before filling in this application form.
(Please fill this application in Blue Ink)

Student's NameStudents' Surname (Use block letters)

ID Card No.

Date of birth Male Fema [Tick ✓as apable]

Admission Date in local Primary School

Address

Name of parent/guardian

Mobile No. Home Tel. No.

College.....

School..... Tel. No.

School email address.....

N.B. If an application for Exemption has also been completed for this student, tick here.

REQUEST FOR:

[Tick ✓as applicable]

READER FOR MATHEMATICS ENLARGED PRINT
(for Visually Impaired children)

MULTIPLICATION TABLES COMMUNICATOR
(for Hearing Impaired children)

ELECTRONIC READER FOR MALTESE

ELECTRONIC READER FOR ENGLISH

SCRIBE FOR MALTESE SCRIBE FOR ENGLISH

REASON FOR REQUEST:

Please indicate and attach any relevant documentation to substantiate this request.

Document 1: _____

Document 2: _____

It is the responsibility of the Head of School:

- To attach all the relevant documentation to the completed form.
- To verify all evidence correct by endorsing a copy of the documents.
- ❖ In case of difficulty, please contact SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties) and SPS (School Psychological Service) Units on Tel 21234965 and 21242882 respectively.
- ❖ Church Schools are to contact the Secretariat for Catholic Education, School Psychological Service on Tel 27790060.

DECLARATION (to be signed by the Head of School)
<p>I confirm that the information provided on this form is accurate.</p> <p>Name (Head of School) <i>(in block letters)</i></p> <p>Signature Date</p> <p>School Stamp</p>
<p>For office use only</p> <p>Remarks _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I hereby give my consent to the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) to process and record personal and sensitive data herewith attached in order to be able to render me or any member of my family the service I am applying for.

I fully understand that:

- by opting out, my application cannot be processed.
- authorized personnel who are processing this information may have access to this data in order to supply me or any member of my family with the service being applied for.
- edited information that would not identify me or any member of my family may be included in statistical reports.

I know that I am entitled to see the information related to me or any member of my family, should I ask for it in writing.

I am aware that, for the purpose of the Data Protection Act, the Data Controller is:

The Director, Curriculum Management, DQSE, Floriana. (e-mail: dcm@gov.mt)

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ **DATE:** _____

I have read and understood this statement of consent myself.

This statement of consent was read and explained to me.

(Tick ✓ as applicable)

DATA SUBJECT	READER <i>(if applicable)</i>
NAME of Parent /Guardian <i>(in block letters)</i>	NAME of Reader <i>(in block letters)</i>
MOTHER <input type="checkbox"/> FATHER <input type="checkbox"/> GUARDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> <i>(Tick ✓ as applicable)</i>	PROFESSION / GRADE
SIGNATURE	SIGNATURE
ID CARD no.	ID CARD no.

DIKJARAZZJONI TA' KUNSENS

Jiena nagħti l-kunsens tiegħi lid-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni biex jipproċessa u jzomm taħt il-ħarsien tiegħu l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva li hawn f'din l-applikazzjoni biex ikun jista' jagħti lili jew lil xi membru tal-familja tiegħi s-servizz li qed nitlob.

Jiena nifhem li:

- jekk ma nagħtix din l-informazzjoni, l-applikazzjoni tiegħi ma tistax tiġi pproċessata.
- sabiex jiena jew xi membru tal-familja tiegħi ningħata/jingħata s-servizz mitlub, persuni awtorizzati jistgħu jkollhom aċċess għal din l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva.
- ċerti dettalji li bl-ebda mod ma jikxfu l-identità tiegħi jew ta' xi membru tal-familja tiegħi jistgħu jiġu pproċessati għal skopijiet ta' statistika.

Jiena naf li, jekk nagħmel talba bil-miktub, għandi d-dritt li nkun naf x'informazzjoni qiegħed iżomm id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni dwari jew dwar xi membru tal-familja tiegħi.

Jiena konxju/a li, għall-fini tal-Att Dwar il-Protezzjoni u l-Privatezza tad-Data, il-kontrollur ta' data personali huwa:

Id-Direttur tat-Tmexxija tal-Kurrikulu

Id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni, Floriana.

(L-Indirizz elettroniku: dcm@gov.mt)

ISEM L-ISTUDENT/A: _____ **DATA:** _____

Jiena nikkonferma li din id-dikjarazzjoni qrajtha jiena stess u fhimt kollox.

Din id-dikjarazzjoni nqrat lili u jiena fhimt kollox.

(Immarka ✓ fejn suppost)

MIN QIEGHED JAGHMEL DIN ID-DIKJARAZZJONI	IL-QARREJ/JA (<i>jekk inhu l-każ</i>)
ISEM il-Ġenitur / Kustodju (<i>b'ittri kbar</i>)	ISEM il-Qarrej/ja (<i>b'ittri kbar</i>)
OMM <input type="checkbox"/> MISSIER <input type="checkbox"/> KUSTODJU <input type="checkbox"/> (<i>immarka ✓ fejn suppost</i>)	PROFESSJONI / GRAD
FIRMA	FIRMA
Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità	Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità

Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni – Ministeru għall-Edukazzjoni u x-Xogħol

(68)

Guidelines on how to complete this application form for Request

- a) All the information on this application form should be entered by the school administration **ONLY**.
- b) When applying for a **SCRIBE**, schools are requested to send photocopies of the applicant's Year 5 Annual examination (Half Yearly in case of absenteeism) writing scripts of Maltese and/or English, depending for which written component the application is being made.
- c) The service of a **Communicator** in the case of children with hearing impairment may be requested for all components in Maltese, English and Mathematics.
- d) Complete the details of the 'DECLARATION' on page 2. In order to be accepted by the Educational Assessment Unit, the application must be endorsed by the Head of School. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to make the request and to supply the information required on the form.
- e) It is important that the STATEMENT OF CONSENT is duly completed in English, on page 3, **or** in Maltese, on page 4.
- f) When a **student has applications for both a n Exemption and a Request**, Heads of school are to ensure that:
 - The box found on the front page of the Request application (Form A) is ticked.
 - Both the Request (Form A) and Exemption (Form B) applications are to be signed by the parent/guardian.
 - Documents for EACH application are to be attached.
 - The applications (with the relevant and stapled documents) are to be sent together, attached with a paper clip (not stapled).
- g) **The original form together with another copy** of this application should be sent to the Educational Assessment Unit. **EACH** application form (original and copy) should have attached (preferably stapled) copies of all the documents relevant to the application. Remember to keep a copy of whatever you send to the Educational Assessment Unit.

APPENDIX 3



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 12th November 2014

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 212/2014

To: All Heads of Primary (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Director, Curriculum Management

Subject: End of Primary Benchmark, June 2015 –
Request for Exemption (Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities)

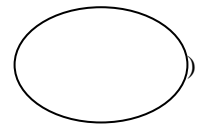
-
1. The Educational Assessment Unit invites schools to apply for requests for exemption for:
 - Children following an alternative learning programme.
 - Children functioning at, or below, Year 3 Primary standard.
 - Children with a severe disability may request an exemption from particular components in the different subjects. For these children a school-based assessment is recommended.
 2. These regulations are to be brought to the attention of teachers and parents. Evidence to substantiate the request is necessary. The evidence required is that provided by the class teacher in collaboration with the INCO and/or Complementary Teacher, or their equivalent, and endorsed by the Head of School.
 3. All requests, duly entered on Application Form B, should be addressed to:

Ms M. Quattromani, Support Teacher
Educational Assessment Unit
c/o San Ġorġ Preca College
Girls' Secondary School
Joseph Abela Scolaro Street
Hamrun
 4. All schools are kindly requested to email a list of all the students (Name, Surname, ID Card Number) who have applied for Exemption (Form B) to marina.quattromani@ilearn.edu.mt. A hard copy of this list should also reach Ms Quattromani together with the applications.
 5. All application forms are to reach the Educational Assessment Unit by **not later than Friday, 12th December 2014**.
 6. In all cases the decision of the Reviewing Board for Requests for Exemption is final.

