



MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT, YOUTH, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme

MGUS

This scheme is administered by the
Students' Maintenance Grants' Board

Regulations 2022 - 2023

These Regulations form one legally binding document
with the Students' Maintenance Grants' Application 2022 - 2023

These Regulations DO NOT APPLY for students
who have applied and been accepted under previous schemes

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 3
Aims and Objectives	3
Eligibility	3
Classification of Courses	5
Entitlements	6
Choice of Institution	6
Administration of MGUS	7
Attendance Records	7
Application Forms	7
General Conditions	8
Additional Requirements	9
Refunds	10
Queries	11

Introduction

Over the last decade, Malta has witnessed a significant overall expansion in the higher education sector. In a knowledge-based economy, it is imperative to have a strong participation rate in higher education that promotes intellectual, social, and economic growth.

High quality undergraduate education is of central importance to a number of objectives: an ever more highly skilled workforce and the development of new fields of study and specialisation. It is a key to Malta's economic and social progress, and is essential to many people's continuing professional development.

The Maltese Government believes that students may find valid learning pathways in degree courses / programmes that are provided, either through foreign higher education institutions or through recognised private higher education institutions in Malta.

The Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme 2022 - 2023 aims at providing more opportunities to further the choice of undergraduate degrees/qualifications leading to MQF Level 6 and including Bachelor Degrees and vocational qualifications, classified as Level 6 or equivalent under the Malta Qualification Framework (MQF).

Through this scheme Government is extending the financial support available to undergraduate students at the University of Malta, MCAST and the American University of Malta (AUM), to other students undertaking equivalent studies at other institutions, leading to officially recognised local and foreign MQF Level 6 qualification.

Students pursuing studies in a foreign / private institution at any other level may request the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit (SMGU) by a letter / email and the duly filled in application within the stipulated time, to consider their case for eligibility.

1. Aims and Objectives

The key objectives of this scheme are:

- To encourage more student participation at an undergraduate level in Malta and abroad;
- To promote academic / vocational excellence in the private tuition sector;
- To increase students' choice of degrees / qualifications and institutions.

2. Eligibility

To be eligible under this scheme, applicants shall be students currently registered as **full-time** students, studying **physically on campus**, reading a course of studies at one of the following institutions:

- a licensed private higher education institution in Malta offering courses leading to a recognised MQF Level 6, or;
- a foreign higher education institution offering recognised MQF Level 6 Qualifications.

Yet, the scheme excludes students registered on: -

- Distance Learning (whether on full-time or part time modality);
- Part-Time

- Blended Courses;
- Students who change modality of course from full-time to Part-time.

Thus, under such circumstances students shall be deemed not eligible according to these Regulations.

For the purposes of this scheme, '*recognised MQF Level 6 qualification*' shall mean such qualifications classified as undergraduate / vocational courses considered equivalent to MQF level 6 by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Accredited Courses enlisted by MFHEA at <https://mfhea.mt> shall be exempted from the requirement of the MQRIC verification by the applicants. However, the SMGU reserves the right to request an MQRIC Evaluation report if this is deemed necessary for the determination of eligibility.

2.1. Provided that, in order to apply under the MGUS, candidates should additionally meet the following eligibility criteria:

- (a) are Maltese citizens, or have at least one parent being a Maltese citizen; or are nationals of a European Union and, or European Economic Area State or a family member of such European Union and, or European Economic Area national (as defined in the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order and in the Immigration Regulations, respectively for a European Union and European Economic Area nationals) (provided that such person has obtained permanent residence in Malta in accordance with the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order and with the Immigration Regulations respectively for European Union and European Economic Area nationals); or be a national of a European Union and, or European Economic Area State who is in Malta exercising his Treaty rights as a worker, self-employed person or person retaining such status in accordance with the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order; or be a third country national that has been granted refugee and, or long term residence status under the Status of Long-Term Residents (Third Country Nationals) Regulations; and
- (b) have resided in Malta for a period of not less than five (5) years immediately prior to the commencement of the relative course of studies:
 Provided that for the sole purpose of calculating the five consecutive years requirement under these regulations, any period of time during which the student would have been residing outside Malta due to medical treatment, or study abroad, or any other purpose that the Board may consider acceptable shall not be considered as residing outside Malta;
 Provided further that for any period of time for any other purpose not considered acceptable, the Board shall consider a trip outside Malta of more than six (6) months absence in a year or an aggregate of ten (10) months absence in the whole five (5) years as having interrupted the five (5) year residency requirement; and
- (d) those applying in the subsequent years of the course are to provide proof that they have been attending the higher education course regularly and making satisfactory progress; and

