

PAID STUDY LEAVE

for Education Class employees

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT,
YOUTH, RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

MALTA

Scholastic Year 2024-2025

PROCEDURES and GUIDELINES
for
PAID STUDY LEAVE
(Category A)
for Education Class employees

MINISTRY FOR EDUCATION, SPORT, YOUTH, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

Malta
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I. APPLICABILITY AND SCOPE OF DOCUMENT

- i. This document is intended to serve as a guide to applicants under the Paid Study Leave scheme for Education Class grades. Its purpose is to clarify the procedures to be adhered to by all applicants when entering into arrangements for paid study leave under this scheme.
- ii. The procedures and guidelines with regards to applications for Paid Study Leave (*Category A*) of up to one (1) scholastic year are applicable to employees in the education stream in both State and non-State sectors.
- iii. This procedure manual supersedes previous procedures related to this scheme.
- iv. The utmost care has been taken to ensure, as much as possible, conformity between these procedures and existing legislation, regulations, and public procedures. Nevertheless, in the eventuality of any discrepancy, these procedures are to be interpreted as being without prejudice to existing legislation, regulation, and public procedure.

II. DISCLAIMER

- i. The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation whenever possible, may assist employees in their personal quest to pursue further studies by making available from time to time, opportunities for utilising study leave. However, applicants under this scheme, are advised that the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation bears no liability for tuition fees, accommodation, transport, or carriage arrangements and or disruptions thereto.
- ii. In this regard, candidates, particularly, those pursuing studies abroad, are to ensure that they are properly insured against risks such as the following; changes of flight times, fare changes, damage, loss of baggage, dishonour of airline, hotel or other reservations, delays, losses, injuries, inconveniences, cessation of operations, airline problems, accidents, or for the acts of defaults of any person or entity engaged in conveying participants or in carrying out other arrangements for the employees.
- iii. Furthermore, the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation shall not be held responsible for any intentional or negligent actions or omissions on the part of the employee, or other suppliers, which result in any loss, damage, delay, inconvenience or injury to the employee, companions, or group members or for breach of contract, or failure to abide with any local or government laws.
- iv. The Ministry reserves the right to make any final decision regarding the approval of paid study leave. The granting of paid study leave will be at management's discretion.

1. INTRODUCTION

Training is an increasingly important part of professional development, towards which academic preparation and pursuit, forms a key element.

The Paid Study Leave scheme offered by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation is a specific initiative for educators. It aims to provide study leave to contribute directly towards the improvement of their professional skills and knowledge through the pursuit of further studies in Education areas of specialisation at tertiary levels of education. Paid Study Leave is intended to enable educators to dedicate time for research and to assist them in the completion of course requirements within a specified timeframe.

The scheme offers two separate categories of paid study leave: Category A (*up to one scholastic year*) and Category B (*short-term*). Paid Study Leave (Category A) commonly referred to as '*Sabbatical*' applies to both the State and Non-State sectors. The Paid Study Leave (Category B) is only offered to Educators in public office.

This manual is intended to guide applicants for Paid Study Leave (Category A) as well as the officers involved in its proper administration. In this connection, applicants and administrators of the scheme are to follow closely the instructions and procedures carried in this document.

2. PROCEDURE FOR ONE-TIME PAID STUDY LEAVE (CATEGORY A) OF UP TO ONE (1) SCHOLASTIC YEAR

2.1 Applicability

- (i) One-time Paid Study Leave (Category A) of up to one (1) Scholastic Year is applicable to both State and non-State employees, who **by the closing date** (*see page 10*), satisfy the following conditions:
- a. hold a grade in the Educational Class or a position represented in the standing Agreement between the Government of Malta and the Malta Union of Teachers; OR

hold a position on an **indefinite** contract basis, designated ‘*Officer in Scale*’, in a Teaching, Kindergarten or Learning Support position, (*excluding positions on a definite basis in a Supply Category*); AND
 - b. have at least **ten (10) years of actual service** within the Educational Class in a licensed School within the State and Non-State sectors, provided that, periods spent on unpaid leave will not be considered as active service; AND
 - c. are in possession of a permanent or temporary teaching warrant [*not applicable to Kindergarten Assistants and Learning Support Assistants*]; AND
 - d. have not previously benefitted from this one-time Paid Study Leave (Category A) of up to one (1) scholastic year; and **in the case of Public Officers**; have not previously benefitted more than twice from short Paid Study Leave (*Category B*) each having a duration not exceeding thirty 30 days, in connection with courses funded by any EU Programme directly related to their professional remit and/or educational projects included in the School Development Plan. AND
 - e. Are **not** in receipt of any other scholarship.
- (ii) Applicants will be considered as eligible if they commit themselves to dedicate the Paid Study Leave (Category A) entirely for studies which:
- a. are directly related to the Framework for the Education Strategy for Malta 2014-2024; or
 - b. are directly related to the National Curriculum Framework for All (2012); or
 - c. are directly related to education policy documents; or
 - d. are directly related to priority areas indicated by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation from time to time as specified in Annex 1 of this document; or
 - e. are directly related to research areas indicated by this Ministry (*see Annex 1*); or
 - f. lead to accreditation at MQF Level **5** or higher related to education in general.
 - g. are **not** a requisite for promotional purposes within the same grading structure.

Due consideration will be given to applicants opting for a course on a full-time basis.

2.2 Submitting an application for Paid Study Leave (Category A)

The Paid Study Leave (Category A) of up to one (1) Scholastic Year involves a selection process for which adequate preparation is required. A call for applications is issued by the Ministry responsible for Education in this regard. Officers wishing to avail themselves of the **one-time** Paid Study Leave (Category A) will be required to apply **online** on the respective eForm (*see Annex 2*) **by the closing date** indicated in the call for applications.

- (i) Applications for Paid Study Leave (Category A) together with all supporting documents, must reach the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board by the established deadline as stipulated by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation. It will not be possible to submit an application after the closing date has expired.
- (ii) Candidates are required to have applied in advance for the relevant course of study with the respective educational institution and have obtained documented proof of unconditional acceptance to the intended course of study. Official proof of acceptance is to be presented with the application, by not later than the closing date of the relative call for applications.
- (iii) **All** the sections of the online Electronic application Form (*eForm*) must be completed.
- (iv) Applicants must sign-off the declaration at the end of the eform, to submit their application successfully.
- (v) Incomplete application forms **shall not be considered**. (*N.B. Applicants utilising the 'save as draft' function of the online application form, must ensure that they submit, by the closing date, their saved draft*).

Candidates pursuing studies at MQF Level 8.

Applicants **not having classroom duties** and are reading for an MQF Level 8 qualification may opt to apply to have the one scholastic year Paid Study Leave (Category A) spread over a maximum period of four (4) calendar years provided the total amount of leave requested does not exceed one (1) scholastic year in aggregate.

Such applicants are to indicate their preference under **Section C** of the online application form. The preference only shows up when the number “8” is keyed in the MQF level text box.

Applicants who express their option to spread the Paid Study Leave over a maximum period of four (4) calendar years are to upload an indicative timetable as supporting documentation.

The indicative timetable is to be agreed with the authorities of the school or educational Institution concerned. It must provide the Board a close indication as to how the Paid Study Leave (Category A), if granted, would be expected to be spread over the four-year period. The timetable is to be signed by applicant and uploaded on the eform.

If paid study leave is awarded, a more detailed timetable signed by the second level supervisor showing the periods of leave being utilised is required.

Before submitting their electronic application form for Paid Study Leave (*Category A*), applicants are reminded to prepare scanned copies of all of the below documents in pdf format for upload by the closing date.

I. **Curriculum Vitae** – this should be in Europass format and recently updated; Scanned copies of certificates and/or documentation attesting for academic achievements and professional development referred to in the C.V. are to be uploaded with the application.

II. **Motivational Statement** – of not more than **400 words**.

The Motivational statement expresses the vision of the applicant and how the qualification being pursued should add value to one's own career, contribute to the education sector, in particular, the applicant's school community.

