

Legal Notice 151 of 2016 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,570 – 9 May 2016 Amended by: Legal Notice 244 of 2017 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,867 – 22 September 2017 Legal Notice 106 of 2018 – Malta Government Gazette No. 19,974 – 6 April 2018 Legal Notice 209 of 2020 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,410 – 22 May 2020 Legal Notice 161 of 2021 – Malta Government Gazette No. 20,607 – 13 April 2021 Legal Notice 181 of 2023 – Malta Government Gazette No. 21,088 – 19 July 2023
--

EDUCATION ACT (CAP. 327)

Bye-Laws of 2016 in terms of the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards, 2004 for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care – B.A. (Hons) ECEC - under the auspices of the Faculty of Education

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon him by articles 74 (5) and 75 (6) of the Education Act (Cap. 327), the Chancellor of the University of Malta has promulgated the following bye-laws made by the Board of the Faculty of Education in virtue of the powers conferred upon it by article 81 (1)(c) of the said Act and which have been approved by the Senate of the University of Malta as required by article 81 (2) of the said Act:

Citation and Interpretation

1. (1) These bye-laws may be cited as the Bye-Laws of 2016 in terms of the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards, 2004 for the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care - B.A. (Hons) ECEC - under the auspices of the Faculty of Education.

(2) In these bye-laws, unless the context otherwise requires –

“the Board” means the Board of the Faculty of Education;

“the Course” means the programme of study leading to the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care - B.A. (Hons) ECEC;

“the Degree” means the degree of Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Early Childhood Education and Care - B.A. (Hons) ECEC;

“the Faculty” means the Faculty of Education;

“the Higher Diploma” means the Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Education and Care – H.Dip.; and

“the Principal Regulations” means the General Regulations for University Undergraduate Awards, 2004.

Applicability

2. These bye-laws shall be applicable for courses commencing in October 2016 or later.

Special Course Requirements for Admission

3. (1) To be registered as regular students in the Course, applicants shall, apart from satisfying the general requirements for admission as specified in the Admissions Regulations of the University, be in possession of a pass at Advanced Matriculation Level at Grade C or better in any one of the following subjects:

Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, English, French, Geography, German, History, Home Economics and Human Ecology, Information Technology, Italian, Maltese, Mathematics (Applied or Pure), Music, Philosophy, Physics, Religious Knowledge, Sociology and Spanish.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2021 or later:

3. (1) To be registered as regular students in the Course, applicants shall, apart from satisfying the general requirements for admission as specified in the Admissions Regulations of the University, be in possession of a pass at Advanced Matriculation Level at Grade C or better in any one subject.

(2) Applications shall also be accepted from persons who are not in possession of the general requirements for admission as specified in the Admissions Regulations but have obtained the following:

(i) the MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Early Years OR the MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Children's Care Learning and Development OR the MCAST-BTEC National Diploma in Child's Play Learning and Development OR the Certificate in Pre-School Education (Education Division - Further Studies and Adult Education Department) OR the Certificate in Childcare (Education Division - Further Studies and Adult Education Department); and

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

(i) the Advanced Diploma in Children's Care, Learning and Development (MCAST) or any other comparable and equivalent recognised qualification; and

(ii) a pass at Advanced Matriculation Level at grade C or better in any one of the following subjects:

Art, Biology, Chemistry, Computing, English, French, Geography, German, History, Home Economics and Human Ecology, Information Technology, Italian, Maltese, Mathematics (Applied or Pure), Music, Philosophy, Physics, Religious Knowledge, Sociology and Spanish; and

(iii) a pass at SEC level at Grade 5 or better in Mathematics.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2022 or later:

(iii) a pass at Secondary Education Certificate level at Grade 5 or better in English Language, Maltese and Mathematics.

