



STANDARDISATION IN COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Standard Operating Procedure

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Administration of School Exams Primary Sector

This procedure needs to be revised at the end of August 2026

Department/Officer Responsible

Department for Curriculum, Lifelong Learning and
Employability – Educational Assessment Unit

General Procedures for National Annual Examinations (Primary Sector)

The official Annual Examinations' Timetables are to be made available to all students and others who may need them before the Easter school holidays.

Distribution of Annual Examination papers

The Educational Assessment Unit (EAU) will start the delivery of the annual examinations papers four to five weeks prior to the commencement of the examination session.

Schools will be informed by email about the delivery of the annual examination papers a week before the delivery commencement date.

Arrival of Examination Papers in Schools

A member of the School Leadership Team (SLT) is to take responsibility to store the annual examination papers in a secure place. Prior to the arrival of the papers at the school, an e-delivery confirmation note will be sent to schools to be completed, rubber stamped and signed. A scanned copy of this delivery note is to be emailed to eau@ilearn.edu.mt within 24 hours of delivery.

The examination papers are to be stored in a secure place.

Preparation before the Examinations' Session

1. SLT (Head of School, Assistant Heads, Heads of Department) are to **prepare the examination papers** received from the EAU for the different classes.

- **Boxes and packs are to be opened** ahead of the examination session to check that the required examinations have been delivered to the school. If any examination papers including marking schemes, are missing, the school is requested to phone the EAU immediately to report the missing papers so that they will be provided. If only a small number of copies of examination papers are missing, photocopies of the examination papers are to be made at school.
- **Examination papers are to be set in envelopes for the different classes:** Place the exact number of examination papers for each class, along with the class list in a jacket sheet (Appendix 1), and place all in an envelope. On the front of the envelope (or on a label as in Appendix 2) write the:
 - examination subject;
 - number of students in the class;
 - date of the examination;
 - session (First, Second) of the examination.

If the invigilators' timetable has already been worked out, include the name of the invigilator.

Leave blank spaces on the front of the envelope where the invigilator can:

- sign, and;
- write the number of students who sat for the examination.

A comment box can also be included where the invigilator can write any comments about what happened during the session. Example: the use of an extra examination paper, reporting students arriving late for the examination, etc.

Make photocopies of any errata corrige, highlight in fluorescent ink the part applicable to the particular examination being prepared and include the photocopied sheet on top of the examination papers inserted in the envelope.

<p>Class teachers should for no reason be involved in the preparation of examination papers in envelopes at this stage.</p>
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2. **Invigilators' timetable** is to be set, taking into consideration any dates that particular staff members will not be on the school premises. This can be due to:
- shared staff;
 - staff excused due to attending courses, conferences, etc;
 - staff members who have asked for time-off due to medical appointments;
 - class teachers/teachers of subjects being examined cannot invigilate their own class.

3. **Digital recordings:** A number of examinations have digital recordings as one of their components. Example: Maltese and English listening comprehensions. These recordings will be uploaded on a OneDrive folder by the EAU. Heads of Schools are to nominate a member of the SLT to be responsible and to be given access to these digital recordings.

The email address of the nominated members is to be passed on to the EAU prior to the commencement of the examinations session, as indicated in the letter circular issued by the department related to the Annual Examination session of the particular year.

Heads of Schools are to ensure that All-In-One devices are in good working order (including sound transmission) as these will be required to play the digital recordings on.

In case of a power-cut, the listening comprehensions will be read by the teachers. Teachers' papers of the listening comprehension texts and questions will be provided by EAU with the examination papers. All instructions on the teacher's paper must be followed precisely, including the indicated time intervals to ensure standardization for all students.

4. **Make arrangements for students having access arrangements:** Access arrangements are to be provided only to those students who have professional reports that recommend such arrangements. Appendix 3 gives details of the access arrangements that are to be granted for the different examinations, as stipulated by the Department for Curriculum, Lifelong Learning and Employability (DCLE).

Ideally, these students are to be placed in a different room than those students without access arrangements. More than one student can be placed in the same room.

The offices of the Head College Network should inform schools a month ahead of examination sessions, the number of peripatetic teachers that will be reporting in each school, so that their services will be used for the provision of access arrangements.

The examination assistant providing the access arrangement provision should not be the Learning Support Educator (LSE) of the student (even though there are some exceptional cases which EAU would have been consulted about). The examination assistant should be informed about the access arrangements provisions for the students s/he is assisting.

A card/label with the student's name and access arrangement provisions granted should be placed on the student's desk.

Invigilators should also be assigned for these rooms with students having access arrangements.