III. **Write-Up on the Relevance of studies** - a written in-depth explanation of not more than **600 words** clearly indicating how the course of study is directly related to the items listed under section 2.1 (ii) a. to (ii) e. of this manual. *This information is to be provided on a separate sheet to be signed by applicant and uploaded with the application form.*

IV. **Permanent or Temporary Warrant to practice the Teaching Profession** - a scanned copy of the warrant is to be attached [*not applicable to Kindergarten and Learning Support Educators*].

Service and Leave Record - Applicants from the Public Service are to produce a recent Service and Leaves Record (GP 47). Applicants of Independent or Church schools are to produce an updated and complete official service record, duly signed by the Head of School / Institution, covering all applicable years of service claimed in the CV.

The service record must clearly show the grade and date of commencement of employment, subsequent grade progression, and current grade. The leave record is to list any previous paid and unpaid leave granted to the applicant during the last three years.

V. A detailed official **Programme of Studies** (*including a Course Description and Course Content as published by the University or Higher Education Institution*)

VI. **Unconditional Acceptance letter from an approved University / Higher Education Institution.**

VII. **Two References** (*see Annex 5*) from the referees indicated in Section F of the application eform. See section 2.3 below

Signed references in **pdf format** are **to be submitted by the referees by email** to pdstudyleave.meyr@gov.mt **prior to the closing date** of the call for applications.

Reference Forms delivered by the deadline of the call for applications will be acknowledged.

Management reserves the right to request specific documents, not listed above, as supporting evidence.

2.3 Reference Form

Applicants need to ensure that they request references in good time **ahead of the closing date** of the call for applications, such that referees can prepare a reference within the established timeframe. The [Reference Form](#) is available for download through the link embedded in the eform application.

The referees should ideally include the officer's current Line Manager (Head of School) and the officer's current Second-level Supervisor (Head of College/ Director), or any previous or most recent Second-level Supervisor or Line Manager. The names and details of the referees are to be inserted in Section F of the application eform. **Note:** If the referees are the same as listed in section D and E the details in Section F may be automatically filled in by pressing the appropriate tick-box in Section F.

The reference is a confidential document and should be shared only with the members directly involved in the evaluation of applications. In requesting a reference applicant gives permission to referees to provide information and comments concerning the applicant.

Referees are to clearly state the length of time and in which capacity (*referee's role*) they have known applicant. **Referees are required** to focus and comment objectively under each of the aspects listed in the reference form, but they may also comment on other qualities relevant to the studies the applicant is seeking to pursue.

The referee being the current line manager / Head of School is to declare whether he/she supports the application by undertaking to release applicant if the application is successful and paid study leave is offered.

Reference Forms are to be submitted in the English language.

2.4 Submission of Unconditional Letter of Acceptance

ALL APPLICANTS shall submit one **Unconditional Letter of Acceptance (ULA)** in writing from the preferred University or Higher Education (HE) institution to the course listed on the Application Form, **by not later than the closing date and time (CET) for receipt of applications.**

Many higher education institutions have strict admission deadlines for their courses of study. In this regard, prospective applicants for Paid Study Leave (Category A) **must** secure admission from the HE institution to the preferred course, in advance of the closing date of the call for application for the Paid Study Leave (Category A).

An **Unconditional Letter of Acceptance (ULA)** is to include the following details:

- A clear statement by the University or Higher Education Institution showing applicant's **unconditional** acceptance to the course of studies listed on the Application Form.
- The **Commencement Date** of studies.
- The **End Date** of studies.
- Modality** of course of study (*that is whether it is part-time or full-time studies, by distance learning or on campus*); and
- MQF level** of the programme of studies undertaken

Applicants shall note that the information provided on the official Unconditional Letter of Acceptance would be incorporated in the Form of Understanding and the deed of Hypothecation to be signed, at a later stage by successful candidates awarded the Paid Study Leave (Category A).

It is the duty of the applicant to ensure that the chosen University or Higher Education Institution is in a position to issue such an Unconditional Letter of Acceptance.

2.5 Endorsement

Applications for Paid Study Leave (Category A) shall be endorsed by the applicant's Line Manager and the Second Level Supervisor (*Head or higher authority of the respective School, College or Educational Institution as applicable*). Such endorsements are to be provided on the Reference Form.

In the case of the non-state sector, it is up to the management of the individual school or education entity to consider whether to consent to extend the opportunity of paid study leave to their employees among their teaching grades. It is to be borne in mind that educators who are awarded paid study leave will not be available for classroom duties during their absence from school. In this connection, it is to be pointed out that in endorsing applications of their staff they would be signifying their willingness to release, during the applicable scholastic year, an applicant, who after being successful in the evaluation, is made an offer for paid study leave by this Ministry.

Prospective applicants are advised to first discuss their plans with their supervisors to ensure that they correspond with the aims of the school and that their study commitments can be accommodated within operational requirements.

2.6 Evaluation of Applications

Applications for Paid Study Leave (Category A) of up to one (1) Scholastic Year shall be evaluated by a Paid Study Leave Scheme Board appointed by the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry responsible for Education.

2.7 Evaluation Process

The role of the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board is to evaluate applications and determine the eligibility and ranking order of candidates according to pre-established criteria (*see paragraph 2.8*).

Applicants may be called for an interview during which they may be required to make a presentation concerning their intended studies or research.

When interviews are held, it is the responsibility of applicants to make sure to be available for the interview on the date and time communicated to them. Applicants who do not turn up for the interview without proper prior notification will be considered as no longer interested.

An alternative date and time for an interview may be given by the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board at its discretion, depending on the circumstances which may have impeded the applicant to attend on the appointed interview date.

2.8 Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications shall be evaluated by the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board to determine the ranking of applicants based on the following evaluation criteria:

Maximum Mark **400** (100%)
Pass Mark **200** (50%).

Criterion	Marks	(Weightings in %)
1. Relevance of Studies	160	(40%)
2. Recommendations	20	(5%)
3. Motivational Statement	100	(25%)
4. Track Record	80	(20%)
5. Service Record	40	(10%)

Eligible applicants are considered to have passed if they obtain a pass mark (*that is 50% of the overall allotted marks*).

N.B. Obtaining a pass mark **does not automatically guarantee** that Paid Study Leave (Category A) has been awarded.

The decision of the Board is final.

2.9 Ranking

The ranking order of all eligible applicants will be exhibited on the Notice Board at the One-Stop Shop of the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation. Candidates will be notified of the publication of the ranking. Depending on the allocated funds available for the particular year, candidates may be awarded Paid Study Leave (Category A) in accordance with their ranking. The allocated funds may vary from one year to the next.

The names of successful applicants will be published on the noticeboard of the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation. In applying for Paid Study Leave (Category A) under this scheme, the Applicant gives consent for such publication.

2.10 Provisional Offer

The top ranked applicants as established in the ranking would be issued with a provisional offer for Paid Study Leave (Category A) in relation to the available funds. Candidates who are notified in this manner would be required to confirm their acceptance of the offer in accordance with the provisions of the scheme. **Successful candidates** are to signify acceptance of the offer in writing **within five working days** of receipt of the provisional notice together with the Form of Undertaking, Rules governing the Award of Scholarship and the form for preparation of the General Hypothec duly signed and any other related document/s as required). Candidates of independent / Church schools are to attach a copy of their last salary statement.

Failure by the successful candidate to signify acceptance of the offer by the prescribed date, would imply that the Paid Study Leave (Category A) would be offered to others according to their respective ranking.

The applicable Undertaking Form and the Rules for the Award of Scholarships (*Annexes 5 or 6 and 7*) are to be countersigned as follows:

- (i) in the case of *Education Grades* in the Public Service) - by the representative of the Government of the Republic of Malta (normally the Director responsible for Finance within MEYR
- (ii) in the case of *Education Grades* in the Non-state sector - by a witness - the Head of School or Head of the respective educational institution may act as witness.