(3) In accordance with the provisions of regulation 15(1) of the Admissions Regulations, the Admissions Board, acting on the advice of the Board of Studies, may admit applicants into any year of the Course if in possession of the following:

(i) MCAST–BTEC Higher National Diploma in Advanced Studies in Early Years OR any other comparable and equivalent recognised qualification; and

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

(i) Higher Diploma in Advanced Studies in Early Years (MCAST); or any other comparable and equivalent recognised qualification; and

(ii) passes at SEC level at Grade 5 or better in English Language, Maltese and Mathematics; and

(iii) passes in proficiency tests in English and Maltese, approved by the Faculty. Applicants shall be exempted from sitting for the proficiency test in English if they are in possession of a pass at SEC level at Grade 3 or higher, or an Intermediate Matriculation Level pass at Grade C or higher, or an Advanced Matriculation Level pass at Grade C or higher. Applicants shall be exempted from sitting for the proficiency test in Maltese if they are in possession of a pass at SEC level at Grade 3 or higher, or an Intermediate Matriculation Level pass at Grade C or higher, or an Advanced Matriculation Level pass at Grade C or higher.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2023 or later:

(iii) passes in proficiency tests in English and Maltese, approved by the Faculty. Applicants shall be exempted from sitting for the proficiency tests in English and Maltese if they are in possession of passes at Intermediate or Advanced Matriculation Level at Grade C or higher in each of the two subjects.

(4) Applicants considered in terms of paragraph (c) of regulation 6 of the Admissions Regulations must be in possession of those qualifications and/or experience that would satisfy the Faculty Admissions Committee that they have reached the academic standard required to follow the Course with profit. The eligibility of such applicants shall be decided by the University Admissions Board on the recommendation of the Faculty Admissions Committee, following an interview conducted by an interviewing board appointed for the purpose.

(5) All applicants shall submit with their application a Police Good Conduct Certificate issued by the Commissioner of Police in terms of the Conduct Certificates Ordinance, and shall not be included in the Register established under the Protection of Minors (Registration) Act.

4. Applicants with other qualifications considered to be sufficient may be exempted by the University Admissions Board, on the advice of the Faculty Admissions Committee, from the whole or part of these special course requirements.

5. (1) The Board shall recommend to Senate the number of students that may be allowed to register for the Course, depending on the availability of human resources and the number of suitable classes available for the field placement component. The Board shall announce the number of available places at the time of the call for applications.

(2) When the number of applicants that may be admitted to the Course is limited in terms of paragraph (1) of this bye-law, and the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, applicants shall be selected according to the following criteria, the weighting of which shall be published at the time of the call for applications:

- (a) academic qualifications;
- (b) experience in the field of Early Childhood Education and Care; and
- (c) performance during an interview.

(3) When more than ten places are available, the interviewing board shall interview a number of applicants that is 25% more than the number of available places. Further groups of applicants as decided by the interviewing board shall only be interviewed if all the places have not been filled.

(4) The interviewing board appointed by the Board for the purpose, shall be composed of at least 3 members from the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

5. (1) The Board shall recommend to Senate the number of students that may be allowed to register for the Course, depending on the availability of human

resources and the number of suitable classes available for the field placement component. The Board shall announce the number of available places at the time of the call for applications, provided that 10% of such available places shall be reserved for eligible applicants considered in terms of paragraph (4) of bye-law 3. If some or all of the reserved places are not filled, these places shall be made available to applicants who satisfy the general and special course requirements.

(2) When the number of applicants that may be admitted to the Course is limited in terms of paragraph (1) of this bye-law, and the number of eligible applicants exceeds the number of places available, applicants shall be selected on the basis of their academic qualifications which shall be weighted in accordance with selection criteria which will be published at the time of the call for application, provided that applicants considered in terms of paragraph (4) of bye-law 3 shall be selected according to the following criteria:

- (a) knowledge and experience in early childhood settings; and
- (b) academic qualifications.

(3) If, after the ranking order is established as indicated above, there is a tie for one or more places, those applicants who ranked in the same position shall be interviewed.

(4) The interviewing board, appointed by the Board for the purpose, shall be composed of at least 3 members from the Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education.

