

MINISTERU
TAL-EDUKAZZJONI u x-XOGHOL



MALTA

MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION and EMPLOYMENT

MALTA GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIPS POST-GRADUATE SCHEME

AWARDS 2012

Regulations

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	Page	3
2. Aims and Objectives		3
3. Explanatory Notes		3
4. Eligibility		5
5. Types of Scholarships		7
6. Priority Areas of Study		7
7. Tenure of Placement		8
8. Choice of Institution		8
9. Administration of MGSS		9
10. Application Forms		9
11. Selection Process		10
12. Selection Criteria		10
13. Value of Awards		11
14. General Conditions of Award		12
15. Termination Prior to Completion of Programme		14
16. Further Information		15

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Malta is witnessing a significant overall expansion in the higher education sector. In a knowledge-based economy, it is imperative to have a strong base of Masters and Doctorate programmes researching innovative and creative hypothesis that ultimately bring intellectual and economic growth to society.
- 1.2 High quality postgraduate education is of central importance to a number of objectives among others:
 - The increase of research and development activity in Malta;
 - The development of new academics and fields of study and research;
 - A more highly skilled workforce;
 - The precious impact and social benefit of groundbreaking discoveries.
- 1.3 Postgraduate education forms an increasingly important part of any country's economic and social agenda. It is a key element in lifelong learning. For this purpose, the Malta Government Scholarships Post-Graduate Scheme for 2012 (MGSS-PG 2012) aims at providing more opportunities to promote further specialisation at higher levels of education particularly at a Masters and Doctoral level.
- 1.4 The Ministry of Education and Employment is cognisant of study trends; the role of the Applicant within his/her family; and the exigencies of our economy within a globalised perspective. The MGSS scheme is proactive and therefore it continues to respond to such exigencies.

2 Aims and Objectives

- 2.1 The key objectives of the MGSS-PG 2012 are to:
 - assist exceptional applicants to pursue further levels of academic research;
 - encourage and promote further participation at a postgraduate level of academic research, both locally and internationally;
 - contribute towards research in identified areas of national priority;
 - increase research activity at the University of Malta;
 - increase the capacity and level of research, innovation and development activity in Malta.

3 Explanatory Notes

- 3.1 **Agreement** shall mean a legally binding document to be signed by the Scholarship Awardee as beneficiary of the Scholarship and the Director for Lifelong Learning. The Agreement shall include these Regulations. The Agreement has to be signed by not later than three months after the commencement of studies or the publication of rankings, whichever comes last. The amounts shown in the Agreement shall be honoured only if the proper documentation (invoices and receipts) are submitted and verified for eligibility. Should there result to be any type of discrepancy between the Agreement and these Regulations, than it is these Regulations which should prevail in all cases.
- 3.2 **Appeals Board** shall mean a Board appointed by the Minister of Education, entrusted with dealing with and delivering final decisions in respect of petitions by Applicants and Scholarship Awardees when contesting decisions taken by the MGSS Board and the Director of Lifelong Learning as administrator of MGSS scholarships over the interpretation/s of these Regulations. Any decision taken by the Appeals Board is to be regarded as final and irrevocable for all intents and purposes of law.
- 3.3 **Applicant** shall mean a person that submits a scholarship application.
- 3.4 **Bench Fees** shall mean fees being educational costs related to the execution of studies or research activity, but which are not covered by the tuition fee, and are not related (but not limited) to general maintenance, travel, conference attendance (including registration fee), buying of books, registration to access libraries, use/buying of computer/electronic equipment, energy charges, sports' membership or living costs/personal salaries of the Scholarship Awardee. As part of the Agreement, the Director of Lifelong Learning reserves the right to ask the Scholarship Awardee to obtain a justification or breakdown of costs from the University or Higher Education Institution on the claim/s declared. All Bench Fees need to be declared in writing upon signature of a University high ranking officer, before the signing of the Agreement. Any increase in, or any additional Bench Fees cannot be claimed by the Scholarship Awardee or the University if not included in the ULA submitted by the closing date. Bench fees shall be paid (if applicable) upon presentation of an **original invoice**.
- 3.5 **Directorate for Lifelong Learning** is the entity within the Ministry of Education and Employment which administers the MGSS-PG 2012.