The above documentation is in accordance with the government standard procedures applicable for paid study leave.¹

2.11 Award Letter (Approval)

The final decision on the award of the Paid Study Leave (Category A) will be communicated in writing to the successful applicants through the official Award Letter. The Award Letter provides formal confirmation to successful applicants that the award of Paid Study Leave (Category A) is finally approved. The Award Letter would be issued only after the Undertaking Form, the Rules governing the award of Scholarship and the formalities concerning the General Hypothec would have been concluded with the office of the Chief Notary to Government.

Candidates are advised that the formalities at this stage of the process involve the signing of legally binding documents.

Provisional Offers and Award Letters to successful candidates are '*inter alia*' issued with the condition that the beneficiary of Paid Study Leave (*Category A*) shall not simultaneously accept a scholarship from another source.

No liability by the Ministry will be accepted for any travel arrangements made prior to the completion of the above award procedure.

Beneficiaries are advised that Deeds of Hypothecation would remain binding unless a formal cancellation procedure by the office of the Notary to Government is carried out. Such deeds are not cancelled automatically upon the expiry of the period of service obligation. In this regard, beneficiaries are to contact the desk-officer on expiry of their service obligation for further guidance. A cancellation of a Deed of Hypothecation may be drawn up only after it is ascertained that beneficiaries would have honoured all their contracted obligations.

¹ vide section 4 of the Sponsorships and Study Leave Manual (2018) published by the Institute for the Public Services, <https://publicservice.gov.mt/en/institute/Documents/SponsorshipsandStudyLeaveManual.pdf>

2.12 Reporting requirements

Within one (1) month of successful completion of their course of studies (in the case of courses undertaken at **MQF level 6 or higher**), beneficiaries of Paid Study Leave (Category A) are to present to the **Institute for Education (MEYR)** a hard bound copy of the final version of the dissertation / thesis.

The Institute for Education will, for this purpose, be notified of beneficiaries of Paid Study Leave (Category A).

If the officer has not yet completed the course at the end of the Paid Study Leave, the officer is to submit a report as per template at Annex 8, within one (1) month to the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board, keeping the Second Level Supervisor and the Line Manager in copy. The desired format for the report is outlined in the Guidelines for Report Writing at *page 39*.

Note: The beneficiary is to advise or send a copy of his report to any interested MEYR departments and /or non-State entity that need to be informed of the report.

2.13 Application Forms

The appropriate electronic Application Form is accessible from the following web-link: [Application Form](#).

Applications and accompanying scanned documents shall **only** be received through the eform.

An acknowledgement for receipt is issued in respect of applications received by the closing date.

Incomplete applications will be rejected.

2.14 Closing Date

The closing date for receipt of complete applications together with all the supporting documents is as laid down in the relevant circular issued by the Ministry for Education announcing the call for applications for Scholastic year 2024/25. The **closing date** of the call for applications is **13:00 (CET) of Wednesday, 27th MARCH 2024**.

No Late applications are allowed.

3. GENERAL CONDITIONS AND GUIDELINES

3.1 Applicants benefiting from a Scholarship

Applicants holding an ongoing scholarship are **not eligible** for Paid Study Leave (Category A). In this regard, when submitting their application for Paid Study Leave:

- (i) Applicants must notify the official responsible for the Paid Study Leave Scheme of any ongoing scholarship awarded to them from other sources.
- (ii) Applicants are also required to inform the official responsible for the Paid Study Leave Scheme of any pending applications or offers of a scholarship.

Applicants holding an ongoing scholarship **shall not** have the option to pay back the scholarship in order to benefit from Paid Study Leave (Category A).

Furthermore, it is to be clarified that throughout the duration of the Paid Study Leave (Category A) beneficiaries must not benefit from another scholarship.

3.2 Priority Areas of Study and Research Areas (Category A)

The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation identified specific Priority Areas of Study and Research Areas that the Paid Study Leave Scheme considers because there is a need for training to develop skills and specialisation in sectors of critical importance to education.

During the evaluation of applications due consideration would be given to applications submitted in respect of courses of study directly related to any Priority Areas of Study and Research as listed under Annex 1.

The Paid Study Leave Scheme Board may from time to time receive further recommendations from the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation with regards to the list of Priority Areas of Study and Research according to important or emerging national needs in education. Priority Areas of Study and Research are considered in the selection criteria to be used by the Paid Study Leave Scheme Board.

3.3 Term of Paid Study Leave (Category A)

Awarded Paid Study Leave (Category A) shall be utilised during the scholastic year in respect of which the call for applications is made. Any unutilised paid study leave under this category will not accrue.

However, applicants who do not have classroom teaching duties and who are pursuing research studies leading to a Ph. D. may opt to spread the Paid Study Leave (Category A) over a four-year period provided the total amount of study leave requested does not exceed one (1) scholastic year in aggregate. In this case, the paid study leave must be taken in blocks not less than one month in duration. Such leave must be planned in advance with the Head of School to ensure that the applicant's study commitments can be accommodated within operational requirements. (*please refer to para 2.2*). The desk-officer is to be informed wherever changes arise.

Awarded Paid Study Leave (Category A) shall be tenable in respect of courses of studies at any local or international Higher Education Institution or University for a specific programme of study or research that are directly related to education as specified in the eligibility criteria.

Paid Study Leave (Category A) cannot be postponed or delayed.

The total duration of Paid Study Leave (Category A) shall not exceed the one scholastic year limit.

3.4 On expiry of Paid Study Leave

At the end of any Paid Study Leave beneficiaries are expected to resume duties. In this connection, an official confirmation is required from the relevant second level supervisor (*eg. Director / Asst Director/ Head of School*) that the officer has resumed his or her duties following paid study leave. This confirmation is to be sent to the Paid Study Leave desk-officer immediately the employee resumes duty.

Beneficiaries will need to provide documentary proof of enrolment at the University or Higher Education Institution and satisfactory progress.

In the case where the duration of the course of studies extends beyond the period of paid study leave, the beneficiaries are to provide supporting documentary evidence to show that they have fully honoured their study commitments during the period of paid study leave. Furthermore, they are to present a report on the studies undertaken during the period (*see section 2.12 for further details*).

3.5 On completion of the course of studies

Beneficiaries are to notify the relevant second level supervisor and the Paid Study Leave desk-officer of the date of successful completion of the course of studies relating to their paid study leave. They shall also state the date when they shall be resuming duties.

Furthermore, at the end of their studies, beneficiaries are to present documentary evidence from the University or Higher Education Institution of the successful completion of the course of studies. (*Official transcript or an original letter or certificate from the University bearing original certification or certification stamp is acceptable*).

Proof of successful completion of studies is to be forwarded to the officer responsible for Paid Study Leave by not later than two (2) months from the completion of the course for which the paid study leave would have been granted and availed.

Please refer to paragraph 2.12 for reporting requirements.

3.6 Extensions

Under no circumstance may Paid Study Leave (Category A) be extended further than the established one scholastic year limit.

The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation may consider, on a 'case by case' basis, requests for further leave for completion of studies beyond the expiry of Paid Study Leave (Category A), only from beneficiaries in the Public Service. Such requests would invariably need to be endorsed by the respective Director / Head responsible for the beneficiary, who shall be required to assess the potential impact of the beneficiary's continued absence on service delivery. Additional periods of leave will be considered as **unpaid leave**, subject to satisfactory progress having been made by the beneficiary in the course of studies.

Documentary evidence from the University or Higher Education Institution on the progress registered in the course of studies, must be produced.

Applicants are required to apply at least three (3) months in advance to allow management to plan for a substitute, if necessary.

Where additional leave is approved, beneficiaries would still be bound by the service obligation attached to the Paid Study Leave (Category A). In this regard, such beneficiaries are to serve their obligation with effect from the date when they report back to work to resume their regular duties.

3.7 Withdrawal

Applicants are advised that they may withdraw a submitted application by sending a written statement addressed to the Paid Study Leave Scheme Desk-Officer (*see details in para 3.12, below*). Special circumstances shall be considered on their own merits. Such requests are to be invariably supported by documented proof.