The application form (**Form B**) with guidelines for its completion, a consent form and declaration are available online at: http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/bm_2015.aspx

Thank you for your collaboration.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management



For office use

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT UNIT

FORM B: APPLICATION FORM FOR EXEMPTION

(Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities)

Examination for which application is made: End of Primary Benchmark

Examining Authority	Session	Level
Educational Assessment Unit	June 2015	Year 6

Please refer to the guidelines on page 6 before filling in this application form.
(Please fill this application in Blue Ink.)

Student's Name..... Student's Surname..... (Use block letters)

ID Card No.

Date of birth Male Female [Tick ✓ as applicable]

Admission date in local Primary School

Address

Name of parent/guardian

Mobile No. Home Tel. No.

College.....

School..... Tel. No.

School email address.....

Refer to Letter Circular DCM 212/2014 dated 12 November 2014.

REASON FOR EXEMPTION – Learning Difficulties and Disabilities

N.B. If an application for REQUEST (for Reader / Multiplication Tables / Enlarged Print / Communicator / Scribe) has also been completed for this student, tick here.

[Tick ✓ as applicable]

Student is following an alternative learning programme and/or functioning at, or below, Year 3 Primary standard. Give details.

Student has a severe disability that prevents access to the different components of the Benchmark. Give details.

An exemption is being requested for the following components: *[Tick ✓ as applicable]*

Maltese

- The SPEAKING component
- The LISTENING COMPREHENSION component
- The READING COMPREHENSION component
- The WRITING component

English

- The SPEAKING component
- The LISTENING COMPREHENSION component
- The READING COMPREHENSION component
- The WRITING component

Mathematics

- MENTAL (Aural)
- WRITTEN

Please **indicate and attach** any relevant documentation to substantiate this request.

- Core Competencies Checklists: Maltese English Mathematics

Document 1: _____

Document 2: _____

It is the responsibility of the Head of School:

- ❑ To attach **all the relevant documentation** to the completed form.
- ❑ To **verify all evidence correct** by endorsing a copy of the documents.

- ❖ In case of difficulty, please contact SpLD (Specific Learning Difficulties) and SPS (School Psychological Service) units on Tel 21234965 and 21242882 respectively.
- ❖ Church Schools are to contact the Secretariat for Catholic Education, School Psychological Service on Tel 27790060.

DECLARATION (to be signed by the Head of School)	
<p>I confirm that the information provided on this form is accurate.</p> <p>Name (Head of School)</p> <p><i>(in block letters)</i></p> <p>Signature Date</p> <p>School Stamp</p>	

For office use only
<p>Remarks</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I hereby give my consent to the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) to process and record personal and sensitive data herewith attached in order to be able to render me or any member of my family the service I am applying for.

I fully understand that:

- by opting out, my application cannot be processed.
- authorised personnel who are processing this information may have access to this data in order to supply me or any member of my family with the service being applied for.
- edited information that would not identify me or any member of my family may be included in statistical reports.

I know that I am entitled to see the information related to me or any member of my family, should I ask for it in writing.

I am aware that, for the purpose of the Data Protection Act, the Data Controller is:

The Director, Curriculum Management, DQSE, Floriana. (e-mail: dcm@gov.mt)

NAME OF STUDENT: _____

DATE: _____

I have read and understood this statement of consent myself.

This statement of consent was read and explained to me.

(Tick ✓ as applicable)

DATA SUBJECT	READER <i>(if applicable)</i>
NAME of Parent /Guardian <i>(in block letters)</i>	NAME of Reader <i>(in block letters)</i>
MOTHER <input type="checkbox"/> FATHER <input type="checkbox"/> GUARDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> <i>(Tick ✓ as applicable)</i>	PROFESSION / GRADE
SIGNATURE	SIGNATURE
ID CARD no.	ID CARD no.

DIKJARAZZJONI TA' KUNSENS

Jiena nagħti l-kunsens tiegħi lid-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni biex jipproċessa u jzomm taħt il-ħarsien tiegħu l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva li hawn f'din l-applikazzjoni biex ikun jista' jagħti lili jew lil xi membru tal-familja tiegħi s-servizz li qed nitlob.

Jiena nifhem li:

- jekk ma nagħtix din l-informazzjoni, l-applikazzjoni tiegħi ma tistax tiġi pproċessata.
- sabiex jiena jew xi membru tal-familja tiegħi jingħata s-servizz mitlub, persuni awtorizzati jistgħu jkollhom aċċess għal din l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva.
- ċerti dettalji li bl-ebda mod ma jikxfu l-identità tiegħi jew ta' xi membru tal-familja tiegħi jistgħu jiġu pproċessati għal skopijiet ta' statistika.

Jiena naf li, jekk nagħmel talba bil-miktub, għandi d-dritt li nkun naf x'informazzjoni qiegħed iżomm id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni dwari jew dwar xi membru tal-familja tiegħi.

Jiena konxju/a li, għall-fini tal-Att Dwar il-Protezzjoni u l-Privatezza tad-Data, il-kontrollur ta' data personali huwa:

Id-Direttur tat-Tmexxija tal-Kurrikulu

Id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni, Floriana.

(L-Indirizz elettroniku: dcm@gov.mt)

ISEM L-ISTUDENT/A: _____ **DATA:** _____

Jiena nikkonferma li din id-dikjarazzjoni qrajtha jiena stess u fhimt kollox.

Din id-dikjarazzjoni nqrat lili u jiena fhimt kollox.

(Immarka ✓ fejn suppost)

MIN QIEGHED JAGHMEL DIN ID-DIKJARAZZJONI	IL-QARREJ/JA (<i>jekk inhu l-każ</i>)
ISEM il-Ġenitur / Kustodju (<i>b'ittri kbar</i>)	ISEM il-Qarrej/ja (<i>b'ittri kbar</i>)
OMM <input type="checkbox"/> MISSIER <input type="checkbox"/> KUSTODJU <input type="checkbox"/> (<i>Immarka ✓ fejn suppost</i>)	PROFESSJONI / GRAD
FIRMA	FIRMA
Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità	Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità

Id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni – Ministeru għall-Edukazzjoni u x-Xogħol

***Guidelines on how to complete this application form:
Exemption (Students with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities)***

- a) All the information on this application form should be entered by the school administration ONLY.
- b) For children with severe coordination difficulties, a report from an occupational therapist is required for the purpose of an exemption from a particular component.
- c) In the case of students in state schools who have checklists, schools are requested to attach a copy of these checklists with their application.
- d) Complete the details of the 'DECLARATION' on page 3. In order to be accepted by the Educational Assessment Unit, the application must be endorsed by the Head of School. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to request the Exemption/s and to supply the information required on the form.
- e) It is important that the STATEMENT OF CONSENT is duly completed in English, on page 4, **or** in Maltese, on page 5.
- f) When a **student has applications for both a Request and an Exemption**, Heads of school are to ensure that:
 - The box found on the front page of the Exemption application (Form B) is ticked.
 - Both the Request (Form A) and Exemption (Form B) applications are to be signed by the parent/guardian.
 - Documents for EACH application are to be attached.
 - The applications (with the relevant stapled documents) are to be sent together, attached with a paper clip (not stapled).
- g) **The original form together with another copy** of this application should be sent to the Educational Assessment Unit. **EACH** application form (original and copy) should have attached (preferably stapled) copies of all the documents relevant to the application. Remember to keep a copy of whatever you send to the Educational Assessment Unit.