Access Arrangements Providers must not:

- **Give factual help nor offer any suggestions to the students.**
- **Explain, clarify or translate into Maltese or English, any part of the examination paper to the candidate.**
- **Advise the student regarding which questions to do, when to move on to the next question, nor the order in which questions should be answered.**

5. **Set Timetable for Examination Rooms:** SLT need to set a timetable for the examination rooms for each day of the examination session. Rooms are to be set according to the number of students taking the examination. Rooms need to have the required number of students' desks and chairs. The seating layout will be done with the assistance of students on the last teaching day prior to the beginning of the examination session.

Students' desks should be a minimum of one metre apart (in all directions) from each other.

Each room should have a working clock showing the correct time of day.

Rooms should be well-ventilated, well-lit, and with minimal noise to accommodate the examination session.

6. **Establish a dispatching/returning of examination papers procedure** and communicate this with invigilators.

Invigilators need to know the time and the procedure for dispatching examination papers during the examinations' session. Each school is to make its own arrangements.

Normally, in the primary sector, the papers are distributed by a member of the SLT to the different classes, once class invigilators take their position in classes. The SLT member will go round the classes distributing the envelopes to each invigilator and extra copies to the corridor invigilators.

On Examinations Days

1. SLT roles:

- Take out the examination papers for the relative sessions from the secure place, and place by subject for each year group.
- Brief the class teachers about the examination venues (including those for students with access arrangements), reminding them about the general rules and procedures to be observed during the examinations.
- Make necessary arrangements for absent invigilators to be substituted by other members of the teaching staff.
- Have the EAU's and/or subject Education Officer's telephone numbers readily available just in case something needs to be clarified within the examination paper.

2. Invigilators' roles:

- Invigilators are to be at school at least 10 minutes before the beginning of the school day.
- In case the invigilator needs to report sick, s/he is to phone the school as early as possible, so that the SLT can make the necessary arrangements to find a substitute who will take up their invigilation role.
- Invigilators should accompany students to the examination room. Instruct students to leave their bags and other belongings in a specific place in the examination room. Students are to take to their desks only the necessary writing material.

- Invigilators should:

- Keep the examination room door open as much as possible;
- Ensure good lighting in the room. If necessary switch on the lights;
- Ensure an appropriate room temperature. If the room is too warm, switch on the ceiling fans/air conditioner. If there is too much sunlight glare in the room, draw the curtains or set the blinds to make the room comfortable for the students to work in;
- Check that there is a clock in the examination room/hall that is working and showing the correct time;
- Ensure that the students are seated according to the class list;
- Distribute examination papers face down five minutes before the start time of the examination;
- For the Mathematics examination – first distribute the Mental paper. Once this examination is ready, collect the Mental papers, give a 5-minute break and then distribute the Mathematics Written papers;
- Remind students to write their names on the front page and their class name. Students should be told to:
 - Check that there are no missing pages and all pages are printed;
 - Write in blue or black ink;
 - Refrain from using erasable pens and erasing fluids/tape;
 - Use clear and legible handwriting.
- Inform the students at the beginning of the examination about any errata corrige. This is to be written by the invigilator on the whiteboard or projection screen;
- Write the names of students who are Absent or Exempted on the jacket and record the number of examination scripts to be collected;
- NOT leave the examination room at any point unless someone else substitutes him/her;
- Invigilate the students in the room by moving around the room without distracting the students;
- At no time use the mobile phone, laptop or other digital apparatus, engage in reading or do any marking of examination scripts, etc. Strict invigilation of the students is recommended;
- Not allow students to borrow items without the permission of the invigilator or speak to each other;
- Allow students to visit the bathroom, but remind them that no extra time will be given for time lost. Only one student may be excused at a given time. Draw the corridors invigilator's attention about the student visiting the bathroom;
- Not allow any student to leave the examination room if s/he has finished the examination paper;

- Inform students 10 minutes before the end of each examination that the examination will end in 10 minutes time;
- In the remaining 10 minutes of the examination, the invigilator should complete the front note on the envelope;
- Ensure that every student stops writing when the examination time is over. All students are to remain seated in their place, with the examination script closed on their desk and with the front page on top.

When the examination finishes, the invigilator should:

- Collect the examination scripts according to the class list. Invigilators of access arrangements should take the students' scripts to their class of origin and give them to the invigilator so these can be placed with the rest of the scripts, according to class list order. Once all the scripts are collected, count the number of scripts and check that it tallies with the number of students present in class and includes those students' scripts who had access arrangements provisions and sat for the exam in another room. Place scripts in envelope together with class list;
- Wait for a member of the SLT to come to the class, check that the number of scripts in the envelope tallies with the number of students who sat for the examination. Once these tally, all scripts are placed in the envelope, sealed and taken by the SLT.

