L-Università ta' Malta

MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD

ADVANCED MATRICULATION LEVEL
2026 SECOND SESSION

SUBJECT:	**Home Economics and Human Ecology**
PAPER NUMBER:	I
DATE:	31st August 2026
TIME:	9:00 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

ANSWER ANY FIVE QUESTIONS (20 marks each)

1. An English couple in their sixties would like to relocate to Malta upon retirement.

   In its latest global ranking, Forbes has named Malta one of the top destinations to retire abroad in 2025. Malta stands out thanks to its favourable combination of cost of living, healthcare access, safety, climate, and widespread use of English.

   (https://clamalta.com/news/forbes-names-malta-among-the-best-places-to-retire-abroad-in-2025/)

   a. Identify **FOUR** different sources of information from which the couple can obtain information about properties available in Malta. (2)
   b. List **ONE** advantage and **ONE** disadvantage of **TWO** of the sources of information identified in part (a). (4)
   c. Suggest **FOUR** basic housing needs for this couple. (2)

   After viewing several properties, the English couple decided on a solitary maisonette, which requires some minor structural changes.

   d. Outline **TWO** changes that the couple could implement to their maisonette to maximise security. (2)
   e. Identify **TWO** pieces of equipment that can be installed to maximise security. (2)
   f. Evaluate, giving **TWO** reasons, why it is important to secure a new home. (2)
   g. Being a one storey accommodation, list **FOUR** ways in which the couple can make the best use of space available. (4)
   h. Suggest **TWO** ways in which the couple can make their home more environmentally friendly. (2)

   (Total: 20 marks)

2. a. List **FOUR** sources of information when purchasing a product or a service. (2)
   b. Name **ONE** advantage and **ONE** disadvantage of **TWO** of the sources identified in part (a). (4)

   People cannot buy a product or service unless they know it exists; this is where the influence of advertising comes into play.

   (The effects of advertising on consumer behaviour, Ben Nancholas, March 19, 2024)

   c. Outline **TWO** advantages and **TWO** disadvantages of advertisement for the consumer. (4)
   d. Identify **FOUR** features that can make an advertisement more effective. (4)
   e. Name **FOUR** features of a misleading advertisement. (4)
   f. Suggest **TWO** ways in which the Malta Consumer and Competition Affairs Authority can safeguard the consumer. (2)

   (Total: 20 marks)

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3. a. Define the term consumer. (1)
   b. State **FOUR** consumer rights and **TWO** consumer responsibilities. (4, 2)

   Calvin and Ruth are a couple with three children. They are considering purchasing a washing machine, as they would like to have an additional one to better manage the large number of laundry loads.

   c. Suggest **TWO** criteria that they should consider when buying a washing machine. (2)
   d. Justify the suitability of the criteria mentioned in part (c) for the family of five. (2)
   e. Name and explain **TWO** environmentally friendly labels that can be found on washing machines. (4)

   Sixty-five percent of EU citizens recognise the impact of environmental issues on their daily lives, are concerned about increasing waste generation, and are willing to take personal steps to reduce waste.

   (https://www.eea.europa.eu/en/analysis/publications/europes-circular-economy-in-facts/public-views-on-the-circular-economy)

   f. List **THREE** factors that consumers should consider to be more sustainable, when choosing laundry detergents and fabric conditioners. (3)
   g. Justify, giving **TWO** reasons, how choosing environmentally friendly laundry detergents helps to safeguard the environment. (2)

(Total: 20 marks)

4. The overwhelming majority of Maltese persons prefer saving money in savings or deposit accounts: 77.4 % amongst those aged 20-29 years and 80 % amongst those aged 30 years and over, with an average of 84.3 %.

   https://maltabusinessweekly.com/financial-capability-in-malta-unearthing-the-facts/23637/

   a. Outline **THREE** different types of income. (3)
   b. Justify the importance for a family to have a budget. (1)
   c. List with examples **TWO** fixed and **TWO** variable expenses in a family budget. (2)
   d. Identify **THREE** sources of financial advice available locally. (3)
   e. Apart from savings accounts, other ways of saving and investing money are shares, bonds and life assurance policies. Outline **ONE** advantage and **ONE** disadvantage of **each**. (6)
   f. Differentiate between bonds and shares. (1, 1)
   g. Many individuals have started to invest in private pension plans. Discuss, giving **TWO** main reasons, why it is important to have such plans for one's future. (2)
   h. State **ONE** incentive given by the government to promote private pension plans. (1)

(Total: 20 marks)

5. In 2022, 96 % of 15-year-olds in the EU used social media daily, with 37 % spending over three hours per day on these platforms.

