MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION AND SPORT

Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme

MGUS

This scheme is administered by the
Students' Maintenance Grants' Board

Regulations 2026 – 2027

These Regulations form one legally binding document
with the Students' Maintenance Grants' Application 2026 - 2027

MGUS Regulations 2026 – 2027 are not applicable for students who are already benefitting under previous Malta Government Undergraduate Schemes, in which cases the terms of these Regulations for their particular scheme are still applicable.

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Introduction

Over the last decade, Malta has witnessed a significant overall expansion in the higher education sector. In a knowledge-based economy, it is imperative to have a strong participation rate in higher education that promotes intellectual, social, and economic growth.

High-quality undergraduate education is of central importance to a number of objectives: an ever more highly skilled workforce and the development of new fields of study and specialisation. It is a key to Malta's economic and social progress and is essential to many people's continuing professional development.

The Maltese Government believes that students may find valid learning pathways in undergraduate courses / programmes that are provided, either through foreign higher educational institutions or through recognised private higher educational institutions in Malta.

The Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme 2026 - 2027 aims at providing more opportunities to further the choice of undergraduate qualifications and degrees from MQF Level 4 up to MQF Level 6 under the Malta Qualification Framework (MQF) including Diplomas, Bachelor's degrees and vocational qualifications.

Through this scheme, the Government is extending the financial support available to undergraduate students at the University of Malta, MCAST and the American University of Malta (AUM), to other students undertaking equivalent studies at other private or foreign institutions, leading to officially recognised local and foreign MQF Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications.

1. Aims and Objectives

The key objectives of this scheme are:

- To encourage more students' participation at an undergraduate level in Malta and abroad;
- To promote academic / vocational excellence in the private tuition sector;
- To increase students' choice of degrees / qualifications and institutions.

2. Eligibility

To be eligible under this scheme, applicants shall be students currently registered as **full-time** students, studying **physically on campus,** reading a course of studies at one of the following institutions:

- Recognised licensed private higher educational institution in Malta offering accredited undergraduate courses at MQF Level 4, 5 or 6, or;
- Recognised foreign higher educational institution offering undergraduate accredited courses at MQF Level 4, 5 or 6 Qualification.

Yet, the scheme excludes students registered on: -

- Distance Learning (whether on full-time or part-time modality);
- Part-Time courses

- Blended Courses
- Students who change modality of course from full-time to part-time.

Thus, under such circumstances students shall be deemed not eligible according to these Regulations.

For the purposes of this scheme, '*accredited MQF Level 4, 5 or 6 qualifications*' shall mean such qualifications classified as undergraduate / vocational courses considered equivalent to MQF level 4, 5 or 6 by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC) within the Malta Further and Higher Education Authority (MFHEA).

Students following accredited courses by MFHEA featuring on MFHEA website at https://mfhea.mt shall be exempted from the obligation to provide an MQRIC report. Yet they are required to upload a screenshot of the qualification that they are reading for as showing on MFHEA website, on their application. However, the SMGU reserves the right to request an MQRIC Evaluation report, if this is deemed necessary for the determination of eligibility.

2.1. Provided that, to apply under the MGUS, candidates should additionally meet the following eligibility criteria:

(a) are Maltese citizens, or have at least one parent being a Maltese citizen; or are nationals of a European Union and, or European Economic Area State or a family member of such European Union and, or European Economic Area national (as defined in the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order and in the Immigration Regulations, respectively for a European Union and European Economic Area nationals) (provided that such person has obtained permanent residence in Malta in accordance with the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order and with the Immigration Regulations respectively for European Union and European Economic Area nationals); or be a national of a European Union and, or European Economic Area State who is in Malta exercising his Treaty rights as a worker, self-employed person or person retaining such status in accordance with the Free Movement of European Union Nationals and their Family Members Order; or be a third country national that has been granted refugee status and, or long term residence status under the Status of Long-Term Residents (Third Country Nationals) Regulations; and

