

GLOSSARY OF TERMS USED IN MATSEC EXAMINATIONS

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Examination questions must be designed to lead the candidates to answer correctly. The following glossary shows what Matsec examiners normally mean and imply by certain terms. They are, however, only guiding terms whose definite meaning depends on the context; the Maltese equivalents also have to be considered within the Maltese context. The depth of treatment required by each answer will usually be indicated by the marks allotted to the respective questions. “Question” is in assessment taken to mean the means of finding out what candidates have learned or can do. When candidates are asked to be brief, they have to express their answer concisely and succinctly.

Analyse
(*analizza*)

Candidates are expected to study in detail a topic, identifying its main factors and arguments, sometimes with reference to the text, and the ultimate aim is to draw some concluding remark/s. The answer, therefore, involves separating the topic into its component parts, that is, taking apart to discover the underlying general principles.
[Analyse Macbeth’s character.]

Apply
(*applika*)

Candidates have to use a rule or principle, etc. in a particular situation.
[Apply the principle to explain why the spinning is faster when the arms are folded.]

Assess
(*Eżamina/ Ifli*)

Candidates have to identify strengths and weaknesses.
[Assess the short-term and long-term implications for family lifestyles and well-being.]

<p>Calculate (<i>Ikkalkula</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to provide a numerical answer. <i>[Calculate the relative atomic mass of zinc to three significant figures.]</i></p>
<p>Classify (<i>Ikklassifika / Poġġi f'kategoriji</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to place objects, words or situations into categories according to defined criteria for each category. The criteria must be made known to the student. <i>[Classify the following objects as solids, liquids or gases.]</i></p>
<p>Comment (<i>Ikkummenta/ Aġħti xi kummenti fuq</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to provide some arguments on the item presented. <i>[Comment on the effectiveness of the paradox in the following lines...]</i> <i>[Comment on the result/s obtained.]</i></p>
<p>Communicate (<i>Ikkomunika</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are asked to convey their answer as requested.</p>
<p>Compare and contrast (<i>Qabbel biex toħroġ ix-xebh u d-differenzi</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to present points of similarity between items in question and they have to be followed by points of difference; i.e. candidates must show how items are similar to each other and how they differ from each other. Generally the answer is to be presented in essay form, but there are some subjects that permit an answer in point or table form. Examiners have to make this clear. In the sciences candidates have to write an extended answer elaborating on the similarities and differences giving specific examples. <i>[Compare and contrast “Burning Everest” and “Mariza’s Story”.]</i> <i>[Compare and contrast the properties of alpha, beta and gamma radiation.]</i></p>

Construct (<i>Ibni</i>)	Candidates must make, build, put together items or arguments. <i>[Construct a dichotomous key that would enable an observer to identify the specimens to species level.]</i>
Deduce (<i>Iddeduci</i>)	Candidates have to present an answer that shows the type of reasoning which starts with a general principle and proceeds with a logical chain of arguments to prove the truth of the principle or to draw conclusions. <i>[What do you deduce from the second paragraph?]</i> <i>[Use the VSEPR theory to deduce the molecular structure of ammonia.]</i>
Define (<i>Iddefinixxi /Aġħti definizzjoni</i>)	Candidates are expected to give a strict definition or a precise statement identifying the main parts of the term in question. They have to determine accurately the meaning of a term. In some subjects an equivalent paraphrase or an alternative form of the term in question may be acceptable. <i>[Define the following words and phrases as used in the passage.]</i> <i>[Define the term resistivity of a wire.]</i>
Describe (<i>Iddeskrivi</i>)	Candidates are required to put into words what they understand by the term in question or how they see an object or an event. The answer has to be made through their own perspective. They have to state the main points of the topic, or the features or characteristics of an object or process. Sometimes they can even involve narration. In some subjects, the answer should include

reference to observations and diagrams.
[Describe the various elements comprised in a company's promotional mix.]
[Describe a practical situation when a converging lens may be required to produce a real and diminished image of an object.]

Design
(*Fassal*)

Candidates are expected to devise the item in question to show that they have understood its underlying principle.
[Design and describe a field method that may be used to assess changes in vegetation cover with increasing distance from the shoreline.]

Determine
(*Iddetermina*)

Candidates are asked to write about the quantity concerned which cannot be measured directly but which may be obtained by calculation.
[Find the molar concentration of sodium thiosulphate in solution H and hence determine the value of x.]

Diagram
(*Disinn / dijagramma*)

A drawing with labels and with a specified organisation.
[Draw a diagram showing the life cycle of a butterfly.]