(Social media usage and adolescents' mental health in the EU, European Commission)

a. Outline **TWO** positive and **TWO** negative affects of social media use on adolescents' life. (2, 2)

In 2024, within the EU, 94 % of individuals aged 16-74 years reported having used the internet during the previous twelve months, and 77 % of those individuals had bought or ordered goods or services online.

(E-commerce statistics for individuals, Eurostat, February 2025)

There is an increasing number of consumers choosing to shop online rather than in person.

b. Identify **TWO** advantages and **TWO** disadvantages of online shopping. (2, 2)
c. List **TWO** methods of payments that can be used when purchasing goods online. (1)
d. Apart from online shopping, outline **THREE** other ways in which consumers can purchase goods. (3)
e. Give **TWO** advantages and **TWO** disadvantages of **TWO** of the purchasing methods outlined in part (d). (8)

(Total: 20 marks)

6. a. Identify **THREE** main changes that adolescents may experience as they develop into an adult, giving an example for **each**. (3)
b. Suggest **TWO** ways in which parents can help their adolescent child manage these changes. (2)
c. State **TWO** ways in which a family's values help children maintain good behaviour and resilience to social peer pressure. (2)
d. Outline **THREE** ways how a family can help an adolescent to gain independence and become a responsible adult. (3)

Europe's teenagers are increasingly picking up e-cigarettes while showing a decline on drugs and alcohol, according to a recent analysis on students' habits across the continent.

(https://www.euronews.com/)

e. Justify, giving **TWO** reasons, why there has been an increase in use of e-cigarettes. (2)
f. Identify **TWO** short-term and **TWO** long-term health implications of e-cigarettes. (4)
g. State **TWO** implications, other than health-related ones, of e-cigarette use on an individual's quality of life. (2)
h. Identify **TWO** ways how the government can control the use of e-cigarettes. (2)

(Total: 20 marks)

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MATRICULATION AND SECONDARY EDUCATION CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS BOARD

ADVANCED MATRICULATION LEVEL
2026 SECOND SESSION

SUBJECT:	**Home Economics and Human Ecology**
PAPER NUMBER:	II
DATE:	1st September 2026
TIME:	9:00 a.m. to 12:05 p.m.

ANSWER ANY FIVE QUESTIONS (20 marks each)

1. Ready-made and convenience foods are increasingly common in the diets of adolescents and busy households.

   a. Outline **FOUR** factors that influence food selection and eating habits among adolescents and working families. (2)

   b. Justify, giving **TWO** reasons, why convenience and ready-made foods are frequently chosen by adolescents and busy households. (2)

   c. A food outlet, popular with post-secondary school students, is reviewing its menu to promote healthier eating choices. One of its best-selling meals is a battered chicken wrap served with fries and a sugary drink.
      i. Describe **TWO** immediate effects and **TWO** long-term health consequences that may result if this meal is consumed regularly by adolescents. (2, 2)
      ii. Suggest, with reasons, **FOUR** changes that could be made to this meal to improve its nutritional quality. (2, 4)
      iii. The outlet also wishes to introduce options suitable for individuals following a plant-based diet. Identify **TWO** suitable alternatives that could replace the chicken in the wrap, outlining their nutritional contribution. (1, 2)

   d. Discuss **THREE** ways in which nutritional information and menu labelling help adolescents make healthier food choices when eating outside the home. (3)

   (Total: 20 marks)

2. Pregnancy and breastfeeding place increased nutritional demands on the mother in order to support her own health and the growth and development of the infant.

   a. Define energy balance and state how an imbalance between energy intake and energy expenditure can affect body weight. (1, 2)

   b. Explain **THREE** reasons why energy requirements increase during pregnancy and lactation. (3)

   c. Energy imbalance during pregnancy and lactation may have significant health consequences.
      i. Discuss **FOUR** possible effects of prolonged energy imbalance on the health of the mother. (4)
      ii. Discuss **FOUR** possible effects of maternal energy imbalance on the child, both before birth and during early infancy. (4)

   d. A pregnant woman in her third trimester has been diagnosed with mild hypertension. She follows a pescatarian diet and reports a reduced appetite. Design a suitable lunch menu for this woman and evaluate how the meal meets her nutritional requirements in terms of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. (2, 4)