- 3.6 **Doctoral Programme** shall mean a research-related programme of higher education study that:
- follows a higher education degree and leads to a doctoral degree by higher education institution, or,
 - in those Member States of the European Union (henceforth called EU) where there is accordance with national legislation and practice, by a research centre.
 - Leads to an MQF Level 8 on the academic level.
- 3.7 **ECTS** shall mean European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
- 3.8 **Higher Education** shall mean all types of courses of study, or sets of courses of study, training or training for research at the graduate or post graduate level which are recognised by the relevant national authorities of a participating country as belonging to its higher education system, and which are equivalent to either Masters Degree studies equivalent to MQF Level 7 or Doctoral Degree studies equivalent to MQF Level 8.
- 3.9 **Higher Education Institution** shall mean an establishment (including a University) providing higher education and recognized by the competent national authority of a participating country as belonging to its system of higher education.
- 3.10 **ISCED** shall mean International Standard Classification of Education.
- 3.11 **Joint Degree** shall mean a single degree issued by at least two higher education institutions offering an integrated programme and recognized officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located. When an applicant applies for a Joint Degree, a leading University has to be identified. The MGSS Board shall only recognise the leading University.
- 3.12 **Masters Programme** shall mean a second cycle higher education programme that
- follows a first degree or equivalent level of learning, and
 - leads to a Masters level qualification offered by a higher education institution with a minimum of 60 ECTS and
 - Leads to an MQF Level 7 on an academic level.
- 3.13 **MGSS Board** shall mean a Board appointed by the Minister responsible for Education, entrusted with the ranking of Applicants for the awarding of Scholarships and overseeing the scheme.
- 3.14 **MGSS-PG 2012** shall mean the Mata Government Scholarship Post-Graduate Scheme. The Scheme launched in 2012 is governed by these Regulations. Under this scheme, eligible Applicants are those who are applying or following a course leading to Masters (MQF Level 7) and Doctoral Degrees (MQF level 8).
- 3.15 **MQF (Malta Qualification Framework)** shall act as a translation device to make national qualifications more readable across Europe, promoting workers' and learners' mobility between countries and facilitating their lifelong learning.
- 3.16 **Scholarship** shall mean an award of financial aid for an Applicant to further education. At the end of the Scholarship, the Scholarship Awardee is to have written documentary proof that s/he has completed successfully the programme of studies for which the Applicant has applied for and this proof is to be forwarded to the MGSS Board by not later than two (2) months from the conclusion of the course for which the scholarship would have been granted and availed of. The proof may be subject to independent verification from the part of the MGSS Board before that last payment shall be effected.
- 3.17 **Scholarship Awardee** shall mean the Applicant who is granted the Scholarship.
- 3.18 **Study Abroad Allowance** shall mean an additional allowance awarded to a Scholarship Awardee who would be abroad (that is outside the Maltese territory) studying on campus at a Higher Education Institution throughout the whole course. When a scholarship Awardee spends part of his/her studies in Malta, the Study Abroad Allowance is paid on a pro rata basis. This allowance is paid at the end of the academic year.
- 3.19 **Tuition Fee** – Enrolment, administration, registration, and/or examination fees charged by a University of Higher Education Institution so that the Applicant follows a Masters or Doctoral degree programme. Tuition Fees covered shall be those charged directly by a University or Higher Education Institution as approved by the MGSS Board. Tuition Fees shall be considered only upon presentation of an **original invoice**. If the invoice is issued by a University's representative in Malta, the invoice shall clearly state separately the tuition fee and commission (if any) for the purpose of reimbursement in terms of claiming for additional funds as specified in Article 13. The MGSS Board shall pay for such tuition fees ONLY.

3.20 **Unconditional Letter of Acceptance** shall mean a letter issued by the Registrar (or a designated high authority) of the University or Higher Education Institution which shall have the following details:

- A clear statement by the University or the Higher Education Institution that it is unconditionally accepting the Applicant to follow a programme of studies;
- The commencement date of studies;
- The end date of studies (which shall mean when the results are expected to be published);
- All Tuition Fees and/or Bench fees incurred to follow the programme of studies (in the case of High Priority Areas of Study);
- Modality of study (that is whether it is distance learning or part-time or full-time studies)
- Any other information required by the Director for Lifelong Learning or the MGSS Board.

ALL APPLICANTS (including those who have commenced their studies on the date of Application) shall be obliged to submit the Unconditional Letter of Acceptance by the closing date.

It is the duty of the Applicant to ensure that when s/he chooses a University or Higher Education Institution, it is in a position to issue such an Unconditional Letter of Acceptance with these details. This has to be in the form of an original letter, signed by the Registrar of the University (or delegated high authority). Scanned, PDF copies or other electronically transmitted formats shall be accepted PROVISIONALLY in terms of Clause 8.2. The original copy of the Unconditional Letter of Acceptance must be produced before the signing of the Agreement.

When signing the Agreement, the accepted ULA is the one issued by the awarding University. No additional costs shall be entered in the Agreement other than those stated in the ULA submitted by 17 September 2012.

4 Eligibility

4.1 In order to apply for the MGSS, an Applicant shall, by the closing date of Applications, that is 15 June, 2012:

- 4.1.1. (a) Be a Maltese citizen who has been residing in Malta for the past five (5) years. Provided that for the purposes of calculating this 5 year requirement, consideration shall not be given to such period of time during which such Maltese citizen has been residing outside Malta for study, health or work purposes or any other purpose which the Board may consider, or
- (b) Be a Maltese Citizen who is a worker or self-employed person in Malta, or
- (c) Be a national of an EU/EEA state or a family member of such EU/EEA national (as defined in LN 191 of 2007 and in LN 205 of 2004 respectively for EU and EEA nationals), provided that such person has obtained permanent residence in Malta in accordance with LN 191 of 2007 and in LN 205 of 2004 respectively for EU and EEA nationals, or
- (d) Be a national of an EU/EEA state who is in Malta exercising his/her Treaty rights as a worker, self-employed person or person retaining such status in accordance with LN 191 of 2007; or
- (e) Be a third country national who has been granted long-term residence status under LN 278 of 2006.
- 4.1.2. Be applying throughout 2012 for either Masters Degree studies equivalent to MQF Level 7 (where the programme of studies exceeds twenty four [24] months duration) or Doctoral Degree studies equivalent to MQF Level 8¹.
- 4.1.3. Scholars who started their Doctoral programme of studies before 1st January 2012, may apply as well provided that during 2012, the applicant still has at least two full academic years to complete such Doctoral programme. In such case, the Applicant is eligible for funding of the remaining **full academic years**. The Applicant is still obliged to submit an Unconditional Letter of Acceptance by 17 September, 2012, whereby University must declare as well the number of full academic years remaining to complete the programme of studies and a progress report on the research so far. The amount of funding which is eligible is worked out pro rata in accordance with Article 13, based on if the scholarship was awarded to cover the whole programme of studies. For the duration of the Doctoral programme, please consult Article 5.
- 4.1.4. Applicant must not be in possession of a degree at the same level of that they are applying for (Applicants with doctoral degrees from the Faculty of Laws and Faculty of Medicine and Surgery from the University of Malta are eligible to apply under this scheme, and shall apply for a Masters or a Doctoral level Scholarship).