APPENDIX 4



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 12th November 2014

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 213/2014

To: All Heads of Primary (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Director, Curriculum Management

Subject: End of Primary Benchmark, June 2015 –
Request for Exemption (Expatriates and Returned Migrants)

-
1. The Educational Assessment Unit invites schools to apply for requests for exemption from English and/or Maltese for children of expatriates and returned migrants.
 2. Heads of school may ONLY apply for an exemption if the student has not followed the subject curriculum during the last two years of Primary school in Malta or Gozo.
 3. This request needs to be supported by an authenticated copy of the official Letter of Admission to School of a Foreign Pupil/Student or other relevant documentation necessary for this exemption.
 4. Heads of school are to bring these regulations to the attention of teachers and parents of children sitting the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark.
 5. All requests, duly entered on Application Form C, should be addressed to:

Mr N. Bezzina, Support Teacher
Educational Assessment Unit
c/o San Ġorġ Preca College
Girls' Secondary School
Joseph Abela Scolaro Street
Hamrun

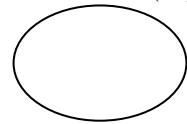
6. All application forms are to reach the Educational Assessment Unit by **not later than Friday 12th December 2014**.
7. In all cases the decision of the Reviewing Board for Requests for Exemption is final.

The application form (**Form C**) with guidelines for its completion, a consent form and declaration are available online at:

http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/bm_2015.aspx

Thank you for your collaboration.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management



For office use

EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT UNIT

FORM C: APPLICATION FORM FOR EXEMPTION (Expatriates and Returned Migrants)

Examination for which application is made: End of Primary Benchmark 2015

Table with 3 columns: Examining Authority, Session, Level. Row 1: Educational Assessment Unit, June 2015, Year 6

Please refer to the guidelines on page 5 before filling in this application form

Student's Name..... Surname.....(Use block letters)

ID Card/Passport No.

Date of birth Male Male [Tick ✓ where applicable]

Address

Name of parent/guardian

Mobile No. Home Tel. No.

College.....

School..... Tel. No.

School email address.....

Date of admission into Primary schooling in Malta/Gozo

EXEMPTION FROM ENGLISH and/or MALTESE for Expatriates and Returned Migrants as per Letter Circular DCM 213/2014 dated 12th November 2014

[Tick ✓ as applicable]

All components Maltese English

Or the following components:

The SPEAKING component Maltese English

The LISTENING COMPREHENSION component Maltese English

The READING COMPREHENSION component Maltese English

The WRITING component Maltese English

It is the responsibility of the Head of School:

- ❑ To attach a copy of the **Letter of Admission to School of a Foreign Pupil/Student** and/or **any other relevant documentation** to the completed form.
- ❑ To **verify all evidence correct** by endorsing the document/s attached.
- ❑ To state clearly (on page 1) **the exact date when the student started primary schooling in Malta or Gozo.**

DECLARATION (to be signed by the Head of School)	
<p>I confirm that the information provided on this form is accurate.</p> <p>Name (Head of School)</p> <p><i>(in block letters)</i></p> <p>Signed Date</p> <p>School Stamp</p>	

<p>For office use only</p> <p>Received on _____ Acknowledged on _____</p> <p>Missing Documents</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Remarks</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	
--	--

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I hereby give my consent to the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education (DQSE) to process and record personal and sensitive data herewith attached in order to be able to render me or any member of my family the service I am applying for.

I fully understand that:

- by opting out, my application cannot be processed.
- authorised personnel who are processing this information may have access to this data in order to supply me or any member of my family with the service being applied for.
- edited information that would not identify me or any member of my family may be included in statistical reports.

I know that I am entitled to see the information related to me or any member of my family, should I ask for it in writing.

I am aware that, for the purpose of the Data Protection Act, the Data Controller is:

The Director, Curriculum Management, DQSE, Floriana. (e-mail: dcm@gov.mt)

NAME OF STUDENT: _____ **DATE:** _____

I have read and understood this statement of consent myself.

This statement of consent was read and explained to me.

(Tick ✓ as applicable)

DATA SUBJECT	READER <i>(if applicable)</i>
NAME of Parent /Guardian <i>(in block letters)</i>	NAME of Reader <i>(in block letters)</i>
MOTHER <input type="checkbox"/> FATHER <input type="checkbox"/> GUARDIAN <input type="checkbox"/> <i>(Tick ✓ as applicable)</i>	PROFESSION / GRADE
SIGNATURE	SIGNATURE
ID CARD no.	ID CARD no.

DIKJARAZZJONI TA' KUNSENS

Jiena nagħti l-kunsens tiegħi lid-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni biex jipproċessa u jzomm taħt il-ħarsien tiegħu l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva li hawn f'din l-applikazzjoni biex ikun jista' jagħti lili jew lil xi membru tal-familja tiegħi s-servizz li qed nitlob.

Jiena nifhem li:

- jekk ma nagħtix din l-informazzjoni, l-applikazzjoni tiegħi ma tistax tiġi pproċessata.
- sabiex jiena jew xi membru tal-familja tiegħi jingħata s-servizz mitlub, persuni awtorizzati jistgħu jkollhom aċċess għal din l-informazzjoni personali u sensitiva.
- ċerti dettalji li bl-ebda mod ma jikxfu l-identità tiegħi jew ta' xi membru tal-familja tiegħi jistgħu jiġu pproċessati għal skopijiet ta' statistika.

Jiena naf li, jekk nagħmel talba bil-miktub, għandi d-dritt li nkun naf x'informazzjoni qiegħed iżomm id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni dwari jew dwar xi membru tal-familja tiegħi.

Jiena konxju/a li, għall-fini tal-Att Dwar il-Protezzjoni u l-Privatezza tad-Data, il-kontrollur ta' data personali huwa:

Id-Direttur tat-Tmexxija tal-Kurrikulu

Id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni, Floriana.

(L-indirizz elettroniku: dcm@gov.mt)

ISEM L-ISTUDENT/A: _____ **DATA:** _____

Jiena nikkonferma li din id-dikjarazzjoni qrajtha jiena stess u fhimt kollox.

Din id-dikjarazzjoni nqrat lili u jiena fhimt kollox.

(Immarka ✓ fejn suppost)

MIN QIEGHED JAGHMEL DIN ID-DIKJARAZZJONI	IL-QARREJ/JA <i>(jekk inhu l-każ)</i>
ISEM il-Ġenitur / Kustodju <i>(b'ittri kbar)</i>	ISEM il-Qarrej/ja <i>(b'ittri kbar)</i>
OMM <input type="checkbox"/> MISSIER <input type="checkbox"/> KUSTODJU <input type="checkbox"/> <i>(Immarka ✓ fejn suppost)</i>	PROFESSIONI / GRAD
FIRMA	FIRMA
Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità	Numru tal-Karta tal-Identità

Id-Direttorat għal Kwalità u Standards fl-Edukazzjoni – Ministeru għall-Edukazzjoni u x-Xogħol

***Guidelines on how to complete
this application form***

- a) All the information on this application form should be entered **by the school administration ONLY**.
- b) Ensure that the **correct** application form (i.e. **Session: June 2015**) is completed and sent to the Educational Assessment Unit.
- c) This application form should **NOT** be sent in duplicate. **The original application form** is required by the Educational Assessment Unit. Remember to keep a copy of whatever you send to the Educational Assessment Unit.
- d) Complete the details of the 'DECLARATION' on page 2. It is the responsibility of the Head of School to request the Exemption/s and to supply the information required on the form. **In order to be accepted by the Educational Assessment Unit, the application and all relevant documentation must be endorsed by the Head of School.**
- e) It is important that the STATEMENT OF CONSENT is duly completed in English, on page 3, **or** in Maltese, on page 4.
- f) Schools should **NOT** apply if a student does not qualify for an exemption (according to Letter Circular DCM 213/2014 dated 12 November 2014).