- (e) are not in full-time employment or in part-time employment working more than twenty-five (25) hours per week; and
 - (f) applicant must intend to follow the course full-time, physically on campus and progress on full-time mode to completion. Students who change modality from full-time to part-time during the duration of course will be deemed not eligible according to these regulations and thus will be liable to refund. (See Section 11 of these Regulations for further details on refund); and
 - (g) applicant shall have satisfied all the necessary entry requirements of the degree / qualification awarding institution by the application submission deadline, that is, the 30th March 2023 at noon CET.
- 2.2
- (a) Applicant should provide scanned copy of all the pages of the School leaving certificate
 - (b) An applicant who has already started the course but has not yet applied under a previous scheme may apply under this scheme, provided that:
 - (i) applicant who has benefitted from or has applied for any other scholarships/grants is to disclose this information in the Application or after submission of application by 30th March 2023 by email. Eligibility in such case is determined by these regulations. In the event, that the Unit subsequently discovers that applicant failed to disclose to the Unit of any other scholarship/s/grants, the applicant would be automatically disqualified from this Scheme and would have to refund all stipends and grants received.
 - (ii) applicant is NOT yet in possession of the formal certificate or in the process of being awarded a degree/qualification at the same MQF level (i.e., Level 6) or higher than the degree that applicant is applying for.
 - (c) **Applicants in possession of a degree/qualification at MQF Level 6 or higher shall not be eligible to apply.**
 - (d) Applicants must be available, to commence their full-time studies by 31st December 2022, and to subsequently continue in full-time attendance, physically on campus uninterrupted, for the duration of the intended course up till completion.
 - (e) The SMGU may, in exceptional cases, consider courses starting at a later date but by not later than 31st March 2023. Such applicants shall request concession in writing from the SMGU.
 - (f) Any change in institution must be approved by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board.

3. Classification of Courses

The MGUS shall support students reading for full-time studies leading to their first degree/qualification at MQF Level 6 as specified in these Regulations. The awards are classified as follows:

- General Degree Courses
- Prescribed Degree Courses

- National High Priority Courses

The courses falling under these categories shall be determined by the Minister for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation on the advice of the SMGB. These courses can be viewed through the following link: <https://education.gov.mt/en/studentsgrants/Pages/default.aspx>

Students applying under this Scheme **cannot** apply for the Supplementary Maintenance Grant.

4. Entitlement

The scheme shall award:

- A One-Time Grant awarded at the first year of their studies at commencement of course;
- A Yearly Grant payable for every year of the course;
- Ten fixed rate four-weekly stipends payable between December and August of every academic year (depending on commencement date of course).

Course Classification	One-time Grant	Yearly Grant	Fixed Rate /Stipend
Post-Secondaries and Vocational Courses	N/A	€332.94	€101.89 X 10
General Degrees	€465.87	€565.87	€101.89 X 10
Prescribed Degrees	€698.81	€798.81	€178.30 X 10
National High Priority Degrees	€698.81	€798.81	€357.68 X 10

- Applicants following courses leading to a degree / qualification conditional to obtaining intermediary qualifications classified at a level lower than MQF Level 6, shall be entitled to stipends and grants as stipulated in Subsidiary Legislation 605.06.
- All Grants and Stipends are credited directly to the bank account entered by applicants in their online application.

Other information:

- Stipend rates are revised every January by a proportionate rate of the COLA increase.
- Updated lists of Prescribed and High Priority Courses are approved by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board and are published separately in the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board website.

5. Choice of Institution

Many courses have strict admission deadlines and applicants must take the necessary steps to secure admission to their preferred institutions in advance of any application under the MGUS. Applicants

shall be responsible to check such admission requirements carefully prior to applying for the Students' Maintenance Grants.

6. Administration of the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme (MGUS)

The MGUS shall be administered by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board - SMGB within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation.

However, cases related to refund, including when and the amount to be refunded in case of abandoning the course, benefiting from another scheme/scholarship, discontinuation of course, termination/resignation and/or change in course and **change in modality of course** or fail to resume course are to be referred for the attention of the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board.

7. Attendance, Progression and Graduation Records

The SMGU may at its discretion, request course attendance records directly from the institutions attended by awardees under this Scheme, limitedly for the purposes of compliance with these Regulations. Progression reports may be requested at end of each semester.