(b) have resided in Malta for a period of not less than five (5) years immediately prior to the commencement of the relative course of studies:
Provided that for the sole purpose of calculating the five consecutive years requirement under these regulations, any period of time during which the student would have been residing outside Malta due to medical treatment, or study abroad, or any other purpose that the Board may consider acceptable, shall not be considered as residing outside Malta;
Provided further that for any period of time for any other purpose not considered acceptable, the Board shall consider a trip outside Malta of more than six (6) months absence in a year or an aggregate of ten (10) months absence in the whole five (5) years as having interrupted the five (5) year residency requirement; and

(d) those applying in the subsequent years of the course, are to provide proof that they have been attending the higher education course regularly and making satisfactory progress; and

(e) are not in possession of a scholarship or in line to be awarded a scholarship for the same course that they are applying for under the MGUS Scheme; and

(f) are not in full-time employment or in part-time employment working more than thirty (30) hours per week during academic year; and

(g) applicants must intend to follow the course full-time, physically on campus and progress on full-time mode to completion. Students who change modality from full-time to part-time during the duration of course, will be deemed not eligible according to these regulations and thus will be liable to refund. (See Section 11 of these Regulations for further details on refund); and

(h) applicants shall have satisfied all the necessary entry requirements of the degree / qualification awarding institution by the application submission deadline, that is by 30th June 2027. Students may amend their online application for Stipends and Grants until the 30th June 2027.

There shall be no further amendments of the students' online applications after 30th June 2027.

2.2

(a) Applicants who have already started the course but have not yet applied under a previous scheme may apply under this scheme, provided that:

(i) applicants who have benefitted from or have applied for any scholarship or grant, are to disclose this information in their application or after submission of application but before 30th June 2027 by sending an email on mgus.mesr@gov.mt. Eligibility in such case is determined by these regulations. In the event, that the Unit subsequently discovers that applicants failed to disclose to the Unit of any other scholarship/s/grants, applicants would be automatically disqualified from this Scheme and would have to refund all stipends and grants received.

(ii) Applicants are NOT yet in possession of the formal certificate or in the process of being awarded a degree/qualification at the same MQF level applying for (i.e. MQF Level 4, 5 or 6) or higher than the qualification/degree that applicant is applying for.

(b) **Applicants already in possession of a qualification at the MQF Level that they are applying for that is, at MQF Level 4 or 5 or 6 or higher shall not be eligible to apply**.

(c) Applicants must be available to commence their full-time studies by 31st December 2026, and to subsequently continue in full-time attendance, physically on campus uninterruptedly, for the duration of the intended course up till completion.

(d) The SMGU may, in exceptional cases, consider courses starting at a later date but by no later than 31st March 2027.

(e) Any change in institution must be approved by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board.

3. Classification of Courses

The MGUS shall support students reading for full-time studies leading to their first degree/qualification at MQF Level 4, 5 or 6 as specified in these Regulations. The awards are classified as follows:

- General Courses
- Prescribed Courses (This applies only for MQF Level 6 degrees/qualifications)
- National High-Priority Courses (This applies only for MQF Level 6 degrees/qualifications)

The courses falling under these categories shall be determined by the Students' Maintenance Grants Board (SMGB). These courses can be viewed through the following link: https://stipendsandgrants.gov.mt

4. Entitlement

The scheme shall award:

(a) A One-Time Grant awarded at the first year of their studies at commencement of course (applicable only for MQF Level 6 courses)
(b) A Yearly Grant payable for every year of the course;
(c) Ten fixed rate four-weekly stipends payable between December and August of every academic year (depending on commencement date of course).

- Applicants following Diploma/Degree/Qualification at MQF Level 4, 5 or 6, shall be entitled to stipends and grants as stipulated in Subsidiary Legislation 605.06.

- Students applying under these regulations may apply for Supplementary stipends and grants (if applicable) subject to proven hardship or humanitarian situations. Students studying abroad shall only be considered for Supplementary if the course/qualification that they are pursuing is not offered in Malta. Only stipend eligible students may be considered for eligibility of Supplementary Stipends and Grants (if applicable).

  All Applications and uploaded documents undergo a rigorous vetting process before being considered by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board. This is required for the official final decision to be issued.

- **All Grants and Stipends are credited directly to the applicants' bank account, as provided in their online application. <u>A bank account, holder of which is not the applicant, shall not be acceptable.</u>**

Other information:

a. Stipend rates are revised every January by a proportionate rate of the COLA increase.

b. Updated list of Prescribed and High Priority Courses is approved by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board and are published in the annex provided by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board.