¹ For further information about the National Qualification Framework, contact the Malta Qualification Council on +356 21801411 or see the following link: www.mqc.gov.mt/pdfs/mqc%20gateA4%20english.pdf. For comparative purposes, MQF Level 7 equivalent to ISCED Level 5a and MQF Level 8 would be equivalent to ISCED Level 6. For more information on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 1997), see the following link: www.unesco.org/education/information/nfsunesco/doc/isced_1997.htm

4.1.5 Hold by application deadline the following qualifications from a recognised Higher Education Institution:

Applicants for Masters degree scholarships:

- an Honours degree at MQF Level 6 of at least a second class standard, or
- a post graduate qualification (excluding Masters) with a first general degree of at least a second class standard.

Provided that Applicants with a General Degree of Grade 1 classification, for which no Honours Degree was available in Malta, can also apply.

Applicants for Doctorate degree scholarships:

- an Honours degree at MQF Level 6 of at least a second class standard, or
- post graduate qualification (excluding Masters) with a first general degree of at least a second class standard, or
- a Masters degree.

Provided that Applicants with a General Degree of Grade 1 classification, for which no Honours Degree was available in Malta, can also apply.

4.2 Provisional applications will also be accepted from Applicants in their final year of studies who will receive their qualifications' results after the closing date but by not later than 17 September 2012 at noon (Local Time).

4.3 It is the responsibility of Applicants, in possession of qualifications awarded by foreign Universities/Higher Education Institutions, to produce an evaluation report on comparability of qualifications issued by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the Ministry of Education and Employment (as per Mutual Recognition Of Qualifications Act – *Act XVIII of 2002*). A copy of the said report issued by the MQRIC, or the designated authority in case of warrants, shall be attached to the application, with the original presented at the interview. Applicants not in possession of this report may still apply, provided that they submit a copy of the report to the receiving MGSS Board as soon as it becomes available and in any case by not later than 17 September 2012.

4.3.1 Applicants whose qualifications are obtained from a foreign University or Higher Education Institution listed on the website of MQRIC as Approved Institutions (<http://www.mqc.gov.mt/mqric>), are not required to produce the evaluation report on comparability of qualifications as long as the course is listed as one of the regular courses of the University.

4.4 Applications submitted by employees of the Public Service/Public Sector require the endorsement of the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry concerned through the Head of the relative Department subject to written confirmation whether leave of absence for the duration of the course has been granted. Clause 14.3 of these regulations will apply to those with approved paid leave of absence for the duration of the course.

4.4.1 An employee who has fees waived by the University or paid by any other source (whether public or private), and retains the salary during studies, is not eligible to apply under this scheme.

4.5 Applicants in possession of other national/ESF (or a combination of both) public grants or national/ESF/Commonwealth (or a combination) scholarships for the same course or programme shall be deemed ineligible for the MGSS scheme. In the event that an Applicant is granted a MGSS Scholarship and the Director for Lifelong Learning becomes aware, after the grant of such MGSS Scholarship, that the Scholarship Awardee had, at any point in time, whether prior to the award of the MGSS Scholarship, or after such award, accepted any such national/ESF public grant or national/ESF/Commonwealth scholarship, the Scholarship Awardee shall be liable to refund the Amount/s up to then granted to him/her in full, and this without prejudice to any other legal action which may be taken with in his regard.

Provided that any scholarships or any other supplementary grants awarded to the Scholarship Awardee shall be notified to and approved by the MGSS Board, whether such are awarded to the Applicant prior to the MGSS Scholarship or throughout the duration of the Scholarship. For the sake of clarity, any scholarships or supplementary grants awarded at any time to the Applicant in relation to the course of studies for which the Scholarship shall be granted shall be approved by the MGSS Board. Applicant shall also consult Clause 14.5 and Sub-Clauses 14.5.1 and 14.5.2.

4.6 Applicants, who have not already commenced their studies, are expected to do so by 31 December 2012.

5 Types of Scholarships

5.1 The Malta Government Scholarships Post-Graduate Scheme shall support:

- (a) Full-time Masters (exceeding twenty four [24] calendar months and up to thirty six [36] calendar months) or full-time Doctoral postgraduate courses (of up to forty eight [48] calendar months). Joint degrees or split-site programmes may be considered as long as documentation is provided indicating the lead degree awarding institution. See Clauses 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 for other conditions.
- (b) Masters and Doctoral programmes offered on a part-time or distance learning basis shall be considered, provided that the duration of the course for Masters exceeds twenty four (24) calendar months but does not exceed sixty (60) calendar months and for Doctoral programme which does not exceed eighty four (84) calendar months. See Clauses 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 for other conditions.