At the end of their course of studies, all awardees are to submit a copy of the graduation certificate to the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit via email. Failure to do so, the case is to be referred for the attention of the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board. This documentation must reach the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit by the end of the respective calendar year. If awardees still fail to provide their final graduation certificate, case is to be referred for legal advice.

8. Application Form

Interested applicants are invited to apply using the appropriate online application through the below link: <https://education.gov.mt/en/studentsgrants/Pages/default.aspx>

Applications must be submitted annually.

Documents to be uploaded with the online application shall include the following:

- i) One (1) copy of the Unconditional Letter of Acceptance issued from the University/Local tuition centre (where applicable). The Unconditional Letter of Acceptance shall include
 - the commencement date of the course
 - the end date of the course
 - the MQF Level at the point of entry
 - the MQF Level at the end of the course
 - confirmation that the course is on full-time basis *and*
 - modality of course applied for
- ii) One (1) copy of MQRIC verification report (where applicable);
- iii) One (1) copy of documents to satisfy eligibility conditions in 2(a) of the Regulations including proof of five (5) year residence in Malta preceding the commencement of course. These documents should include one (1) copy of the secondary School Leaving Certificate and one (1) copy of a recent Jobsplus Employment History;
- iv) One (1) copy of contract of work indicating the hours of work per week, (if applicable) and

- v) One (1) copy of the receipt of payment for first payment of tuition fees. In case of courses where no tuition fee is paid, the students are to submit proof from their University / Institution stating that the students has started their course as scheduled.

Supporting documents must all be uploaded in the online application and not send by email or by mail to SMGU.

9. General Conditions

- (a) Applicants who are required to repeat one (1) year or do an additional year in their chosen course of studies shall be entitled for stipend only during the repeat/additional year. Students who discontinue or choose to interrupt their studies are to continue their studies by a determined date as agreed with the relative educational institution, shall request approval from the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit. It shall remain at the SMGU discretion whether to approve such an extension.
- (b) Awardees whose progress, as assessed through periodical assessment procedures, is deemed to be unsatisfactory, or who are not attending their course regularly, shall forfeit the right to receive their stipends and grants or part thereof until such time as the Head of the Educational Institution, Institute, or Faculty of the University concerned certifies that these students have resumed attending regularly and are making satisfactory progress. In this respect the SMGU may demand refund.
- (c) The fixed four-weekly part of the award is paid during the academic year, including the Christmas and Easter recesses, but excluding the summer recess. Stipends are also not paid when a student is following a sandwich course that is, when students are required to spend some time working in a business or industry as part of their course and thus is being remunerated for his/her placement.
- (d) Where the structure of particular courses so warrants, students may receive payments of stipends during the summer recess.
- (e) Applicants progressing from a diploma at MQF level 5 to a degree / qualification at MQF Level 6, or from a general degree to an honours shall not be deemed to be following a second course for the purposes of these Regulations. Students already benefitted from MGUS, cannot re-apply under this scheme. MGUS Regulations 2022 - 2023 are not applicable for students who are already benefitted under previous Malta Government Undergraduate Schemes, in which cases the terms of the Regulations for their particular scheme are still applicable.
- (f) The financial aspect of this Scheme shall be administered by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit.
- (g) Awardees must **at application stage, every academic year, indicate** any commitment of employment. Awardees are allowed to retain part-time employment up to and not exceeding twenty-five (25) weekly hours.
- (h) Awardees who retain full-time or are in employment working more than twenty-five (25) hours per week or engagement on a contract of service contemporarily with their studies shall be deemed to be in breach of these Regulations, resulting in cancellation of the Award and shall be obliged to refund any funds already received by them. Applicants are responsible for informing the SMGU of any such situations in advance. For all intents and purposes Awardees will not be deemed to be in breach of these Regulations if they engage on full-time

employment between the 1st July and the 30th September of any academic year of their course. Students pursuing a sandwich course and not receiving remuneration for their placement shall also be entitled to receive Students' Maintenance Grants during that academic year.