6. The University Admissions Board, after seeking the advice of the Faculty Admissions Committee, shall first consider eligible applicants whose qualifications were obtained in the Matriculation Certificate Examination or from another examining board, if the Faculty Admissions Committee is satisfied that the qualifications presented are comparable in content and equivalent in standard to the Matriculation Certificate Examination in the same subject/s. For the purpose of selection, applicants whose qualifications and the special course requirements as stipulated in bye-law 4, were obtained by 31 August preceding the commencement of the Course shall be considered first. If vacant places are still available, applicants who obtain all necessary qualifications and fulfil all special course requirements as stipulated in bye-law 4 after the 31 August and before the 30 September shall be considered to take up the remaining places.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

6. The University Admissions Board, after seeking the advice of the Faculty Admissions Committee, shall first consider eligible applicants whose qualifications were obtained in the Matriculation Certificate Examination or from another examining board, if the Faculty Admissions Committee is satisfied that the

qualifications presented are comparable in content and equivalent in standard to the Matriculation Certificate Examination in the same subject/s. For the purpose of selection, applicants whose qualifications and the special course requirements as stipulated in bye-law 3, were obtained by 31 August preceding the commencement of the Course shall be considered first. If vacant places are still available, applicants who obtain all necessary qualifications and fulfil all special course requirements as stipulated in bye-law 3 after the 31 August and before the 30 September shall be considered to take up the remaining places.

Course Duration

7. The Course shall extend over a period of three years of full-time study.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

7. The Course shall extend over a period of three years of full-time study or the equivalent in part-time study.

Programme of Study

8. The Board shall publish the programme of study before the commencement of each Course. Subject to changes that the Board may, with the approval of Senate, be constrained to make, students are bound to follow the study-units and obtain the credits as indicated in the programme of study for the Degree, provided that the programme of study shall be drawn up in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Principal Regulations.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2023 or later:

8. (1) The programme of study, which shall comprise study-units to which 180 ECTS credits are assigned, shall be published after approval by Senate, normally not less than eight months prior to the commencement of the Course.

(2) In addition to the programme of study specified in paragraph (1) of this bye-law, students shall be further required to:

(i) register for the study-units included in the Communication and Academic Skills Programme (CASP); and

(ii) sit for a Maltese Aptitude Test - 'Test ta' Hiliet fil-Malti' - at the beginning of the Course; provided that applicants in possession of a pass in Maltese at Intermediate or Advanced Matriculation Level at Grade C or higher, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent by the Board, shall be exempt from this requirement. Students who fail the Maltese Aptitude Test shall be required to follow and successfully complete a proficiency course in Maltese.

9. (1) Students shall be required to register and pass in study-units to which a total of 180 ECTS credits are assigned.

(2) Students who successfully complete a prescribed set of study-units totalling 120 ECTS credits, including two field placements, and do not successfully complete the Course, shall be entitled to the Higher Diploma.

(3) Students who on admission into the Course are not in possession of passes in English and Maltese at Intermediate or Advanced Matriculation Level at Grade C or higher, or qualifications deemed to be equivalent by the Board, shall be required to follow and successfully pass from proficiency course/s approved by the Board in Maltese and/or English (as applicable) before the end of the fifth semester of the Course. Students who do not satisfy these requirements by this period shall be required to interrupt their studies for up to a maximum of twelve months during which time they are expected to obtain these requirements. Students shall only be eligible to proceed with their studies if they comply with these requirements.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2023 or later:

9. (1) Students who successfully complete a prescribed set of study-units totalling 120 ECTS credits, including two field placements, and do not successfully complete the Course, shall be entitled to the Higher Diploma.

(2) Students shall be eligible for the award of the Degree if they successfully complete:

- (i) the 180 ECTS credits as outlined in the programme of study for the Course; and
- (ii) the credits assigned to the study-units included in the Communication and Academic Skills Programme (CASP); and
- (iii) the Maltese Aptitude Test - 'Test ta' Hiliet fil-Malti' or the proficiency course in Maltese, if required.

Field Placement

10. (1) There shall be a period of observation and teaching in an early childhood setting, under supervision, as determined by the Board in the last two years of the Course.

(2) Field placements shall be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis.

(3) The Board shall appoint a field placement Board of Examiners which shall follow the University Assessment Regulations and any other procedure that the Board may determine for the purpose of the field placement, provided that such procedures are in conformity with the University Assessment Regulations.

(4) Each student shall be assessed by at least two examiners as provided for by the University Assessment Regulations. The number of assessment visits shall be stated in the Faculty guidelines but examiners may increase assessment visits as they deem fit.

(5) Students shall be required to pass all the field placements.

