



STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

SOP CODE	SOP TITLE
XLI-019-01	ADMINISTRATION OF FINES PERTAINING TO OVERDUE BOOKS

PART 1

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PART 2

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PART 3

Authoriser <hr/> MR SIMON SAMMUT UNIVERSITY SECRETARY	Date of issue: Date of next revision:
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PART 4 (To be filled in by OOTS, QSU or RSSD)

<input type="checkbox"/> This procedure has been revised and is no longer valid as from: (Write date)	<input type="checkbox"/> Date of NEXT REVISION is extended until: (Max. 4 years)	<input type="checkbox"/> SOP rendered obsolete on: (Write date)
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1. Reason for revision

1.1 New SOP

2. Purpose and scope

2.1 This procedure is aimed at defining the criteria and the workflow of the Circulation Desk pertaining to the administration of fines for overdue book returns from registered patrons.

3. Definitions

3.1. **Academic:** All the Lecturing Staff appointed by UM Council (full-time academics; part-time T/R appointments teaching over 16 hours per week; visiting faculty with part-time Council appointment teaching 1 hour per week); casuals who are appointed by Faculty but with no UM Council appointment.

3.2. **ALMA:** Library Management System

3.3. **Circulation Desk:** UM Main Library's Circulation Desk and UM branch Libraries':

ML = Main Library (including Melitensia)

FLT = Faculty of Laws and Theology Library

HSL = Health Sciences Library

JCL = Junior College Library

ML = Main Library (including Melitensia)

UGC = University of Malta Gozo Campus Library

VCL = Valletta Campus Library

Other branches: Bighi Library (Under Heritage Malta); Cottonera Resource Centre Library

3.4. **Circulation Staff:** UM Library members of staff who work at the Circulation Desk during the Library's opening hours of service

3.5 **HyDi:** Library Discovery & Delivery Portal. A one-stop solution that allows users to perform a single search through all the Library's print and online resources.

3.6 **Library patron:** "Patron" means any person using the Library by virtue of his/her eligibility under Library Regulation 3 (*Clause 7.2.1*)

3.7 **Library Regulation 3** The Library shall be open for the purposes of study and research to:

(a) members of the University of Malta, who are entitled to borrowing privileges, as follows:

(i) members of Council and of Senate

(ii) all academic members of staff

(iii) visiting academics on University service

(iv) members of the University support staff

(v) registered students of the University

(b) bona fide researchers to whom a temporary borrowing permit may be issued by the Director

(c) day visitors, admitted at the discretion of the Director, who may not borrow any item.

3.8 Waiver:

Library staff with access rights to ALMA Circulation Module may waive an overdue book fine in accordance with *Clause 6.6 below*.

4. Responsibilities

4.1 Roles and Responsibilities of the Circulation Staff:

4.1.1 carrying out the day to day transactions

4.1.2 Issuing and renewing of print publications to UM registered patrons,

4.1.3 Circulation Staff generate lists of patrons having overdue publications. Lists are generated via ALMA Analytics.

4.1.4 Waiving of fines are applicable in accordance with the Library Circulation procedure, as per Clause 6.6 below.

4.1.5 checking returned items and

4.1.6 answering general queries.

4.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Patrons:

4.2.1 Settling outstanding fines pertaining to overdue book returns online via HyDi (*My Library Card*) or at MaltaPost Branch on Campus, quoting "Code No. 71".

4.2.2 Books can be renewed online as long as these are not requested by another patron.

4.2.3 Fines on overdue books are not applicable to academics.

5. Health and Safety requirements

5.1 N/A

6. Procedure

6.1. University of Malta Library Borrowers' Accounts Policy

6.1.1 The various categories of UM patrons range from students to full-time professors. The amount of print publications patrons are entitled to borrow can be found at: <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/64536>.

6.2. Overdue Fines

6.2.1. ALMA generates fines for overdue print publications in accordance with the Library Regulations (*Clause 7.2.1*)

6.3. Paying overdue book fines

6.3.1. Payments for overdue book fines are settled online via *My Library Account* (facilitated to UM registered patrons via a link through HyDi). Once a fine is paid, ALMA updates the record automatically and the patron receives an email as a confirmation of receipt of payment.

6.3.2. Patrons without an IT Account or with an expired UM IT Account may settle payments at the MaltaPost Branch on Campus (Code No. 71) and present their receipt to the Circulation Staff to amend ALMA records accordingly.

6.4. Non-settlement of overdue fines

6.4.1 Non-settlement of overdue fines may lead to the blocking of the patron's both Library Borrower's Account and the UM IT Account, when total accrued fines on all items amount to Eur30 or beyond. In this case, when Circulation staff are approached by the patron at the Circulation, the patron is informed by the Circulation staff about his/her pending fines.

6.5. Waiving a patron's fine

6.5.1. Waiving a patron's fine needs considerable attention by the waiver (member of staff at the Circulation Desk) and a valid reason why the fine is waived must be recorded on ALMA.

6.5.2. A patron's overall fine that amounts to Euro30 and/or beyond should only be waived with the approval of the Library Management.

6.5.3. Overriding a patron's overdue book fine by any member of staff is not permitted.

6.6 Reasons for Waiving of Fines

6.6.1 A *Waiving Reason Description* function is provided in ALMA Circulation Module and the reason for waiving an overdue book fine is selected from pre-defined reasons and entered on ALMA by the Circulation Desk staff, as per list below:

- Viva student
- Graduating student
- Withdrawn student
- Health issues
- Valid reason provided by the patron

6.6.2 When the ALMA system-generated notices and the Library's final notice are completely ignored by the patron for an overdue book/s to be returned to the Library and to settle all outstanding fines, then the case may be referred to:

- the Registrar's Office, if the student is about to graduate
- the Legal Office, if the student is withdrawn from his/her course of studies with the UM.

6.7 Reports and statistics

6.7.1 Reports and statistics that cover all the required data are to be obtained via ALMA Analytics on a monthly basis, in compliance with the EU GDPR and all other applicable data protection laws.

7. References

7.1 University of Malta Library: borrowers' accounts policy, (2019), Available at

<https://www.um.edu.mt/library/oar/handle/123456789/64536> [Accessed 11th December 2020].

- 7.2 Library Regulations, (2017), Available at <https://www.um.edu.mt/library/aboutus/libraryregulations> [Accessed 11th December 2020].
- 7.3 Legal Notice 141 of 2011, and 86 of 2017 Library regulations: [Subsidiary Legislation 327.205](https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/327.205) <https://legislation.mt/eli/sl/327.205/eng/pdf> [Accessed 11th December 2020].

8. List of appendices/worksheets

- 8.1 N/A