APPENDIX 5

(90)

DIRETTORAT GHAL
KWALITA` U STANDARDS FL-EDUKAZZJONI
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA



DIRECTORATE FOR
QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA

Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 14th November 2014

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 217/2014

To: All Heads of Non-State Primary Schools and Sections

From: Clare Wigg – Education Officer, Assessment of Learning

Subject: Expression of Intent to Participate in the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark

Church and Independent Schools are being invited to enrol students for the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark.

Schools that enrol and participate in these Benchmark assessments will be obliged to register **all students in Year 6**. Exemptions will only be allowed for exceptional cases after a professional review.

Heads of School are therefore kindly requested to express their intention to participate in the June 2015 Benchmark by filling in the attached form which has to reach the Educational Assessment Unit by **not later than Friday, 12th December 2014**. The completed form is to be emailed to Clare Wigg (Education Officer) on clare.marie.wigg@ilearn.edu.mt.

For your information the End of Primary Benchmark Report 2014 will soon be available online at: <http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Pages/Home.aspx>.

Thank you for your attention.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

Department of Curriculum Management

Expression of Intent to Participate in the End of Primary Benchmark

June 2015

NAME OF SCHOOL:

EXPRESSION OF INTENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE JUNE 2015 END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK:

(Please tick where applicable)

YES

NO

The information below is required only if the school intends to participate.

SCHOOL ADDRESS:

TELEPHONE/MOBILE NUMBER:

EMAIL ADDRESS:

NUMBER OF YEAR 6 STUDENTS ON SCHOOL REGISTER:

BELOW PLEASE WRITE ANY COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE:

Kindly send this form **by email** to Clare Wigg on clare.marie.wigg@ilearn.edu.mt by not later than **Friday 12 December 2014**. In case of difficulty, please contact the Educational Assessment Unit on 2598 2137 / 80 / 86.

APPENDIX 6



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 20th January 2015

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 023/2015

To: All Heads of Primary and Secondary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Director, Curriculum Management

Subject: Markers for the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark

Applications are invited from all teaching grades in possession of a permanent Teacher's Warrant and performing duties in State, Church and Independent Schools who wish to be considered to act as markers in the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark. Primary Year 6 teachers are also encouraged to participate in this process.

Teachers are to note that the candidates' details will be removed from these scripts.

The subjects to be marked are: **English, Maltese and Mathematics**. More than one subject may be applied for, but selected applicants will be asked to act as markers in one subject only.

Markers will be remunerated at the following rates:

Listening Comprehension + Reading Comprehension (Languages)	€1.25
Creative Writing (Languages)	€1.25
Mental + Written Mathematics Paper	€1.25

Conditions

The selected markers:

- must be available to fulfil their duties from the first week of June 2015 till the publication of the results;
- must regard the whole exercise as **strictly confidential** (including the notification of their appointment to act as markers);
- must not mark scripts in schools or in any public place;
- will be subject to monitoring and will have their marked scripts moderated during the marking process;
- who are employed in state schools must provide the Educational Assessment Unit with their **ilearn email address**. Other markers should provide an email address which is frequently used;
- may be precluded from continuing to mark if their marking is found to be unreliable and inconsistent.

Duties

Markers will be required to:

- attend two Co-ordination Meetings. Those who fail to attend these meetings will not be allowed to mark any scripts;
- collect and return scripts on the appointed date and at the appointed time;
- mark scripts allocated to them and record marks electronically in accordance with instructions;
- write short reports on certain aspects of the examination as required;
- perform any other duties assigned that are related to the marking exercise.

Failure to abide by the above conditions, and/or failure to carry out the duties assigned to a marker, may result in the termination of his/her employment as marker and forfeiture of payment due for work already performed.

Officers wishing to be considered to act as markers are asked to fill in the relevant Application eForm, which can be accessed **either** directly on this link:

<https://adobeformscentral.com/?f=Cre-EYr3OZ6rbCLK%2AnIw1Q>

or on the Department of Curriculum Management website: **<http://curriculum.gov.mt>** under the section End of Primary Benchmark General Information – 2015.

All e-applications, together with attached copies of relevant documentations, are to be submitted electronically to Ms Julie Gatt by not **later than noon of Friday 6th February 2015**. **Late applications will not be considered**. Applicants will receive an automatically generated electronic acknowledgement when they submit their application. In case of any difficulties, kindly contact Ms Julie Gatt (25982132) or Ms Carmen Muscat (25982186).

The decision of the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education in the selection of markers is final.

Thank you for your attention.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

APPENDIX 7



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 22nd January 2015

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 024/2015

To: All Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Clare Wigg – Education Officer, Assessment of Learning

Subject: Timetable and Guidelines for the End of Primary Benchmark – June 2015

1. Timetable for the End of Primary Benchmark – June 2015 (First Session)

The first session of the End of Primary Benchmark will be held according to the attached timetable. **Please ensure that this timetable is brought to the attention of all teachers and parents concerned.** It is to be noted that a few changes have been made to the timetable to space out the assessments better.

2. Guidelines for the June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark

In order to ensure the smooth running of the End of Primary Benchmark, Heads of School are to take note of the End of Primary Guidelines, which have been updated for the June 2015 session, thanks to the feedback from the different stakeholders.

A copy of these guidelines is attached.

Below please find a summary of the main changes:

- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, the number of tests will change: Instead of the usual 15 sets, there will be eight for the first session and two new sets for the second session. This means that when there are more than 16 students in a class, the same task will be used with two pairs of students. The two pairs should immediately follow one another.
- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, there will be some additional sub-themes for the interview part. These will include: Shopping, School Outings, House and Home Environment, Health and Body Care, and People Who Help Us.
- In Mathematics there will be a Warmer in the Mental Paper, an extra question at the beginning of the test that will not be awarded marks. This is to help students focus on the speaker's voice and familiarise themselves with the test. Additional time will be allocated for this question.

- In the Mathematics Written Paper, working space will be introduced in questions that require working.
- The procedure used in the electronic Reading Assistance in the Maltese and English Reading Comprehension papers will be slightly different from last year. The texts will be read twice at a speed which is slightly slower than normal speed. The rest of the procedure remains unchanged.

For your information the End of Primary Benchmark Report 2014 will be available online at:
http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/bm_2014.aspx

Thank you for your attention.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

Timetable

END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK JUNE 2015 FIRST SESSION

Tuesday 26 May	Wednesday 27 May	Thursday 28 May	Friday 29 May	Monday 1 June	Tuesday 2 June
Maltese Speaking Component	English Speaking Component	8.45 – 9.45	8.45 – 9.45	8.45 – 9.15	8.45 – 9.00
		(60 minutes) Maltese Writing	(60 minutes) English Writing	(30 minutes) Maltese Listening Comprehension	(15 minutes) Mathematics Mental Paper
		9.45 – 10.15 <i>30 min Break</i>	9.45 – 10.15 <i>30 min Break</i>	9.15 – 10.00 <i>45 min Break</i>	9.00 – 9.15 <i>15 min Break</i>
		10.15 – 11.05	10.15 – 11.05	10.00 – 10.30	9.15 – 10.45
		(50 minutes)* Maltese Reading Comprehension	(50 minutes)* English Reading Comprehension	(30 minutes) English Listening Comprehension	(1h 30min) Mathematics Written Paper

* Students with a Reader will have an additional 30 minutes

N.B. On Thursday 28 & Friday 29 May, the school may use the remaining time after 11.05 as a contingency for the Maltese and English Speaking Components.