6 Priority Areas of Study

6.1 Applicants may apply for any Area of Study.

6.2 For the purpose of funding, in consultation with the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST) it has been established that the following areas shall be considered as High Priority Areas of Study. For the purpose of Article 13 (Value of Awards), the following are considered to be High Priority Areas of Studies:

Aerospace:	Aeronautics, aircraft maintenance and composite structures. Meteorological studies.
Education:	Quality of curricula. Quality assurance. Specialisation in inclusive educational services and special needs. Educational Psychologists. Counsellors.
Environment:	Energy efficiency and alternative energy (solar energy, solar cooling, wind energy, bio-energy/biofuel, energy from waste and energy efficient buildings). Water (conservation of rainwater, consumption efficiency, regeneration of the aquifer and efficient desalination). Waste (Waste Rehabilitation Technologies). Soil erosion Marine Sciences, Marine Management, Maritime affairs and fisheries. Climate change. Physical sciences, in particular seismology and atmospheric monitoring.
Crops and Food Biotechnology:	Food and water safety and Quality. Including production, packaging, testing and preserves. Increasing Nutritional Value and higher concentrations of known nutrients and disease-fighting compounds. Higher Quality Crops with Pathogen-resistant properties Better Packaging To Reduce Spoilage Reduced Health Risk of certain foods Research on crops for use in the production of fuels and plastics
Health Biotechnology:	eHealth, telemedicine and bio-informatics as relating to local health, including diabetes, asthma, obesity, heart disease, cancer. Bio-imaging and nuclear medicine. Medical Devices. Clinical trials and pharma process development. Development of human genetics and genealogy databases to support clinical trials including pharmacogenetics. Biotechnology particularly bio-generic production and contract research as a follow-on for generic pharma industry. GMO research and analysis. Health and Well Being Technologies including Alternative Medicine and Natural Remedies, Aromatherapy, Holistic Therapy' (eg natural resources to overcome pains and aches using honey, olive extracts, herbs etc). Orthodontics.
ICT:	Software development related to bridging technologies in security, hardware, telecommunications, health, marine and specialised applications. Software technologies related to hardware and other telecommunications equipment related to satellites, switches, GIS. ICT and security. Microelectronics. Hardware Software. Telecommunications and Satellite Software. Specialised applications such as GIS. R&D in the Marine Software industry.

Digital Games Production:	Digital Entertainment including animation for movies, scientific displays, edutainment.
High Value Added Manufacturing:	Digital manufacturing. High tech materials. Nanotechnology. Production Design.
Social science & Humanities:	Science education and popularization. Science-society studies. S & T curricula. Research and innovation policy. Innovation Economics and econometrics. Research and Innovation Statistics. Knowledge transfer. Intellectual property management. Technology entrepreneurship.

- 6.3 The MGSS Board may receive further recommendations from the Ministry of Education and Employment with regards to the list of Priority Area of studies according to national needs and criteria. This will be incorporated in the selection criteria to be used by the MGSS Board.

7 Tenure and Placement

- 7.1 Awards are tenable at any local or international university or higher education institution for a specific programme of study or research. Only those institutions recognised by the Maltese authorities shall be taken into consideration by the MGSS Board.
- 7.2 It shall be the responsibility of Applicants, applying for qualifications awarded by foreign Universities/tertiary education institutions, to produce an evaluation report on comparability of qualifications issued by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the Ministry of Education and Employment (as per Mutual Recognition Of Qualifications Act – *Act XVIII of 2002*). A copy of the said report issued by the MQRIC, shall be attached to the application, with the original presented at the interview. Candidates not in possession of this report may still apply, provided that they submit a copy of the report to the receiving department as soon as it becomes available and in any case by not later than 17 September 2012 at noon (Local Time).
- 7.2.1 Applicants whose course is at a foreign University or Higher Education Institution listed on the website of MQRIC as Approved Institutions (<http://www.mqc.gov.mt/mqric>), are not required to produce the evaluation report on comparability of qualifications as long as the qualification was obtained after following a regular course of study.
- 7.3 The MQRIC may be contacted as follows:
Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC)
Casa Leoni,
476, St. Joseph High Road,
St. Venera, SVR 1012
Tel. No.: (+356) 21801890
e-mail: mqc@gov.mt

8 Choice of Institution

- 8.1 The final decision with regards to the choice of the institution of study will be made by the MGSS Board, which reserves the right to overrule any preferences expressed by the candidate at the application stage.
- 8.2 Applicants are, however, expected to identify on the application form up to three institutions that they consider most appropriate. Applicants shall have one unconditional acceptance in writing from an institution listed in their preferences on the Application Form by not later than 17 September 2012 at noon (Local Time). If more than one ULA is submitted by 17 September 2012, the Applicant shall state in writing which University she/he is choosing. This written statement is to be delivered to the MGSS Office by not later than 18 September 2012 (noon). Failure to submit such a statement, the MGSS Board assumes that the University as listed on the Application Form are in the order of preference of the Applicant.
- 8.3 The MGSS Board shall not allow any changes to the institution/s and/or course for which the Applicant has been provisionally selected after the MGSS Board performs the interview, unless exceptional information becomes available that could not have been foreseen at the time of application.

- 8.4 Many courses have strict admission deadlines and Applicants must take the necessary steps to secure admission to their preferred institutions in advance of any scholarship application to the Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Board. Applicants shall note that a number of university departments will require an Applicant to demonstrate a valid GMAT or GRE score before an offer of admission can be made. Applicants shall check admission requirements carefully at the time of application.