Discuss
(*Iddiskuti*)

Candidates are required to give a critical account of the ideas involved with reference to the text/topic/theme studied. All the important points have to be considered and examined in detail. This implies debating and sifting ideas. The nature of the question could also involve writing about the advantages and disadvantages of an issue in which case a balanced answer would

probably be required. In discussing an advantage candidates must explain a favourable condition or circumstance and when presenting a disadvantage they have to mention a drawback or an unfavourable condition. In other words, candidates have to write an extended answer exploring concepts and issues using detailed examples.

[Discuss how Golding manages to make us see, feel and think.]

[Discuss the ways the authors use irony to enhance the significance of the story.]

[Discuss the energy changes in the process.]

Distinguish
between...
(*Aghzel bejn...*)

Candidates are expected to highlight the differences between two or more terms given in the question. They have to identify the relevant conditions when only two contrasting identifications are involved for each response.

[Distinguish between the first-person narrator and the third-person narrator in the novel.]

*[Distinguish between **longitudinal** and **transverse** waves.]*

Draw
(*Pingi*)

Candidates must provide a diagrammatic presentation.

[Draw the Lewis structure of the thiocyanate ion.]

Elaborate on
(*Iftah fuq / elabora fuq*)

Candidates have to present an answer that is rich in explanation, logical, and very explicit.

[Elaborate on the use of irony in the novel.]

Estimate (<i>Ikkalkula / aghmel stima</i>)	Candidates must present a reasoned order of magnitude statement or calculation of the quantity concerned, making simplifying assumptions where necessary, about points of principles and about the values of quantities not included in question. <i>[Estimate the partial pressures of all gases present at equilibrium.]</i>
Evaluate (<i>Evalwa</i>)	Candidates have to assess and reach judgements about the relative value of some items. <i>[Evaluate the role of the human kidney in excretion and osmoregulation.]</i>
Explain (<i>Fisser/ spjega</i>)	Candidates have to describe and elaborate on an item. They have to make plain a particular idea to make it easily understood. Sometimes they have to present the concept in question in terms of simpler concepts or principles. In other cases they have to interpret the meaning of a given idea or statement or principle, that is, they have to state what happens, together with how and/or why. <i>[Explain in your own words the meaning of the following as they are used in the context of this passage.]</i> <i>[Explain what astonishes the poet in the attitude of the nurses in lines 11-18.]</i> <i>[Explain the term interference.]</i>
Find... (<i>Sib</i>)	This is a general term that may be interpreted as calculate, measure, determine etc. <i>[Find R in terms of W and n.]</i>

<p>Give an account of (<i>Għid/ Irrakkonta</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to describe an episode or narrate part of a plot in their own words. In some cases, they have to describe a particular process or an item. They have to make sure to include all the relevant points or information. <i>[Give an account of what happened in “The Lady of Shalott”.]</i></p>
<p>Give reasons for your answer (<i>Sib raġunijiet għal</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to provide arguments, motives or inducements to justify their presentation. A reason can take the shape of an underlying explanatory principle. <i>[Give a possible reason why the author uses a number of structures in the passive voice.]</i> <i>[Suggest a reason why the author does this.]</i></p>
<p>Identify (<i>Identifika</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to ascertain and pinpoint the major issues of a topic without explanation. <i>[Identify Macbeth’s reasons for killing Duncan.]</i> <i>[Identify protein filaments X and Y.]</i></p>
<p>Illustrate (<i>Uri</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to make clear the meaning of a concept to the examiners, demonstrating such a meaning by using examples or episodes from a studied text. In other words, they have to provide examples to explain their point. <i>[Narrative poetry seeks to delight. Illustrate this with reference to one of the poems you studied.]</i> <i>[Illustrate by means of a diagram and a written description how streams within a drainage basin are ordered according to the method developed by Strahler.]</i></p>

<p>Interpret (<i>Għid x'interpretazzjoni toħroġ minn</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to provide an explanation or summary of a communication producing a new view of the material presented to them. <i>[Interpret the weather map given below.]</i></p>
<p>Justify (<i>Iġġustifika</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to give reasons for and provide supporting examples. <i>[Justify the statement that a nuclear power station resembles a coal-fired power station but uses a different fuel.]</i></p>
<p>List (<i>Elenka / Aġhti lista</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to present a number of points (generally in catalogue form) with no elaboration. In itemising their material candidates often enumerate ideas or elements. They have to provide the number of items asked for, using headings only. <i>[List the dramatic features in the novel.]</i> <i>[List the four fundamental forces.]</i></p>
<p>Make a reference to / By referring to (<i>Aġħmel referenza għal/ irreferi għal</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to present an answer by addressing the contents of a set text. Quotations and references have to be made. <i>[The characters in the play behave with great dignity. Discuss with reference to the major incidents of the play.]</i></p>
<p>Match (<i>Qabbel</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to team up examples with statements or definitions <i>[Match the sentences listed below with each picture by writing the number of the sentence below the correct picture.]</i></p>