End of Primary Benchmark Guidelines

June 2015

1. The Head of School is the Head of Centre and is fully responsible for the smooth running of the Benchmark in his/her school.
2. On each day of the Benchmark, schools will be receiving the relevant examination papers together with CDs which will be used during the Listening component of Maltese and English and for the Mental Mathematics paper. **Schools are to ensure beforehand that the necessary electronic apparatus for playing the CD is fully functional in every classroom and that teachers are familiar with its operation.** If, on the day, the CD or the equipment do not function properly, the school may use the transcript that will be provided by the Educational Assessment Unit. If the envelope containing this script is opened, a note should be written to inform the Educational Assessment Unit of the reason why this has been opened.

CDs will also be provided for the Reading Comprehension for those students requiring a Reader as part of their access arrangements. A Spare CDs are sent to each centre to ensure that there are enough spares for emergencies.

The CDs are checked before being sent to schools; however if there is a fault with the CD, the school is requested to return back the faulty CD to the Educational Assessment Unit.

3. The examination papers will be packed in envelopes containing the number of papers needed for each particular class. An envelope containing additional papers to replace any faulty ones will also be provided to the Head of School. At the end of the session, the scripts must be sorted according to the Attendance List. **All scripts, used and unused, must be put back in the appropriate envelope and sealed.**
4. Schools are to ensure that an authorised person is at the school from 7.00am onwards to receive the Benchmark material. At the end of the session, personnel should be available to hand over the envelopes containing the scripts, including the extra papers, to the authorised driver calling for their collection.
5. Once again, the font that will be used in the 2015 End of Primary Benchmark will be Andika and the paper will be cream.
6. The Speaking component will be assessed by two teachers, preferably the class teachers, in case the number of classes is even. If the number of classes is odd, then the class teacher has to be accompanied by a Complementary or Literacy teacher or a teacher nominated by the Head of School. The teachers are to be given the Speaking Component pack a few minutes prior to the start of the assessments so that they have enough time to familiarise themselves with the tasks.

7. The Benchmark sessions will take place as follows:

Tuesday 26 May 2015	–	Maltese Speaking
Wednesday 27 May 2015	–	English Speaking
Thursday 28 May 2015	–	Maltese Writing Maltese Reading Comprehension
Friday 29 May 2015	–	English Writing English Reading Comprehension
Monday 1 June 2015	–	Maltese Listening Comprehension English Listening Comprehension
Tuesday 2 June 2015	–	Mathematics Mental Mathematics Written

8. During the Benchmark sessions, teachers are to ensure that students write in **blue** or **black** ink. However, work can be crossed out in pencil. **The use of biros with erasable ink, correcting fluid and correcting rolls are not allowed.**

9. Before each Benchmark session, teachers are to instruct students to check their scripts to ensure that they have all the pages and that all have been printed.

10. ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS

- The duration of each component includes **Extra Time**. This implies that Extra Time is being provided to all candidates.
- The class teacher has to act as a **Prompter** in the classroom being invigilated, if and whenever required.
- For children with writing difficulties due to physical conditions (e.g. broken arm) the **Amanuensis** has to be provided by the school.
- **Enlarged prints** and other special examination requirements will be provided as per Letter Circular DCM 211/2014.
- Hearing impaired candidates may be assigned a **Communicator** as per Letter Circular DCM 211/2014. The Communicator will be provided by the Students' Services Section.
- For students with reading difficulties, an electronic reader will be provided for the Reading Comprehension (in both Maltese and English). A CD will be provided by the Educational Assessment Unit but the school needs to provide the personnel to operate the equipment and invigilate the students (as per Letter Circular DCM 211/2014).

It is important to note that for this access arrangement provision:

- The texts will be read twice, electronically at a speed which is slightly slower than normal speed.
- Questions will be read twice and there will be long pauses which will allow students to answer the questions.
- The text will be projected on screen and highlighted as it is read. The background colour for the text that will appear on screen is cream.

- In the Maltese and English Writing components, a **Scribe** (to transcribe illegible words) may be provided as per Letter Circular DCM 211/2014. This Scribe, if needed, will have to be provided by the school.

It is important to note that the procedure to be followed when a Scribe is provided is as follows:

- The student must be allowed to complete the task first.
- Then, the Scribe can ask the child to read out all the words which are totally illegible.
- The Scribe writes, in a green pen, the word that the child intended to write, using the correct spelling.

- In the case of Mathematics, a **Reader** for the Written session may be provided as per Letter Circular DCM 211/2014. This Reader, if needed, will have to be provided by the school.

11. EXEMPTIONS

All children are expected to sit the Benchmark examinations. However, children who fulfil certain requirements may be exempted from all or parts of the End of Primary Benchmark as per Letter Circulars DCM 212/2014 and Letter DCM 213/2014.

Class invigilators are to ensure that children who are exempted or absent from any component should be marked as such on the attendance sheet and the word 'Absent' or 'Exempted' written on the front cover page on both the top and bottom sections. The candidate's full name and index number should be written on the top part of the front page. The script should be inserted in the envelope with the other scripts in Index Number order.

12. EXAMINATION SYLLABI

The Benchmark will be based on the State Primary Syllabi for Maltese, English and Mathematics. These syllabi may be retrieved from <http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Curriculum/Years-1-to-6/Pages/default.aspx>

In addition, the following guidelines regarding the format of the Benchmark examination papers are to be noted:

ENGLISH and MALTESE

The language papers will consist of **four** components, as shown in the table below:

Component	Weighting	Duration of Examination
Listening / Smigh	20 %	30 minutes
Speaking / Taħdit	20 %	10 minutes
Reading / Qari	30 %	50 minutes
Writing / Kitba	30 %	60 minutes

Listening (20%)

There will be **two** listening tasks:

- The first task will consist of a short text or a small number of short texts of about 300 words such as: *dialogues; conversations; announcements; monologues; instructions; directions; descriptions; and news bulletins, including weather reports.*
- The second task will be about 500 words long and it will consist of a: *monologue; dialogue; or conversation.*

Students will be asked to: *write words or numbers in gaps; mark a statement as True, False, or No Information Given; underline, circle, or tick the correct answer; match; complete grids with information; and label pictures or simple diagrams.*

- Students will listen **twice** to the recordings of both texts, including questions. Students will be asked to:
 1. listen to the text and they may begin to work out the task/s as they listen;
 2. listen to the questions and answer as they listen;
 3. listen to the text for a second time;
 4. listen to the questions for a second time and complete the task/s as they listen.

Students will be allowed some time to check their answers.

Speaking (20%)

In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, the number of tests will change: Instead of the usual 15 sets, there will be eight for the first session and two new sets for the second session. This means that when there are more than 16 students in a class, the same task will be used with two pairs of students. The two pairs should immediately follow one another.

Students will be assessed **in pairs**. Each student will work on **four** speaking tasks.

- The first is *the Warmer / it-Thejjija* which is not assessed.
- The second is *an Interview / l-Intervista* and each student will be asked questions on two topics. As from 2015, there will be some additional topics. These include: Shopping, School Outings, House and Home Environment, Health and Body Care, and People Who Help Us.
- The third and fourth tasks will consist of two of the following: *Compare and Contrast / Qabbel; Inverted Interview / Staqsini Inti; Single Picture / Stampa Waħda; Picture Story / Stampa Storja; or Thematic Picture / Stampa dwar Tema.*

More information can be found on <http://schoolnet.gov.mt/oraltests/OralTestsHandbook.pdf>

Reading (30%)

The reading component will comprise two parts:

- The first part will consist of one of the following texts: *a diagram or picture or set of pictures with some text; simple timetables and schedules; short texts such as notices, signs, posters, instructions, directions, advertisements, blurbs, and messages.*

Students will be asked to carry out any of the following tasks: *write words or numbers in gaps, underline, circle, tick, match, complete grids with information, and label pictures or simple diagrams.*

- The second part will consist of a text, fiction or non-fiction, of approximately 500 words. The text will be split up into sections with questions set on each section. Questions will also be set on the whole text.