9 Administration of MGSS

- 9.1 The MGSS Post-Graduate Scheme is administered by the Directorate for Lifelong Learning within the Ministry of Education and Employment.
- 9.2 The MGSS Board, set up by the Minister responsible for Education, shall operate the process of selection. The MGSS Board shall be responsible for all matters concerning the selection and determination of appropriate awards according to the regulations.
- 9.3 All correspondence is to be addressed to:
The Secretary
Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Board
Room 415, Directorate for Lifelong Learning
Great Siege Road,
Floriana, VLT2000.
Malta
Tel. No.: (+356) 2598 2250 / 2598 2230
Fax: (+356) 2598 2123
E-mail: pgscholarships.mede@gov.mt
Website: www.myscholarship.gov.mt

10. Application Forms

- 10.1 Applicants are invited to apply using the appropriate Application Forms which are available from the Customer Care Office, Directorates for Education, Great Siege Road, Floriana, VLT2000, or online from the following link www.myscholarship.gov.mt.
- 10.2 The Applicant shall complete **in full and sign one application form** and submit it to the MGSS Board together with the following:
- Four (4) copies of the Applicant's University/College transcripts (detailed);
 - Four (4) copies of the unconditional letter of acceptance from the University applied for (see Clause 8.2 if such unconditional letter of acceptance is not available by application deadline);
 - One (1) original and three (3) copies of the Appendix (ie the Proposal). Applicants applying for a scholarship to support studies leading to a PhD shall submit a Proposal that is not less than 500 words and not more than 1,000 words. Applicants are expected to elaborate further during the interview. Applicants applying for a Masters shall submit a Proposal of not more than 300 words indicating clearly the content of their course and/or research.
 - One (1) copy of the MQRIC evaluation reports (where applicable);
 - One (1) copy of Identity Card;
 - In case of Applicants with disability one (1) copy of the special identity card issued by KNPD (Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabilita`)
 - In the case of Applicants going through a period of special circumstance, documentation is to be presented to support their special circumstance.
- 10.3 The MGSS Board shall penalise Applicants who fail to submit a proper Proposal with the Application Form.
- 10.4 Three (3) Reference Letter forms for academic referees are to be sent by the Applicants to their respective referees of their choice, who in turn shall send the completed form (and any other reference letter they may wish to submit), in a sealed envelope to:
The Secretary
Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Board
Room 415, Directorate for Lifelong Learning
Great Siege Road,
Floriana, VLT2000, Malta
E-mail: pgscholarships.mede@gov.mt
- Templates of these forms may be collected from the Customer Care Office, Directorates for Education, Great Siege Road, Floriana, VLT2000 or downloaded from the website www.myscholarship.gov.mt.

- 10.5 Applications for scholarships are required to arrive at the:
Customer Care Services
Directorates for Education
Great Siege Road
Floriana. VLT2000, Malta.
Tel: +356 2598 2463
Free phone: 1571
- 10.6 Late applications shall not be considered by the Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Board.
- 10.7 All Applicants are to request an acknowledgement for receipt of application from the receiving office if the form is submitted by hand. Alternatively, applications sent by mail are to be sent by **registered post**. The Applicant has to ensure that the application is received by the respective deadline. The MGSS Board nor the Directorate for Lifelong Learning assumes any responsibility for Applications not sent by registered mail.
- 10.8 The application deadline is Friday 15th June 2012 at noon (Local Time).

11 Selection Process

- 11.1 The role of the MGSS Board is to evaluate and select candidates according to pre-established criteria (Article 12).
- 11.2 Each application is considered as follows:
- the MGSS Board shall, where and as necessary, appoint an expert with expertise in the subject area concerned to evaluate the application;
 - the MGSS Board itself shall consider the application and any advice submitted by appointed experts.
- 11.3 Eligible Applicants shall be called for an interview. It is the responsibility of the Applicant to make sure to be available on the date and time communicated to him/her for the interview. No alternative arrangements shall be made to change the date and time of the interview unless there is an exceptional circumstance (supported by written proof) that warrants the change in such date and time. The aforementioned exceptional circumstance shall be examined and such alternative date and time may be communicated by the Board, at its discretion.
- 11.4 In the case of applicants who are unable to attend for the interview at the given date and time due to being abroad, such interview shall take place via SKYPE only at the given date and time. It is the Applicant who has to ensure to be at a place where such facilities are available and that the video and audio link on his/her end, are adequate to ensure a proper interview throughout. The MGSS Board does not assume any responsibility if the interview fails to materialise properly due to any technical reason. An alternative date for interview may be given by the MGSS Board depending on the circumstances which lead to the failure of such an interview.
- 11.5 The Ministry of Education and Employment has also appointed an Appeals Board to deal with objections raised by Applicants after they are informed in writing with the decisions of the MGSS Board.
- 11.6 The Appeals Board shall only address appeals from the MGSS Board's decisions on matters related to procedure or interpretation of the regulations in terms of eligibility, awards, and other decisions related to the granting of a Scholarship. Under no circumstance shall the Appeals Board change the score of Applicants deriving from interviews by the MGSS Board, nor change the ranking of an Applicant as a result of such score.
- 11.7 If an Applicant disagrees with the MGSS Board or any other procedure under these Regulations, the Applicant or Scholarship Awardee may present a petition to the Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Appeals Board within five (5) working days from the date when the MGSS Board or the Secretary of the Board communicates decision/s to the Applicant in writing.
- 11.8 The decision of the Appeals Board is final.

12 Selection Criteria

- 12.1 Applications shall be considered on the basis of the following selection criteria:
- Academic merit of the candidate.
 - The quality of the proposal.
 - The relevance of the area of study vis-à-vis national priorities.
 - The likely impact of the work on the development of Malta.
 - The availability of such expertise in the academia or in the economy.
 - The modality of study. Preference shall be given to programmes in the following order *ceteris paribus*:
 - First preference – Full time programmes;
 - Second preference – Part time programmes;
 - Third preference – Distance learning programmes.

Provided that students who are persons with disabilities and do not have any possibility of following a full or part-time programme of studies unless through distance learning, shall be given first preference in the same way as those who apply to follow full-time programmes.

For those who are short-listed, the MGSS Board may consult further with KNPD (Kummissjoni Nazzjonali Persuni b'Dizabbilta') to evaluate the nature of disability with respect to undergoing further studies and whether this disability shall be considered for the purpose of this Article.

