B 3160

L.N. 188 of 2005

EDUCATION ACT
(CAP. 327)

Secondary Education Certificate Examination Regulations, 2005

IN exercise of the powers conferred upon him by sections 30 (5) and 31 (6) of the Education Act (Cap. 327), the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following Regulations made by the Senate of the University of Malta by virtue of the powers conferred upon it by sections 31 and 35 of the said Act:

Citation and Interpretation

1. (1) These regulations may be cited as the Secondary Education Certificate Examination Regulations, 2005.

(2) In these regulations, unless the context otherwise requires -

"the Examination" means the Secondary Education Certificate Examination; and

"the MATSEC Board" means the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations Board.

(3) The MATSEC Board retains to itself the interpretation of the regulations and syllabuses relating to its examinations.

Applicability

2. (1) These regulations shall apply to the Examination held from 1st January 2005 onwards.

(2) The Examination shall also be subject to the Conduct of the Matriculation and Secondary Education Certificate Examinations Regulations, 1996, published as Legal Notice 62 of 1996, and to any other relevant statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University.

Sessions and Time-Tables

3. There shall be two sessions of the Examination: the First Session shall be held during the period April to June, and the Supplementary Session shall be held in September of each year.

Subjects of the Examination

4. (1) In the First Session the subjects offered shall be the following:

Accounting, Arabic, Art, Biology, Business Studies, Chemistry, Classical Culture and Civilisation, Commerce, Computer Studies, Economics, English Language, English Literature, Environmental Studies, European Studies, French, Geography, German, Greek, History, Home Economics, Italian, Latin, Maltese, Mathematics, Physical Education, Physics, Religious Knowledge, Russian, Social Studies, Spanish, Technical Design (Graphical Communication/Technology), and Textiles and Design.

(2) In the Supplementary Session, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of regulation 5, the subjects offered shall be the following:

English Language, Maltese, Mathematics, and, subject to the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of regulation 5, Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

Choice of Subjects

5. (1) No subject may be taken in both the Secondary Education Certificate Examination and the Matriculation Certificate Examination at Advanced or Intermediate Level at the same session.

(2) Candidates may not sit for the examination in Business Studies with any of Accounting, Commerce, and Economics in the same session.

(3) Candidates may register for the Supplementary Session only if, in the First Session, they have obtained Grade 6 or below, or were absent in any of the subjects offered in the Supplementary Session, except for Biology,

Chemistry and Physics which are regulated by paragraph (4) of this regulation.

(4) In the Supplementary Session, candidates may sit for only one examination in either Biology, or Chemistry or Physics, provided that they shall not be eligible to sit for the examination in any of these three subjects if they had already obtained Grade 5 or better in any one of them.

Structure of Examination Papers

6. (1) In all subjects, the Examination shall consist of two papers, each of two hours' duration: Paper I and Paper II.

(2) The papers shall be structured as follows:

(a) Paper I shall be the core paper to be taken by all candidates registered for the examination in the subject, and may include an oral/aural/coursework/practical component; and

(b) Paper IIA comprises more demanding questions than those in Paper IIB.

(3) Candidates shall be required to indicate on their application form which of Paper IIA or Paper IIB they wish to sit for.

(4) In the Supplementary Session, only Paper I and Paper IIB shall be offered.

Grades

7. (1) Grades shall be awarded on a seven-point scale, according to the criteria laid down in paragraph (2) of this regulation. Grade 1 shall be awarded for the highest level of achievement, whereas Grade 7 indicates the minimum satisfactory performance.

(2) Grades shall be awarded in accordance with the following criteria:

Grade 1: Indicates an overall excellent grasp of the subject and the level of attainment is that expected of the ablest candidates.

Grade 2: Indicates a very high level of achievement overall.

Grade 3: Indicates a high level of achievement but falls below this level in certain sections of the examination.

Grade 4: Indicates a good overall level.

Grade 5: Indicates a good level, but not overall, and is the minimum level acceptable for further studies in the subject.

Grade 6: Indicates a general grasp of the subject but not a sufficiently deep understanding of it.

Grade 7: Indicates a low level of attainment, and is the minimum certificate grade.

(3) Candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIA may qualify for Grade 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5. The results of candidates who do not obtain at least Grade 5 shall remain unclassified and shall be denoted as U.

(4) Candidates sitting for Paper I and Paper IIB may qualify for Grade 4, 5, 6 or 7. The results of candidates who do not obtain at least Grade 7 shall remain unclassified and shall be denoted as U.

Registration

8. (1) Only candidates who have completed their studies in Form V of secondary education or who attain the age of sixteen by 31 December of the year of examination shall be allowed to register for the Examination.

(2) Registration for the First Session of the Examination, on the appropriate application form and accompanied by the relevant fee, must be made by the closing date as published in the notice for registration. Applications submitted after the closing date but by the published date for late applications shall be accepted if an additional fee is paid.

(3) The Registrar may, at his discretion, accept applications for registration for the First Session at a later date against the payment of a further additional fee.

(4) Registration for the Supplementary Session shall be made during the week following the publication of the First Session results. Candidates shall be allowed to register for the Supplementary Session only if they had also registered for the First Session of the examination and subject to the provisions of paragraphs (3) and (4) of regulation 5.

(5) The Registrar may, at his discretion, accept late applications for the Supplementary Session after the closing date if an additional fee is paid.

(6) Alterations to the application form may only be made by the candidates subject to the same conditions and additional fees applicable for late registration.