Students will be asked to answer a range of comprehension questions requiring them to *write words or numbers in gaps; underline, circle, or tick the correct answer; match; mark a statement as True, False, or No information given; complete a grid; and construct a response.* Knowledge about language may also be assessed. For the constructed response questions, answers need not be in full but they have to be sufficient to show comprehension.

Writing (30%)

There will be a short writing task (10%) and a long writing task (20%). Conventions of spelling, punctuation, and grammar apply in both writing tasks and will be assessed accordingly. The pre-writing task (the plan) will not be assessed for accuracy.

The short writing task will require students to write between 50 and 60 words on one of the following: *a note / message; an informal email; an invitation; a notice; an advertisement; a short dialogue; instructions; directions; or a short paragraph about a topic.*

- Students will choose one of two writing tasks. Both writing tasks will be of the same text type (for example, a short dialogue) but will consist of two content areas (such as, a dialogue about a missed school outing or a dialogue about planning to meet for sport practice).

The long writing task will require students to write between 140 and 200 words on one of the following: *an informal letter; a write-up of an event; an article; or a short story for the school magazine or a similar publication intended for young students.*

In the case of Maltese, in line with the current official primary syllabus, the long writing task may also include *a dialogue.*

- Students will also choose from two writing tasks both representing the same text type but having a different content area. Students will be asked to plan their writing. The pre-writing task (the plan) is to allow students to use the range of strategies available to them to plan their work. The pre-writing task carries a maximum of 4 marks out of a total of 20 marks allotted to the long writing task.

More information on the pre-writing task can be found on <http://curriculum.gov.mt/en/Benchmark/General-Information/Pages/default.aspx>

MATHEMATICS

The Mathematics Benchmark examination is made up of two papers:

- a **Mental paper** which carries 20% of the marks and is 15 minutes long;
- a **Written paper** which carries 80% of the global mark and is 1 hour and 30 minutes long.

Please note the following changes in Mathematics as from 2015:

- There will be a Warmer in the Mental Paper, an extra question at the beginning of the test that will not be awarded marks. This is to help students focus on the speaker's voice and familiarise themselves with the test. Additional time will be allocated for this question.
- In the Written Paper, working space will be introduced in questions that require working. Candidates are encouraged to use this space for their working. However, the use of this space is not compulsory.

The Mental Paper (20%)

The Mental paper is made up of a warmer and twenty short questions which are read twice, in succession. The questions are graded and divided into three sections. There are some easy questions at the beginning and some harder ones at the end.

The time interval between one question and another for answering each question in each section is as follows:

the first 5 questions 5 second intervals
the next 10 questions 10 second intervals
the remaining 5 questions 20 second intervals

Students will neither be penalised nor awarded extra marks if they jot down notes and do their working on the Mental paper.

The Written Paper (80%)

The written paper covers all the four strands of the mathematics curriculum, that is, Number and Algebra; Measures, Shape and Space; Data Handling and Problem Solving. The paper is made up of 16 questions. The first four questions carry a total of 16 marks and test simple basic skills. The following eight questions carry a total of 40 marks and test the pupils' mathematical competences in the four strands of the syllabus. The last four questions have a total of 24 marks and are more demanding non-routine questions.

These questions require the application of mathematical knowledge and reasoning to solve more challenging problems.

12. RETURN OF SCRIPTS

A sample of scripts will be kept by the Educational Assessment Unit for archiving and research purposes. The rest of the scripts will be returned to schools in October 2015 to be used formatively by each school.

13. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE

The school may request a review of performance if there is evidence of a discrepancy between the student's performance throughout the year and the performance in the Benchmark, (at least a 25% performance discrepancy). Such request for the review of the performance must be received by the Educational Assessment Unit within **five working days** after the school receives the result.

Summary of Changes for End of Primary Benchmark 2015

- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, the number of tests will change: Instead of the usual 15 sets, there will be eight for the first session and two new sets for the second session. This means that when there are more than 16 students in a class, the same task will be used with two pairs of students. The two pairs should immediately follow one another.

- In the Speaking Component, in both Maltese and English, there will be some additional sub-themes for the interview part. These include: Shopping, School Outings, House and Home Environment, Health and Body Care, and People Who Help Us.

- In Mathematics there will be a Warmer in the Mental Paper, an extra question at the beginning of the test that will not be awarded marks. This is to help students focus on the speaker's voice and familiarise themselves with the test. Additional time will be allocated for this question.

- In the Mathematics Written Paper, working space will be introduced in questions that require working.

- The procedure used in the electronic Reading Assistance in the Maltese and English Reading Comprehension papers will be slightly different from last year. The texts will be read twice at a speed which is slightly slower than normal speed. The rest of the procedure remains unchanged.

APPENDIX 8

DIRETTORAT GHAL
KWALITA` U STANDARDS FL-EDUKAZZJONI
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA



DIRECTORATE FOR
QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA

Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email: gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 31st January 2015

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 042/2015

To: All Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Carmen Muscat – Education Officer (Assessment of Learning)

Subject: Training for the Speaking Component of the End of Primary Benchmark

Heads of School are to note that training for the Speaking Component of the End of Primary Benchmark will be held for those teachers teaching Year 6 classes for the first time. These will include newly qualified teachers and teachers who are teaching Year 6 this year but who have not taught Year 6 classes in the past four years.

Complementary teachers and/or Assistant Heads who might be required to act as interlocutors or assessors for the Speaking Component for the 2015 End of Primary Benchmark, are also encouraged to attend.

This training will be conducted by the Education Officers for Maltese and English and will focus on the elements which form part of the Speaking Component, the procedures to be followed, and tips on the marking process.

The training will be held on Friday, 27th March at 1.00pm at the National Curriculum Centre (NCC), Hamrun.

Heads of School are to email the Educational Assessment Unit a list of participants. This list should be sent to Ms Carmen Muscat on carmen.muscat@ilearn.edu.mt by not later than Friday 20th February 2015.

Thank you for your attention.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

APPENDIX 9



Department of Curriculum Management

Tel: 2598 2426 / 2598 2425

Email:

gaetano.bugeja@ilearn.edu.mt

LETTER CIRCULAR

Information: X

Date: 3rd May 2015

Action Required: X

Ref: DCM 116/2015

To: All Heads of Primary Schools (State and Non-State) and Sections

From: Joanne Grima – Assistant Director

Subject: June 2015 End of Primary Benchmark (2nd Session) – Call for Application and Timetable

1. The second session of the End of Primary Benchmark is going to be held in the afternoon between **15 and 19 June 2015**. The Second Session of the End of Primary Benchmark will be held at Floriana Primary School for Maltese candidates and at the Education Office in Victoria, Gozo, for Gozitan candidates.
2. This Second Session is being held for children who fall under one of the following two categories:

Category A – includes candidates who will have completed Year 6 in a Church or Independent School that will not be participating in the First Session of the End of Primary Benchmark. These candidates are only eligible for the second session. The candidates should complete an Application Form that may be collected as from **4 May 2015** from the Educational Assessment Unit, c/o Maria Assumpta Girls' Secondary School, Joseph Abela Scolaro Street, Hamrun (the block behind the National Curriculum Centre - NCC) or the Education Office, Victoria, Gozo. This application form is also available for downloading from the website <http://www.curriculum.gov.mt>. All completed application forms need to be returned to the Educational Assessment Unit, Hamrun (8:00 to 16:00hrs), or the Education Office, Victoria, Gozo, by not later than **15 May 2015**.