- 12.2 An Applicant is considered to have passed the interview if the Applicant obtains a pass mark (that is 50% of the allotted marks). However, a pass mark does not guarantee that a scholarship has been awarded.

13 Value of Awards

13.1 Value of award for **full-time Masters Programme** in Malta or outside Malta:

- For Masters Courses provided by a recognised University, the Scholarship grant will be Euro 6,000 per annum, provided that for courses listed in Clause 6.2 as falling under Priority Areas of Study, **additional funds** may be allocated by MGSS Board if proof is provided by the Applicant that the Tuition/Bench fee exceeds Euro 6,000 per annum. The **additional funds** that may be allocated cannot exceed Euro 7,000 per annum, that is, the total Scholarship cannot exceed the sum of Euro 13,000 per annum. The additional funds will be limited to cover pro-rata that part of Tuition/Bench Fee that exceeds Euro 6,000 per annum.
- Applicants will be expected to follow courses exceeding twenty four [24] calendar months up to a maximum of thirty six [36] calendar months.

13.2 Value of award for **full-time Doctoral Programme** in Malta or outside Malta:

- For Doctoral programmes provided by a recognised University, the Scholarship grant will be Euro 8,500 per annum, provided that for courses listed in Clause 6.2 as falling under Priority Areas of Study, **additional funds** may be allocated by MGSS Board if proof is provided by the Applicant that the Tuition/Bench Fee exceeds Euro 8,500 per annum. The **additional funds** that may be allocated cannot exceed Euro 13,500 per annum, that is, the total Scholarship cannot exceed the sum of Euro 22,000 per annum. The additional funds will be limited to cover pro-rata that part of Tuition/Bench fees that exceeds Euro 8,500 per annum.
- The above mentioned additional funds may be allocated during the first three (3) years of Doctoral programme if Applicant holds a Masters Degree at the beginning of this programme OR may be allocated during the second, third and fourth year of studies of Doctoral programme if Applicant does not hold a Masters Degree at the beginning of this programme. No additional funds may be allocated during the other years.
- The MGSS Board may allocate additional funds to two (2) successful Scholarship Awardees if part of the research is undertaken at a Research Institute approved by the Malta Council for Science and Technology (MCST). The research has to be approved by the University as part of the programme of studies undertaken by the Scholarship Awardee and endorsed by the same University. The research must be related to one of the Priority Areas of Study as listed in Clause 6.1. The additional funds that may be allocated cannot exceed Euro 13,500 per annum, that is, the total Scholarship cannot exceed the sum of Euro 22,000 per annum. The amount of additional funds allocated to the Scholarship Awardee will be determined by the MGSS Board and the MCST. The Ranking Order published by the MGSS Board will be used to determine the two (2) successful awardees for this award on research.
- Applicants will be generally expected to follow programmes lasting not more than three (3) years. However programmes of a longer duration up to maximum period of four (4) years will be considered by the MGSS Board.
- The MGSS Board may consider under exceptional circumstances to extend by a further 12 months the period of completion of the studies in the case of studies leading to a Doctoral Degree. If this extension is granted by the MGSS Board, the scheme does not allocate any funds during this extension.

13.3 Value of award for **part-time or distance learning Masters programmes** in Malta or outside Malta:

- For Masters Courses provided by a recognised University through distance learning or on a part-time basis, exceeding twenty four [24] months, the Scholarship grant shall be Euro 6,000 for the entire duration of the course. The grant shall be split in equal instalments over the whole duration of the course.

13.4 Value of award for **part-time or distance learning Doctoral programmes** in Malta or outside Malta:

For Doctoral courses provided by a recognised University through distance learning or on a part-time basis, the Scholarship grant will be Euro 12,000 for the entire duration of the course, provided that for courses listed in Clause 6.2 as falling under Priority Area of Study, **additional funds** may be allocated by MGSS Board if proof is provided by the Applicant that the Tuition/Bench Fee exceeds Euro 12,000 for the entire programme. The **additional funds** that may be allocated cannot exceed Euro 13,000 for the entire programme, that is, the total Scholarship cannot exceed the sum of Euro 25,000 for the entire programme. The **additional funds** shall be limited to cover pro-rata that part of the Tuition/Bench Fee that exceeds Euro 12,000 for the entire programme. The grant shall be split in equal instalments over the whole duration of the course.

13.5 Payments of Scholarship grant is effected as follows:

- For full-time Masters and Doctoral Awardees, the payment (including additional funds where applicable) is effected to the Awardee at the beginning of each Academic Year. During the last year of studies, the payment is split in two instalments: 50% at the beginning of the academic year and 50% on presentation of the final official results. The results are to be presented to the Secretary of the MGSS Board.
- For part-time and distance learning programmes leading to Masters and Doctoral Degrees, the payment is split equally on the number of course years. Payments are effected to the Awardee at the beginning of each Academic Year, except for the last instalment. Authorisation of the last instalment is effected when the Awardee presents the final official results to the Secretary of the MGSS Board.

13.6 **Other Additional funds** are awarded to Awardees when following full-time programmes. These **additional funds** are over and above the funds quoted above.

For Scholarship Awardees selected by the MGSS Board an allowance is payable as prescribed below. It is not paid when spouse is also in receipt of any national/ESF/Commonwealth (or a combination) of scholarships.