Enquiries upon Results

9. The marking of papers and the results shall be final and binding on all candidates, and the MATSEC Board shall not, except in its absolute discretion, enter into correspondence about results with candidates or their parents or any other person.

Revision of Examination Papers

10. (1) In terms of regulation 6 of the University Examinations Regulations, candidates who are not satisfied with the grade awarded to them in any of the subjects for which they sat, may request a revision of their examination scripts, within the period specified by the MATSEC Board and against a fee as determined by the University.

(2) The revised result shall be final.

Certificates

11. (1) A certificate showing the grade obtained in each subject, together with the criteria for the award of the grade as laid down in paragraph (2) of regulation 7, shall be issued once only to candidates who obtain a grade from 1 to 7.

(2) An authenticated copy of the result may be obtained from the MATSEC Support Unit against a fee as determined by the University.

Conduct during the Examination

12. (1) Conduct during the Examination shall be governed by the statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University in force at the time of the examination.

(2) Candidates shall not be allowed into an examination room after the first half hour of the examination, and they shall not be allowed to leave the examination room, temporarily or permanently, during the first half hour and during the last quarter of an hour of an examination.

(3) Mobile phones, books, note-books and any other unauthorised aids to the examination (including electronic aids) must be left outside the examination room or delivered to the invigilator before the examination questions are distributed.

(4) Candidates shall be provided with one or more examination booklets, which must be filled in accordance with the directions printed on the cover of the booklet. No part of an examination booklet may be torn off, and no examination booklet or part thereof may be taken outside the examination room.

(5) When an index number is used, candidates must not write their names on any part of the examination booklet or make any mark thereon calculated to disclose their identity to a marker.

(6) Candidates caught cheating, or attempting to cheat, during an examination or in any way caught taking, or attempting to take, an unfair advantage over other candidates shall be subject to disciplinary procedures as laid down in the statutes, regulations and bye-laws of the University at the time of the examination. Such candidates may have the results of all their examinations cancelled and they may also be precluded from sitting for any other examinations offered by the MATSEC Board.

Coursework

13. (1) When a syllabus for a particular subject requires the submission of coursework, such coursework must be available at the candidates' school for moderation by the Markers' Panel.

(2) The coursework assessment marks awarded by the candidates' schools must reach the MATSEC Support Unit by the date specified by the MATSEC Board.

(3) Coursework assessment marks shall be retained for the Supplementary Session.

(4) Coursework assessment marks may also be retained for subsequent sessions of the Examination, but the candidates may, at their option, present new coursework.

(5) Private candidates are required to submit their coursework as established by the MATSEC Board, with a dated endorsement showing where it was carried out, by the date specified by the MATSEC Board.

(6) Private candidates who left school before 1994 will not be expected to present their laboratory report books. Their mark will be obtained by pro-rating of the written papers.

(7) Candidates who studied a subject which involves a practical at school and are re-sitting the examination may carry forward the practical mark from a previous session.

(8) Candidates who have never studied a subject which involves a practical at school but have covered the coursework privately will be expected to present their coursework to the MATSEC Board by the date indicated by the MATSEC Board. Such candidates will be asked to attend for an oral examination about their practical work.

Oral/Aural Components of the Examination

14. (1) Marks obtained in the oral and aural components of an examination during the First Session shall be retained for the Supplementary Session.

(2) Candidates who re-sit an examination in subsequent years shall be required to re-take the oral and aural components of that examination.

(3) A Supplementary Session for the oral/aural components shall be made available to candidates who are marked absent for the First Session of the oral/aural examination provided that they are either covered by a medical certificate presented within three days of the oral/aural examination or they are absent for a reason deemed valid by the MATSEC Board. Candidates who are absent for the oral/aural examination in the First Session without a valid reason shall not be awarded any marks and shall not be entitled to a supplementary oral/aural examination.

Examination Materials

15. (1) No texts or dictionaries are permitted in the examination room unless specifically indicated in the syllabus.

(2) With the exception of the part of Paper I in Mathematics for which a calculator cannot be used, and unless otherwise indicated in the syllabus and in the examination paper, the use of non-programmable electronic calculators is permitted in Mathematics, science subjects and related subjects.

(3) Scientific and mathematical formulae shall be provided by the MATSEC Board where appropriate.

(4) All work submitted in connection with the Examination, including written work and coursework, shall remain the property of the MATSEC Board, but may be returned to the candidates at the MATSEC Board's discretion.

Candidates with Special Needs

16. (1) Candidates with special needs may be given the option to be exempted from being examined in a particular component of the examination, such as an oral or a practical examination. When candidates accept the option and their mark is pro-rated to compensate for the missing component, their certificate shall be endorsed as follows:

'Special arrangements were made to enable the candidate to be assessed in this subject. Details may be obtained from the Registrar.'

(2) Such certificates shall only be issued as a last resort when ways cannot be found of supporting candidates with special needs to satisfy examination requirements.

(3) Applications requesting special arrangements shall be made on the appropriate form, within the date stipulated by the MATSEC Board, and must be endorsed by the Head of the candidate's school and supported by appropriate medical or other professional evidence issued within the two years previous to the examination.

Quality of Language

17. Candidates are expected to bear in mind the necessity for good expression and orderly presentation in their examination answers.

Language of Examination

18. The language/s in which the questions are set shall be indicated in the syllabus of each subject. Candidates are required to answer in the language the questions are set, unless otherwise specified in the examination paper.

Repeal

19. The Secondary Education Certificate Examination Regulations, 1995, published as Legal Notice 111 of 1995, shall be deemed to cease to be in force as from 31st December 2004.

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