A passport-sized photo is to be submitted together with the Application Form. The photo needs to be signed by an authoritative person (such as the Head of School), verifying that it is a true image of the applicant.

Category B – includes candidates who will have completed Year 6 in a State, a Church or an Independent School that will have participated in the First Session of the Benchmark but, during the First Session, were either sick or absent from any component or all components.

In the case of candidates falling under Category B, the Educational Assessment Unit will automatically assume that children who were sick or absent in the First Session for any components will be sitting the missed component/s in the Second Session. These children therefore need not apply. However, on returning to school, after the end of the First Session of

the Benchmark, these candidates need to submit to their school a passport-sized photo which has been signed by an authoritative person (such as the Head of School), verifying that the photo is a true image of the applicant. This photo needs to be affixed to the Identity Card that will be provided to the school by the Educational Assessment Unit. Heads of School are to ensure that these cards are filled in and sent to the Educational Assessment Unit by not later than **8 June 2015**.

Heads of School are kindly requested to inform the parents of all candidates concerned about the venue and the timetable indicated below. All examinations start at 3.00pm and therefore candidates will have to be seated by 2.45pm.

3. The components of the Second Session of the End of Primary Benchmark will be held according to the following timetable. Please ensure that this timetable is brought to the attention of all parents concerned.

JUNE 2015 Second Session				
15 JUNE	16 JUNE	17 JUNE	18 JUNE	19 JUNE
<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
15.00 – 16.00 (60 minutes) Maltese Writing	15.00 – 16.00 (60 minutes) English Writing	15.00 – 15.15 Mathematics Mental Paper (15 minutes)	15.00 – 18.00 Maltese Oral	15.00 – 18.00 English Oral
16.00 – 16.25 <i>25 min Break</i>	16.00 – 16.25 <i>25 min Break</i>	15.15 – 15.30 <i>15 min Break</i>		
16.25 – 16.55 (30 minutes) Maltese Listening Comprehension	16.25 – 16.55 (30 minutes) English Listening Comprehension	15.30 – 17.00 Mathematics Written Paper (1h 30min)		
16.55 – 17.10 <i>15 min Break</i>	16.55 – 17.10 <i>15 min Break</i>			
17.10 – 18.00 (50 minutes) Maltese Reading Comprehension	17.10 – 18.00 (50 minutes) English Reading Comprehension			

4. The End of Primary Benchmark syllabi are applicable for both the First Session and the Second Session. These syllabi may be downloaded from the website <http://www.curriculum.gov.mt> together with the guidelines. (Please refer to Letter Circular DCM 24/2015 for these guidelines.)
5. Requests for exemptions from any component of the End of Primary Benchmark or requests for the provision of Access Arrangements will be considered on the submission of the requested evidence provided for the First Session. For more information contact the Educational Assessment Unit on 2598 2139.

Candidates who are applying for the Second Session as private candidates (Category A) may wish to be considered for any of the following Access Arrangements (provided that they are able to produce a professional report indicating the need of such Access Arrangements):

- Reader for Mathematics Written paper;
- Reading Assistance for Maltese and English Reading Comprehensions;
- Scribe to transcribe illegible words for Maltese and English Writing Components;
- Multiplication Tables for Mathematics Written paper;
- Enlarged Print (for visually impaired students);
- Communicator (for hearing impaired students)

These candidates are to contact the Educational Assessment Unit on 2598 2139 by **15 May 2015**.

Thank you for your collaboration.

Gaetano Bugeja
Director, Curriculum Management

DIRETTORAT GHAL
KVALITA` U STANDARDS FL-EDUKAZZJONI
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA



DIRECTORATE FOR
QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA

**THE END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK 2015
APPLICATION FORM FOR THE SECOND SESSION**

15 June – 19 June 2015

(3.00pm – 6.00pm)

Surname: _____

Name: _____ Male/Female: _____

Date of Birth: _____ / _____ / _____ Student's ID No: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Address: Door Number/Name & Street Name: _____
Town/Village & Postcode: _____

Surname and Name of Parent/Guardian: _____

Present School: _____ Year/Grade: _____

Centre where the candidate will be sitting the examination: Malta / Gozo (*Underline the applicable option*)

Student's Signature: _____ Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____

Statement of Consent (in accordance with the Data Protection Act)
I hereby give my consent to the Department of Curriculum Management for processing this information being supplied with this application. I fully understand that by opting out, this application cannot be processed.

Parent's/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Department of Curriculum Management within the Directorate for Quality and Standards in Education collects and processes information to carry out its functions under the Education Act. All data is collected and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2001, the Education Act, other subsidiary legislation and the Privacy Policy of the Department, a copy of which is available on demand.

**PLEASE FILL IN AND RETURN, TOGETHER WITH A PASSPORT-SIZED PHOTO,
TO: THE EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT UNIT, TRIQ JOSEPH ABELA SCOLARO, HAMRUN
(behind National Curriculum Centre NCC)
OR: THE EDUCATION OFFICE, VICTORIA, GOZO
BY 15 MAY 2015**

On each day of the examination, please bring with you the electronic slip that you were given when handing in your application.

For Office use only

Application Form Number

Application received on / /

Application received by

**This timetable is to be handed to the applicant
together with the electronic slip.**

SECOND SESSION OF THE END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK 2015

TIMETABLE

JUNE 2015 Second Session				
15 JUNE	16 JUNE	17 JUNE	18 JUNE	19 JUNE
<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
15.00 – 16.00 (60 minutes) Maltese <i>Writing</i>	15.00 – 16.00 (60 minutes) English <i>Writing</i>	15.00 – 15.15 (15 minutes) Mathematics <i>Mental Paper</i>	15.00 – 18.00 Maltese <i>Oral</i>	15.00 – 18.00 English <i>Oral</i>
16.00 – 16.25 <i>25 min Break</i>	16.00 – 16.25 <i>25 min Break</i>	15.15 – 15.30 <i>15 min Break</i>		
16.25 – 16.55 (30 minutes) Maltese <i>Listening Comprehension</i>	16.25 – 16.55 (30 minutes) English <i>Listening Comprehension</i>	15.30 – 17.00 (1h 30min) Mathematics <i>Written Paper</i>		
16.55 – 17.10 <i>15 min Break</i>	16.55 – 17.10 <i>15 min Break</i>			
17.10 – 18.00 (50 minutes) Maltese <i>Reading Comprehension</i>	17.10 – 18.00 (50 minutes) English <i>Reading Comprehension</i>			

END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK 2015

- In Malta, all components of the Second Session of the End of Primary Benchmark will be held at Floriana Primary School. In Gozo, they will be held at the Education Office in Victoria.
- All sessions start at 3.00pm. All candidates have to be seated by 2.45pm.
- Requests for Exemptions from any Benchmark component, or requests for the provision of Access Arrangements, will be considered on the submission of the requested evidence provided for the First Session.

Candidates who are applying for the Second Session as private candidates (Category A) and who may be eligible for Access Arrangements indicated in Letter Circular DCM 211/2014 are to contact the Educational Assessment Unit on 25982139 by 15 May 2015.

- No calculators will be allowed in Mathematics. A protractor may be required.
- During the Orals, candidates will be allowed to go home as soon as they finish the interview.