(6) Students shall be required to abide by the Field Placement Code of Ethics published by the Board. Any breach of this Code of Ethics shall be referred to the Board of Examiners of the field placement and may result in a recommendation to Senate for expulsion from the Course.

(7) (a) Students who, for health reasons, fail to attend for up to three days should present a medical certificate within 24 hours to the coordinator of the field placement. The medical certificate, drawn up by a medical doctor, should clearly state the ailment which is preventing the student from attending school and should include the name, the signature and the medical registration number of the medical doctor.

(b) Where students are away from the early childhood setting for up to three days for health reasons or for any other reason which the Board considers valid, as well as in special circumstances for which prior approval would have been given by the field placement Board of Examiners, they shall be requested to make up for any missed teaching duties in accordance with instructions issued by the coordinator of the field placement and the Head of Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education.

(c) Students who fail to attend four days or more shall either be required to repeat the whole field placement or, at the discretion of the Board, may be required to carry out additional days of supervised practice during the same academic year as directed by the Board.

(8) Students shall only be declared to have passed the field placement by the field placement Board of Examiners. The academic and professional judgement of the field placement Board of Examiners is not reviewable.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

Field Placement

10. (1) There shall be a field placement, comprising a period of observation and/or teaching in an early childhood setting, under supervision, as determined by the Board, provided that for courses followed on a part-time basis there shall be at least three field placements.

(2) The Board shall appoint a field placement Board of Examiners that shall follow the University Assessment Regulations and any other procedure that the Board may determine for the purpose of the Field Placement, provided that such procedures are in conformity with the University Assessment Regulations.

(3) Students shall be required to obtain a Pass in all the field placements, which shall be assessed on a Pass/Fail basis. The number of assessment visits shall be stated in the Faculty guidelines but examiners may increase assessment visits as they deem fit.

(4) Students shall be required to abide by the Field Placement Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct published by the Board. Any breach of these Codes shall be referred to the Board of Examiners of the field placement and may result in a recommendation to Senate for expulsion from the Course.

(5) (a) Students who, for health reasons, fail to attend for up to three days should present a medical certificate within 24 hours to the coordinator of the field placement. The medical certificate, drawn up by a medical doctor, should clearly state the ailment which is preventing the student from attending school and should include the name, the signature and the medical registration number of the medical doctor.

(b) Where students are away from the early childhood setting for up to three days for health reasons or for any other reason which the Board considers valid, as well as in special circumstances for which prior approval would have been given by the field placement Board of Examiners, they shall be requested to make up for any missed teaching duties in accordance with instructions issued by the coordinator of the field placement and the Head of Department of Early Childhood and Primary Education.

(c) Students who fail to attend four days or more shall either be required to repeat the whole field placement or, at the discretion of the Board, may be required to carry out additional days of supervised practice during the same academic year as directed by the Board.

(6) Students shall only be declared to have passed the field placement by the field placement Board of Examiners. The academic and professional judgement of the field placement Board of Examiners is not reviewable.

Classification of the Awards

11. The Final Weighted Average Mark for the purpose of the classification of the Degree shall be based on the results obtained in each year of the Course, all credits being weighted equally.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

11. (1) The Final Weighted Average Mark for the purpose of the classification of the Degree followed on full-time basis shall be based on the results obtained in the three years of the full-time Course which shall be weighted as follows:

First Year Average Mark	20%
Second Year Average Mark	30%
Third Year Average Mark	50%.

(2) The Final Weighted Average Mark for the classification of the Degree followed on part-time basis shall be based on the results obtained in the five years of the part-time Course all credits being weighted equally.

(3) The Final Weighted Average Mark for the purpose of the classification of the Higher Diploma shall be based on the results obtained in each year of the Course, all credits being weighted equally.

12. In the case of assigning the classification of First Class Honours, the Degree Classification Board shall take into consideration the students' record of performance during the field placements.

13. The classification of the Degree and the Higher Diploma shall be published according to the provisions of the Principal Regulations.

Applicable for courses commencing in October 2020 or later:

Special Provisions for Part-Time Courses

14. The provisions of the foregoing bye-laws shall apply *mutatis mutandis* to courses followed on a part-time basis, and subject to such changes as may reasonably be deemed by the Board as necessary due to the part-time nature of the Course.