Measure (<i>Kejjel</i>)	Candidates must apply a standard scale or use a measuring instrument <i>[Measure the period T of small oscillations of the pendulum for a number of different lengths of the pendulum string.]</i>
Name (<i>Semmi</i>)	Candidates have to give actual names or titles but no other detail. <i>[Name the principle involved.]</i>
Order (<i>Pogġi f'ordni</i>)	Candidates must arrange two or more objects, events etc according to stated criteria. <i>[Arrange the following atoms in order of increasing radius.]</i>
Outline (<i>Agħti fil-qosor</i>)	Candidates must provide general ideas only, without detail. <i>[Briefly outline any precautions you would take prior to starting this investigation.]</i>
Plan (<i>Fassal pjan</i>)	Candidates have to use scientific knowledge and understanding to turn ideas into a form that can be investigated, and to decide on an appropriate strategy.
Practise (<i>uża xi verb li jaqbel, eż. fil-mużika: 'doqq'</i>)	Candidates have to perform some task or to put some element to use.
Predict (<i>Xi jkun...</i>)	Candidates must use a rule or principle to infer some consequence. <i>[Predict the next term in the following arithmetic series such as 2, 5, 9, 14, ____.]</i>

<p>Presentation of experimental results (<i>Ippreženta</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates must represent and communicate qualitative and quantitative data using diagrams, tables, charts, graphs, etc. <i>[Present the information in the table in the form of a graph.]</i></p>
<p>Solve (<i>Solvi dan li ġej</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to produce a solution to a given problem usually in writing.</p>
<p>Prove (<i>Agħti prova li</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates must demonstrate or show by logical argument the truth of a statement. <i>[Prove that the velocity can never exceed g/k.]</i></p>
<p>Recall (<i>Ftakar</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates must memorise the appropriate material (terminology, specific facts, methods, processes, etc.)</p>
<p>Record (<i>Irreġistra</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates must make clear and accurate note of measurements and evidence collected. <i>[Record your results in an appropriate data table.]</i></p>
<p>Reproduce (<i>Irriproduċi</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to copy an object, diagram, etc. presented.</p>
<p>Research (<i>Irričerka</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are asked to investigate.</p>
<p>Select (<i>Agħżel</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates must choose from a given piece of data. <i>[Select three of the conditions listed below and explain how each condition could result in social exclusion.]</i></p>
<p>Show (<i>Uri</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to demonstrate by logical arguments and opinions the proof of a given</p>

statement. All terms and ideas used have to be very explicit.

[Show how the sense of danger is heightened in this story.]

[Show that the ratio of the times taken by the two trains is $\sqrt{27/25}$.]

Sketch
(*Hazzež*)

Candidates must make a freehand drawing including essential aspects only.

[Sketch a graph showing how the amplitude of oscillations of the spring varies with the frequency of oscillations of P.]

State
(*Ghid*)

Candidates are expected to provide a short concise answer without explanation unless instructed to do so.

[State where, giving an explanation, the tension in the string is a maximum.]

Suggest
(*Issuđerixxi*)

Candidates have to think of plausible reasons or opinions for the item or phenomenon specified in the question; it implies that there is no unique answer. Sometimes they have to propose a theory and defend it by showing how it could work.

[Suggest one possible advantage of a double circulation, such as that of mammals and birds, over a simple circulation such as that of fish.]

Summarise
(*Qassar*)

Candidates have to give a concise account of the main points or substance of a matter, omitting details and examples.

Translate
(*Aqleb/ittraduci*)

Candidates have to transcribe one symbolic form to another of the same or similar meaning.

<p>To what extent... (<i>Sa kemm...</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to discuss in detail. <i>[To what extent can “The Glass Menagerie” be called a dream-memory play?]</i></p>
<p>What is meant by.../ what do we mean by... (<i>X'nifhmu bi...</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are required to give a definition together with some relevant comment/s on the relation of the term concerned to the context. If there is no context, the definition has to be accompanied with relevant information or comment on the significance of the term in question.</p>
<p>What is the purpose of... (<i>X'inhul-iskop ta'...</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates have to provide the definite intention of an author or work or part of a work. They must specify the aim of the author of the text at hand.</p>
<p>Write a critical evaluation (<i>Aġħti evalwazzjoni kritika</i>)</p>	<p>Candidates are expected to analyse the text given to discuss the theme, the feeling and tone, and the style of presentation. They have to write about imagery, language, mood, verse/prose form, sentimental involvement. They are free to admire or to reject ideas presented by text, provided they back their arguments by theoretical material.</p>