However, except for justified reasons beyond their control, beneficiaries shall not relinquish the Paid Study Leave (Category A) after having formally accepted the offer and after having entered into a legally binding formal act of hypothecation. The ensuing legal costs that may arise to reverse such legal formalities are transferable to the beneficiary.

Beneficiaries are advised that the applicable legal guarantees for honouring the obligations associated with the granting of Paid Study Leave (Category A) would still remain in force unless the applicable deed of hypothecation is formally rescinded. Beneficiaries would not be able to re-apply for Paid Study Leave (Category A) for the same purpose after relinquishing it.

Beneficiaries are to note that should they be constrained to relinquish Paid Study Leave (Category A) after having been granted the award, they may not retain, for that particular scholastic year, the right to keep their '*posting*' in the same school in which they were initially posted at the time of submitting their application for Paid Study Leave (Category A).

3.8 Termination of Paid Study Leave prior to completion of studies.

Beneficiaries of Paid Study Leave (Category A) who for any reason discontinue their studies shall immediately inform the Desk Officer, Paid Study Leave Scheme in writing.

The MEYR shall within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice terminate the Paid Study Leave if:

- the beneficiary's progress is deemed unsatisfactory by the University or Higher Education Institution;
- the beneficiary discontinues the Studies; and/or
- the beneficiary is in breach of the conditions attached to the award of Paid Study Leave (Category A) and does not remedy the breach within thirty (30) days of receipt of written notice requiring him/her to do so.
- at any point after the grant of Paid Study Leave (Category A) the beneficiary accepts or retains another scholarship in breach of the conditions of the Paid Study Leave (Category A) scheme.

Beneficiaries who have their Paid Study Leave terminated in accordance with the above conditions will be required to resume duties and refund the entire amount of salaries received during the utilised Paid Study Leave (Category A).

Beneficiaries who cannot pursue their studies further due to unforeseen health situations or similar exceptional circumstances shall be treated in terms of paragraph 12 and 13 of the Rules governing the award of Scholarships.

In such situations, the beneficiary must provide justifiable explanation as to why the course was not completed or why the beneficiary failed to obtain the qualification.

Documented evidence, medical certificates and testimonials must accompany each claim.

The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation, in such circumstances reserves the right to demand a reimbursement of all or part of the salaries disbursed. However, the Ministry may not waive the entire amount of refund of salaries disbursed.

3.9 General Conditions

The scheme does not cover tuition fees and/or bench fees, nor does it give the beneficiary the right for any other payments or allowances.

Should any travel be required, it is the beneficiary's responsibility to make his/her own travel arrangements including any applicable Visa approvals once the above formalities have been endorsed.

Furthermore, beneficiaries are reminded not to proceed abroad unless covered by a travel insurance and where applicable the European Health Insurance Card.

Paid Study Leave may be awarded only in relation to the course of studies stipulated in the Application Form. **A beneficiary shall not complete a different course or pursue a higher qualification other than that for which paid study leave is awarded.**

Applicants are to ensure that all the information submitted in the application form is correct. Applicants who are found to have obtained an unfair advantage by withholding or giving false information shall be immediately disqualified and where Paid Study Leave (Category A or B) may have already been awarded, the beneficiary will be asked to reimburse the entire salary paid during the period of study leave utilized. The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation reserves the right to take any other action deemed appropriate in such circumstances.

The Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation may make information concerning the award of Paid Study Leave available to public authorities for accountability purposes.

3.10 Choice of University or Higher Education Institution

Applicants are, expected to identify on the electronic Application Form, a recognised University or Higher Education Institution that they consider most appropriate for pursuing their academic studies or professional development relevant to their employment. All required details concerning the course of study are to be entered in Section B of the eform.

Prospective applicants for Paid Study Leave (Category A) are advised to take careful note of the eligibility criteria in identifying the course of study.

Applicants who intend to follow courses of study leading to qualifications obtained from foreign Universities or Higher Education Institutions are to ensure that the selected institution is listed on the website of the MQRIC as Approved Institutions (<http://www.ncfhe.org.mt>). However, they are to ensure that the course undertaken is listed as one of the regular courses of the University.

On the other hand, where the University or Higher Education Institution is not listed on the website of the (MQRIC) within the National Council for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE)², it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to request an evaluation report about comparability of qualifications issued by the Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre.

² For further information about the National Qualification Framework, contact the National Council for Further and Higher Education.

The **MQRIC** may be contacted as follows:

Malta Qualifications Recognition Information Centre (MQRIC)
National Council for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE)
Bice Mizzi Vassallo School,
Alamein Road ,
Pembroke PBK 1776
Tel. No.: (+356) 27540051 / 21801890 / 27540026 / 21801411
e-mail: ncfhe@gov.mt
www.ncfhe.gov.mt

3.11 Remuneration during Paid Study Leave

Beneficiaries of Paid Study Leave shall continue to be paid the basic salary '*pro rata*', (*including Bonus / Income Supplement*) due in relation to the employee's current grade or position (*less Social Security and income tax deductions*) for the duration of the paid study leave. Beneficiaries are to notify the desk officer responsible for the Paid Study Leave scheme of any changes in circumstances.

Any allowances received by the beneficiary, such as an *All-inclusive Allowance*, a *Qualification Allowance* or other allowance will be withheld for the duration of Paid Study Leave.

3.12 Further Information

For further enquiries, please contact:

Desk-Officer
Paid Study Leave Scheme
Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation
Room 209,
Great Siege Road,
Floriana VLT2000,
Malta.
Tel. No.: (+356) 2598 2261

E-mail: pdstudyleave.meyr@gov.mt

Website: <https://education.gov.mt>

4. GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Academic Record: shall mean an official document issued by a Higher Education Institution [HEI] (including a University). The document shall show the marks / grades obtained by the applicant and where it is the norm, the final grade / classification.

Allowances: refers to the payment of a Qualification Allowance, an All-Inclusive Allowance, or any other allowance. Where paid study leave has been granted to an applicant under this scheme, the payment of allowances is withheld for the duration of the Paid Study Leave.

Applicant: shall mean a person who applies for Paid Study Leave under this scheme.

Beneficiary: shall mean a person who is granted Paid Study Leave under this Scheme.

Deed of Hypothecation: shall mean a legally binding document to be signed by the beneficiary of Paid Study Leave and the official representing the Government of Malta and entered in the acts of the Office of the Chief Notary to Government.

Distance Learning Programmes: – a programme of study that allows students to learn while in a different location to the course provider, often studying from home and link with the HEI/ University via computer. The delivery method of distance or ‘online’ learning programs varies. In the case of **Full-time distance learning programmes** (with *blended learning* where students attend lectures in addition to completing work online), applicants would be required to establish with the University /HEI that part of the course programme which is on campus and that which is by distance learning.

Commencement Date: of the Course of Studies shall mean the date as specified in the Unconditional Letter of Acceptance being the start date of the course and on which paid study leave commences.

Completion Date: of the Course of Studies shall mean the date when the Studies are completed and the final result is published. (*documentary evidence of successful course completion is to be presented*)

Course duration: is established by the Higher Education Institution or University as applicable.

Doctoral or doctorate Programme: is the highest level of academic degree awarded by accredited Universities or Higher Education Institution, and refers to a research-related programme of higher education that is referenced at MQF Level 8 on the academic level.

End Date: shall mean the date as specified on the acceptance letter or another suitable academic record issued by the Higher Education Institution or University.

Full-time studies: shall mean studying full time on-campus at the Higher Education Institution (including a University).

Higher Education Institution (HEI): (including a University) shall mean an entity providing higher education and recognized by the competent national authority of a participating country as belonging to its system of higher education and is a recognised body with Degree awarding powers.

Joint Degree: shall mean a single degree issued by at least two HEIs (including Universities) offering an integrated programme and recognized officially in the countries where the degree-awarding institutions are located. For the purpose of these Regulations, when an applicant applies for a Joint Degree, a leading HEI (or University) has to be identified.