IL-BENĊMARK TA' TMIEN L-EDUKAZZJONI PRIMARJA

- F'Malta, il-komponenti kollha tat-Tieni Sessjoni tal-*Benchmark* ta' Tmien l-Edukazzjoni Primarja se jsiru fl-Iskola Primarja, Floriana. F'Ghawdex, se jsiru fl-Uffiċċju tal-Edukazzjoni, ir-Rabat.
- Is-sessjonijiet kollha jibdew fit-3.00pm. Il-kandidati kollha jridu jkunu f'pothom sat-2.45pm.
- Kull talba għal Eżenzjoni minn xi komponent tal-*Benchmark* jew għal *Access Arrangements* tiġi kkunsidrata skont l-evidenza li tkun nġhatat fl-Ewwel Sessjoni. Dawk il-kandidati li se japplikaw għat-Tieni Sessjoni bhala kandidati privati (Kategorija A) u li huma eliġibbli għal *Access Arrangements* skont kif indikat fl-Ittra Ċirkulari DCM 211/2014 għandhom jikkuntattjaw it-Taqsima tal-Assessjar Edukattiv fuq in-numru 25982139 sas-15 ta' Mejju 2015.
- L-użu tal-*calculators* mhux permess waqt il-Matematika; iżda wiehed jista' jiġi bżonn l-użu ta' *protractor*.
- Malli jispiċċaw mill-orali, il-kandidati jkunu jistgħu jmorru lura d-dar.

END OF PRIMARY BENCHMARK (Year 6)
JUNE 2015 (2nd Session)

<i>Monday 15 June</i>	<i>Tuesday 16 June</i>	<i>Wednesday 17 June</i>	<i>Thursday 18 June</i>	<i>Friday 19 June</i>
15.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 15.15	15.00 – 18.00 Maltese Oral Component	15.00 – 18.00 English Oral Component
(60 minutes) Maltese <i>Writing</i>	(60 minutes) English <i>Writing</i>	(15 minutes) Mathematics <i>Mental Paper</i>		
16.00 - 16.25 <i>25min Break</i>	16.00 - 16.25 <i>25min Break</i>	15.15 - 15.30 <i>15min Break</i>		
16.25 – 16.55	16.25 – 16.55	15.30 – 17.00		
(30 minutes) Maltese <i>Listening Comprehension</i>	(30 minutes) English <i>Listening Comprehension</i>	(1h 30min) Mathematics <i>Written Paper</i>		
16.55 – 17.10 <i>15min Break</i>	16.55 – 17.10 <i>15min Break</i>			
17.10 – 18.00	17.10 – 18.00			
(50 minutes)* Maltese <i>Reading Comprehension</i>	(50 minutes)* English <i>Reading Comprehension</i>			

* Students with a Reader will have an additional 30 minutes

**IL-BENCHMARK TA' TMIEM IL-PRIMARJA (Is-Sitt Sena)
ĠUNJU 2015 (It-Tieni Sessjoni)**

<i>It-Tnejn 15 ta' Ġunju</i>	<i>It-Tlieta 16 ta' Ġunju</i>	<i>L-Erbgha 17 ta' Ġunju</i>	<i>Il-Ħamis 18 ta' Ġunju</i>	<i>Il-Ġimgħa 19 ta' Ġunju</i>
15.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 16.00	15.00 – 15.15	15.00 – 18.00	15.00 – 18.00
(60 minuta) Il-Malti <i>Il-Kitba</i>	(60 minuta) L-Ingliz <i>Il-Kitba</i>	(15-il minuta) Il-Matematika <i>Il-Karta Mentali</i>		
16.00 - 16.25 <i>Waqfa ta' 25 minuta</i>	16.00 - 16.25 <i>Waqfa ta' 25 minuta</i>	15.15 - 15.30 <i>Waqfa ta' 15-il minuta</i>		
16.25 – 16.55	16.25 – 16.55	15.30 – 17.00		
(30 minuta) Il-Malti <i>Il-Fehim mis-Smigh</i>	(30 minuta) L-Ingliz <i>Il-Fehim mis-Smigh</i>	(Siegħa u 30 minuta) Il-Matematika <i>Il-Karta Miktuba</i>		
16.55 – 17.10 <i>Waqfa ta' 15-il minuta</i>	16.55 – 17.10 <i>Waqfa ta' 15-il minuta</i>			
17.10 – 18.00	17.10 – 18.00			
(50 minuta)* Il-Malti <i>Il-Fehim mill-Qari</i>	(50 minuta)* L-Ingliz <i>Il-Fehim mill-Qari</i>			

* Studenti li għandhom Qarrej ikollhom 30 minuta miżjuda

APPENDIX 10

XXXXXXX College
XXXXXX College, XXXXXXX Primary



**End of Primary Report
2014 – 2015**

Name: XXXXXXXXXX XXXXXXX

ID:XXXXXXXX

Class: XXXXX

Subject	Student's Result	National Median*	Teacher Assessment			
			Excellent	Good	Fairly Good	Needs to improve
Malti						
Orali (20 marka)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fehim mis-Smigh (20 marka)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taħriġ il-Fehim (30 marka)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Kitba (30 marka)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total						
English						
Oral (20 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Listening Comprehension (20 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reading Comprehension (30 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Writing (30 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total						
Mathematics						
Mental Paper (20 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Written Paper (80 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Total						
Religion (100 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Social Studies (100 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Science (100 marks)			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Behaviour			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Median is the middle mark after sorting all the marks in ascending order.

Additional Information: _____

Class Teacher _____

Head of School _____

Name Surname
House Name & Number
Street Name
Locality, Malta/Gozo

APPENDIX 11

DIRETTORAT GHAL
KWALITA` U STANDARDS FL-EDUKAZZJONI
IL-FURJANA VLT 2000
MALTA



DIRECTORATE FOR
QUALITY AND STANDARDS IN EDUCATION
FLORIANA VLT 2000
MALTA

**Department of Curriculum Management
Educational Assessment Unit**

Tel: 25982139 / 80 / 86

Email: eau@gov.mt

MEMORANDUM

Information: X

Date: 6 October 2015

Action Required:

Ref: 15//2015

To: All Heads of State Primary Schools B/C

From: Ms Joanne Grima (Assistant Director)

Subject: Returning of the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 Scripts

In the coming days, the End of Primary Benchmark 2015 scripts of your students will be returned to your school.

You might find that some scripts are missing; this is due to the fact that some are being kept at the Educational Assessment Unit for archiving and research purposes.

The returned scripts should ideally be used internally by the school to review students' performance and identify areas where improvements in the teaching and learning process can be made.

The scripts are to be archived by the school and should not be disposed of before a period of one year.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Ms Joanne Grima
Assistant Director

Specimen of Statistical Information Sent to Schools Regarding the End of Primary Benchmark 2015

	Malti Orali	Malti Smigh	Malti Fehem mill-Qari	Malti Kitba	Malti Total	English Oral	English Listening	English Reading	English Writing	English Total	Maths Mental	Maths Written	Maths Total
National Median	17.0	16.0	21.0	19.0	74.0	17.0	15.0	23.0	16.0	71.0	16.0	56.0	72.0
Particular Primary Median	20.0	17.0	21.0	19.0	79.0	18.0	16.0	22.0	12.0	69.0	16.0	64.0	80.0
National Mean	16.4	15.7	19.9	18.3	69.1	16.0	14.8	22.3	15.3	67.3	14.1	52.1	65.9
National Std Deviation	3.2	3.3	5.6	5.4	16.7	3.5	3.5	5.3	4.9	16.3	5.6	19.6	24.8
Particular Primary Mean	19.8	16.1	20.5	18.5	74.9	16.5	15.2	21.1	11.1	63.8	13.8	51.3	65.2
Particular Primary Std Deviation	0.4	3.6	5.6	4.2	12.8	4.2	3.8	6.6	3.4	16.3	5.7	24.2	29.5

APPENDIX 12

Soft Versions of all Resources related to
the End of Primary Benchmark 2015
are found on this CD
or
on the Department of Curriculum website
www.curriculum.gov.mt