- a) For Scholarship Awardees who are following full-time studies in a foreign University or Higher Education Institution *outside* Malta, a Study Abroad Allowance of Euro 2,500 per annum shall be given to cover additional costs related to studying abroad, provided that studying abroad shall mean, resident abroad throughout the whole programme of studies. Awardee has to provide the e-ticket **and** original boarding pass as proof of travelling abroad. Furthermore, the Scholarship Awardee shall be required to provide official documentation from the University authorities that he/she is actually on campus attending at the University or Higher Education Institution on a regular weekly basis. When this allowance is paid on a pro-rata basis, this is done at the end of the academic year.
- b) For Scholarship Awardees with children (including a Scholarship Awardee who is widowed, separated or a single parent), a child allowance is payable at the rate of Euro 1,170 per annum for the first child, and €700 for any additional child under the age of 15, provided they are residing with their parent/s.
- c) For married Scholarship Awardees awarded Doctorate programmes, a marriage allowance of €2,330 per annum is payable provided that the husband and wife are residing together at the same address in Malta on the closing date of applications, or before the course commenced in case of Applicants who are applying for a scholarship after the Doctoral programme has commenced. Proof that spouse is living abroad has to be provided from time to time throughout the whole scholarship.
- d) Scholarship Awardees from Gozo, following full-time Masters or full-time Doctoral course at the University of Malta, and awarded a scholarship, will be entitled to additional maintenance supplement of Euro 1,050 per annum for the duration of the course. Such Scholarship Awardees would need to give evidence that they have attended school in Gozo for at least three scholastic years and are currently living in Gozo.
- e) Scholarship Awardees with a disability taking up full-time on-campus studies abroad may also request in advance an additional subsidy to contribute towards the added expense incurred in relation to their impairment. Every such request shall be evaluated by the MGSS Board on a case by case basis. The maximum amount that the MGSS Board can refund is Euro 2,000 per annum, against original receipts to support the reimbursement.
- f) The MGSS Board, in consultation with the Minister responsible for Education, may adopt different grants on a case by case basis, where extraordinary circumstances warrant such conditions.

13.7 The income from this scholarship scheme shall not be subject to income tax.

14 General Conditions of Award

- 14.1 It is important that Applicants indicate clearly at the point of application the qualification for which they are applying, especially if they wish to be considered for a Scholarship intended to lead to a doctoral degree (e.g. M.Phil. as a first year in a 3 year Doctoral programme). This will enable the MGSS Board to consider the application in the correct category.

- 14.2 Applicants shall be expected to seek prior visa approval (where applicable) for any proposed studies abroad.
- 14.3 In the case of selected Applicants for full-time Masters or full-time Doctoral courses who are employed on full-time employment contracts and receiving paid leave of absence, the grant shall be 75% of the eligible funds. When computing the eligible funds for the scholarship, no **additional funds** can be added.
- 14.4 In the case of selected Applicants for Masters or Doctoral courses who do not have any course fees, the grant shall be 25% of the eligible funds. When computing the eligible funds for the scholarship, no **additional funds** can be added.
- 14.5 Supplementary awards or grants by MGSS scholarship for the same course of programme of studies must be declared at the point of interview or before formally accepting the other awards or grants. All declarations require approval from the MGSS Board. Any unapproved awards additional to Malta Government Scholarship Scheme for the same course or programme shall be deemed to be in breach of the contract and cancellation of award and refund of all funds granted by then shall be required by the Ministry of Education and Employment.
- 14.5.1 The MGSS Board reserves the right to deduct a percentage of the scholarship grant if such supplementary awards or grants are approved. Each request shall be evaluated by the MGSS Board on a case by case basis.
- 14.5.2 When Supplementary Scholarship awards are in the form of studentship, internship etc., other than full or partial exemption of Tuition Fees, the amount of supplementary awards is deducted from the Scholarship awarded under MGSS Scheme, provided that the Awardee shall benefit from at least 25% of the eligible MGSS funds. When computing the eligible funds for the scholarship, no **additional funds** can be added.
- 14.5.3 At any time from the publication of rankings till the end of the course, Scholarship Awardee may be asked to submit a letter from Higher Education Institution/University stating whether the awardee is benefiting from supplementary awards for the same programme of studies for which a MGSS scholarship has been awarded. Failure to produce such a declaration may result in withholding of funding or the termination of award.

Award stage

- 14.6 Applicants will be notified of their ranking by the MGSS Board.
- 14.7 Applicants will be given a draft Agreement which stipulates the terms and conditions of such award. The MGSS Board reserves the right to review the provisional award if any information reveals that the Applicant is ineligible for the Scholarship.
- 14.8 Formal confirmation of an award will be issued when the Applicant provides all necessary documentation and agrees to the terms and conditions of the award stipulated in the Agreement.
- 14.9 Whoever is awarded a Scholarship shall sign the Agreement by a prescribed date, failing which, the Scholarship could be awarded to others according to their respective ranking.
- 14.10 Applicants shall be expected to take up the award from the date stated in the Agreement.
- 14.11 Shall any conflict arise between the interpretation of clauses in the Regulations and the Agreement, it is what is contained within the Regulations which shall prevail.
- 14.12 If for any reason, the Applicant cannot start on the date stated in the Agreement, or requires a different start date, the MGSS Board reserves the right, on notification of such intention, to review the Agreement's start date or cancel the award should the changes imply postponing the start date by later than 31 December 2012.
- 14.13 The MGSS Board reserves the right to publish the names of successful Applicants. These names may be published on the website and/or publications of the Ministry of Education and Employment and/or the Directorate for Lifelong Learning or any other Government entity. In applying for an award, the Applicant gives consent for such publication in the event that her or his application is successful.