Line Manager: is to be understood as the officer whom the applicant is directly answerable to, in a position not lower than that of Head of School (Scale 5) or Assistant Director (Scale 5).

Ministry: refers to the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation

Motivational Statement: Motivational statement is a personal statement primarily about the relationship between the studies undertaken by applicants, their career goals, and their personal development.

MQF (Malta Qualification Framework): refers to the referencing tool of Malta that helps to describe and compare both national and foreign qualifications to promote quality, transparency, and mobility of qualifications in all types of education. It is mainly referenced to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) as well as to other non-European qualifications frameworks.

MQF Level Qualification: any qualification referenced at the applicable Level on National Qualifications Framework by the National Commission for Further and Higher Education (NCFHE).

On-campus: shall mean attending physically at the HEI (including a University), excluding learning or studying from any other place that is not designated as being part of the campus of HEI (or University).

Paid Study Leave Scheme Board: shall mean a Board appointed by the Permanent Secretary responsible for Education, entrusted with the evaluation and ranking of applicants for the purpose of the awarding of Paid Study Leave

Paid Study Leave: refers to final approval for the award of special leave with pay, which in the case of Category A follows an evaluation and ranking process, to enable a beneficiary to pursue studies at a Higher Education Institution including a university. At the end of the Paid Study Leave, the applicant is to submit documentary proof that beneficiary has successfully completed the programme of studies for which the beneficiary has been awarded paid study leave.

Scholastic year: refers to a Scholastic year in Malta which is understood to be a year starting from the third week of September and ending at the end of August of the following year.

Second Level Supervisor: refers to the officer to whom the applicant's Line Manager is directly answerable to, in a position not lower than that of Head of College Network or Director (Scale 4).

Studies: shall mean all work required to be undertaken and completed by the Beneficiary to the satisfaction of the HEI (including University) in which the Beneficiary is registered. The studies shall be the same originally applied for in the Application Form, and in respect of which paid study leave has been awarded under this scheme.

Transcript: shall have the same meaning as Academic Record.

Tuition and related Fee(s): shall refer to enrolment, administration, registration, bench fees and / or examination fees charged by a HEI (including a University) so that the Applicant follows an eligible course of studies.

Tuition and related fees are NOT covered under this scheme and cannot be claimed by the Beneficiary.

Unconditional Letter of Acceptance (ULA): shall mean a letter issued to the Applicant by the Registrar (or a delegated high authority) of the Higher Education Institution HEI (including a University)

Annex 1 - PRIORITY AREAS OF STUDY and RESEARCH

Early Years

Lifelong Learning

Validation for Informal Learning

Concept of Vocational Education Training

Post-Secondary and Higher Education System

Early School Leavers

Concept of Learners with Different Learning Styles

Teaching Ethics

Research Studies in Teaching and Learning

Education Technology

Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Educational Policy Writing

Educational Leadership

Continuous Professional Development

Concept of Mentoring Process

Induction and Mentoring

Educators' Well-Being

Students' Well-Being

Students' Support Services

Youth and Community Studies

Internationalisation of Education – Education across the borders

Neuroscience and Brain-based Learning

Prevention of Radicalisation in Education

Quality Assurance in Education

Work-based Learning and Internship in Education

Annex 2 APPLICATION FORM (online only)

gov.mt

Sign In EN | MT

Sign in with your e-ID Account*

ID Number [\(view sample\)](#)

Password

Sign In

[Sign-in and change my password](#)

*If you don't have an e-ID account, kindly contact us during office hours on **2590 4300**.

[Forgot your password?](#)
[Help on how to start using e-ID](#)



e-form

Paid Study Leave (Category A) Sabbatical

PAID STUDY LEAVE (CATEGORY A) of up to one (1) Scholastic Year for Grades in the Education Category in State, Church and Non-State Schools.

All Sections in this Application are to be filled in.

Scholastic Year throughout this Application, is understood to be a year starting from the third week of September and ending at the end of August of the following year.

Once this Application is Completed and Submitted, an acknowledgement email will be sent.

Applicants must Submit this Application and upload all the required Documents by not later than Friday 11 October 2021.

A. Applicant Details

Date of Application

Please indicate which School category you are applying from.

State School

Church School

Independent School

Name

Surname

Date of Birth

ID Card Number

Contact Number/s

Email Address

House Number

House Name

Street Name

Locality

Post Code

Present Grade / Position

College / School / Unit

Year Group / Subject Taught

Primary

Secondary

Other

B. Course Details



Course Title Area of Study

Awarding Body Course Duration (in months)



MQF Level

Mode

On Campus By Distance Full-time Part-time

Course Start Date  Course End Date 

C. Paid Study Leave Requested Details

Commencement Date  Paid Study Leave End Date  Duration (in months)

Applicant pursuing a Course at MQF Level 8 Yes No

If Paid Study Leave is awarded a detailed timetable endorsed by the School authorities will be provided

I request to avail myself of Paid Study Leave Up To one Full Scholastic Year.

I request to avail myself of the one-year Paid Study Leave spread over a maximum period of four years in accordance with the following description: (NB. Applicable in the case of applicants who do not have Classroom duties)

This section only shows up if Course is at MQF Level 8.

D. Head of School / Line Manager Details

Name	Surname
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Designation / Position	Head Email Address
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
School Name	Contact Number
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

E. Second Level Supervisor / Head of College Network Details

Name	Surname
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Designation / Position	Supervisor Email Address
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
College Name	Contact Number
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

F. Referee Details

Please include the details of two Referees - these must include:

(a) Your current Line Manager (eg. Head of School) AND/OR

(b) Your Second Level Supervisor OR any previous Second Level Supervisor or Line Manager (eg. Director, Rector / Head of College Network or an equivalent level of authority of the School)

Two Reference Forms are to be Submitted by the Referees listed in this Section to pdstudyleave.meyr@gov.mt prior to the closing date.

It shall be the Applicants' responsibility to ensure that the Reference Forms are Submitted on time by the Closing Date of the Application.

[CLICK HERE to download the Reference Form](#)

Referee 1: Name

Referee 1: Surname

Referee 1: Designation / Position

Referee 1: Email Address

Referee 1: Contact Number

Same Details as Head of School / Line Manager

Referee 2: Name

Referee 2: Surname

Referee 2: Designation / Position

Referee 2: Email Address

Referee 2: Contact Number

Same Details as Second Level Supervisor / Head of College Network

G. Documentation

[CLICK HERE](#) to view the required Documentation List

Click here to attach a file

Please use a ZIP folder to attach multiple files (max 15 MB) Files must be of type PDF, DOC, DOCX, ZIP, JPG, JPEG, PNG.

H. Declaration

1. I acknowledge that I read and understood the conditions tied to the scheme as mentioned in the Procedures and Guidelines for Paid Study Leave for Education Class Employees manual together with related documents;
2. I declare that the information and statements provided by me in connection with this application are true and complete;
3. I declare that I would be willing to accept an offer of paid study leave from the Ministry for Education according to the terms and conditions of the scheme and, if granted, I shall use the Paid Study Leave (Category A - Sabbatical) for the sole purpose of pursuing the studies stated in my application;
4. I give my consent to the stated referee(s) to provide confidential reference forms in my regard in connection with this application. (I confirm that I have taken steps to notify the referees mentioned in this application to refer the indicated reference form by the established closing date for submission of applications);
5. I consent to the publication of my name on the ranking order for Paid Study Leave (Category A- Sabbatical);
6. I understand that the Ministry for Education reserves the right to withdraw at any time the Paid Study Leave granted to me, if such information results to be false or if I breach the regulations;
7. I understand that the successful completion of courses supported through this scheme does not give me an automatic right for promotion and/or for a qualification allowance;
8. I agree to abide with the rules and procedures as laid down in the following documents: Procedures and Guidelines for Paid Study Leave for Education Class Employees, the Form of Undertaking including the applicable provisions laid down in the Rules Governing the Award of Scholarships in their entirety.