5. Choice of Institution

Many courses have strict admission deadlines and applicants must take the necessary steps to secure admission to their preferred institutions in advance of any application under the MGUS. Applicants shall be responsible to check such admission requirements carefully, prior to applying for the Students' Maintenance Grants.

6. Administration of the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme (MGUS)

The MGUS shall be administered by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit - SMGU within the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation.

However, cases related to refund, including when and the amount to be refunded in case of abandoning the course, benefiting from another scheme/scholarship, discontinuation of course, termination/resignation and/or change in course and ***change in modality of course*** or fail to resume course, are to be referred for the attention of the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board - SMGB

7. Attendance, Progression Reports and Graduation Records

For the purposes of compliance with these Regulations, at the end of each semester, Students are to ask their Educational Institution/faculty supervisor to send by email, a short statement/report confirming the progress and attendance of student to MGUS, on email address mgus.mes@gov.mt copying the respective applicant/student. Failure to receive this information, despite reminders sent by the MGUS Officer, will lead to a halt in payments of further stipends and grants.

At the end of their course of studies, all awardees are to submit a copy of the graduation certificate to the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit, via email on mgus.mes@gov.mt. Failure to do so, would result in the case being referred for the attention of the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board. This documentation must reach the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit by the end of the respective calendar year on mgus.mes@gov.mt If awardees still fail to provide their final graduation certificate, case is to be referred for legal advice.

8. Application Form

Interested applicants are invited to apply using the appropriate online application through the below link: https://stipendsandgrants.gov.mt

Applications under this scheme must be submitted annually.

Documents to be uploaded on the online application shall include the following:

New Students

i) Scanned copy of the Unconditional Letter of Acceptance (ULA) issued by the Educational Institution. The Unconditional Letter of Acceptance shall include: -
   - The commencement date of course
   - The end date of course
   - The EQF/MQF Level of qualification
   - The modality of course (that is whether the course is full-time, part-time, distance learning or blended).
   - The number of semesters for each academic year
   - The Tuition Fees (These are to be indicated per annum or for the whole duration of the course)
     In the case of courses where no tuition fees are paid this is to be specified in the ULA.

ii) Scanned copy of MQRIC Statement (where applicable). (See regulation 2 for further information);

iii) Scanned copy of documents to satisfy eligibility conditions specified in 2(a) of the Regulations including proof of five (5) year residence in Malta preceding the commencement of course.

iv) Scanned copy of their Secondary School Qualification and Profile (One page document) and the Certificate Supplement (Four pages document in the case of those who finished their Secondary Education (Year 11/Form 5) in 2026.

v) Scanned copy of their recent Jobsplus Employment History;

vi) Scanned copy of contract of work indicating the hours of work per week, (if in part-time /self-employed) and

vii) Scanned copy of the receipt of payment for first payment of tuition fees. **Supporting documents must all be uploaded on the online application** and **not to be send by email or by mail to SMGU.**

IMPORTANT:

New Students

Applicants are to inform their Educational Institution to email the ***Unconditional Letter of Acceptance - ULA*** pertaining to their course directly to the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme - MGUS on mgus.mes@gov.mt In the meantime, the scanned copy of the ULA uploaded by Applicants shall only be accepted **PROVISIONALLY** until it will be confirmed by the MGUS Officer.

Promoted Students

i) Applicants are to inform their respective Educational Institution to send by email the **Enrolment Letter** pertaining to their course directly to the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme on mgus.mes@gov.mt copying the respective student. In the meantime, the scanned copy of the Enrolment letter uploaded by Applicants shall only be accepted **PROVISIONALLY** until it will be confirmed by the MGUS Officer.

ii) Copy of receipt of the Tuition Fees paid for the current academic year;

iii) Recent Jobsplus Employment History.

9. General Conditions

(a) Applicants who are required to repeat one (1) year or do an additional year in their chosen course of studies shall be entitled for stipend ***only*** during the repeating/additional year. Students who discontinue or choose to interrupt their studies, are to continue their studies by a determined date as agreed with the relative educational institution. The later shall request approval from the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board. It shall remain at the discretion of the SMGB whether to approve such an extension or otherwise.