- (i) Awardees in full-time employment, who, are on paid leave of employment for the purpose of undergoing a course of studies, or who enter into a contract with an employer whereby they bind themselves to work for that employer following the completion of their course, and who would therefore be benefiting from that salary or the agreed remuneration, shall not be eligible for Students' Maintenance Grants under this Scheme, **unless they have approved unpaid leave.**
- (j) Applicants who are public service/sector employees on full-time employment contracts and receiving paid leave of absence shall not be eligible to the scheme.
- (l) Applicants whose studies commence later than the 31st December 2022 but not later than 31st March 2023, shall request concession in writing from the SMGU. Students shall not be entitled to any grants prior to the commencement date of the course.
- (m) Applicants who apply before the applications deadline but receive the MQRIC verification report after the official start date of their course, shall be entitled to all the grants applicable from the official start date of their course.
- (n) Any other award or grant or assistance given (or a combination of both) by the Government of Malta or any other institution (whether public or private, local or foreign, or a combination of such, including the Malta Government Arts Scholarship and the Malta Government Sport Scholarship) to support the applicant/awardee for the same course/programme of studies must be declared before formally accepting the Award, grant or assistance (or any combination) under this Scheme. The SMGB shall decide whether to award or withdraw the award of Students' Maintenance Grants or refund thereof.
- (o) The Students' Maintenance Grants' Board reserves the right to confirm the information submitted in the application with other authorities. In applying for Students' Maintenance Grants under this Scheme, applicants are given their consent for such verification and processing of details as may be required.

10. Additional Requirements

- (a) If additional documentation is required, applicants shall be notified by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit.
- (b) Applicants who do not start their studies by the course commencement date shall forfeit their right for students' maintenance grants. In that event, applicants are to immediately inform the SMGU in writing. Applicants who discontinue their studies after the commencement of the course are requested to communicate their resignation in writing to the SMGU stating the reason/s for such resignation. In such cases students shall be requested by SMGU to refund. See Section 11 of these Regulations for further details on refund.
- (c) Students reading for courses of more than one academic / vocational year shall ask their faculty supervisor to submit a yearly short statement confirming their progress and attendance. This must be uploaded to the online application for the Students' Maintenance Grants. Failure to apply annually and submit such a statement, shall automatically lead to a halt in further payment of funds. Student will be considered as having terminated his/her studies. Students who fail to submit proof of their progression before the end of November of the same

academic year would only be eligible from date of submission of proof of progression, and no backdated funds would be awarded.

- (d) Awardees who opt to change the University or Institution before the completion of studies, shall not receive any funds if the new University or Institution demands that the awardee repeats the academic years already carried out at the previous University or Institution.
- (e) Awardees who require a study break are to inform the SMGU in writing. Grants and stipends shall be suspended until the awardee informs the SMGU in writing that studies have resumed. If the break is of more than one academic year, students shall be considered as having terminated their studies and shall be requested to refund.
- (f) Students shall be benefitting from Students' Maintenance Grant to obtain **one** degree / qualification at MQF Level 6. Funding will not be extended to enable the awardee to complete an additional or higher qualification other than that stated in the application. Funding under this scheme covers a maximum of four (4) years. A repeating year during which students may be awarded stipend rates only, is not included in this 4-year period. A special concession is being granted to High Priority Courses for the duration of the whole course.
- (g) Students who are in receipt of funds from any other scheme/scholarship scheme after submission of application, must inform the SMGU immediately in writing by using the contact button available on the Students' Maintenance Grants' online applications. Any double funding shall render students liable to refund all or part of the Stipends and Grants already disbursed to such students as determined by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit.

11. Refunds

Students deemed in breach of these Regulations for the below reasons will be required to refund in full or in half the One Time Grant and/or the Initial Grant or both, depending on the time when the breach takes place.

Reasons for refund: -

- a) Abandoned the course;
- b) Benefiting from another scheme/scholarship scheme;
- c) Change in course;
- d) Change institution;
- e) Change in modality of the course;
- f) Discontinue the course;
- g) Failed to resume with the course;
- h) Resignation from course;
- i) Termination of studies;
- j) Unsatisfactory progress.

Hence, students will be required to refund the One-time grant and the Yearly grant already received in full if the breach takes place during the 1st semester or half of the One-time grant and the Yearly grant if the breach takes place after the 1st semester.

Nevertheless, if the breach takes place during the 2nd year or in the subsequent years of the course, students will be liable to refund the Yearly grant received in full if the breach takes place

in the 1st semester or half of the Yearly grant if the breach takes place after the 1st semester in a particular year.

12. Queries

For further queries, please send an email through the contact button accessible on the online application or by visiting the EduServizz.gov at the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation. Alternatively, you may contact us via email: servizz@gov.mt

Website: <https://education.gov.mt/en/studentsgrants/Pages/default.aspx>

Telephone: *Freephone 153*