I Agree



SAVE AS DRAFT



SUBMIT

Documentation

[CLICK HERE to view the required Documentation List](#)

Click here to attach a file

Please use a ZIP folder to attach multiple files (max 15 MB). Files must be of type PDF, DOC, DOCX, ZIP, JPG, JPEG, PNG.



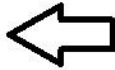
Please use a ZIP folder to attach multiple files (max 15 MB). Files must be of type PDF, DOC, DOCX, ZIP, JPG, JPEG, PNG.

Information needs to be submitted in accordance with regulations.

7. I understand that the successful completion of courses supported through this scheme does and/or for a qualification allowance.

8. I agree to abide with the rules and procedures as laid down in the following documents: Proc Education Class Employees, the Form of Undertaking including the applicable provisions laid Scholarships in their entirety.

I Agree



TICK BOX TO CONTINUE



TO SUBMIT APPLICATION PLEASE PRESS SUBMIT BUTTON ONLY ONCE AND WAIT FOR A RESPONSE.

Fig 1

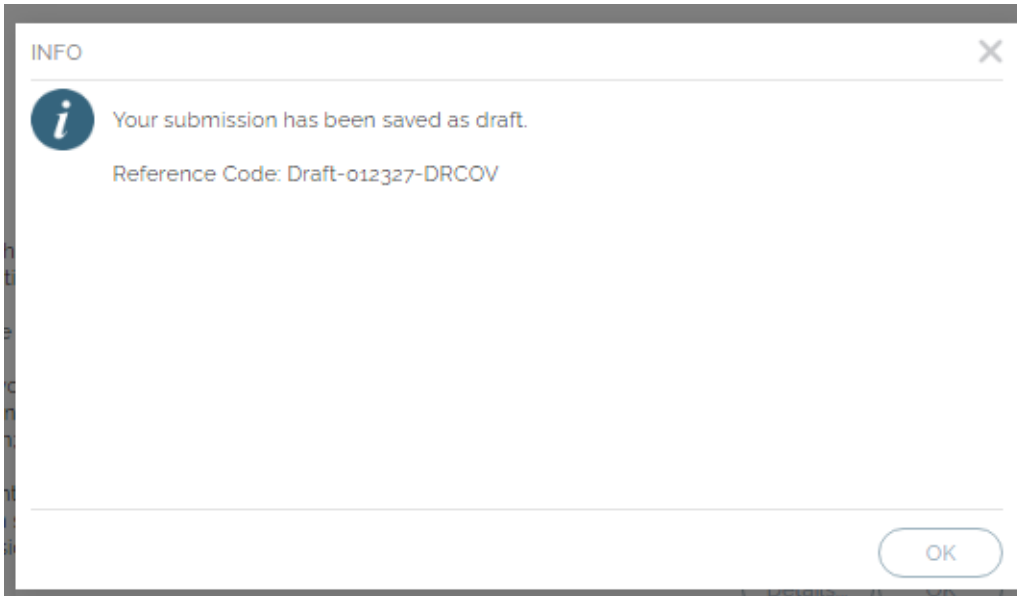


Fig. 2

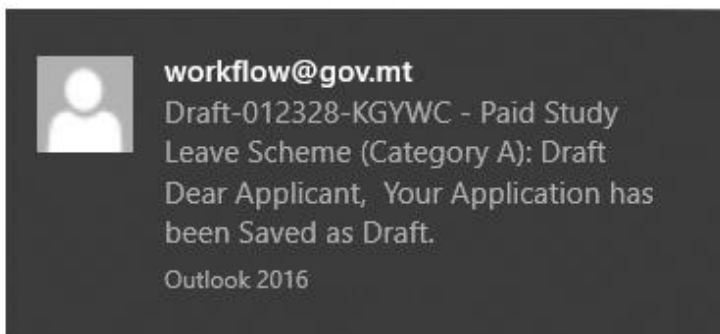


Fig.3

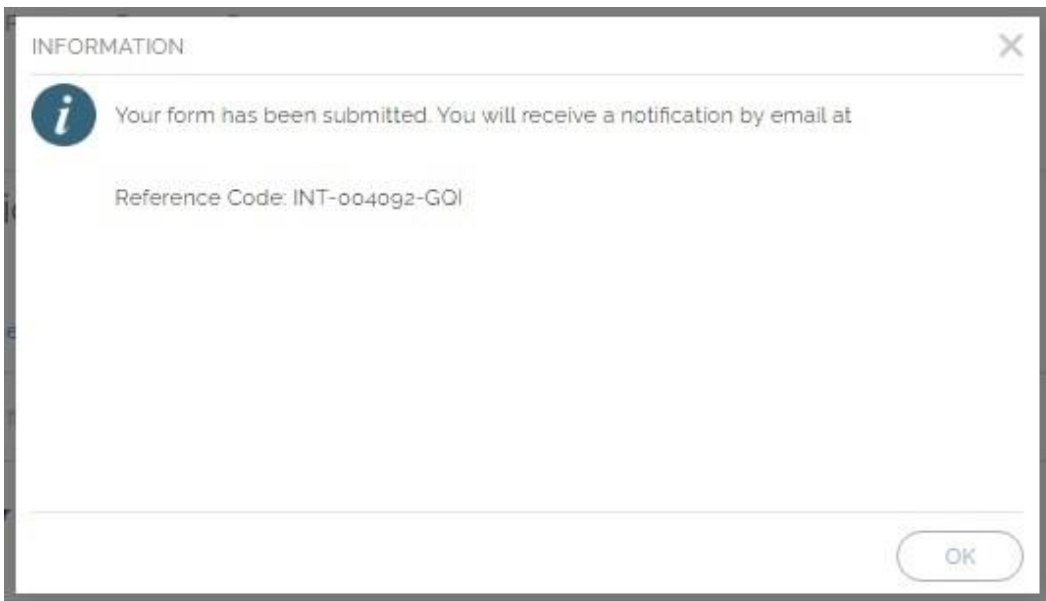


Fig. 4

Annex 3 Guidelines - filling of eform application and submission of documents

The below application guidelines are intended to help applicants understand the electronic features of the online application Form and to reduce the chances of errors. Applications for Paid study leave can only be received in electronic format. Applicants are therefore **not allowed** to send their application in hard copy paper format.

Filling the eform

The correct filling in of the application form and supporting documentation are important for a prospective applicant to be considered. In this regard, this guide to filling the application form and uploading of documents is being facilitated through an eform, which is to serve to help applicants easily avoid common pitfalls such as the omission or incorrect entry of details in the form, discrepancies in the details provided or failing to fill in all the required details in all the required fields. The form will alert applicant if for example an email address is not inserted or of documents are not uploaded. The form will fail to submit wherever, errors are detected. However, it shall be the applicant's final responsibility to ensure that an application has been submitted complete with all the required supporting documents.

Prior to filling the online application Form, make sure you understand all the information available about it. Please carefully read the eligibility conditions and the application procedures described in this Manual. Go through the Manual carefully. You will find most of the answers to your questions. Please familiarise yourself with the list of required information and supporting documents required to apply, and their desired format. The supporting documents can be submitted in electronic format only. Please ensure that you prepare in advance the scanned copy of all the requested documents. Make sure that the size of the documents do not exceed the permissible size restriction the eform can support, which collectively **must be less than 15 MB**.

Make sure you set aside sufficient time to fill in the online application as this needs to be carried out in one single go. Once you have all the information and documents in hand, you can begin the application procedure. Please be very careful while filling up the details. Please ensure that you read the procedure manual to include the correct information requested of you. Avoid giving too few or too much detail than is required.

If you are working on a laptop please ensure that you are plugged in while working.

Access the online Electronic Application (eform) through the following link:
<https://education.gov.mt/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/REFERENCE-FORM.pdf>
and log-in using your eID.

The eform application has eight different sections.

All fields are mandatory. Ensure that you fill in all the required details appropriately in all the fields. If the form fails to submit it is indicative that you have an error or errors which you would need to correct before you may proceed.