   (Total: 20 marks)

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3. Fermented dairy foods are widely consumed across different age groups due to their nutritional value, versatility and functional properties.

   a. Define protein and state why proteins are classified as macronutrients. (1, 1)

   b. Protein quality varies depending on amino acid composition.
      i. Identify **TWO** foods that provide all the essential amino acids. (1)
      ii. Explain, using **ONE** suitable example, how combining plant protein foods can improve protein quality. (2)

   c. A hospital canteen is encouraging staff to choose locally produced fermented dairy products. Justify, giving **TWO** reasons, why locally produced yoghurt may be preferable to imported alternatives. (2)

   d. Yoghurt undergoes several scientific processes during production and storage. Provide a scientific analysis of the following statements:
      i. Regular consumption of yoghurt contributes to gut health. (2)
      ii. Yoghurt must be stored under refrigerated conditions to maintain safety and quality. (2)

   e. Suggest **FOUR** different ways how yoghurt can be incorporated into sweet and savoury dishes. (2)

   f. Enzymes play a crucial role in the manufacture of fermented foods. Define enzymes and explain their role by outlining **SIX** stages involved in yoghurt production. (1, 6)

(Total: 20 marks)

4. The increasing prevalence of overweight and obesity among young adults has led to growing interest in weight-loss trends and fad diets promoted through social media and online platforms.

   a. Explain why fad diets are particularly appealing to young adults. (1)

   b. Describe **FOUR** characteristics typically associated with fad diets. (2)

   c. Suggest **THREE** possible long-term health consequences of prolonged adherence to fad diets, justifying your answers. (3)

   d. National dietary guidelines are used by public health authorities to promote healthy lifestyles.
      i. Explain briefly why national dietary guidelines require regular review and updating. (1)
      ii. Analyse the role of national dietary guidelines for:
         a. the general population; (1)
         b. health professionals; (1)
         c. policy makers. (1)
      iii. Distinguish between a food-based visual model (such as a healthy eating plate) and national dietary guidelines. (1, 1)

   e. With reference to the national dietary guidelines, list **SIX** dietary and **FOUR** non-dietary measures that young adults can adopt for sustainable weight management. (3, 2)

   f. Identify **THREE** economic and **THREE** social benefits of government-led programmes that promote healthy weight management across different age groups. (3)

(Total: 20 marks)

5. Food-borne illness remains a significant public health concern, particularly when food is prepared or consumed outside the home.

   a. Identify **THREE** main types of microorganisms that can cause food-borne illness. (3)

   b. Campylobacter and Listeria monocytogenes are commonly associated with serious food-borne illness. For **each** microorganism:
      i. Identify **TWO** high-risk foods commonly linked to contamination. (2)
      ii. Suggest **ONE** way in which improper handling can lead to food poisoning. (2)
      iii. Outline **TWO** main symptoms of food poisoning. (2)

   c. Suggest **FOUR** situations in which food poisoning outbreaks are more likely to occur. (2)

   d. Identify **THREE** reasons why prompt reporting to health authorities is essential during food poisoning outbreaks like those suggested in part (c). (3)

   e. Identify **ONE** food safety monitoring system commonly used in catering establishments and outline **FIVE** of its key features. (1, 5)

(Total: 20 marks)

6. Osteoporosis and rickets are bone disorders that may arise due to nutritional and lifestyle-related deficiencies.

   a. Differentiate between osteoporosis and rickets. (2)

   b. Analyse how the following factors help prevent osteoporosis:
      i. nutrient intake; (2)
      ii. physical activity; (2)
      iii. sunlight exposure. (2)

   c. Provide a scientific justification for the following statements about calcium:
      i. Vitamin D enhances calcium absorption. (1)
      ii. Calcium requirements vary across the life cycle. (1)
      iii. Excessive calcium intake may affect cardiovascular health. (1)
      iv. Low calcium levels may result in muscle cramps. (1)

   d. Lactose intolerance may increase the risk of inadequate calcium intake.
      i. Explain briefly what lactose intolerance is. (2)
      ii. Outline how a lactose-intolerant child can meet calcium requirements, suggesting **TWO** alternative food sources. (1, 1)

   e. Discuss **TWO** ways in which schools and community health programmes can promote lifelong bone health among children and adolescents. (4)

(Total: 20 marks)