(b) Awardees whose progress, as assessed through periodical assessment procedures, is deemed to be unsatisfactory, or who are not attending their course regularly, shall forfeit the right to receive their stipends and grants or part thereof until such time, as the Head of the Educational Institution, Institute, or Faculty of the University concerned certifies that these students have resumed attending regularly and are making satisfactory progress. In this respect the SMGU may demand refund.

(c) SMGU reserves the right to conduct regular checks on the progress of students. SMGU also reserves the right to request further documentation, even after application is approved, in order to conduct verifications of the eligibility. Should there be no co-operation from students, SMGU reserves the right to stop any payment and recover any funds already disbursed to such students.

(d) The fixed four-weekly part of the award is paid during the academic year, including the Christmas and Easter recesses, but excluding the summer recess. Stipends are also not paid when students are following a sandwich course that is, when students are required to spend some time working in a business or in industry as part of their course and thus are being remunerated for his/her placement.

(e) Where the structure of particular courses so warrants, students may receive payments of stipends during the summer recess.

(f) Applicants following degree/qualification at MQF Level 6 from a general degree to an honours shall not be deemed eligible to be following a second course for the purposes of these Regulations.

(g) The financial aspect of this Scheme shall be administered by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit.

(h) Awardees must **at application stage, in every academic year, indicate** any commitment of employment. Awardees are allowed to retain part-time employment up to and not exceeding thirty (30) hours weekly.

(i) Awardees who retain full-time or are in employment working more than thirty (30) hours per week or engaged on a contract of service contemporarily with their studies shall be deemed to be in breach of these Regulations, resulting in cancellation of the Award and shall be obliged to refund any funds already received by them. Applicants are responsible to inform SMGU of any such situations in advance. For all intents and purposes Awardees will not be deemed to be in breach of these Regulations if they engage on full-time employment between the 1st July and the 30th September of any academic year of their course. Students pursuing a sandwich course and not receiving remuneration for their placement shall also be entitled to receive Students' Maintenance Grants during that academic year.

(j) Awardees in full-time employment, who, are on paid leave of employment for the purpose of undergoing a course of studies, or who enter into a contract with an employer whereby they bind themselves to work for that employer following the completion of their course, and who would therefore be benefiting from that salary or the agreed remuneration, shall not be eligible for Students' Maintenance Grants under this Scheme, **unless they have approved unpaid leave**.

(k) Applicants who are public service/sector employees on full-time employment contracts and receiving paid leave of absence shall not be eligible under this scheme.

(l) Applicants whose studies commence later than the 31st December 2026 but by no later than 30th March 2027, shall indicate such instance in writing to MGUS. Students shall not be entitled to any grants prior to the commencement date of the course.

(m) Applicants who apply before the applications' deadline but receive the MQRIC verification report after the official start date of their course, shall be entitled to all the grants applicable from the official start date of their course.

(n) Any other award, r grants or assistance given or a combination thereof, by the Government of Malta or any other institution (whether public or private, local or foreign, or a combination thereof) , including the Malta Government Arts Scholarship and the Malta Government Sport Scholarship to support the applicant for the same course/programme of studies must be declared before the applicants formally confirm the Stipends and grants application , Should the Board find out that applicants were beneficiary of a scholarship while at the same time receiving stipends and grants, the SMGB shall decide whether to approve or withdraw the award of Students' Maintenance Grants or refund thereof.

(o) Students participating in training programmes under the Malta Government Sport Scholarship Scheme are eligible to apply for the MGUS.

(p) The Students' Maintenance Grants' Board reserves the right to confirm the information submitted in the application with other authorities. In applying for Students' Maintenance Grants under this Scheme, applicants are given their consent for such verification and processing of details as may be required.

(q) The Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit reserves the right to reassess the applicants' online application to determine eligibility. Certain documents may be requested at a later stage during the respective academic year even though application is already approved. **MGUS students' application is also subject to Spot Checks.**

10. Additional Requirements

(a) If additional documentation is required, applicants shall be notified by the Malta Government Undergraduate Scheme administrator.