It is important that you download the Reference Form first thing and send it to your referees. Details of the referees are to be keyed in Section F. The reference form is to be sent separately by the referees and must not be uploaded on the eform.

Fill in all required personal details as appropriate.

Sections B includes options which shows up solely when the number 8 is inserted in the MQF level field and is solely intended for Ph.D candidates.

The eform includes a feature for uploading of supporting documents. In order to do so please proceed to page 5 and download the list of requested documents which will serve as a checklist. Make sure you have collected all documentation and have them scanned in pdf format. Make sure that copies are not blurred or unreadable. Please avoid taking photos with your mobile phone camera unless you have a pdf scanner for mobile application. If the size of all the scanned documents is 10 MB or larger, please use a compression tool and save them in .zip format. Documents that are 15 MB or larger will not be supported by the system and you will not be able to submit your application successfully unless you reduce them in size.

Press the arrows to move between the sections. Make sure you do not miss out on important details you need to provide. The eform will prompt you if you miss filling in the required details. Once you are done with the mandatory details ensure you make a thorough proof-check of the details you keyed in the form. You may review the sections by moving back and forth between pages prior to submission. NB. The eform has an option to save your work for review later on. An email notification will be sent when this function is applied (*see fig 2*)

Make sure you read the declaration properly and tick the Agree button before proceeding with submission.

Follow any instructions on the eform carefully before finally submitting. **Press on the submit button only once and wait for a response which will come up within fifteen seconds depending on internet speed connection. (N.B. Pressing the submit button repeatedly will generate multiple applications.)** You will be alerted on successful submission or otherwise (see fig. 4). A computer-generated e-mail will also be sent as an acknowledgement of the application. Please retain this acknowledgement.

Applicants are advised to be double sure while clicking on the final submit as no change of information will be possible after final submission. **Please send only one application form.**

Applications cannot be submitted after the closing date (*see page 10*).

Keep an eye on the deadline

The application procedure provides ample time to prepare and submit your application. Most of the documents are in your possession already, others you would need to obtain before the deadline. To avoid last minute hurdles, it is suggested that you fill-in the on-line application as early as possible. Make sure you give yourself enough time to not miss the deadline. If you save your application for later review, it is advisable not to leave a long period of time between filling in the online application and the uploading of the documents for submission. Applications sent without all the required supported documents, would be considered incomplete.

Annex 4 - REFERENCE FORM CONFIDENTIAL

TO: Chairperson, Paid Study Leave Evaluation Board

Full name of Applicant & ID No.	
Title of Course and Area of Study	

TO BE COMPLETED BY REFEREE.

- In what capacity have you known applicant? _____
- For how many years / months? _____
- PLEASE RATE THE APPLICANT** on a scale from **1** (*minimum*) to **10** (*maximum*) on each of the aspects listed in the below table, providing your **JUSTIFICATION** for each of the rating given:

RATING:	JUSTIFICATION
	Quality of applicant’s service in the Role:
	Quality of service beyond the Role:
	Articulation:
	Contribution at national level in the field:
	Contribution at national level in the field:

Name of Referee: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ email: _____

Date: _____ Tel: _____

ENDORSEMENT

by Head of College /Director / Head or School/
or equivalent Authorities as applicable

1. I **endorse / do not endorse** this application (*delete as necessary*)

and

2. In doing, so I signify / do not signify (*delete as necessary*) my willingness to release the above-mentioned applicant for the duration of the applicable scholastic year, if after being successful in the evaluation applicant is made an offer for paid study leave by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation.

Remarks (if any): _____

Name and Surname / *Delegation*

Signature and rubber stamp

Date: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

TO THE APPLICANT:

Please download the form and after filling in the top section, send it to the two referees to complete. It is important to ensure that you inform the referee of the date of the deadline for submission of applications, which deadline applies also to the submission of references.

TO THE REFEREE: (Head of College and /or Head of School)

Thank you very much for agreeing to write a reference for the above-named applicant for the Paid Study Leave (Category A) scheme. Your reference will constitute an essential part of the applicant's evaluation.

Please fill in all the required details in this form including your endorsement on the reverse side of the page.

Please note that you may elaborate further with any information you wish to share about the applicant related to his application for Paid Study Leave. For this purpose, **ONE signed** additional page **on official letterhead** may be attached with additional information and comments that could help the Board evaluate the applicant's appropriateness for Paid Study Leave.

References under confidential cover are to be addressed to the **Chairperson**, Paid Study Leave Evaluation Board and sent by the referees in **pdf format** by email to pdstudyleave.meyr@gov.mt **prior to the closing date** of the call for applications (*see page 10*).

An acknowledgement of receipt will be issued.

Annex 5

Personal information on this form is protected and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

FORM OF UNDERTAKING FOR GOVERNMENT SCHOLARSHIP ³ HOLDERS

I acknowledge that in accepting the **paid study leave** to enable me to follow a _____¹ at _____², during the period _____, I take advantage of public funds in order to complete the said studies and I agree that on completion of the studies I will continue to serve the Ministry/Government and/or any other recognised organisation at the discretion of the Government for a period of _____⁴ years /months from the production of documentary evidence showing successful completion of my studies.

I also accept that the above-mentioned paid study leave is being granted to me under the conditions set out in the scheme and the rules governing the award of scholarships to which I hereby bind myself, a copy whereof is being signed by me and attached hereto.

.....
Signature of beneficiary

.....
(ID Number)

Countersigned

.....
(Name, Grade and Signature of the Representative
of the Government of the Republic of Malta)

.....
(ID Number)

.....
(Date)

The information shown on this form will be used by the Staff Development Organisation/Ministry/Department for record-keeping purposes and for any action that may be required relating to this Undertaking.

¹ type of qualification and area of study

² Name of University / Educational Institution and Country of Study

³ Dates of period of studies or paid study leave

⁴ As per paragraph 3 in Annex 7 (below)

³ The rules governing the award of Scholarships at Annex 7 of this document apply in the case of the granting of Paid Study Leave in terms of paragraph 3.2.3. of the Sponsorships and Study Leave Manual (*Institute for the Public Service, 2018*).

Annex 6

Personal information on this form is protected and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

FORM OF UNDERTAKING FOR EMPLOYEES NOT IN GOVERNMENT SERVICE AWARDED PAID STUDY LEAVE (Category A) THROUGH GOVERNMENT FUNDING

I acknowledge that in accepting the Paid Study Leave (Category A) for one scholastic year, awarded by¹ in order to follow a course leading to the² organised by the³ during the period.....⁴ I hereby bind myself, if selected for the Paid study leave, to continue to serve at my present employing non-state sector institution in Malta or to be available to serve the Government of Malta, Government having the first option to post appropriate with the level/s of the qualification/s which I shall obtain, for a period of⁵ years from the date that beneficiary resumes duties on completion of study.

I acknowledge further that the above-mentioned Paid Study Leave is being granted under the conditions set out in the Rules and Regulations governing the award of scholarships insofar as they are applicable to the particular person selected and I hereby bind myself to abide by those rules.

I also bind myself to pay the Government of Malta the penalty of €.....⁶ for failure to comply fully with my obligations according to this undertaking.

.....
Name and Signature of Beneficiary ID Number

.....
Name, Grade and Witness to Signature ID Number

.....
(Date)

The information shown on this form will be used by the Ministry/Department for record-keeping purposes and for any action that may be required relating to this Undertaking.

¹ Awarding Government organisation (This is to refer to the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation)
² Full title of the course of studies (to specify Area of Study)
³ Name of Educational Institution and country
⁴ Duration of the course of study
⁵ Number of years of obligation according to the criteria shown on the Rules Governing the Award of Scholarships (vide Appendix 7)
⁶ Penalty incurred based on the actual salary paid. Subject to verification of salary. Candidates from Non-state schools are to present official statement of salaries earned.