Once all the scripts in the classes are collected, teachers can quickly proceed to their own classes and continue to have a break with their class base students, until time for the next examination session. During this break, students should be encouraged to use the bathroom.

If the break is very short (15 minutes or less), the invigilator should not leave the class s/he is invigilating, but remain with the class.

Before dismissal time, all class teachers should return to their class base so that dismissal proceeds as per normal school days, thus ensuring that students are picked by their parents/guardians.

3. Corridor Invigilators

Corridor supervision is essential to control the flow of students entering and exiting the examination rooms.

Teachers who are given corridor invigilation should:

- Have available extra copies of the examination materials (students' papers, teachers' papers, etc.) of the examination taking place just in case they are needed;
- Remain in the location indicated to him/her by the SLT;
- At the end of the examination, assist the SLT member collecting the scripts to be returned. Once examination scripts are all collected, supervise the corridor until all teachers return to their class base.

4. Class Teachers' role:

- Class teachers are to take the attendance of their class everyday throughout the examination period. Students who are absent are to present a Medical certificate even if they are absent for only one day during examinations.
- If a student suddenly falls sick during the first examination session and leaves school thus not sitting for the next examination sessions on the day, s/he will not need to present a medical certificate for that particular day.
- All medical certificates are to be kept at school.
- Class teachers are to go through a copy of the examination paper their class base students will be sitting for during that session. If something needs to be clarified, the class teacher is to inform the SLT immediately, who in turn will phone EAU or the subject Education Officer and clarify the issue.

After the Examination Session

Once examination is over, the marking and reporting of marks takes place.

Markers' roles:

Teachers marking the scripts are to:

- Collect scripts for marking from the designated office at the time given. All scripts are to be collected within 24 hours of the end of the examination.
- Ensure reliability of results. When possible, it is advisable that one teacher corrects, for instance, all comprehension exercises for a particular year, while another teacher corrects the controlled exercises or compositions. Heads of School are to ensure that teachers mark scripts of the students they teach ONLY in cases where the same teacher teaches all the classes in the school.
- Ensure they have a copy of the marking scheme and the errata corrige. Marking schemes provided by the EAU are to be followed to ensure consistency among the different markers. Heads of Department or Education Officers are to be consulted where clarifications regarding the interpretation of marking schemes are required. Marking schemes should be discussed before the marking process to ensure that the markers share a common interpretation.
- Mark scripts within six working days of the examination day and record the marks in the marksheets given. Sign and date the marksheet.

When the marking process is completed, internal moderation meetings may be carried out to guarantee additional consistency. External moderation will be carried out by Education Officers.

Inputting of Assessment and Examination Marks

- Marks are to be inputted in MySchool once marks are thoroughly checked. No changing of marks will be allowed after the marks are inputted.
- Instructions on the inputting of marks is annually forwarded to schools via email by the Schools Information Systems Unit (SIS). Any difficulties are to be communicated to SIS or the EAU.

- For students sitting for the **Maltese as a Foreign Language** or **Maltese (MFL) Induction exam paper**, teachers are to ensure that the students are pegged with the related programme on the MySchool portal and not the Maltese (native) programme.

For Maltese (MFL) Induction programme, teachers are to input the results in the Teacher's Comment Box.

Student Malpractice

In the case of a student observed looking at another student's work

The invigilator is to draw the student's attention by calling her/his name so that the whole class can hear. The student should be told to look at her/his paper.

In the case of a student caught copying

The invigilator is to retrieve the evidence source (paper/book/mobile phone) the student was copying from, whilst the student is asked to continue the examination.

Immediately inform the SLT. Ask the Corridor Supervisor to call a member of the SLT to the class and the invigilator is to explain what happened passing over the evidence source retrieved.

The SLT member should write a short report, stating the facts: date; time; subject of examination; invigilator's name; invigilator's statement of what happened and the evidence. Head of School should be notified immediately.

Once the student finishes the examination, s/he is to be accompanied to the Head's office. In the meantime the Head of School is to phone the student's parents/guardians and inform them that their son/daughter was caught copying during the examination and therefore a zero (0) mark shall be given.

General Notes

During examinations, no one should visit classes to speak to students without permission first sought from the Head of School or representative.

In case something needs to be communicated to students about the examination being held, permission is first sought from the Head of School and only one person is to go around the classes, so as to ensure standardisation of communication.

Teachers not invigilating, are to notify their whereabouts to the SLT so if the need arises they may be called to assist.

All members of staff need to be present during the examination period.

General Procedures for National Annual Examinations (Primary Sector)

Process Map