(b) Applicants who do not start their studies by the course commencement date shall forfeit their right for students' maintenance grants. In that event, applicants are to immediately inform the SMGU by sending an email on mgus.mes@ov.mt. Applicants who discontinue their studies after the commencement of the course are requested to communicate their resignation in writing by sending an email to the SMGU on mgus.mes@gov.mt stating the reason/s for such resignation. In such cases students shall be requested by SMGU to refund. See Section 11 of these Regulations for further details on refund.

(c) Progressing students are to apply annually and provide the required documentation indicated in Regulations 7 and 8. Failure to provide the requested documentation, shall automatically lead to a halt in further payment of funds. Students will be considered as having terminated their studies. Students who fail to submit proof of their progression before the end of December of the same academic year would only be eligible from date of submission of proof of progression, and no backdated funds would be awarded.

(d) Awardees who opt to change the University or Institution before the completion of studies, shall not receive any funds if the new University or Institution demands that the awardee repeats the academic years already carried out at the previous University or Institution.

(e) Awardees who require a study break are to inform the SMGU in writing by sending an email on mgus.mes@gov.mt. Grants and stipends shall be suspended until the awardee informs the SMGU in writing by sending an email on mgus.mes@gov.mt that studies have resumed. If the break is of more than one academic year, students shall be considered as having terminated their studies and shall be requested to refund.

(f) Students shall be benefitting from Students' Maintenance Grant to obtain diploma/qualification at MQF Level 4, 5 or 6. Funding will not be extended to enable the awardee to complete an additional or higher qualification other than that stated in the application. Funding under this scheme covers a maximum of four (4) years depending on the course A repeating year during which students may be awarded stipend rates only, is not included in this 4-year period. A special concession is being granted to High-Priority Courses for the duration of the whole course.

(g) Students who are in receipt of funds from any other scheme/scholarship scheme after submission of application, must inform the MGUS immediately in writing by sending an email to the MGUS on mgus.mes@gov.mt or by using the 'contact us' button available on the Students' Maintenance Grants' online applications. Any double funding shall render students liable to refund in full or in part the Stipends and Grants already disbursed to such students as determined by the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board.

11. Refunds

Any breach of laws, these Regulations and guidelines issued by SMGU, or for any reason from the below, students will be required to refund in full or in half the One Time Grant and/or the Initial Grant or both, depending on the time when the breach takes place.

Reasons for refund: -

a) Abandoning the course;
b) Benefiting from another scheme/scholarship scheme;
c) Change in course;
d) Change in Institution;
e) Change in modality of the course;
f) Discontinuing the course;
g) Failing to resume with the course;
h) Resigning from course;
i) Termination of studies;
j) Unsatisfactory progress.

Hence, students will be required to refund the One-time grant and the Yearly grant already received, in full, if the breach takes place during the 1st semester or half of the One-time grant and the Yearly grant if the breach takes place after the 1st semester.

Nevertheless, if the breach takes place during the 2nd year or in the subsequent years of the course, students will be liable to refund the Yearly grant received in full if the breach takes place in the 1st semester or half of the Yearly grant if the breach takes place after the 1st semester in a particular year.

12. Queries

For further queries, please send an email on mgus.mes@gov.mt, or through the contact us button accessible on the online application or by visiting the EduServizz.gov at the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation. Alternatively, you may contact us via email: *servizz@gov.mt*

Website: *https://stipendsandgrants.gov.mt*

Telephone: *Freephone 153*

Appendix A

MGUS Applicant's Consent Form

Date: .....

I ..... (Insert name and surname of MGUS applicant) give my consent to the Students' Maintenance Grants' Board – SMGB and the Students' Maintenance Grants' Unit – SMGU, to verify and check about the details and progress in my course of studies with the Educational Institution/University ..... (Insert name in full of your Educational Institution/University) with whom I am studying.

.....

Signature of MGUS applicant

Full name of MGUS applicant: .....
Date of birth of MGUS applicant .....
MGUS applicant ID No. .....
University's Student's number .....
Nationality of MGUS applicant .....

NB: Please print this form, fill it in, upload it to your online application and submit or re-submit as deemed necessary.

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