Annex 7

Personal information on this form is protected and used in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

RULES GOVERNING THE AWARD OF SCHOLARSHIPS ⁴

1. Paid study leave will cover funds as indicated in the form of undertaking, paid to the paid study leave holder (known from now on as 'the beneficiary') as well as any payments effected by the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research, and Innovation on the beneficiary's behalf, in pursuing the approved course of studies/training.
2. The beneficiary will be required:
 - a) to devote the whole time to follow the course of instruction for which the paid study leave is awarded, unless permission to undertake other work or to change the course is granted by the Ministry⁵ and unless course of study is undertaken after office hours or through distance learning;
 - b) to sit prescribed examinations or approved group of examinations;
 - c) to satisfy the Ministry as to attendance, conduct and progress by reports from the head of the institution or other authority under whom the course of training is being undertaken.
3. Before starting or proceeding on a course, the beneficiary of paid study leave will be required to sign an undertaking binding the beneficiary to serve the Government (*or employing organisation* for a given period, as stated hereunder, from the date of termination of studies.

Duration of Scholarship or Course Expenses as per para. 3.1 below

Period for which the beneficiary will be employed

Up to 1 week duration
or up to €700 expenses

6

Above 1 week (up to 1 month)
or up to €1300 expenses

9 Months

Above 1 month (up to 3 months)
or up to €1900 expenses

1 Year

Above 3 and up to 6 months
or up to €3000 expenses

2 Years

Above 6 and up to 9 months
or up to €4100 expenses

3 Years

Above 9 and up to 12 months
or up to €6000 expenses

4 Years

Above 12 months
or up to €8500 expenses

5 Years

⁴ The term scholarship is being used interchangeably with 'Paid Study Leave' and unless stated otherwise conditions are similarly applicable to Paid Study Leave.

⁵ Refers to the Ministry for Education, Sport, Youth, Research and Innovation and/or the non-state institution employing the beneficiary

3.1 Calculation of the period for which the scholarship holder will be bound to serve should be made as follows:

- Where fees are involved the period for binding should be calculated on the expenses
- Where salary only will be paid the period for binding should be based on the length of the course or paid study leave, as applicable.
- Where expenses involve fees and salary the binding period shall be left at the discretion of the respective Permanent Secretary (for courses of less than one year) and IPS (for courses over one year). It is understood that a reasonable agreement is reached in these cases.

In the case of sponsorships for distance learning or part-time programmes the period of service is to be calculated against approximate cost shown in the above table.

4. Paid study leave may be suspended or terminated if:-

- a) reports on the beneficiary's work or conduct are unsatisfactory;
- b) the beneficiary, without reasonable excuse, fails to pass a prescribed examination within the time fixed by the authorities of the institution which beneficiary is attending, or by the Ministry/Department;
- c) the beneficiary engages in any occupation which is detrimental to progress in the prescribed course of studies or accepts any paid employment without the permission of this Ministry;
- d) the beneficiary becomes unfit to complete the prescribed studies owing to illness or is absent from undertaken studies owing to illness.

5. In some cases where the course of study is abroad the cost of a return passage will be met if the scholarship is terminated for reasons stated above provided that, if the scholarship holder declines to travel at the earliest opportunity without reasonable excuse, he/she will lose his/her right to a free passage and the payment of any allowance which he/she may be receiving will cease forthwith. (Not applicable to paid study leave scheme for Educators)

6. The beneficiary must notify the Ministry of the date of termination of course. This declaration is to be supported by documentary evidence from the university or institution which the beneficiary is attending confirming the effective date of termination.

7. The beneficiary may be required to pass a medical examination before selection and may also be required to submit to an annual medical examination during the tenure of the Paid Study Leave.

8. The beneficiary may also be required to refund all or any part of the expenses incurred by Government on the beneficiary's behalf and in connection with the beneficiary's Paid Study Leave.

- a) if the beneficiary fails to successfully complete the course due to negligence on the beneficiary's ;
or
- b) if the beneficiary fails to serve the Government (*or the beneficiary's employing organisation*) as stated in paragraph 3 above.

9. For this purpose, the beneficiary may be required to enter into a formal act of hypothecation with Government before the commencement of the course if the costs to the Ministry/Department amount to more than €4100.

10. On successful completion of the studies, the beneficiary must be prepared to accept to be transferred to an area where the Government (*or employing organisation*) can reap maximum benefit from the beneficiary's qualifications.
11. Any qualification allowance resulting from a government sponsorship is regulated by section 22.1 of the Collective Agreement for Employees in the Public Service (*effective 1st January 2017*).
12. Every candidate who is undertaking a course of studies and who has to abandon the course as a result of physical or mental illness is to bring back to Malta a medical certificate from a qualified medical practitioner indicating why the beneficiary is unable to continue with the studies. Any such certificate should be authenticated by the appropriate authorities in the country in question. Unless such a certificate is produced, the candidate may be required to refund all or part of the costs incurred by the sponsoring organisation as a result of the sponsorship.
13. When a candidate undertaking a course of study locally is unable to go on with the studies because of any physical or mental illness the candidate is to be referred for examination to the People and Standards Division, who will report on the candidate's state of health. The candidate may be required to refund all or part of the costs incurred by the sponsoring organisation as a result of the sponsorship unless it is officially certified in this manner that the candidate's state of health precluded the candidate from completing the course.

.....
(Signature of beneficiary)

.....
(ID Number)

.....
Name and Surname (*in block Letters*)

.....
(Date)

ANNEX 8 Report Template for Paid Study Leave

DETAILS OF COURSE:

TITLE: COURSE OF STUDIES / PROGRAMME: _____

DATES OF COURSE: FROM: _____ TO: _____

VENUE: _____

<p>An overview of the visit/studies</p> <p><i>(Including Teaching methods adopted)</i></p>	
<p>Degree of participation by officer</p>	
<p>The extent to which the objectives were reached</p>	
<p>The educational/ professional relevance to officer's duties <i>(an evaluative assessment)</i></p>	

<p>Benefit which has been derived by the Public Service and /or non-state entity.</p>	
<p>Possible application of Knowledge and/ or experience gained in the sphere where the officer is serving and or the service in general.</p> <p><i>Including any Recommendations for follow-up including dissemination of the experience gained</i></p>	
<p>Any other pertinent remarks</p> <p><i>Including an account of any incident that might have occurred</i></p>	
<p>Appendices</p>	

Name & Surname
Block Letters

Grade
Block Letters

College / School / Section
Block Letters

ID. No

Signature

Date

Guidelines for report writing.

- **SCOPE OF DOCUMENT –**

This document is intended to provide guidelines for writing reports which effectively serve:

- to document and disseminate knowledge within the Ministry and or a non-state sector entity;
- to identify any important issues which require follow-up.
- To assist evaluation of training programmes

- **TEMPLATE –**

For reasons of standardisation, beneficiaries granted paid study leave are to use the same appropriate reporting Template at Annex 8;

Please ensure that ALL sections of the report are filled in, including headers.

- **ABBREVIATIONS –**

If abbreviations are used, their meaning should be clearly indicated. If it may be helpful, a glossary of abbreviations used may be included.

- **LENGTH –**

Your report should be long enough to accomplish its purpose but should be kept concise. Where applicable, use of point form is recommended. It is recommended that annexes and attachments are kept to a minimum.

- **COURSE PROGRAMME OF STUDIES –**

Where an official course programme concerning the studies undertaken is available it should be attached to the report.

- **STYLE AND PRESENTATION –**

Your report should be easily accessible and your readers should get a sense of what you are saying just by scanning it. The same font size/style should be used throughout your report.

It is strongly recommended that the report is proofread prior to submission to check accuracy of facts and clarity of report. Essentially, what is clear to you needs to be clear to your reader.

- **IMPORTANT ISSUES TO BE FOLLOWED UP** - Always ensure to provide some feedback in the section reserved for “*recommendations for follow up*” section where applicable, or else if nothing is required, please write “n/a”. **Any important issues in this section and throughout all the report should be clearly indicated.**

- **SAVING YOUR REPORT** – Essentially, the filename should allow readers to understand what the report is about at a glance. For this reason, the report should be saved with a filename that follows the format:

“*[Name of course / training programme] – [Month] [Year]*”