Contracted award stage

- 14.14 The MGSS Board reserves the right to publish the names of Applicants awarded the Scholarship, and to request and publish the status and progress of the Awardees and their work.
- 14.15 Awards are to fund the degree stipulated within the Agreement and funding will not be extended to enable Applicants to complete an additional or higher qualification other than that for which the selection was made.
- 14.16 Any intellectual property including patents directly arising from or derived from the research work funded by the Scholarship and carried out by the Applicant shall be covered by an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) agreement that acknowledges that the research work carried out is partially funded by the Malta Government Scholarship Scheme.
- 14.17 The Malta Government Scholarship Scheme shall not seek to obtain any rights in intellectual property owned by the University and/or the Awardee.

- 14.18 On award of a Scholarship, the MGSS Board shall make information obtained available to public authorities for accountability purposes.
- 14.19 Scholarship Awardee who is found to have given false information or who have in any manner withheld information that would have influenced the awarding of the Scholarship and/or grants in accordance with these Regulations, shall be immediately disqualified and shall be asked to reimburse any expenses and money granted. The Director for Lifelong Learning may proceed with a criminal liability suit without prejudice to any civil action for damages against such Awardee.

Employment during full-time studies

- 14.20 Full time Scholarship Awardees shall need to seek approval beforehand from the MGSS Board of any commitment of employment during the duration of their studies. Unapproved employment shall be deemed to be a breach of these Regulations and the Agreement signed between the Scholarship Awardee and the Director for Lifelong Learning and shall lead to the termination of the Scholarship and the obligation on part of the Scholarship Awardee to reimburse all the Amounts awarded until such time.
- 14.21 Without prejudice to Clause 14.18 above, Scholarship Awardees retaining more than nineteen (19) hours per week of employment contemporarily to their studies/research shall be deemed to be in breach of their obligation towards full-time studies resulting in a cancellation of the Scholarship award and refund of any Amounts granted by then. For the purpose of these Regulations, a Scholarship Awardee who is on approved paid or unpaid leave shall not be deemed to have retained the said hours per week of employment contemporarily to the studies/research. For the sake of clarity, any Scholarship Awardee who notwithstanding the fact that s/he was granted paid or unpaid leave, engages himself/herself in employment or any other work exceeding nineteen (19) hours per week, shall be in breach of this Clause and the provisions of Clause 14.18 shall *mutatis mutandis* apply. Applicants and Scholarship Awardees are to inform and seek approval of the MGSS Board in advance. Provided that this clause does not apply for those students awarded a Scholarship for a Masters/Doctoral programme on a part time basis or distance learning.

Progress and completion

- 14.22 Scholarship Awardees receiving awards for courses shall ask their faculty supervisor to submit a short statement confirming progress and attendance of the Scholarship Awardee. Failure to receive this by the MGSS Board could lead to a halt in payments of further instalments of the award.
- 14.23 Scholarship Awardees shall also be requested to write a report on their progress at the end of every academic year and to submit this report by the end of July of every year. A final report following the completion of the thesis and the award of the qualification will be required by the MGSS Board within one (1) month from the award of the qualification.
- 14.24 Copies of all publications by Scholarship Awardees, including a publication arising from the thesis, shall be sent in electronic format to the MGSS Board, within 30 days of being made public. A hard copy of the thesis shall also be sent to the MGSS Board on publication. Publications (excluding thesis) may become freely and electronically available on open access supported by the Ministry of Education and Employment.
- 14.25 All publications arising from the degree being sponsored by Malta Government Scholarship Scheme shall reflect the following acknowledgement on the first pages of the thesis: "The research work disclosed in this publication is partly/funded by the Malta Government Scholarship Scheme".
- 14.26 Scholarship Awardees would be expected to write a minimum of one article on their work/studies in the Maltese public media within sixty (60) days of their graduation, during which they publicly acknowledge that the degree was carried out following the award of a Malta Government Scholarship.
- 14.27 In special and valid circumstances that may arise, Scholarship Awardees may ask the MGSS Board to review the date of completion of their scholarship specifying the reasons for such extension. Each case will be considered on its own merits.

15 Termination prior to completion of programme

- 15.1 Scholarship Awardees who for any reason discontinue their studies shall inform the MGSS Board in writing immediately.
- 15.2 The MGSS Board shall on thirty (30) days written notice terminate the award if the Scholarship Awardee's -
- progress is deemed unsatisfactory by the University;
 - discontinues the Studies; and/or
 - is in breach of any provision of these Regulations, and does not remedy the breach within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice requiring him/her to do so.

Provided that in the case of persons with a disability or persons going through a period of special circumstance, the MGSS Board shall review any such case on its own merits.

15.3 Scholarship Awardees who have their award terminated under conditions stipulated in Clause 15.2 will be required to refund the entire award including additional funds (if applicable), within three (3) months of failing the course or failing to complete the course of studies.

15.4 Scholarship Awardees who cannot pursue further their studies due to unforeseen health situations or exceptional circumstances as approved by the MGSS Board shall not be deemed to be in breach of these regulations.

In such situations, the Scholarship Awardee must provide justifiable explanation as to why the course was not completed or why the Scholarship Awardee failed to obtain the qualification. Documented evidence, medical certificates and testimonials must accompany each claim. The MGSS Board is in no way bound to waive all claims put forward. The MGSS Board reserves the right to appoint its own expert, be it medical or otherwise to advise and assess the case of the claimant.

16 Further Information

16.1 For further queries, please contact:

The Secretary
Malta Government Scholarships Scheme Board
Room 415, Directorate for Lifelong Learning
Great Siege Road,
Floriana VLT2000, Malta.

Tel. No.: (+356) 2598 2250 / 2598 2230

Fax: (+356) 2598 2123

E-mail: pgscholarships.mede@gov.mt

Website: www.myscholarship.gov.mt